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SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 1, 2016 to MAY 31, 2017

OFFICE OF THE
OMBUDSPERSON



To the University community,

Pursuant to articles 8.1 and 8.2 of the Terms of Reference for the Office of the Ombudsperson, on my own behalf and on behalf of the members of my team, I am pleased to submit our seventh annual report, which covers the period from June 1, 2016, to May 31, 2017. This report is the accountability instrument provided for in the Ombudsperson's mandate:

"8.1. The Ombudsperson shall submit an annual report to the University Community, and in particular to the Senate of the University, the Board of Governors of the University and the Student Unions. The Ombudsperson shall make the report public via the Ombudsperson's website.

8.2. The report shall detail the activities of the Ombudsperson, including statistics on all complaints received, and shall make recommendations, as necessary."¹

I am very grateful for the privilege of being asked to assist the University community in resolving disputes and problems and in seeking fair and equitable solutions. I wish to thank all those who called on our services throughout the year, as well as the many people within the University and the student associations we worked with to resolve disputes and problems in a manner that was equitable for all. I am also grateful to the members of the Ombudsperson Advisory Committee for their support. Lastly, we thank the relevant authorities at the University and the two student associations who considered our recommendations and suggestions and who continue to support our office's mandate with the University community as a whole.

Respectfully,

Lucie Allaire



From left: Camille Brochu-Lafrance, Marie Boglari, and Lucie Allaire

This year's team:

Lucie Allaire, Ombudsperson since 2010

Sana Khalil, Assistant Ombudsperson

Marie Boglari, Assistant Ombudsperson

Camille Brochu-Lafrance, CO-OP student, Promotion Officer

¹ Terms of Reference: <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/board-of-governors/committees/ombudsperson-advisory-committee>

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Introduction

The team that has been in place since 2010 is presenting its seventh report. It reflects our commitment to providing the University community with a detailed account of the response to the recommendations from past years and to presenting new recommendations arising from our review of the complaints we received in 2016-2017. The recommendations it contains are all intended to improve systems, procedures, policies or practices for the community as a whole. In fact, the process of reviewing a complaint can sometimes serve as an opportunity to identify a weakness or deficiency that needs to be rectified to prevent adverse impacts on the University community.

In following up on the recommendations from past years, we noted some delays in the implementation of certain procedures or policies that in our opinion are very significant. For example, the ongoing review of Policy 67A that has been taking place for the past several years continues to impede the examination of discrimination or harassment complaints filed by students. We are still observing problems relating to interpretation of the policy, confusion with regard to roles and responsibilities, hesitation in taking up complaints and, in an overall sense, negative impacts on students who file a complaint. Although students with a disability do in fact have access to many services, regulatory oversight of the academic accommodation process shows deficiencies that call for more immediate attention.

As part of our review of the complaints process, we focused specifically on the clarity of the information disseminated on web pages and through the wording in certain regulations. We found three areas that called for corrective action so that students and administrators can have the clear and accurate information needed to ensure equitable treatment: credit transfers with Carleton University, revision of grades for group work and the regulation pertaining to the submission of research papers for masters programs.

Other recommendations highlight issues and problems that emerged in the wake of regulatory changes: the new requirement that students see the professor before asking for a grade review and the retroactive application of changes to program requirements. We also asked the University to revisit a practice that was having a major impact on tuition fees for students who have failed to submit proof of citizenship on time. We noted as well that the Department of Criminology needs to obtain Senate approval to require an average higher than the one set out in the University's Academic Regulations.



This year again we observed problems with the administration and distribution of the Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass). We encourage the student associations and the University to come up with a more effective way of administering this program in order to better serve all students.

Finally, we have expressed some serious concerns about how the Accessibility Fund for Students with Disabilities was being used, and we have made specific recommendations to the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa (SFUO) to make sure that students who need it can have access to it. The Association has agreed to post information about the Fund on its website and to ensure that its staff is properly informed and trained. It has also agreed that minutes would be kept for all of its Fund Committee meetings. The Graduate Students' Association des étudiant.e.s diplômé.e.s. (GSAED) has agreed to inform its members about the Fund and about their eligibility.



*“Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”
– Desmond Tutu*



Follow-up on recommendations from past years

Each year we issue recommendations to the University of Ottawa regarding problems that we have identified and changes that we recommend. Each year we follow up on how our recommendations are being implemented. This section contains a summary of the different situations, the follow-up to our recommendations, the University's response to us and our comments on the latter.

We therefore hope to provide an update to the University community on the major issues that we consider the University needs to focus on.

1. Procedural fairness: Academic sanctions for non-academic conduct and role of Protection Services

a. Summary

The 2013-2014 annual report of the Ombudsperson of the University of Ottawa identified problems with the imposition of academic sanctions for non-academic conduct.² The Ombudsperson recommended that guidelines be established to cover such situations, with a focus on procedural fairness, the right of appeal and the adoption of a specific policy on temporary leaves of absence for students who pose a threat to themselves or to others. The Ombudsperson also recommended that Protection Services develop a meaningful test to determine when the matter needs to be reported to the dean of the faculty.

For the 2015-2016 annual report, the University advised us that a protocol/guide was in the process of being developed.³ The preliminary title was "Guidelines for supporting at-risk students experiencing health or mental health problems". The University also informed us of a list of criteria that Protection Services would be using to determine when a matter had to be reported to the dean.

Our comments regarding the University's response acknowledged the work that had been done on developing guidelines to address situations in which students are engaging in behaviour that is dangerous to themselves or others. We encouraged the

² http://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsman/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/dc036737_annual_report_en_web.pdf p. 11

³ http://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/sixth_annual_report_2015-2016.pdf p. 14-17

University to ensure that decisions not covered by the guidelines are made objectively and that students are provided with clear information about the allegations and are given an opportunity to provide an explanation. The criteria established by Protection Services satisfied our concerns around transparency and the information that students are given.

The Ombudsperson nevertheless noted that cases in which an academic or administrative measure is taken in a situation that is not related to academic standing or to a student's health or mental health are not covered by the guidelines. The University added that such situations would be dealt with directly by the Vice-President Academic and Provost. It is not clear whether students subject to such measures are advised that they can appeal the Vice-President Academic's decision. If such a remedy does in fact exist, students will need to be clearly advised of it.

We identified at least one case in which a student was prohibited from being on campus without an opportunity to present his point of view, because there are still no guidelines in this regard.

For the 2016-2017 annual report, the Ombudsperson followed up with the University to obtain an update on the following two points:

- The development of guidelines to support at-risk students experiencing health or mental health problems,
- Situations in which an academic or administrative measure is taken for reasons other than academic standing or a student's health or mental health.

b. University's response to our follow-up, dated May 30, 2017

[Translation]

"A draft protocol for responding to situations in which a student's behaviour poses a danger to him/herself or others was prepared in 2016. The Ombudsperson was consulted about the contents of the protocol at that time. Internal consultations will begin in the near future and the University expects the protocol to be in place by the fall 2017 semester."



c. Our comments

We were not given any explanation regarding the delays and we continue to strongly encourage the University to finalize the protocol to ensure such situations are managed properly.

The Ontario Ombudsman has had jurisdiction over universities since January 2016. In his 2016 2017 report,⁴ he stressed the importance of procedural fairness. He also recommended that a procedural fairness guide be prepared for a university's decision-making bodies. We urge the University of Ottawa to ensure that this suggestion is reflected in the development of its University policies.

2. Procedural fairness: Examination of formal complaints of discrimination by students

a. Summary

In 2011, the Office of the Ombudsperson published an *Issue Paper on Handling Complaints of Discrimination at the University of Ottawa*,⁵ which recommended five principles for improving the complaints procedure for student complaints of discrimination:

- "
1. the procedure must be accessible and well-understood
 2. conflicts of interest or duties must be eliminated or managed
 3. the procedure must be fair to the complainant, respondent and all parties involved [the conditions are set out on page 4 of the Issue Paper]
 4. the investigation process must be effective
 5. every step of the procedure must be documented
- "

In our fifth annual report (2014-2015),⁶ we noted that deficiencies and errors continued to exist in the implementation of Policy 67a, which deals with the management of discrimination complaints at the University of Ottawa. We recommended a review of Policy 67a and of Procedures 36-1 and 36-2.

The University's response was that it had focused its efforts on implementing a policy on the prevention of sexual violence. It added that it would now proceed with a comprehensive review of Policy 67a and Procedures 36-1 and 36-2, in consultation with various stakeholders within the University, in order to address the overlap between the two policies.

⁴ <https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/Files/sitemedia/Documents/Resources/Reports/Annual/AR2017-EN-Final.pdf> p. 49

⁵ https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/procedural_fairness_0.pdf

⁶ https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/annual_report_2014-2015.pdf p. 6-7.



In the 2015-2016 report, the Office of the Ombudsperson commended the publication of the policy on the prevention of sexual violence. We were also pleased to read that the University wished to continue its review of Policy 67a and Procedures 36-1 and 36-2.

In 2016-2017, we again observed that the problem still existed and that students who were considering or who had initiated such a process were often placed in a vulnerable position and that the process was unfavourable to them. Training of the staff who handle this type of complaint is inadequate, and in some cases staff do not have the proper information concerning the correct procedures to be followed in such situations to ensure that a student receives equitable treatment.

For the 2016-2017 annual report, the Ombudsperson followed up with the University for an update of how the review of Policy 67a and Procedures 36-1 and 36-2 was progressing in light of the new policy on the prevention of sexual violence.

b. University's response to our follow-up, dated May 30, 2017

[Translation]

"The Human Rights Office is currently working with the Vice-President, Governance, and other entities to create a coherent framework in which all members of the University community are required to refrain from harassment and discrimination prohibited under the legislation governing human rights and occupational health and safety. Furthermore, the procedures will be assessed in order to ensure compliance with the new requirement to investigate under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

These changes have a bearing on the drafting of the accommodation and accessibility policies and on Policy 67b on Sexual Violence. These regulations must therefore be redrafted simultaneously."

c. Our comments

We can only add that the coherent framework that has been promised is urgently needed.



3. Delays in implementation of the accommodation and accessibility policies

a. Summary

The Office of the Ombudsperson's second and third annual reports (issued in 2012 and 2013 respectively) presented recommendations regarding the development of policies and procedures on accessibility, accommodation and human rights protection for students with a disability or with learning or mental health issues.⁷ The recommendations made to the University also included the implementation of a separate, adapted and efficient redress process, a clear definition of each party's roles and responsibilities and staff training.

In our sixth annual report (2015-2016),⁸ the University acknowledged the delay in implementing policies in this regard, which had earlier been pushed back to December 2015. It informed us that draft regulations on academic accommodation and accessibility had been prepared and were in the process of being approved by the University's decision-making bodies. The Office of the Ombudsperson was compelled to observe the slow pace of the process around the development of policies on academic accommodation and accessibility. Moreover, the University did not provide any new timelines for adoption of the drafts or implementation of the policies. The Ombudsperson also recalled that awareness and training initiatives should be included in the implementation plan for these policies.

