



**Ombuds Services  
2024-25 Annual Report**

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## University of Michigan-Dearborn Ombuds Services 2024-25 Annual Report

Ombuds Services operates independently as an informal, impartial, and confidential\* resource providing students guidance on University policies, assistance in resolving concerns and critical situations, help in securing appropriate information and timely responses, and opportunities to discuss or question University actions. Ombuds duties encompass researching visitor questions and concerns, communicating with students, faculty, and staff involved to provide a quick resolution, if possible, and assisting with appeals and petitions.

**Mission:** To provide a safe space for students to express concerns and receive assistance navigating University policies and procedures. To propose University policy recommendations based on issues presented by students. To support UM-Dearborn's commitment to ensure that students are treated with fundamental fairness and personal dignity.

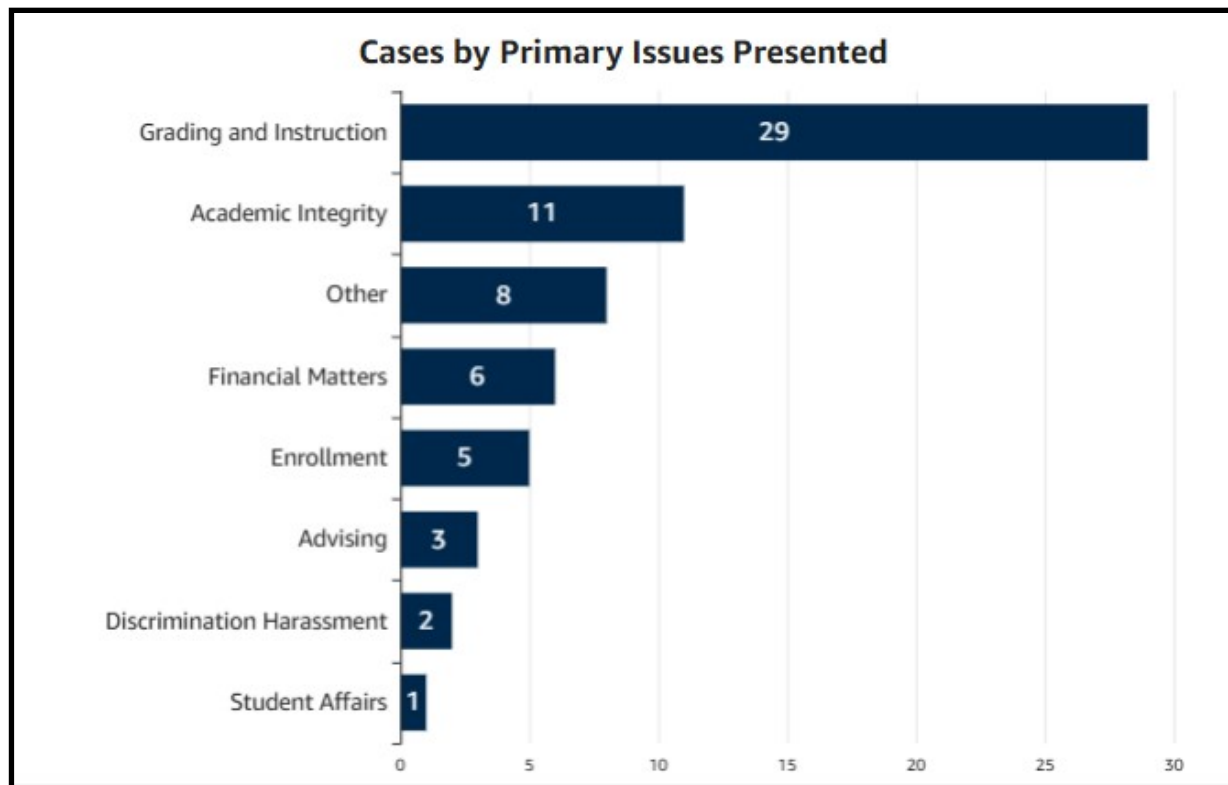
**Vision:** Through resolution of specific concerns and imparting of self-advocacy skills, contribute to increased student persistence and sense of belonging.

**Values/Principles:** Informal, Independent, Impartial, Confidential\*

From July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, the office recorded 65 unique cases, representing a decrease of 27 cases compared to the previous year.

In reviewing cases by the primary issue presented by the student, cases involving Grading and Instruction (29) were the most frequent followed by Academic Integrity (11), Financial Matters (6), Enrollment (5), Advising (3), Discrimination and Harassment (2), Student Affairs (1), and Other (8). Charts and analysis follow.

