



Office for Conflict Resolution **Fiscal Year 2018/19 Annual Report**

The University of Minnesota's Office for Conflict Resolution (OCR) is a resource for University faculty, staff and student employees who are not represented by a union to assist in the resolution of workplace disputes – either through informal problem-solving initiatives or a peer hearing process. By listening to employment concerns and offering a range of processes to respond to challenges, the OCR promotes a University culture of engagement and achievement. The OCR is a neutral and independent office; it is not part of either the Office of Human Resources or the Office of the General Counsel. Conflict resolution services are offered confidentially, subject only to limited exceptions.

Staffing Transitions

FY18 and FY19 were times of staff transitions for OCR. Program Coordinator Amanda Klepp was on leave from September 2017 through January 2018, and Jan Halverson served as Interim Program Coordinator during that time. Director Julie Showers was appointed Interim Associate Vice President for Equity and Diversity in September 2017; that appointment became permanent in May 2018. Bruce Grosland served as Interim Director from September 2017 through June 2018, followed by Eric Schnell who served as Interim Director through the end of FY19. Throughout these transitions, OCR continued to deliver informal and formal conflict resolution services across the University of Minnesota system.

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FY18:

176

CONSULTATIONS
TO INDIVIDUALS

FY19:

199

CONSULTATIONS
TO INDIVIDUALS

FY18:

4

PETITIONS CARRIED OVER
FROM FY17

1

PETITION FILED IN FY18

1

OCR PEER HEARING
CONDUCTED IN FY18

FY19:

SEE FORMAL
ASSISTANCE SECTION

Informal Assistance

Informal conflict resolution matters are the largest part of the office workload. Consultations are face-to-face meetings about workplace concerns or problems. The following statistics represent the number of individuals who met with OCR staff for one or more consultation meetings in FY18 and FY19. Some consultations resulted in several meetings conducted over many months. Phone inquiries are not counted in these totals.

Formal Assistance

Petitions are formal complaints that allege a violation of a University rule, regulation, policy, or practice. The OCR had four petitions carry over from FY17 and received one new petition in FY18. Of those filed in FY17: two settled prior to hearing, one was heard and dismissed by a peer panel in FY17, which was affirmed by the Executive Vice President (EVP) and Provost in FY18. That case was appealed through writ of certiorari to the Minnesota Court of Appeals, which affirmed both the panel's and the EVP & Provost's decisions. The last case filed in FY17 and carried over to FY18 was heard and dismissed by a peer panel which found no violation of University policy. The EVP and Provost affirmed the panel's decision, and that decision was not appealed. The sole petition submitted to the OCR in FY18 was closed following the petitioner's departure from the University.

In FY19, OCR received 8 new petitions. Of these:

- 1 was heard by a peer panel decision which found in favor of the University. This decision was upheld by the EVP and Provost.
- 1 petition was withdrawn.
- 2 petitions were dismissed following jurisdictional challenges. One dismissal was appealed to the Provost, who upheld the jurisdictional decision.
- 1 petition was redirected to an alternative forum.
- 3 petitions are in process and carried over into FY20.

Educational Programming

OCR offers two trainings:

- **Success Signals®** focuses on understanding the intersection between conflict and communication. It is a highly interactive workshop that helps participants become more aware of their own style, identify the styles of others, and communicate better with others.
- **Conflict Competency** emphasizes that conflict between people is inevitable. Participants are given practical assistance in raising concerns in a constructive manner and managing difficult situations more effectively.

FY18 & FY19 Conflict Resolution Advisory Committee

- **Roderick Squires** (Chair), Associate Professor Geography (FY18)
- **Jill DeBoer**, Director, Office of Emergency Response, Academic Health Center (FY18 & FY19)
- **Mary Belisle**, HR Consultant, School of Public Health (FY18 & FY19)
- **Maxwell Hurst**, CLA Undergraduate Student (FY18)
- **Michael LuBrant**, Program Director/Assist. Professor Program of Mortuary Science (FY18 & FY19)
- **John Steadland**, Associate to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Initiatives Office of the President (FY18)
- **Megan Sweet**, Assistant to Student Affairs Admin., Vice Provost and Dean, Office for Student Affairs (FY18)
- **Marlowe Thomas**, Undergraduate Student (FY19)
- **Laura Wegscheid**, Office Manager/Policy Coordinator, Office of the President (FY19)

Visitor Feedback

FY18:



FY19:



FY18:

9

CONFLICT COMPETENCY WORKSHOPS DELIVERED

2

SUCCESS SIGNALS WORKSHOPS DELIVERED

FY19:

23

CONFLICT COMPETENCY WORKSHOPS DELIVERED

3

SUCCESS SIGNALS WORKSHOPS DELIVERED

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