In 2016-2017, our office again witnessed how the lack of such policies and processes was causing major problems in the academic and personal lives of students with a learning disability or some other type of disability. We note a number of problems caused by the lack of clear policies and processes, as reported to us over the past year:

- We know that not all programs at the graduate level are offered on a part-time basis. In the absence of policies and procedures, requests for accommodation through part-time studies are not always considered in a timely manner. Some students must experience a very poor semester before the faculty takes another look at part-time studies as a reasonable accommodation.
- Exam arrangements and communication involving students, the Access Service, professors and the faculty suffer from the lack of clear and consistent policies and processes. Sometimes the problem lies with a professor who is not willing

⁷ https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/ombudsannualreport_2012e.pdf p. 6-8.

https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsman/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsman/files/dc025771_ombudsman_annual_report_2013_en.pdf p. 5-6.

⁸ https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/sixth_annual_report_2015-2016.pdf p. 18-19.



to adopt the accommodations previously arranged between a student and the Access Service or who confronts students about why they started their exam earlier than the other students. There may also be a lack of clarity regarding the documentation that a student must provide. The level of complexity is even greater for students from Quebec.

- The Access Service has determined that its role and responsibilities do not extend to research laboratories. That said, there is no indication on the Access Service's web page that their role is confined to the classroom. Access Service staff were not aware of this restriction, and this confusion has caused several months of delays in the implementation of accommodation measures. In addition, the role of the Human Rights Office in resolving disputes could stand to be clarified.
- The lack of clear policies and processes also leads to misunderstanding of the duties and responsibilities of each of the parties involved. For example, it is not always clear how all of the parties concerned are to be notified of a change in the adapted exam schedule. In other cases, the absence of clear processes at the faculty and interdepartmental level have led to major delays in the implementation of accommodations and confusion regarding each party's roles and decision-making authority. In one case, up to six different services were involved, with delays of several months for a decision to be made.
- A number of students came to see us because they were worried about discussions on the reasonableness of the accommodations to be put in place. It is in fact important to note that the lack of procedures has led to accommodations being denied without cause and to delays in their implementation. Guidelines would be a great advantage in the context of such discussions.

In all of these examples, the existence of clear policies and processes could help with rapid coordination of the mandates of the various services involved and would make it possible to have effective discussions beforehand as to whether or not accommodations are reasonable. They could serve as guidelines for discussions involving students, faculties and services. They would also reduce the length of the process and the discussions, the stress that students are under, conflict and the number of people and services involved.

It is therefore urgent that the University establish policies and procedures regarding accessibility, accommodation and human rights protection for students with a disability or with learning disabilities or mental health issues in order to improve the student experience and the University's internal operations.

For the 2016-2017 annual report, the Ombudsperson followed up with the University for a status update on the adoption and implementation of such policies.



b. University's response to our follow-up, dated May 30, 2017

[Translation]

"We acknowledge that the University is still experiencing a delay in the adoption of the accommodation and accessibility policies. However, it is important to note that this delay does not mean that services are not being provided. In fact, significant measures have been implemented with regard to accessibility, including the creation of a website (<https://www.uottawa.ca/respect/en/accessibility>) intended to provide the University community with better information and tools. In terms of accommodation, SASS has been providing services to students for a number of years and is currently conducting a comprehensive review of its processes.

With regard to regulations, the provincial legislation continues to evolve, and decisions by the Ontario Human Rights Commission have meant that a number of changes had to be made to our initial drafts. The arrival of a new Vice-President, Governance, also served as an opportunity to take another look at the thinking behind the various policies, regulations (academic or administrative) and procedures. Finally, as noted in the second recommendation above, the connection between the concepts of access and accommodation on the one hand and discrimination on the other are forcing us to revisit our entire set of policies.

The primary stakeholders involved in this matter have been meeting very regularly to clarify the process to be followed and to develop a set of policies around these concepts. Proposals will be submitted to the Senate Appeals Committee in the coming weeks."

c. Our comments

There is no doubt in our minds that the lack of clear and properly articulated policies and procedures is causing conflict and problems in the accommodation process.

⁹ https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/sixth_annual_report_2015-2016.pdf p. 19-20.



4. Procedural fairness: Inconsistent information on the right to appeal

a. Summary

In our 2015-2016 annual report,⁹ we noted that students were not yet being systematically informed of their right to appeal decisions against them.

The University responded that approximately 80% of faculties include such information in their correspondence with students. It also informed us that the Senate Appeals Committee had recommended in its annual report that the right to appeal to the Committee be mentioned in all letters from faculties. The annual report was approved by the Executive Committee of the Senate, and the Office of the Vice-President, Governance, was to contact the faculties to notify them. The University also informed us that decisions sent to the Office of the Vice-President, Governance, would henceforth be verified and would be sent back to the faculty for revision if the right to appeal was not mentioned.

In its 2015-2016 report, the Office of the Ombudsperson noted that it was pleased with the follow-up on this matter, as it would ensure that students were properly informed of their right to appeal.

In 2016-2017, our Office was advised of a number of cases in which faculties had made decisions without notifying the student of his or her right to appeal. In one case, the student was told that the decision was final, with no reference to the appeal process that was open to him. The Ombudsperson followed up with the faculty concerned and with the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost to urge the University to abide by the recommendation it had accepted.

It seemed that monitoring of this matter was still required. The Ombudsperson therefore decided to follow up with the University for an update on the situation for its 2016-2017 report.

b. University's response to our follow-up, dated June 29, 2017

[Translation]

"We checked with the University Secretariat and there were in fact a number of occasions when faculties had to be reminded to include information about the right to appeal in their communications with students [...]"



We have asked for an annual reminder to be sent to staff at the faculties to make sure this procedure is adhered to. The Secretariat will remind the deans and ask them to pass on this message to all concerned in their faculty. In addition, when the next Senate Appeals Committee report is sent to the faculties in the fall, the Secretariat will take the opportunity to remind them of the importance of mentioning the right to appeal a decision.

We hope that these measures will ensure that faculties continue to systematically include this message in their communications with students.”

c. Our comments

We thank the University for its engagement in verifying and encouraging information regarding a student’s right to file an appeal. We note that the University’s review of cases in which students were not advised of their right to appeal looked only at cases that had reached the Senate. It is important to point out that there are other cases in which this is occurring and in which the student does not appeal, is not aware of this right and does not report this irregularity.

5. Adherence to Regulation on Academic Fraud

a. Summary

Last year we identified a substantial number of practices that were in violation of Regulation 14 on academic fraud, which are detailed on pages 21 to 24 of the 2015-2016 annual report.¹⁰

In light of this finding, the Ombudsperson recommended in her 2015-2016 report that the University ensure compliance with Regulation I-14 on academic fraud by looking at the need to provide better training to staff responsible for its application and by putting in place monitoring mechanisms to enable it to identify gaps and intervene more effectively.

The University responded that it was time for it to take stock of how the Regulation was being applied and that our recommendations would be discussed with the Vice-Deans of Undergraduate Studies. Further to this response, we contacted the University again to note that we would have hoped for a more affirmative response on its part. The University assured us at that time that the matter would be dealt with in the fall of 2016.

This 2016-2017 annual report therefore served as an opportunity for the Ombudsperson to follow up with the University to obtain an update on the discussions within the

¹⁰ https://www.uottawa.ca/ombudsperson/sites/www.uottawa.ca.ombudsperson/files/sixth_annual_report_2015-2016.pdf



University regarding the concerns raised and the recommendations made by the Ombudsperson with regard to compliance with Regulation I-14 on Academic Fraud.

b. University's response to our follow-up, dated May 30, 2017

[Translation]

"The Ombudsperson's observations and recommendations regarding the application of Regulation I-14 on academic fraud were discussed at two different meetings with the Vice Deans of Undergraduate Studies in December 2016 and April 2017. A working group has been formed to develop a best practices guide for the various stakeholders involved in implementing this regulation. The working group's work, which will start in June 2017, will be based largely on the Ombudsperson's observations and recommendations. The group will also include the Vice-Deans of Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies."

c. Our comments

We encourage the University to maintain a proactive approach to ensure that its regulation is adhered to. Monitoring mechanisms should be put in place, if this has not already been done. As the University's response applies only to undergraduate students, it would also be important to include those responsible for masters and doctoral studies within the faculties.

Further to its review of a specific complaint, the Ontario Ombudsman suggested that the University draft a procedural fairness guide¹¹ in order to support equitable treatment for all parties involved in the academic fraud process. We believe that better knowledge of the principles of procedural fairness on the part decision-makers will enhance the quality of decisions, not only when allegations of academic fraud are reviewed but for all other types of processes as well. We hope that the University will follow up on this suggestion as soon as possible. We recall that we had identified this same need on a number of other occasions, including in our review of the handling of discrimination and harassment complaints filed by students.

6. "All or nothing" policy – Retroactive withdrawal requests

a. Summary

In the 2015-2016 annual report our office shone a light on an internal practice of adopting an "all or nothing" approach in responding to requests for retroactive withdrawal for health reasons. From a student's complaint, we learned that the Faculty of Arts would accept such requests only if the student agreed to withdraw from all of the courses in which he or she was registered during the semester in question. The Faculty of Arts informed us that all faculties had adopted this practice.

¹¹ <https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/Files/sitemedia/Documents/Resources/Reports/Annual/AR2017-EN-Final.pdf> p. 49.



When such practices are expressed and applied in absolute terms, there is a risk of unfair and even discriminatory treatment. A 2015 report by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development's Mental Health Innovation Fund (the recommendations from which were supported by the Ontario Human Rights Commission) states as follows: "Each case should be examined based on the unique circumstances and the student's individual needs. [...] **The recommendation is that post secondary institutions incorporate into their accommodation policies a statement or statements which indicate that all Code-related requests for accommodation will be given meaningful consideration.**"¹²

In its 2015-2016 annual report, the Office of the Ombudsperson recommended that this all or nothing policy be replaced with a case-by-case assessment of retroactive withdrawal requests so that the circumstances of the particular individual could be taken into account.

The University's response was that there was no policy on retroactive withdrawal requests and that requests were therefore being assessed on a case-by-case basis. The University added that discussions were under way regarding the problems in applying section 9.5 (Justification of absence from an examination or of late submission of assignments) of Academic Regulation I-9.

The Office of the Ombudsperson reiterated that faculties had confirmed the adoption of an all or-nothing approach. The University undertook to review the matter, and this 2016-2017 annual report therefore serves as an opportunity for the Ombudsperson to follow up on it with the University.

b. University's response to our follow-up, dated May 30, 2017

[Translation]

"This matter is currently being dealt with. The policy on accommodation will have an impact on how the University handles the review of retroactive withdrawal requests. It will therefore be necessary to adjust our position in light of this policy."

c. Our comments

We observe that the University has taken note of our recommendation. However, we believe it is now appropriate and necessary to issue a directive to its faculties to cease adopting an all or nothing approach, which it has not yet done. Each request should be assessed on its own merits.

¹² Condra, M. & Condra E, M. 2015. Recommendations for Documentation Standards and Guidelines for Academic Accommodations for Post-Secondary Students in Ontario with Mental Health Disabilities. *Queen's University and St. Lawrence College Partnership Project*. Kingston, ON. The report is available in English only.