*\*Confidentiality cannot be promised if there is serious risk of imminent harm or if required by law.*



## **What Students Can Expect at an Ombuds Appointment:**

**Introductions** - At the start, the Ombuds will explain how their office operates, covering key principles like independence, informality, impartiality, and confidentiality. It's an opportunity to ask any questions and provide some background on why Ombuds Services was contacted.

**Getting the Story** - This is the time for students to share their concerns. The Ombuds will ask open-ended, non-judgmental questions to understand the situation fully and help analyze it from different perspectives.

**Exploring Options** - Together with the Ombuds, students will brainstorm possible solutions to address their issues. Pros and cons of each idea will be weighed, which might include gathering more information, initiating conversations with involved parties, getting referrals to other offices, working on petitions or appeals, or deciding to take no immediate action.

**Next Steps** - The decision about what happens next is up to the student. Taking time to consider options before making a choice is always an option—unless there's an imminent risk of harm.

**Follow-Up** - Ombuds Services remains accessible for follow-up discussions. It often takes more than one conversation to fully resolve a concern, so additional meetings can be scheduled as needed.

## **Ombuds Services Will:**

- Listen respectfully, non-judgmentally, and confidentially to students having disputes with any part of the University
- Maintain a neutral and objective viewpoint
- Identify relevant University policies and procedures and help students understand their rights
- Make referrals to knowledgeable people
- Assist students in evaluating and assessing a variety of options to address their concerns
- Provide an opportunity for students to discuss or question University actions

## **Ombuds Services Does Not:**

- Make decisions for any other part of the University
- Advocate for any individual
- Take sides
- Serve as an office of notice for the University
- Offer legal advice or provide counseling services

## Primary & Secondary Issues Combined

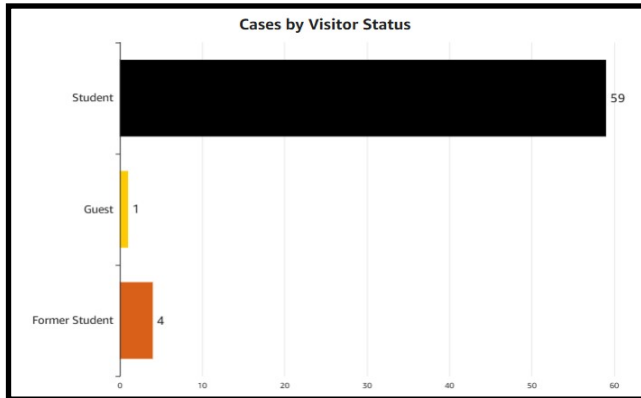
The tables below show the primary and secondary issues presented by visitors totaling 94. Out of 65 visitors, 29 had more than one concern. It is important to note that students sometimes led with one concern (the primary issue), but with discussion it may have been important to address additional areas (the secondary issue). At times the primary and secondary issues fall under the same category. For example a student could have an issue with grading methods and applying for an incomplete. Other times they will fall under different categories such as when a student is contemplating a grade appeal and the poor grade is impacting their aid due to unsatisfactory academic progress.

Each issue brought forward by Ombuds visitors was first assigned to one of 12 categories (highlighted in blue). Each issue was then assigned to the relevant sub-category. In 2024-25, cases were noted in 8 categories. No concerns were brought to the office regarding Academic Affairs, Campus Facilities, Student Employment, or Housing.

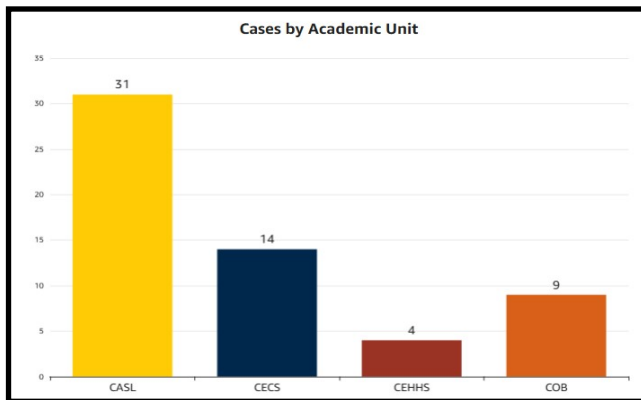
<b>Grading &amp; Instruction</b>	<b>39</b>
Issue with instructor	15
Exams/homework	12
Grade appeal	9
Grading methods	1
Incomplete	1
Other	1
<b>Academic Integrity</b>	<b>17</b>
Policy review	10
Violation appeal	4
Other	3
<b>Discrimination &amp; Harassment</b>	<b>8</b>
Disability	4
Religion	2
Age	1
Other	1
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>7</b>
Adds, drops	2
Other	2
Fee adjustment petition	1
Repeat credits	1
Withdraw	1

