



# ACCUO

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN  
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY  
OMBUDSPERSONS



**National Technical  
University of Athens**

**FEBRUARY 2020**



## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS: ENOHE - ACCUO Conference 2020 Athens – May 26 – 29, 2020**

### **Theme: “Students’ Rights and Ombuds’ Values: Ensuring Democracy in Higher Education”**

The Conference Planning Committee for the ENOHE – ACCUO Conference 2020 invites proposals for papers, workshops and round-tables at [hello@enohe.net](mailto:hello@enohe.net) The deadline is set for Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup> 2020.

There are two categories of topics: general and specific. General topics of interest include: • ombuds values: how they work in practice • all aspects of conflict management and ombuds practice • new and/or alternative means of providing ombuds services • maximizing ombuds’ impact on higher education institutions and their democratic development • working with other departments within higher education institutions, including legal counsel, human resources, relationship and risk management officials, among others • the ombuds role in preventing and addressing allegations of sexual misconduct • updates on respective legal and regulatory frameworks including restorative practices Specific topics of interest include: • ombuds and shifting cultural norms and organizational regulations - ombuds and equity, justice, and democracy work • self-reflection, personal growth, and self-care for ombuds • working with data: collecting, analyzing, communicating, effective and ethical reporting, leveraging for change • how to direct and/or work within an ombuds team: set-up, roles, challenges, best practices • ombuds’ relations to leaders, decision-makers, and stakeholders.

Each proposal should include: • Title: succinctly reflect what is being proposed • Presenter/s: name, institution, position, country • Category: case study, practice-oriented or policy-oriented • Topic: Selected from the above General or Specific topics (applicants can suggest an additional topic of their interest, connected to the work of ombuds) • Presentation Format: (a) a presentation as part of a round-

table (60 minutes including questions and discussion time) (b) a good practice/special project session (90 minutes in total, shared with other speaker(s) on a complementary topic) • Abstract: core idea and objective of your proposal: 300 words maximum • Content level designation: Emerging (0 - 5 years of practice and/or knowledge); Established (5 - 15 years); Experienced (over 15 years)

The conference planning committee may ask for amendments to proposals and/or format changes, such as that an individual presentation become part of a collaboration or panel discussion among speakers on a related topic. The committee will communicate their decisions after mid-March. The committee will assign speakers to a specific time slot and session length (generally 60 or 90 minutes, including time for discussion and questions). If you have questions about your proposal, contact [hello@enohe.net](mailto:hello@enohe.net). Registration fee: 300 Euros; accommodation choices will be announced shortly on the ENOHE website.

**ACCUO Awards Nominations** Each year we ask that you consider nominating an award to deserving members of ACCUO. To find out more about the kinds of awards and how to nominate someone, contact George Cole at [coleg@algonquincollege.com](mailto:coleg@algonquincollege.com)

**ACCUO Elections Officer** Please contact Natalie Sharpe if you wish to stand as the new Elections Officer at [natalie.sharpe@ualberta.ca](mailto:natalie.sharpe@ualberta.ca) This is a minimal investment of time, and is a great way to get involved with your organization. We will need someone in this position very shortly for our AGM election in May 2020.

**Eastern Regional Conference** On January 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, the office of the Ombudsperson at the University of Ottawa (Martine Conway and Evelyne Poisson) hosted the Eastern Mid-Year 2020. Members of ACCUO from Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick participated in this annual meeting. They discussed Ombuds principles and practice, inclusion and exclusion on campuses, challenges in practice today and best practices.



Back row, left to right: George Cole, Rob Thompson, Remonia Stoddart-Morrison, Evelyne Poisson, Kwame Addo, Carmela Parzanese, Carolyn Brendon, Lavonne Hood, Monique Laforest, Barbara Carswell, Caroline Audette, Anita Pouliot, Caroline Roy, Nora Farrell; Front row, left to right: Heather McGhee-Peggs, Wilfred Langmaid, Martine Conway, Jim Kennelly

**Ombuds UNAM – Mexico City** Five higher education ombudspersons participated in three days of sessions, including two private days of meetings with the UNAM ombuds staff to examine problems and best practices in higher education ombudsing January 2020. Hosted by UNAM's Defensor (Ombuds) office, Ombuds Guadalupe Barrena and UNAM's deputy ombuds Luis Angel Benavides Hernandez, Josef Leidenfrost (University of Vienna), Cristina Ayoub Riche (University of Rio de Janeiro), Zeetu Makamandela-Mguqulwa, (University of Capetown), Felicity Mitchell (England and Wales Office of Independent Adjudicators) and Natalie Sharpe (University of Alberta), prepared selected presentations. These included: ethical standards and standards of practice; impartiality; fairness; mediation; access to information; power to investigate; report writing; provisional measures; reparations and remedies; improving the visibility of the office On the third day, there was a public forum on how higher education institutions in their country are formulating policies to address sexual harassment and sexual violence; diversity, equity and inclusion measures; disability policy; and the role of the ombudsperson.