Follow-up on observations and suggestions from last year to improve service delivery and student experience

Roadmap@Destination2020 sets out the strategic objectives as well as the action plans and initiatives that the University of Ottawa has put in place. The document states as follows:

"In all of this, uOttawa takes as its first priority the quality of each student's experience. Everything we do and aspire to do places students at the centre, as we strive to create a stimulating and supportive environment in which our students can thrive."¹³

This overarching priority is also made clear through the list of short-term (up to 2016) objectives, which include the following:

"Objective is to improve service delivery, eliminate non-relevant services, reduce the burden of complexity, overcome duplication of services so as to better support university mission, ensure appropriate governance and reduce cost of services."¹⁴

In our 2015-2016 annual report we did not make any recommendations regarding the student experience *per se*, as it was already the subject of University initiatives. However, it was important for us to relate a number of situations in which the student experience was mishandled and to propose a reflection and possible solutions in this regard.

It is from that perspective that we are following up with the University of Ottawa and with SFUO on three areas in which the student experience should be improved. Our observations indicated that improvement is needed in the following areas.

1. Dispute resolution in inter-faculty and interdepartmental situations

The Office of the Ombudsperson was informed of a number of cases in which students suffered from the lack of coordination and communication among the faculties or departments involved in their case. For example, the University took more than a year to resolve the situation of a student who had experienced serious health problems and tried to withdraw retroactively from his semester. The two faculties concerned had different requirements and were not working together to help the student.

The Office of the Ombudsperson suggested that the University adopt a more proactive and simpler approach to resolve problems and improve coordination of responses and actions taken by the different departments, services or faculties involved in a particular case.

¹³ <http://www.uottawa.ca/about/sites/www.uottawa.ca/about/files/roadmap-to-destination-2020.pdf> p. 2

¹⁴ <http://www.uottawa.ca/about/sites/www.uottawa.ca/about/files/roadmap-to-destination-2020.pdf> p. 12



This 2016-2017 annual report is therefore an opportunity for the Ombudsperson to reiterate the need for the University of Ottawa to better coordinate the management of situations that involve more than one faculty or department.

2. Response times

In our 2015-2016 report, we mentioned that a number of students had come to see us because they could not obtain a response from the University and did not know what was happening with their case. For example, one student had not been given the instructions for an adapted exam until the day of his exam (a Monday) after being told he would receive them by the previous Friday at the latest. For graduate students dealing with lengthy delays in obtaining feedback from their supervisors, there is a concrete impact in the form of a delay in submitting the final project, with the risk of having to enrol for an additional semester.

In 2016-2017, we identified the following situations in which students were unable to reach the University: when certain offices were closed to students for several days in a row, when there was no answer to outside telephone calls, when voice mails from international students were not returned, when students had to wait a long time for an appointment and when students could not meet with an academic assistant that same day even when they had a number. Other situations involved an extension of the response time without the students being informed and the replacement of a telephone number with a live chat option available only for a few days or hours per week. For example, one faculty sent the following note:

[Translation]

"We are currently in an intensive period of registration for the spring/summer 2017 semester and we have a high volume of requests to process. **Therefore, we will not be replying to any emails until further notice.** For a reply to your inquiry, please come to the Undergraduate Studies Office. We are located [...]. You can also reach us by telephone at [...]." (Emphasis in original)

Apart from the message that the faculty is not available, we do not think that refusing to reply to emails "until further notice" does anything to address the gridlock at the faculty; on the contrary, because a date on which service will be restored is not provided, students are likely to call or write more often to check whether the faculty can be reached again.

This trend is part of the growing distance between people and institutions. This situation has become a problem for students and community members who are seeking to resolve a problem or looking for answers when the information they need does not appear on the website. Despite employees' best intentions and the University's adoption of modern communication methods (such as live chat), access to the University's personnel and resources seems difficult at certain times of the year.



This 2016-2017 annual report provides an opportunity for the Ombudsperson to stress the direct connection between the management of response times and the student experience. Accordingly, concrete measures for improving access to the University's services are strongly desired.

3. Client service is also an issue for SFUO

In our 2015-2016 annual report, we reported that we had received 55 complaints about the SFUO's services. Despite the staff's efforts, many of the complaints pertained to service quality, in particular difficulty in reaching the SFUO, lengthy delays in receiving answers and incomplete responses. The services offered by the student associations have a major impact on students' lives. Aside from the negative perception among the student population that such poor quality service creates, it can also lead to situations of injustice.

The Ombudsperson suggested that the SFUO adopt a mechanism for following up on files and requests in order to reduce response times and the number of incomplete responses and thereby improve its client service.

We realize that the SFUO is dealing with financial difficulties and that the staff is doing its best to keep up with demand. Nevertheless, this 2016-2017 annual report serves as an opportunity for the Ombudsperson to remind the SFUO of the importance of continuous improvement of its client service.

We sent the SFUO and the GSAED a report entitled "A Blueprint for Student Driven, Professionally Supported Student Associations".¹⁵ This document is the product of an in-depth investigation of the governance structures of universities in the Maritime provinces. It focuses on the issues currently being experienced by Canadian student associations and offers recommendations for improving the structure and good governance of such expanding organizations. According to the study's authors, the governance model of years past is no longer working for student associations and they need to look at a more "professional" model in order to respond to the new issues that are arising. This study is extremely interesting and well worth reading.

Thoughts on client service with specific reference to SFUO's management of the U-Pass

This year we received fewer complaints about the appropriateness of including the area covered by the STO in the U-Pass, and we received fewer cases involving requests for exemption from the U Pass. However, we continued to observe organizational and communication difficulties relating to the U-Pass that had an impact on students. Most of the complaints we received pertained to the SFUO's services. Examples include the following:

¹⁵ <http://studentsns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2015-02-20-Independent-Governance-Review-Final1.pdf>



- Difficulty in reaching the SFUO's offices (emails that went unanswered, voice mailboxes that were full, difficulty in seeing someone in person);
- Long waiting lines in connection with the fall 2016 distribution;
- In the fall of 2016, the information on the SFUO's website regarding the U-Pass was incomplete or inaccurate. Although we did have some highly productive meetings with the SFUO on this matter, unfortunately the only result was a partial correction of the French-language content on the website. The English content still showed the errors and omissions identified in the fall of 2016.

It seems appropriate to suggest that measures be taken to improve the management and distribution of the U-Pass in collaboration with the University, OC Transpo and the student associations. Without ruling out other solutions, we suggest that the possibility of using the UOttawa card as a bus pass be considered as a way of eliminating the need to wait in line and the distribution problems.

FEEDBACK

I want to thank you again for all the hard work you and Marie have put in to helping me. I very much appreciate it. I would not have gotten a resolution without your help.

FEEDBACK

Service is excellent. I have no suggestions.

FEEDBACK

Keep it up!
Thank you.

Recommendations arising from this year's service

1. Need for clarification of University of Ottawa rules, procedures and forms

a. Processes, terms and conditions and forms relating to credit transfers with Carleton University

i. Situation

One student contacted us because he was unable to register for an optional course at Carleton University. The student was wondering why he could not take an optional course at Carleton when he would have been able to take a required course. That question led the Office of the Ombudsperson to contact the persons responsible at the University of Ottawa and to check the applicable regulations, the relevant forms and the terms and conditions for taking one or more courses at another university, in this case Carleton.

Academic Regulation I-6, entitled "General policy on credit transfers", includes two key provisions: section 6.2, entitled "Credit transfers with Carleton University", and section 6.4, "Courses completed at other Canadian universities".

These two provisions differ in two respects:

- Section 6.2 stipulates that an alphanumeric grade will appear on the student's transcript if this process has been applied. However, section 6.4 states that the grade obtained at the host university will not appear on the transcript: only CR or NC¹⁶ will appear.
- The two provisions also differ with regard to the requirements for a student to be able to take a course at a host university. For greater clarity, the reader is referred to the comparative table (see **Appendix 2**) that indicates the criteria set out in the respective provisions¹⁷ and forms.¹⁸

¹⁶ According to University of Ottawa Regulation I-10, clause 10.1, "CR" means "Credited course" and "NC" means "No credits".

¹⁷ Sections 6.2 and 6.4 of Academic Regulation I-6: <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/academic-regulation-6-general-policy-on-credit-transfers>

¹⁸ Form for credit transfer with Carleton University and permission request form: <http://www.uottawa.ca/undergraduate-course-registration/enrolment-forms-and-tools>



The main issue lies in the fact that the criteria indicated in the forms associated with the sections in question do not precisely match those set out in the applicable sections of the regulation (see table below). It is not simply a matter of minor changes in wording: criteria have been changed, added or deleted. It should be noted that the criterion that appears in section 6.2, which indicates that a student could take an equivalent course at Carleton University “for any other valid reason”, does not appear in the list of criteria on the form. We note as well that the fact that a course is required for a program is included as a criterion on the permission request form but not in section 6.4. These two elements in particular greatly limit the scope of sections 6.2 and 6.4 along with students’ access to courses at Carleton University.

Moreover, our discussions with various faculties indicated that some allow students who wish to take a course at Carleton to choose which of the two provisions/forms they prefer. This practice seems contrary to the regulations, which are presented as mutually exclusive, and to the explanations provided on the University website.¹⁹ Please consult the **Appendix 2** for a comparison of the criteria included in the policies and forms.

This summary of the situation gives rise to a number of observations and questions, as detailed below:

- According to some faculties, students are able to choose between the two different provisions/forms when they want to take a course at Carleton, thus enabling them to determine the impact of the course on their weighted average. The two regulations and the information on the University website seem to go against this interpretation and do not seem to indicate that the student has a choice.
- The criteria in the forms are different from those in the corresponding provisions.
- Different interpretations can be made of the following wording: “courses that meet the University of Ottawa’s degree requirements”, “this course is essential to your program”, “allow you to complete the requirements of your program” and “courses required for the degree program”.
- It is unclear whether the criteria set out in both the provisions within the regulation and in the forms are to be read as applicable or whether a choice exists: the words “and” and “or” do not appear in the list of criteria.

This situation has a negative impact on students who cannot know whether or not their request will be accepted (and who are often disappointed with the reasons provided by the faculty in the event of a refusal) as well as on administrators. The criteria need to be clarified and coordinated in order to improve the student experience as well as university policies.

¹⁹ <http://www.uottawa.ca/undergraduate-course-registration/enrolment-forms-and-tools>



ii. Recommendations

That the University clarify, in its regulations and in the relevant forms, whether students have a choice between the two regulations/forms when they wish to take a course at Carleton University.

That the University amend its forms to bring them in line with the criteria that appear in sections 6.2 and 6.4 of Academic Regulation I-6.

That the University provide a clear interpretation of the following four criteria: "courses that meet the University of Ottawa's degree requirements", "allow you to complete the requirements of your program", "this course is essential to your program" and "courses required for the degree program".

iii. University's response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translation]

"The work around clarifying the information that appears in the forms is already under way. With respect to the other information raised in this regard, discussions between SEM and the faculties have already started. The Associate Vice-President, Programs, will provide the necessary follow-up with the various parties concerned to be sure that all of the points raised in these recommendations are addressed."

b. Revision of grades for group projects

i. Situation

In 2016-2017, several groups of students contacted us with similar questions: If one of their members wished to request a revision of the grade received for a group project, was this possible? If so, would the final decision affect the entire group or just the person requesting the revision?

In one case, two people had worked together in a group, and one of them wanted to appeal the group's grade, which he considered too low. The other student did not want to initiate a grade appeal process given that the grade for the project (and the final grade for the course) could also be lower as a result of the revision.