<b>Financial Matters</b>	<b>7</b>
Aid not disbursed as expected	4
Residency	2
Past due balance/hold	1
<b>Advising</b>	<b>6</b>
Other	2
Petition	2
Academic dismissal	1
Issue with advisor/advice	1
<b>Student Affairs</b>	<b>1</b>
Disability and Accessibility Services	1
<b>Other</b>	<b>9</b>
Athletics	2
Office of International Affairs	1
Other	6

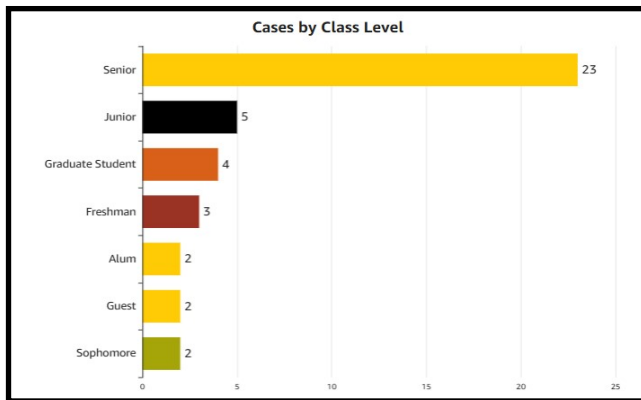
The charts below and on the following page illustrate demographic data for student visitors to Ombuds Services from July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025. Please note that complete data was not gathered for all visitors and categories with null values are not displayed. Numbers may not sum to the overall total of 65 cases.



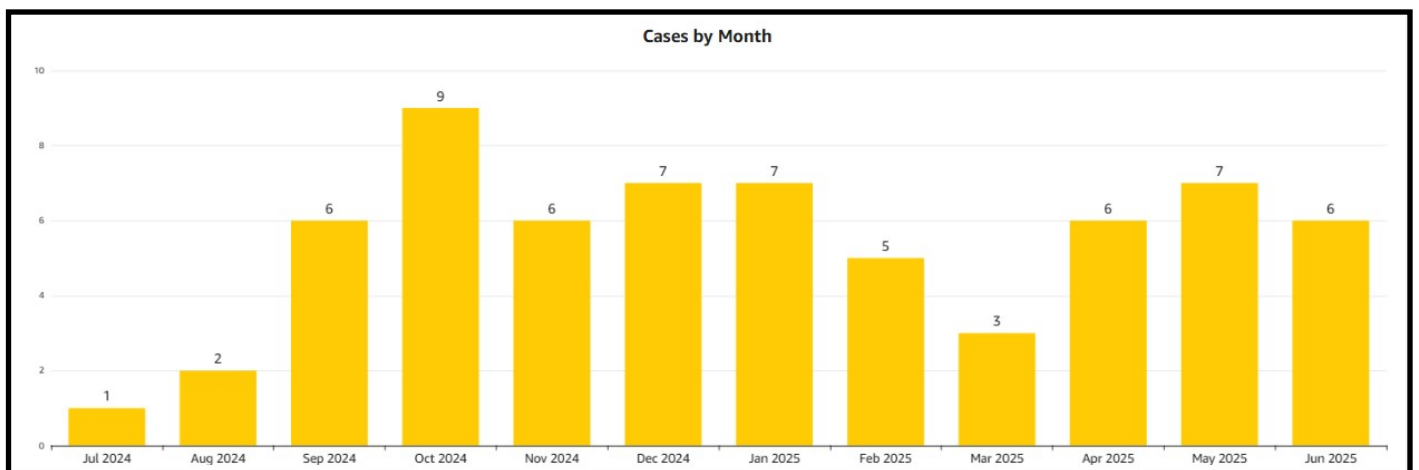
The majority of visitors were current students. Additional groups seeking assistance included former students (including alumni), and guest students. A number of parents do reach out each year; if their student subsequently engages with the office, this interaction is not categorized under parents.