The Office of the Ombudsperson contacted the University to verify how section 10.3 (Revision of grades and appeal) of Academic Regulation I-10 was to be interpreted in the light of this question. It turned out that section 10.3 was silent on the matter of revision of grades received for a group project. The University undertook to verify how faculties were managing requests to that effect. We have not yet been advised of the final result of the University's effort.

On May 15, 2017, the University provided the following response to our inquiry:

[Translation]

"We have already started the process of documenting how the different faculties approach section 10.3 as it relates to group projects and the fact that the current wording is silent on this matter. On the basis of this initial documentation, we had this item put on the agenda for our most recent meeting with the vice-deans in April. However, we did not have enough time to deal with this matter. Therefore, and to avoid delaying the consultations that need to take place around this matter, we will discuss it at our next Council on Undergraduate Studies meeting, which is scheduled for early June.

We will keep you abreast of the follow-up to this question."

We note that the University is concerned about this situation and has taken steps to study the matter.

The Office of the Ombudsperson has contacted ombudspersons at other universities and colleges in Canada to find out how they deal with such requests. Most of them replied that the right of appeal was treated as an individual right. The conclusion was that an individual could request a grade review, and that if more than one member of a group wanted a review they all had to submit individual requests. The situation nevertheless remained unclear with regard to how this would be applied: would a new grade apply only to the individual(s) concerned or to all members of the group? Only one university replied that its regulations stipulated that, if an identical grade was received by all members involved in a group project, then the revision request had to be a collective effort.

Section 10.3 remains silent on the matter of requests for a revision of grades in the case of group work, but it seems to give students an individual right to request a grade review. It is therefore important that this provision be amended, either by including a provision setting out the rules and processes applicable to such requests or by clarifying and standardizing the interpretation and application of section 10.3 to such cases.

ii. Recommendation

That the University amend section 10.3 of Academic Regulation I-10 to clarify its application in cases in which a revision of a grade is being requested for a group project.



iii. University's response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translation]

"This matter was discussed at the Council on Undergraduate Studies meeting in June. The members were informed at that time that a legal opinion had confirmed that the regulation as currently written confers the right on any student to request a revision of a grade for either an individual or a group projects. In the short term, it was agreed to work with the faculties to ensure uniform application of the regulation. The discussion needs to continue to determine whether the regulation will need to be amended to ensure clarity."

c. Regulation and process regarding the submission of a major research paper for a master's program

i. Situation

One of the issues for students at the end of their program is understanding the terms and conditions that govern whether or not they need to reregister and pay tuition fees for the semester following the submission of their research paper.

The University regulation pertaining to graduate studies provides no guidance regarding the writing of a major research paper for a master's program.²⁰ Therefore, the guidelines concerning the process of writing and submitting a major research paper for a master's program vary from one program to the next.

The Office of the Ombudsperson has identified a number of points that warrant attention from faculties and from the University. They stem mainly from the fact that the guidelines around the writing of a major research paper for a master's program are not always sufficiently clear in the terminology that they use and the steps of the process that apply to a major research paper written as part of a master's program.

The information that appears on the University website under "Important dates"²¹ only adds to the confusion (see box below). This situation could have a negative impact on students.

<p>Last day of the Winter term to submit the final version of a major research paper or engineering report without having to enrol in the Spring-Summer term. Dates for submitting major research papers may be earlier in some academic units. Please confirm date with your academic unit.</p>	<p>April 27</p>
<p>Close</p>	

²⁰ Academic Regulation II-2 - Graduate Program Requirements, section 2.2 <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/academic-regulation-II-2-graduate-program-requirements>

²¹ <http://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>



We reviewed the writing guides for research papers for different programs and spoke with faculties and with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, to ensure the regulations were clearly understood.

The most problematic issue is undoubtedly the lack of clarity around what is meant by “final version of a major research paper” as it appears in various writing guides and on the “Important dates” site. This term can mean the final version submitted to the examiner but also the actual final version that has been evaluated, corrected, approved and submitted to the faculty. Although each type of version has its own deadline, the guides and the University website do not make it clear which interpretation is to be used.

There are other terms that also need to be clarified, such as “submission” of a major research paper, which can refer to two different steps of the process: submission for examination or submission of the corrected and approved version to the faculty. Moreover, writing guides do not always indicate the various possible verdicts. Nor is a distinction made between the examiner’s verdict and the final grade received for the research paper. These two “grades” are not delivered at the same stage of the process: receiving the verdict does not mean that the process is finished, and there is still a risk that the student will have to reregister for another semester.

One final point must be noted: we have determined that a financial credit is available to students writing a thesis but not to those writing a research paper (see box below).²²

Reports, major research papers, and theses (graduate studies) ✕	
Topic	Dates
Last day of the Fall term to submit a thesis without having to enrol in the Winter term	December 16
Last day to submit a thesis and receive a 100% financial credit (applies only if you are enrolled exclusively in the thesis and were also enrolled in the previous term). Submission by this date results in the cancellation of your enrolment for the current term. Credit not available if you are submitting a revised thesis.	January 27
Last day to submit a thesis and receive a 50% financial credit (applies only if you are enrolled exclusively in the thesis and were also enrolled in the previous term). Credit not available if you are submitting a revised thesis.	February 24
Last day of the Winter term to submit a thesis without having to enrol in the Spring-Summer term.	April 27
Last day of the Winter term to submit the final version of a major research paper or engineering report without having to enrol in the Spring-Summer term. Dates for submitting major research papers may be earlier in some academic units. Please confirm date with your academic unit.	April 27

Close

²² <http://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>



We raised this matter with the University and received the following response on March 14, 2017:

[Translation]

There are some major differences between the educational path of a student enrolled in a master's program with a thesis requirement as compared to one with a research paper. Among them is a difference in policy with regard to financial credit:

Upon completion of their program, students enrolled in a master's program with a thesis requirement submit a thesis that must be defended orally in front of a committee of professors. Students can be asked by their thesis supervisor to make changes before the thesis is submitted for the oral defence. This does not hold true for a research paper. A thesis must be approved by the thesis supervisor(s) in order to be submitted for examination. A research paper does not need to be approved by the supervisor to be submitted for examination. Students can decide to reregister in order to improve their work if they so wish but are not required to do so.

Refunds are allowed for students enrolled in a program that requires a thesis but not a research paper because a thesis must be examined and approved by the thesis supervisor(s) before it can be submitted for examination to the board of examiners. Thesis supervisor(s) can cause major delays in this pre-examination process. This is not the case for a student writing a research paper because the paper is examined simultaneously by the supervisor and a single other examiner, who will assign a final grade together. There is no pre-examination process before the formal examination of a research paper, and students do not need their supervisor's approval before submitting their work for examination.

The regulation recognizes that delays incurred because of the need for pre-examination of a thesis may be beyond a student's control, which is not the case for a research paper.*

We would like to point out that some of the guides to writing a research paper that we saw indicated that the supervisor's approval is needed before a research paper can be submitted for examination. The main distinction that the University uses to justify offering a financial credit for a thesis therefore seems to be invalid. We have thus concluded that there is a lack of consistency between the University's response and the practices of certain faculties or departments and that this situation should be clarified.

In conclusion, it appears that the steps in the submission and examination process relating to research papers for a master's program are not sufficiently clear or detailed. This leads to confusion on the students' part (around which step they are at, the remaining steps and the time frames that are given), misunderstandings, differing interpretations among faculties regarding the applicable rules and, in some cases, an increased financial burden.



ii. Recommendation

That the University and the faculties clarify and standardize the conditions to be met to avoid the need to reregister in order to complete the different steps of the research paper and thereby enable students to better assess the date on which their program will end and to manage their tuition fees. Among other things, we believe it would be desirable to clarify the term “final version” and to document the different steps of the examination process for research papers written as part of a master’s program

That the University take another look at the appropriateness of the distinctions with regard to financial credit for masters students writing a thesis versus those writing a research paper.

iii. University’s response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translation]

“The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has reviewed the above recommendations. With regard to the regulation and the process governing the submission of research papers for a master’s program, the inconsistencies raised by the Ombudsperson have been noted. We will therefore discuss this with all faculties in order to follow up on the two recommendations and clarify the term “final version” as it appears in a number of documents. We will also take another look at the appropriateness of the distinctions relating to financial credit for masters students writing a thesis versus those writing a research paper. These points will be added to the agenda of a Council on Graduate Studies meeting this fall.”

2. Regulation on revision of grades: students’ obligations

i. Situation

The Office of the Ombudsperson has noted that the University has amended section 10.3 of Academic Regulation I-10.²³ This provision now includes the obligation to discuss the matter with the professor before seeking a grade review. The 5- or 10-day time frame still applies, depending on the period in which the request is made.

²³ See section 10.3.A of Academic Regulation I-10 <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/academic-regulation-10-grading-system>

In the past, students had only one obligation: an attempt to speak with their professor before requesting a grade review was sufficient to meet the condition. The change to the regulation creates a new condition/obligation for students, who now must have spoken with the professor before being able to request a grade review. Unless such a discussion has taken place, a student cannot initiate the grade review process set out in the new regulation.

While it is reasonable and prudent to refer students to their professors for information before they decide to request a grade review, it must be noted that professors vary greatly in their availability, depending on their schedules and the time of year. The Office of the Ombudsperson is therefore wondering about the reasonableness of this condition, which is imposed on a particular individual but depends on the actions of another.

We have discussed this situation with the University, which was open to studying the question and assessing whether this new obligation represents an excessive burden for students who are thinking about initiating a grade review.

ii. Recommendation

That section 10.3 of Regulation I-10 be amended so that the condition of having discussed the matter with the professor before being able to initiate a grade review is withdrawn.

iii. University's response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translations]

"Discussion between the Associate Vice-President, Academic Programs, and the Ombudsperson have been initiated in order to clarify the situation regarding this recent change to the regulation. The Ombudsperson's recommendation 2i will be brought up with the Council on Undergraduate Studies in the fall of 2017."



3. Retroactive application of changes to program requirements

i. Situation

In 2017, a student came to see us because there was a chance he might not be able to graduate as a result of changes to the University of Ottawa's regulations pertaining to the average needed to graduate and to achieve satisfactory academic standing.²⁴

We consulted with the faculty as well as the Office of the Associate Vice-Dean of Undergraduate Studies to learn more about the situation. It appears that the regulation on the average required to graduate had been changed retroactively. For students affected negatively by this change, especially at the end of their program, it becomes very difficult to graduate in their current program. Their only options are to transfer to a program that requires a lower average, to leave the University or to extend their studies by several semesters in order to bring up their average.²⁵

Along with the new graduation requirement is a grandfather clause (which applies only to certain students) that provides as follows:

*Given that there will no longer be a DGPA as of September 2016, students admitted to an honours bachelor's program for September 2015 or earlier must achieve a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 5.0 to graduate.

The following grandfather clause applies to students admitted to the Faculty of Engineering for September 2015 or earlier: For students admitted to the Faculty of Engineering for September 2015 or earlier the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) required to graduate is 4.5. For students admitted after September 2015, the CGPA required to graduate is 5.0.*²⁶

The student who came to see us complained that this grandfather clause was in effect for students of the Faculty of Engineering only, since all other students were subject to the new regulation. The student felt that the Academic Regulations that applied to students should be those that were in place when the student was admitted to the University and that it was unfair to apply new conditions to him, especially when he was so close to the end of his bachelor's program. In fact, he would have had to take many courses to bring up his average from 4.5 to 5.0 when he had always met the program requirements over the years.