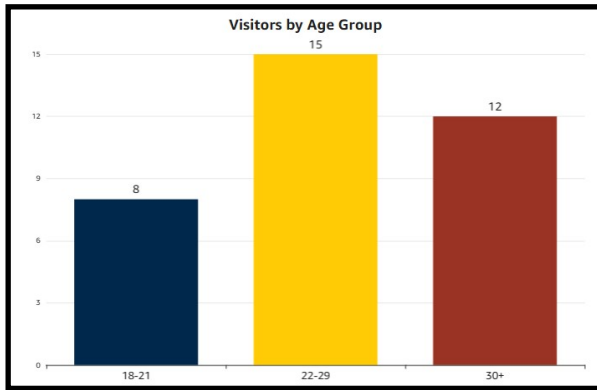


The Cases by Academic Unit chart reflects the student's college. However, the student's issue may not necessarily originate within their own academic unit. It could involve a non-academic unit or a course offered by a different college.

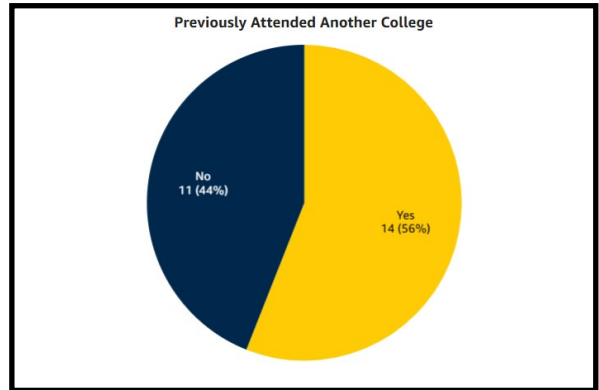


Of class levels noted, seniors initiated the highest number of cases, followed by juniors, graduate students, and freshmen. At the lowest levels were sophomores, alums, and guests.

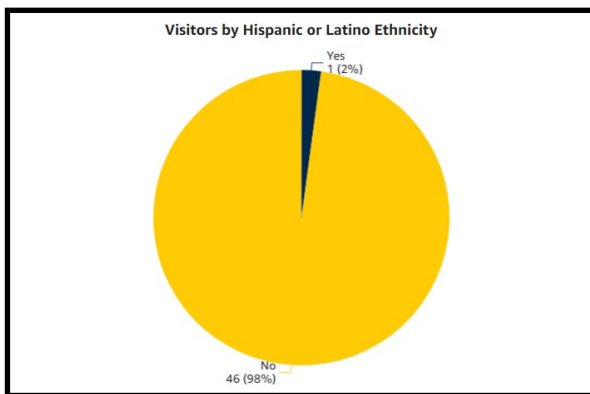




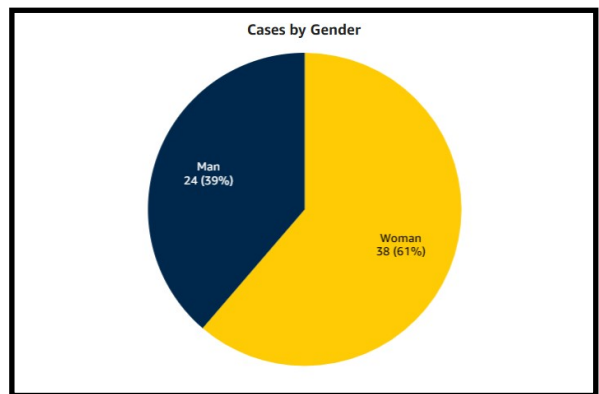
Of the students whose ages were noted, 15 were between 22 and 29 years old, 12 were 30 years or older, and 8 were between 18 and 21.



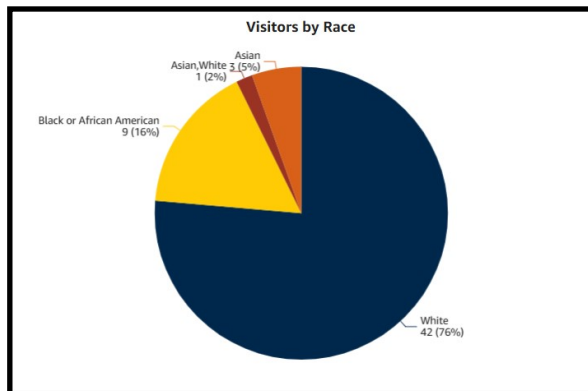
Of the students whose transfer status was noted, 56% previously attended another college and 44% were first time in any college.



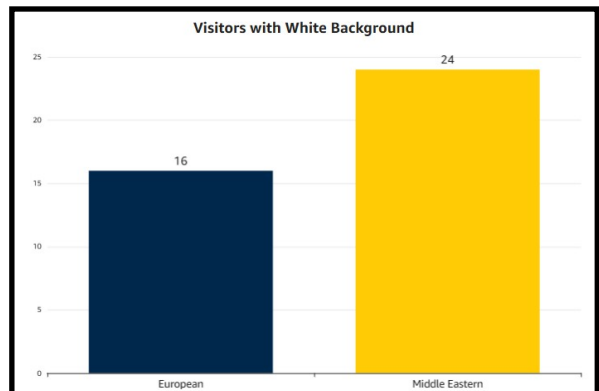
One student visitor identified as Hispanic or Latino. (In Banner, this is listed separately from race.)