²⁴ Section 11.1 of Academic Regulation I-11 on academic standing: <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/academic-regulation-11-academic-standing-probation-and-mandatory-withdrawal>

Section 12.2 of Academic Regulation I-12 on the conditions for obtaining an honours bachelor's degree: <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/academic-regulation-12-conditions-for-obtaining-a-degree-a-certificate-or-a-diploma>

²⁵ It must be noted that this modification of the policies can also have an impact on students who are in the middle of their program and who are notified of their probation or withdrawal because their average is not sufficient according to the new standards. They face the same challenges as the students who are finishing their program.

²⁶ <https://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/grandfather-clause>

Our communications with the University and the faculty indicated that they clearly understood this issue that the student was experiencing and had even taken it into consideration in their deliberations around the new regulations. They added that an information campaign had been implemented to alert students of these changes and to give those concerned an opportunity to improve their academic standing.

The Office of the Ombudsperson also conducted some research to see if – and how – the courts and tribunals had dealt with the matter of changing the conditions applicable to students during their course of their programs. *Hazanavicius c. McGill University*, rendered in 2008 by the Superior Court of Québec, provides some clarification on this point:

“When a student is admitted and registered into a university program, a sui generis contract is formed between himself and the university.”²⁷

That ruling cites the 1988 decision in *Melanson v. Université de Montréal et al.*, by way of clarification of this contractual relationship:

« Il intervient entre les parties un contrat innommé — *Tremblay et autres c. UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE* [(1973) C.S. 999] dont les principales conditions sont inscrites dans le règlement pédagogique. L'étudiant est présumé connaître les conditions du contrat et accepter de s'y conformer. L'Université ne garantit aucun résultat. [...]»²⁸

According to that ruling, although the University was under no obligation to guarantee the student's success, regulations are considered to be contractual conditions that must be honoured by each party. In this case, the unilateral change to the criteria for graduation and satisfactory academic standing applied retroactively by the University of Ottawa could be interpreted as a breach of contract that had an adverse impact on the student.

ii. Recommendation

That the University and the faculties broaden the wording of the grandfather clause and reconsider the reasonableness of such a retroactive change to the graduation criteria for students admitted before the fall of 2016.

²⁷ <https://www.canlii.org/en/qc/qccs/doc/2008/2008qccs1617/2008qccs1617.html?resultIndex=8> p. 11

²⁸ Ibid. In French in the decision.



iii. University's response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translation]

"Discussions around this point have been initiated and will continue at the Council on Undergraduate Studies in the fall."

4. International tuition fees applied to Canadian citizens

i. Situation

A student who is a Canadian citizen alerted us to the following situation. The student had been late in providing proof of Canadian citizenship to the University and was charged tuition fees as an international student for the 2016-2017 semesters. This meant that his tuition fees were approximately \$11,000 higher than what he was supposed to pay for the two semesters. The student was unable to pay these very high fees and was therefore unable to continue his university studies.

It is important to note that the SEM became proactively involved in looking for solutions for this student: they met with the student a number of times and their work led to a favourable outcome in this case.

The SEM office also explained its procedures to us. It seems that people who report that they are Canadian citizens but were born outside Canada are asked to provide additional proof of citizenship. People who report that they are Canadian citizens but were not born outside Canada do not need to provide additional documents to prove their citizenship.

We understand that the University must provide accurate information to the Ministry of Education and needs to verify certain types of information regarding its students. We also understand that the University needs to establish procedures for verifying the status of its students. We would nevertheless ask the University to consider the following point. It is important to consider the concept of proportionality as it relates to an error and its consequences. Is it reasonable to add \$11,000 to the amount that a young student must pay for university because he replied late to an email during his first semester there? We find this amount to be an overly harsh consequence for an oversight committed at a time in which first year students at the University are already being solicited from all sides, both academic and administrative. Are there any other measures or consequences that could prompt students to respond, such as blocking their registration before the first semester or the winter semester.

ii. Recommendation

That the University reassess its procedures for verifying the Canadian citizenship or permanent resident status of students born outside Canada in a manner that would not impose a financial burden that could prevent those who should pay Canadian fees from continuing their studies at the University of Ottawa.

iii. University's response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translation]

"The University is currently reviewing all of its communications with students on this subject in order to make them more complete and more clear. Moreover, because the circumstances surrounding these cases vary considerably, the University will continue dealing with such matters on a case-by-case basis in order to come up with solutions best suited to each case."

5. Requirements for honours degree in Criminology

i. Situation

For the past several years, students admitted to the honours degree in Criminology program have had to maintain a CGPA of 7.0 after completing 24 credits; otherwise, they must leave the program. Students are informed of this requirement in their offer of admission. Those who are admitted to the program through a change of program are not subject to this regulation. In addition, the program requires a CGPA of 6.0 to be able to register for optional 4000-level courses and for their practicum.

According to section 12.2 of Academic Regulation I-12, approved by the Senate on February 28, 2017, the CGPA needed for an honours bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Social Sciences is 5.0, without exception. According to section 11.1 of Academic Regulation I-11, satisfactory academic standing is also 5.0, except for specific programs as otherwise approved by the Senate, which is still not the case for this program.

The Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs (SCEUP) made the following recommendations in its 2014-2015 annual report. The department has not responded to them. It has continued to apply the CPGA requirement of 7.0 and has withdrawn students who failed to achieve this average from the program.

"The SCEUP recommends that the Department comply with Senate-approved academic regulations or submit a formal request for an exception to the Senate for approval.
The SCEUP recommends that the Department review its academic practices regarding the cumulative weighted averages required to access the fourth year of study and to be admitted to the program's "placement" option in accordance with the academic regulations approved by the Senate."



ii. Recommendations

That the Department of Criminology apply sections 12.2 and 11.1 to students registered in the honours bachelor's program until an exception has been approved by the Senate.

That corrective measures be evaluated and implemented for students who have been withdrawn from the program because of the requirement for a 7.0 CGPA.

iii. University's response, dated August 1, 2017

[Translation]

"Until recently, students had been advised of the 7.0 CGPA requirement for the honours degree in Criminology through the offer of admission they were sent by letter. When the letters were rewritten, we deleted some of the information that was not relevant to students at this stage of the admissions process. Because the CGPA requirement was not necessary information at the time of enrolment, we removed it from the offer letter in order to provide it to students at a more appropriate time. From now on, students admitted to and enrolled in the program will receive this information via Talisma in late August, just before school starts.

Although the practice of informing students in advance of this particular requirement for the Criminology program is appropriate, the Ombudsperson is correct that this exception to the regulation should be approved by the Senate. In order to formalize this practice, the Department of Criminology will need to submit a request to the Council on Undergraduate Studies this fall so that the Council can forward it to the Senate. The Council will carefully examine the Ombudsperson's recommendation with regard to the corrective action proposed and will decide on the measures to be implemented, if applicable."

6. Accessibility Fund of the SFUO

i. Situation

The Accessibility Fund is funded by students through their quarterly contributions to the SFUO. The Fund is connected to the Centre for Students with Disabilities, a service offered by the SFUO. We looked at its funding and the way it operates after complaints were filed with our office.

The role of the SFUO's Centre for Students with Disabilities is to educate the University population and promote awareness of the issues faced by people with a disability, as well as to provide services. With regard to the Accessibility Fund, the SFUO's constitution



states that it is managed by the Accessibility Fund Committee, which is chaired by the SFUO's VP Finance.²⁹ Its purpose is to "revise subsidy requests of the Accessibility Fund and propose the amount to be allocated."³⁰ According to the information we received, the Committee is supposed to meet every month but it has not met this year. It was reported to us that it is also difficult to communicate with the Committee and to obtain information from them. The GSAED informed us that it had not been contacted by the SFUO and had not transferred any money to the Accessibility Fund.

Moreover, it is impossible to find any information about the existence of the Accessibility Fund or the way it operates. The Centre's former website provided detailed information about the Fund and included the form to be completed to submit a request for funding through the Fund. The new site does not include any information about the Fund or the application form.

It was rather difficult to obtain a copy of the current form, and we are concerned that it will also be difficult for students to obtain a copy and to obtain information. The new form, which is not available on line and is difficult to obtain from SFUO staff, contains far less useful information than the previous version.

We then verified whether the University of Ottawa was collecting fees for the Fund. The amount allocated per student (undergraduate and graduate) to the Centre for Students with Disabilities and the Accessibility Fund was approved in a referendum by the students themselves. According to the information available on the University's website, the amount allocated (and transferred to SFUO) for 2016-2017 was as follows:

- For the Centre for Students with Disabilities:
 - \$1.24 per semester per full-time undergraduate student (\$0.61 for part-time students),
 - \$1.11 per semester per full-time graduate student (\$0.56 for part-time students),
- For the Accessibility Fund:
 - \$1.24 per semester per full-time undergraduate student (\$0.61 for part-time students),
 - There were no contributions from graduate students.

According to the information available in the approved budget projections on the SFUO website, for 2015 and 2016, the SFUO did in fact receive these transfers, resulting in a surplus of \$36,618 and \$59,552 respectively, with a projected surplus of \$62,590 for

²⁹ Constitution of the Student Federation, BY-LAW NO.3 – Decision making bodies of the Federation, article 3.4.1.10.
<http://sfuo.ca/wp-content/uploads/SFUOConstitution2016-2017.pdf>

³⁰ Constitution of the Student Federation, BY-LAW NO.3 – Decision making bodies of the Federation,, article 3.12.13
<http://sfuo.ca/wp-content/uploads/SFUOConstitution2016-2017.pdf>



2017.³¹ It is important to note that these amounts represent monies in in the Accessibility Fund that were not used and not reinvested in the Fund year over year. Surpluses are transferred to the general administration fund.

On the basis of this research, it seems important to make the following observations:

- Information about the Fund's existence and the funding application form are almost impossible to find, and the people working at the Centre and at SFUO could not readily provide us with relevant information about the Fund.
- Surpluses accumulate each year.
- Surpluses are not added to the following year's budget and are used for purposes other than those for which they were intended, when the students voted in favour of creating such a fund.
- The low rate of use of the Fund is understandable given the absence of information on the website about the Fund's very existence and the lack of basic information regarding the objectives and the criteria used to evaluate applications. In order for these funds – which are collected by the University for every student enrolled – to be used appropriately, the information needs to be communicated and accessible.

ii. Recommendations

That the SFUO take the necessary measures to maximize use of the full amount available in the Accessibility Fund each year.

That the SFUO make the necessary changes to its website to clearly announce the existence of the Accessibility Fund, the process for submitting an application and the criteria for allocating the monies available.

That the SFUO produce an annual report on the use of these monies. At a minimum, it should report the number of applications received, approved and denied as well as qualitative data on the type of support and services provided through the Fund.

That the SFUO's Accessibility Fund Committee produce minutes of its meetings, including information on applications received, approved and denied.

That the GSAED inform its members of the Fund's existence.

³¹ Based on these projections, the Accessibility Fund has only given out 25 000\$ in financing on their total budget of 77 718\$ in 2015, and 17 977\$ on a total budget of 78 291\$ in 2016. <http://sfuo.ca/governance/documents/>

iii. SFUO's response, dated August 2, 2017

The SFUO accepted our recommendations that the information be posted on its website and that its staff be better informed and equipped to respond to requests. The following is an extract from their response:

[Translation]

"Further to your visits, your recommendations apply in this case and we will rectify this. Unfortunately, you were misinformed and I take responsibility for the lack of information you received when you came to our Centre for Students with Disabilities and to the SFUO reception desk. The funding application form is in the reception area and an electronic copy was provided to the Centre for Students with Disabilities. Our employees at the reception desk and at the Centre will have forms from now on, and printed copies of the terms of reference will be available at their offices.

The SFUO's and the Centre's websites were not updated in 2016-2017. We spent an entire year developing a marketing plan and rebuilding a functional website. We acknowledge the lack of visibility with regard to the Accessibility Fund. However, as the 2016-2017 budget indicates, the board of directors approved the budget for the Accessibility Fund, with a total of \$15,000 in funding based on previous applications and in particular the SFUO's financially precarious situation. The Federation experienced an unprecedented financial crisis and had to take drastic measures with regard to the 2016-2017 budget. We nevertheless limited the impact of the financial situation on this budget (Accessibility Fund) by trying to allocate the same amounts as the actual figures from the previous year.

That said, I wanted to touch on the point concerning the limitations placed on use of the Fund. Our budgets are based on a fiscal year that starts in May and ends in April of the following year. The SFUO's constitution sets out provisions for certain budgets, such as that of the Student Life Services General Fund (Bylaw No. 9), which provides as follows:

- » *9.5.9 - Remaining funds at the end of each fiscal year left in the SLS General Fund will be carried over to the following year's SLS General Fund budget, up to and including \$75,000.00. Funds exceeding \$75,000.00 will be absorbed by the SFUO operating budget. The General Fund cannot project or realise a deficit.*

Such provisions do not apply to the Accessibility Fund given that the constitution makes no mention of it. Accordingly, any monies in the Accessibility Fund that have not been allocated by the end of the fiscal year are applied against deficits in the different budgets (via the admin account, as mentioned earlier), such as the U-Pass, the Health Plan,



elections and clubs (services and programs that are essential to the students). I would like to stress that the Accessibility Fund Committee never takes losses in other budgets into account when it discusses funding applications. The Committee is able to allocate all of the monies in the Accessibility Fund if funding applications reach that level.

Finally, the Fund will be promoted on the SFUO's website and on that of the Centre for Students with Disabilities. We will ensure that the forms are available at both locations. The Committee does not have any minutes for 2016-2017 and we will be sure to keep minutes establishing that funds have been granted to students in the archives. If there is information indicating that some applications have been denied, we will be sure to indicate the reasons. The GSAED is not involved in this process and is not part of the committee in question. The Fund is nevertheless open to all students, at both the graduate and the undergraduate levels."

iv. Comments

We hope that, if information about the existence of this Fund for students with disabilities and how it operates is made available, the monies collected will be fully used. If a large portion of the Fund remains unused year over year, some questions will need to be asked, because there is no doubt in our minds that there is a high level of need for this student population. If staff are trained to respond properly to requests, the students who might submit applications will be better served.

With regard to publicly available information, it is strongly desirable that the SFUO adopt the practice of producing an annual report, given that minutes could not be made public because they contain protected information of a personal nature pertaining to applicants.

FEEDBACK

You guys do an extremely important job helping those who need it, and definitely need more recognition. Thanks for all the help! I wish there was any way i can return the favor.

FEEDBACK

thanks again to Lucy for helping me solve a problem that no one else could solve.

FEEDBACK

I would like to thank the personnel of the office especially Mrs. Lucie Allaire who helped me very much. She spent a lot of time to resolve the issue properly and quickly and gave me great advice.

Examples of our work

- **Observations made to the University**

In some instances a student's case caused us to observe that rapid corrections or improvements were necessary with regard to practices or behaviours on the part of University of Ottawa members. For example, one student going through a very difficult period for personal reasons contacted us because his case was handled with a lack of empathy. We then contacted the person in authority to have the situation rectified. The person assured us that the matter would be handled with due consideration to the student's particular situation.

- **Coaching – guidance for students**

Many students come to see us to confirm the process they need to follow in relation to such matters as grade review requests, retroactive withdrawal requests or complaints regarding a course or a service. In addition to referring them to the appropriate authorities, we take the time to help students clarify their issues, discuss their hopes and fears and make sure they are able to submit a clear and coherent request.

- **Communication bridge between students and their faculty**

We helped one student with health problems and debts with the University gain access to the campus and resume his courses. With our involvement, communication among the University, the student's faculty and the student himself was restored, and the issues and problems were clarified. We also helped establish the parameters for his return to school.

- **Improvement of University practices over the long term**

It was brought to our attention that lab courses at a particular faculty were not subject to end-of-semester evaluations by the students. In this case our work entailed conducting research with the faculty and the University. While an immediate solution for this particular student was not possible, the University indicated that it was interested in changing the situation for future years.

- **Communication bridge**

A student contacted us because he had to defer a mid-term exam because of a health-related emergency. We served as a communication bridge by re-establishing the connection among the student, his professor and his department. We also clarified the deferral process for mid-term exams and the possibility of the student's obtaining accommodations for health reasons.

- **Accuracy of student account**

A student contacted us because he was seeking unpaid amounts from the University, arguing that he had been granted a scholarship covering the duration of his studies. We spoke with the student, checked the scholarship criteria and the University regulations and verified the situation with various people involved



at the University. Ultimately we helped determine that the amount the University owed was less than what was being claimed. We urged the University to reconsider the student's request in light of the clarification brought to this case.

- **Help to understand an invoice**

One student came to see us because he did not understand the invoices the University had sent and was not certain of the amount to be paid. The student had not been successful in obtaining sufficient explanations from the University. In this case we noted that the invoicing was in fact very difficult to understand, and we worked with the relevant University authorities so that the student could obtain the information he was entitled to.

- **Impact of the federal government problems of Phoenix on a CO-OP student**

One student came to see us because he wanted to leave his CO-OP placement with the federal government, as he had not been paid due to the problems with the Phoenix pay system. In the circumstances, we intervened to have the CO-OP program take the exceptional circumstances into account and to enable the student to find another placement without incurring a failing grade. The student could not be asked to remain at a placement when he was not being paid.

- **Intervention with employer**

The accommodation that one student was given led to his being denied a summer job. The student was attending school part time as an accommodation measure (while being considered a full-time student for the purposes of access to University programs and services), whereas the employer was hiring full-time students only. We found this to be a situation of discrimination. We intervened with the employer to clarify how the accommodation worked and to ask the employer to reconsider. Ultimately the student was able to obtain his summer job.

- **Thesis evaluation jury composition**

We intervened to recommend that the dean of a particular faculty make decisions on a case-by-case basis when situations of conflict of interest arose in the selection of jury members for a student's thesis in accordance with section 7.10.2.2.2.

FEEDBACK

I was unable to resolve my issue alone and as soon as the Ombudsperson became involved, steps were made towards a resolution. I had a very good experience.

FEEDBACK

already doing best job



Data analysis

In this section we provide an overview and an explanation of the statistics included in attachment, which we obtained from our database.

1. Feedback

The feedback provided voluntarily by clients whose files have been closed can be used to assess the level of satisfaction and understanding of our mandate. The results were positive on the whole, as can be seen in **Tables 1 and 2**.

We must continue to clearly explain our role and the impartial and confidential nature of our work. Over the past year, with the CO-OP student's help, two videos on the role of the Office of the Ombudsperson and on conflict were created, as well as a Facebook page.³² This enabled us to increase the number of tools available to us to explain our mandate and our approach in order to ensure the best service possible.

2. Number of files

While the number of completed files has been continually rising since the Office of the Ombudsperson was created in 2010, the past two years have been characterized by a significant increase in the number of open files and completed files from previous years (**Table 3**).

The increase in the total number of files processed can likely be attributed to two factors. The first is our marketing and communication efforts. After seven years of operation, a number of students have told us that they were referred to our office by a friend. Also, we note that the CO-OP student we engaged during the fall 2016 semester did an excellent job of marketing and communication. The number of files we processed nearly doubled in the months following her placement. We therefore find that the Office of the Ombudsperson is starting to be well known and is perceived as an effective resource in the University community. The second factor is the rising number of service-related complaints, which arise mainly when students contact the University with questions about academic matters or admissions and registrations (**Table 14**). We were in regular contact with certain faculties and services to advise them that we had received an unusually high number of complaints about them, most of them pertaining to their inaccessibility (by telephone, email and in person) or to incomplete or inaccurate information that a client had been given.

³² The office's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Ombudsman-UOttawa-1769449429991401/>
Presentation of the Office of the Ombudsperson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wp53WoltUhw>
What is a conflict and how do we react to it? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CN0OkcXYLas>



3. Type of client

Table 4 shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of people who consulted us from one year to the next, mainly students (from 316 in 2015-2016 to 402 in 2016-2017) and people in the “other” category (from 196 to 249). The “other” category primarily represents people from outside the University community, such as parents and potential students.

We recall that, while the Office of the Ombudsperson does offer services to the entire University community, it rarely agrees to take on a case on another person’s behalf. If a parent calls to complain on behalf of a student, the Office will ask that the student contact us directly.

A slight decrease in the number of University staff contacting us is noted (see also **Table 4**). The increase in the number of students served can largely be explained by the fact that most staff members are represented by unions and that matters that fall under a collective agreement do not lie within the Ombudsperson’s mandate. The size of the student population is also a factor.

4. Official language used

Table 6 indicates the language in which we offered services. The respective proportions of Anglophone and Francophone students who came to see the Office of the Ombudsperson reflect the proportions of Anglophone and Francophone students at the University of Ottawa.

5. Faculty, level of study, category of student and nationality of student

When students call on us, we do not ask which faculty they are a part of, their level of education, their student category (full or part time) or their nationality if that information is unrelated to the reason they have come to see us. We prefer that students not have to disclose information that is not relevant to their situation and that could make them uncomfortable. **Tables 8, 9, 10 and 11** reflect this situation with the “unknown” category.

6. Type of issue

Table 14 presents a list of issues by type of client. The number of issues identified rose from 600 in 2015-2016 to 776 in 2016-2017. Specifically, **Table 14** shows that there was a strong increase in the number of issues involving admissions and registration (from 118 in 2015-2016 to 202 in 2016-2017) as well as a higher number of academic issues (from 114 in 2015-2016 to 167 in 2016-2017). As we noted earlier, the people consulting us about these issues also stated that the reason they were calling us was because they had been unable to resolve their problem directly with the service or faculty concerned.



Table 15 details the academic issues that students face. The most common academic issue relates to evaluation. This year a number of our recommendations stemmed from the observation that certain academic regulations were having a negative impact on students in connection with the grade review process or the average required to graduate or withdrawal from a program.

Table 16 provides details on human rights issues. As in past years, the majority of the situations that were reported to us had to do with disability and academic accommodation. The lack of a University policy on academic accommodation and accessibility is undoubtedly the reason for this situation, as our comments on the recommendation attests.