During the past year, Ombuds visitors by gender were 61% women, 39% men. No visitors reported a gender identity outside of these categories.

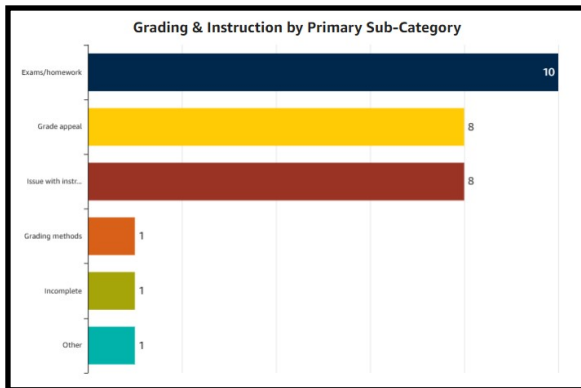


Visitors by race shows 76% White, 16% African American or Black, 5% Asian, and 2% Asian/White. There were no students represented in the American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander categories.

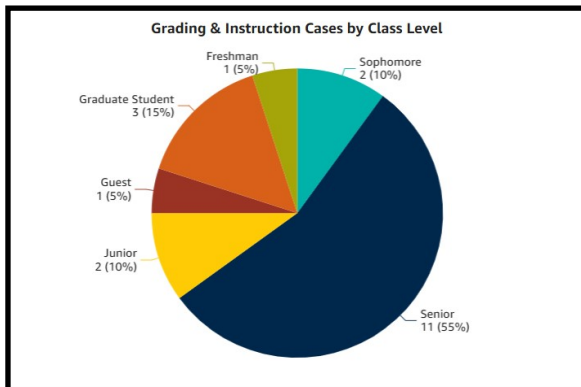


The white race category was further subdivided. This resulted in 60% Middle Eastern and 40% European.

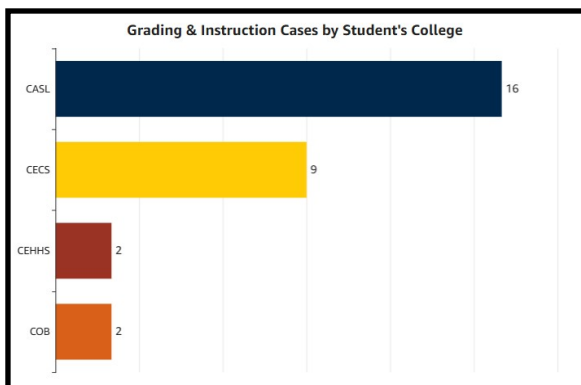
The **Grading & Instruction** category accounted for the highest number of primary issues, totaling 29. Given the volume of cases, further analysis of the data may reveal underlying trends. The charts below offer additional information on grading and instruction cases.



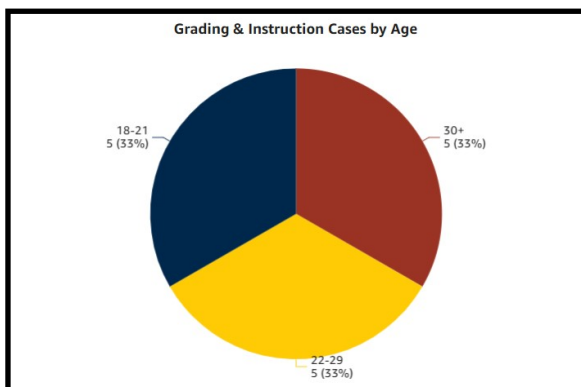
Primary sub-categories for Grading and Instruction show exams/homework at 34% followed by grade appeal and issue with instructor both at 28%. Grading methods, incomplete, and other were the lowest categories with one case each.



Of the students whose class standing was noted, seniors brought forward grading and instruction concerns at the highest level, followed by graduate students, juniors, and sophomores.



For grading and instruction concerns, CASL students visited Ombuds Services most frequently at 55% followed by CECS at 31% and CEHHS and COB both at 7%. Cases are tracked by the student's college and not the academic unit that offers the course.



Grading and instructions cases were equally distributed between age groups. The age of students was not noted for all cases.