7. Services offered by type of client

As can be seen in **Table 17**, the services offered most frequently in 2016-2017 were the provision of information, referrals and coaching, which enable the people who consult us to obtain solutions to their problems on their own. The Office of the Ombudsperson also offers problem-solving and communication bridge services whereby the Office provides more proactive assistance to the parties concerned in resolving their problems. The communication bridge method enables us to clarify the messages understood by each party. When we intervene to resolve a conflict, we endeavour to restore a respectful dialogue between the parties concerned. We make sure that the University regulations are adhered to and that the solutions proposed are equitable and address all of the issues that have been raised.

8. Review of formal complaints

In 2016-2017, the Ombudsperson received and handled far smaller number of formal complaints (10 as opposed to 25 as in 2015-2016) (see **Table 18**).

The formal complaints that were accepted related to students who had exhausted their remedies within the University. Most of them had received a Senate decision against them on an academic matter, such as academic fraud, evaluation or program withdrawal.

Of the 10 complaints, one led to a recommendation on our part. That recommendation was addressed to the SFUO and it involved the payment of a subsidy for attendance at a conference. The SFUO accepted our recommendation and the matter was resolved.



9. Results obtained for closed files

Table 19 summarizes the results obtained in the files closed in 2016-2017. The number of closed files for which the outcome was unknown (172) was down slightly from 2015-2016 (174). The substantial number of such cases is tied to the fact that people do not always follow up to see whether or not their case has been resolved, in particular when we have provided them with information and referral services.

Ultimately, 67.2% of cases were partially or fully resolved, 25.4% had an unknown outcome and only 7.4% did not result in a satisfactory resolution. The increase in the total number of cases that were handled was accompanied by an increase in the number of cases resolved for 2016-2017.

FEEDBACK

I had a wonderful and very pleasant experience with the Ombudsperson. I would definitely contact them again should help/advice be needed.

FEEDBACK

Genuinely really appreciate the support and timely manner in which your offices approached my case. Highly respected and particularly grateful

FEEDBACK

I just wanted to send you a quick note stating that my appeal was heard today before the Senate Appeals Committee and [...] they unanimously granted my appeal. This has been a very rough time for me and I am glad this part is now over, but I did absolutely want to write you and let you know and thank you very much for listening and your help.

FEEDBACK

the service was excellent and much appreciated.

Appendix 1: Statistical Tables

Clients' Feedback

Table 1

	Yes	No
Was it easy to find the Office of the Ombudsperson?	57	9
Did you receive a quick reply to your email, telephone message or letter?	63	1
Was the role of the Office of the Ombudsperson explained to you clearly?	56	8
If you asked that your name not be released, was your concern handled in a confidential manner by the Ombudsperson office?	51	7
Did the Ombudsperson demonstrate impartiality (objectivity) in reviewing your concerns?	55	7
Did the Ombudsperson handle your concern fairly?	60	4
Were you treated with respect?	66	0
Would you contact the Office of the Ombudsperson again?	57	3

Table 2

Why did you contact the Office of the Ombudsperson?	
To acquire information	21
To get advice	31
To facilitate communication with others	26
To determine if I had been treated fairly	31
To discuss options or alternatives so that I could handle the problem myself	24
For the Ombudsperson to intervene and to assist with the resolution of the problem	40



Files Opened and Closed per Year

Table 3

Year	Files Opened	Files Closed
2016-2017	674	677
2015-2016	554	540
2014-2015	436	449
2013-2014	396	413
2012-2013	420	405
2011-2012	381	375
2011-2010	194	174

Type of Client

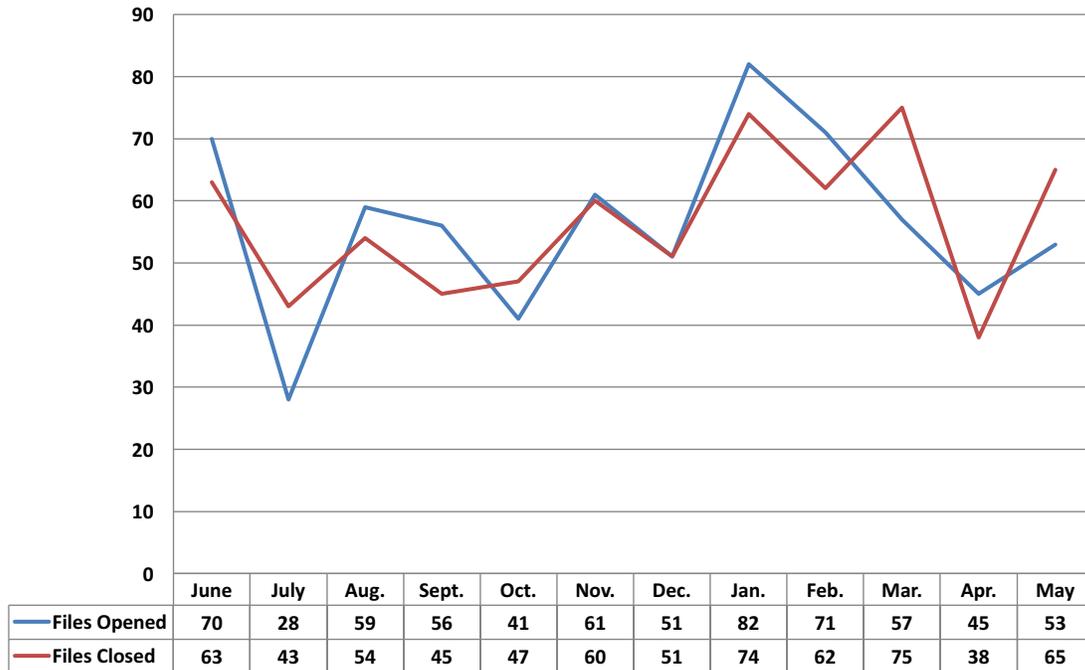
Table 4

Year	Students	Personnel	Other
2016-2017	402	26	249
2015-2016	316	28	196
2014-2015	309	37	103
2013-2014	337	30	46
2012-2013	340	33	32
2011-2012	295	48	32
2011-2010	152	22	0



Files Opened and Closed per Month

Table 5



Files opened: 674 | Files closed: 677 | Files carried over from previous year: 19

Official Language Used

Table 6

Official Language Used	French	English
All Clients who consulted us	28.2%	71.8 %
Students who consulted us	26.1 %	73.9%
Students enrolled in University of Ottawa (Fall 2015)*	30.7 %	69.3 %

* <http://www.uottawa.ca/institutional-research-planning/resources/facts-figures/quick-facts>



Gender

Table 7

Gender	Male	Female	Other	Unknown
All Clients who consulted us	49.8%	49.3%	0.3%	0.6%
Students who consulted us	43.8%	55.2%	0%	1%
Students enrolled in University of Ottawa (Fall 2015)*	41.1%	58.9%	---	---

* <http://www.uottawa.ca/institutional-research-planning/resources/facts-figures/quick-facts>

Students – Faculty Distribution (total 402)

Table 8

Faculty	Students who consulted us	Students registered in University of Ottawa (Fall 2015)*
Arts	9.2 %	14.1%
Common Law	4.2 %	5.2%
Civil Law	2.5 %	
Telfer School of Management	6.7 %	11.1%
Education	5.7 %	3.7%
Engineering	10.9 %	12.5%
Medecine	2.5 %	6.1%
Sciences	6.2 %	11.6%
Health Sciences	9.2 %	10.8%
Social Sciences	24.4 %	24.6%
Unknown	16.9 %	---
Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies **	1.6 %	---

* <http://www.uottawa.ca/institutional-research-planning/resources/facts-figures/quick-facts>

** Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies abolished in Sept. 2016

Students – Level of Study (total 402)

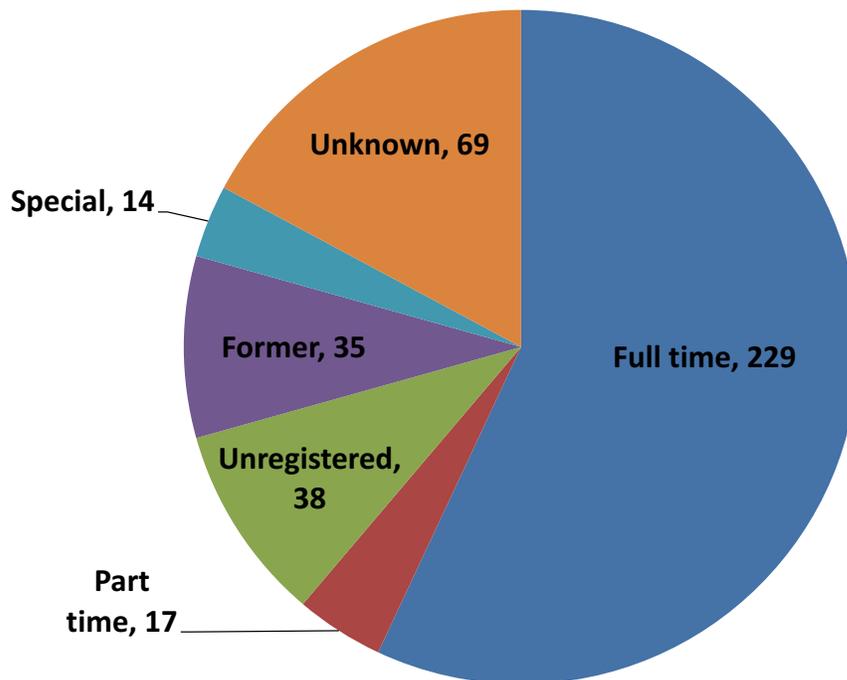
Table 9

Level of Study	Students who consulted us	Students registered in University of Ottawa (Fall 2015)*
Undergraduate	61.9 %	84.6%
Master	14.7 %	10.3%
PhD	7.5 %	4.59%
Unknown	15.9 %	---

* <http://www.uottawa.ca/institutional-research-planning/resources/facts-figures/quick-facts>

Students – Categories (total 402)

Table 10



Students – International & Canadian (total 402)

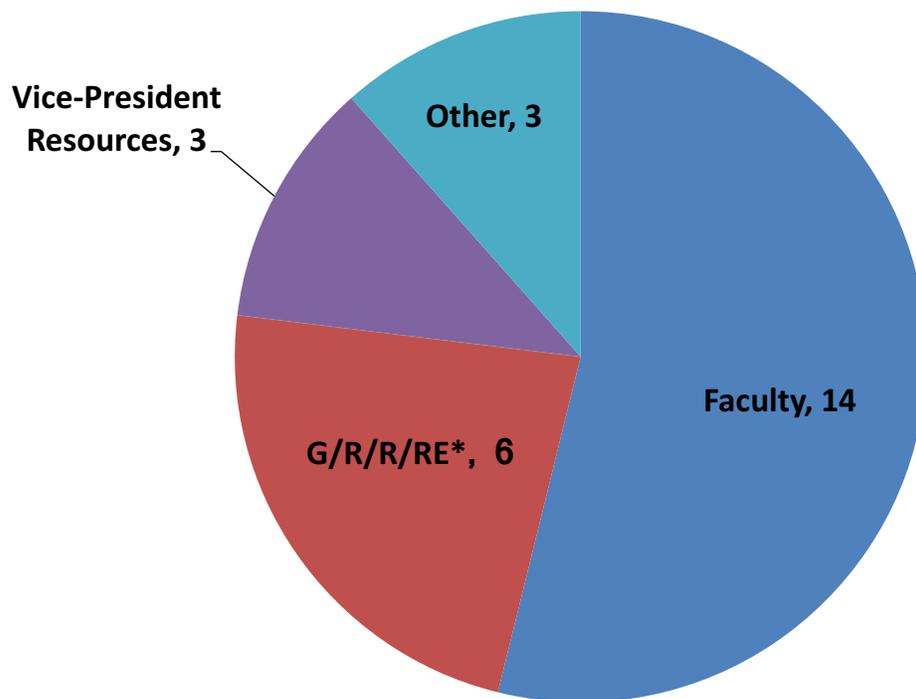
Table 11

	Students who consulted us	Students registered in University of Ottawa (Fall 2015)*
Canadian	37.8 %	88%
International	7.2 %	12%
Unknown	55 %	---

* <http://www.uottawa.ca/institutional-research-planning/resources/facts-figures/quick-facts>

Personnel – Organizational Unit (Total 26)

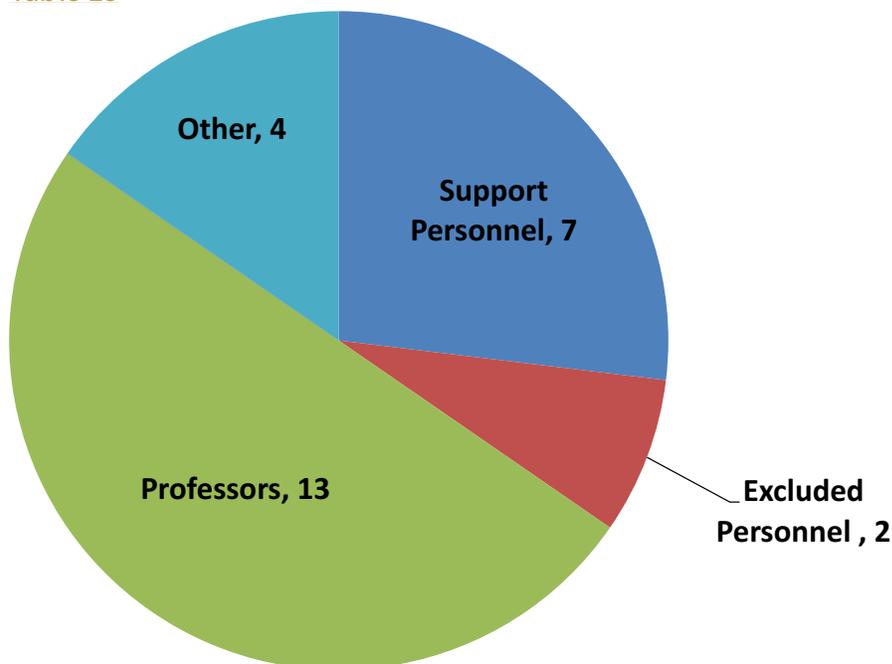
Table 12



*G/P/R/ER: Gouvernance/President/Research/External Relations

Personnel – Category (total 26)

Table 13



Categories of Issues

Table 14

Type of Problem	Student	Personnel	Other	Total
Academic	157	2	8	167
Admission & Registration	57	1	144	202
Student Association	7	0	5	12
Relational Conflict	4	2	4	10
Human Rights	33	1	3	37
Academic support	39	0	2	41
Finance	69	3	20	92
Harassment	3	4	0	7
Work Relations	2	10	2	14
Residence	16	0	7	23
Security	3	1	6	10
Services by Student Assoc.	29	0	3	32
Supervisor/Student	5	0	0	5
Student Conduct	5	3	4	12
Professor Conduct	29	1	2	32
Other	46	5	29	80
Total	504	33	239	776

A client can have more than one issue.



Students – Academic Issues

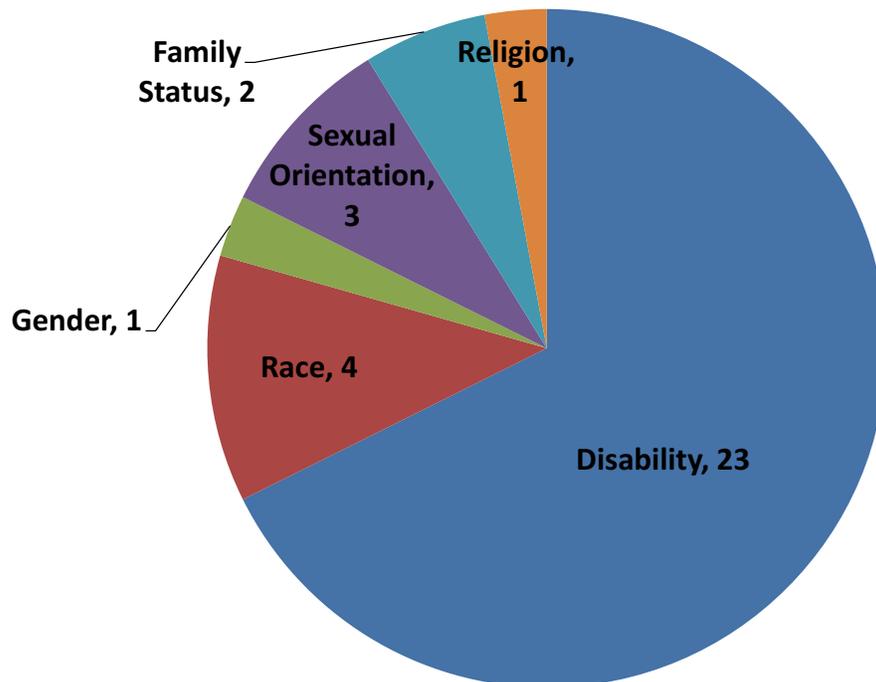
Table 15

	Academic	Academic Fraud	Evaluation	Withdrawal from program	Other	Total
Undergraduate	2	4	55	1	27	89
Graduate Students	1	5	4	0	6	16
Unregistered/ Former/Special	2	4	12	14	7	39
Unknown	0	0	4	1	8	13
Total	5	13	75	16	48	157

A student can have more than one academic issue.

Human Rights Issues (total 37)

Table 16



Services Offered by Type of Client

Table 17

Service	Student				Personnel	Other	Total
	Undergrad	Master	PhD	Unregistered/Former/ Special/Unknown			
Formal Complaint Examination	6	1	1	2	0	0	10
Information	82	15	9	51	7	162	326
Coaching	30	16	4	26	9	8	93
Referral	79	17	7	51	7	149	310
Facilitation	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
Communication Bridge	6	4	0	3	2	1	16
Problem Resolution	31	7	4	7	1	2	52
Mediation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	237	60	25	140	26	323	811

More than one service can be offered to a client.

Formal Complaint Examination (total 10)

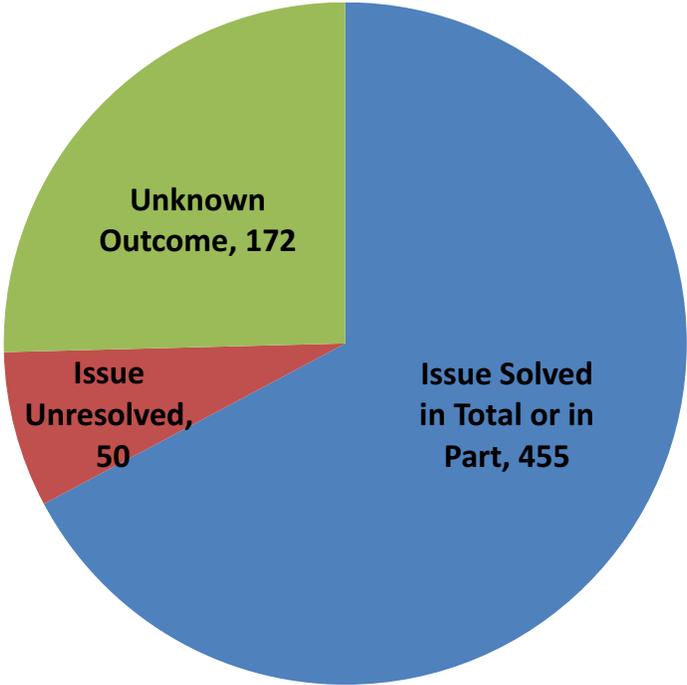
Table 18

Type of student	Without Recommendations	With Recommendations	Accepted in Total or in Part	Not Accepted
Undergrad	6	0	0	0
Master	1	0	0	0
PhD	0	1	1	0
Unregistered/ Former/Special	2	0	0	0
Total	9	1	1	0



Achieved Results - Closed Files (total 677)

Table 19



66/677 files withdrawn by clients | 30/677 files refused (no jurisdiction)



Appendix 2: Table of the policies and forms for credit transfers with Carleton University

Section 6.2 Credit transfers with Carleton University

Preliminary criteria to follow a course with Carleton University

- Be admitted to a program of studies at the University of Ottawa;
- Be registered at the University of Ottawa for the term during which the credit transfer will occur;
- Be in good academic standing

Criteria in order to register to a course in Carleton: 6.2.3

- Students cannot register for a course at Carleton University if an equivalent course is offered at the University of Ottawa during the same academic year unless:
 - The course is full;
 - The course is absolutely required to complete the program; or
 - For any other valid reason.
- Student must obtain their faculty's approval to register at Carleton University
- 6.2.4 Only courses that meet the University of Ottawa's degree requirements can be taken at Carleton University

6.2.7 Grades obtained for courses completed at Carleton University are converted according to the equivalence table below, appear on the student's official transcript and are included in grade point average calculation



Section 6.4 Courses completed at other Canadian Universities

Preliminary criteria to follow a course in a University with which the University of Ottawa has no formal agreement:

- **6.4.1** [...] students must obtain a letter of permission from their faculty.
- **6.4.3** To obtain a letter of permission, students must meet their faculty's academic standing requirements at the time of submitting their request.
- **6.4.8** Courses taken at another university with a letter of permission do not count towards residence requirements at the University of Ottawa.

6.4.2 In order for these courses to be credited by the University of Ottawa, students must obtain a minimum grade of 60%. All Nursing (NSG) and Nutrition Sciences (NUT) courses require 65%. At the graduate level, the minimum grade required is 65% or more, depending on the program. If the required minimum grade is not obtained, a NC grade will appear on the student's University of Ottawa transcript.

6.4.3 To obtain a letter of permission, students must meet their faculty's academic standing requirements at the time of submitting their request. Only courses that meet the student's degree requirements will be approved. Deadlines for requesting a letter of permission are April 15th for the spring-summer term, August 15th for the fall term, and December 15th for the winter term.



Form of the University of Ottawa-Carleton University exchange program

Preliminary criteria:

- In order to be eligible for the Exchange program,
- The University of Ottawa student must be admitted to a degree program at the University of Ottawa
- And be in good academic standing.

Criteria:

- You can register for a course at Carleton University only if this course is essential to your program,
- If it is not offered at the University of Ottawa,
- And if the addition of this course would allow you to complete the requirements of you program in the current academic year.
- You cannot register for a course at Carleton University if an equivalent course is offered at the University of Ottawa.

Letter of permission form

Preliminary criteria:

- In order to obtain a letter of permission,
- The niversity of Ottawa student must be admitted to a degree program at the University of Ottawa,,
- Be in good academic standing (e.g. not be on probation))
- And have no outstanding debt with the University from previous sessions.

Criteria:

- A letter of permission cannot be granted other than for courses required for the degree program at the University of Ottawa.