**Shirley Nakata is our new ACCUO Chair for FCO/ACCUO Conference April 12 – 14, 2021, St. John's, Newfoundland.**

Shirley has been the Ombudsperson for Students at the University of British Columbia since 2009 when she was hired to establish the office. She was called to the B.C. Bar in 1989 and practised at a Vancouver law firm before moving to the Canadian Human Rights Commission and then to the BC College of Teachers where she led and managed the conduct of investigations and hearings. Shirley has been a member of ACCUO since 2009 and has been grateful for the Ombuds community it has provided over the years. She is looking forward to working with FCO colleagues to co-chair the 2021 FCO/ACCUO Biennial Conference and reconnecting with colleagues and meeting new members. She has also been a presenter at the Osgoode/FCO Certificate – Essentials for Ombuds course since 2016 and has been co-Director since 2018. Shirley has presented at many ombuds conferences, including FCO/ACCUO, Cal Caucus, and the International Ombuds Association.



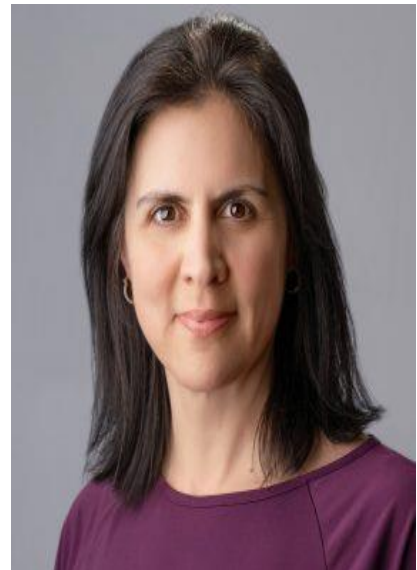


## New Ombuds Arrivals



**Michelle Quigg** is the Ombuds Officer and the first point of contact for the Ombuds Office on Vancouver Campus. Michelle did both her undergrad and law degree at UBC and was called to the B.C. Bar in 2007. In addition to an immigration law private practice, she has worked as a staff lawyer and program coordinator for the Access Pro Bono Society of BC and as an International Student Advisor at Vancouver Island University. Her recent volunteer work has focused on helping stateless people in Canada obtain citizenship. She is happy to have found a home in Ombuds to continue championing fairness, problem solving and compassion. When not at work Michelle enjoys time with family, friends, books and British Comedy. She aspires to things like morning exercise.

**Cindy Leonard** is the Ombuds Officer at the UBC – Okanagan Campus. She recently relocated to Kelowna, bringing with her decades of experience from a long-serving career in the education sector. Cindy graduated with a B.Ed. from the Campus Saint-Jean, a French-language faculty of the University of Alberta in 1995. There, she developed the skills required to serve in many school boards and teach various French as a Second Language programs across Canada. While still holding a Professional Teaching Certificate in both BC and Ontario, she has made a natural transition to UBC Okanagan to fulfill her desire to continue supporting students as well as a culture and spirit of fairness. Since March 2019, Cindy has welcomed many visitors to the Okanagan Ombuds Office; she enjoys problem-solving and exploring options with students. She feels very grateful to be able to offer assistance when students need it most. Her new role MAY even prepare her to offer sound advice to her own 3 teenagers at home!





**Masani St. Rose** joined the Ombuds Office at Athabasca University in 2019. Masani is a native Calgarian who now calls Edmonton home. “Having had the opportunity to work in various project coordination roles within the Alberta Government, I gained a great deal of practice and execution of listening skills, analytical skills and strategic thinking. The Ombuds position at Athabasca University links my love of policy, access and privacy and creative problem solving.”

**Alexia Wright** is the new Ombudsperson at NAIT. Alexia worked within the Student Services area in the post-secondary sector for more than ten years. She served as an advisor for both domestic and international students, as well as the Team Lead for the Undergraduate Student Services Office in the Faculty of ALES at the University of Alberta. More recently, Alexia oversaw the Admissions and Transfer Credit unit in the Office of the Registrar at NorQuest College. These roles, coupled with her Master of Arts degree in Higher Education, Administration and Leadership have prepared her to support students throughout their academic careers. Alexia’s passion is to serve learners and she is delighted to be able to work closely with them in my new role. She and her partner Scott have a 4-year old son named Luca and two dogs named Francis and Dali. Alexia loves spending time with her son and rediscovering the world through his eyes. She enjoys traveling, all forms of art, and has a soft spot for symphonic metal.



## Transfers and Departures

**Rob Thompson** Currently the Ombudsperson at The Lakehead (Thunder Bay, Ontario), Rob will soon be paddling west to Camosun College in Victoria, B.C. to start his new Ombuds position in April, 2020. Rob is an avid outdoors person; he is our Communications lead for ACCUO.



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**Kim Morgan** has been the ombuds at Confederation College since January 2008, and just retired in January 2020. Kim came to the college with an extensive background in nursing and health care administration. She has a BSc in Nursing and Masters of Education, and received certificates in Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Osgoode/FCO Certificate "Essentials for Ombuds". Kim has been an active member of ACCUO. She is well respected by her ACCUO colleagues as well as students and administration at Confederation College. In her 12 years at Confederation College, Kim educated students to advocate for themselves and make informed choices. She delivered conflict resolution workshop for students and acted as a resource for both students and employees.



**Cathryn Heslep**, after 26 years serving MacEwan University, included the V.P. Student Services, retired in 2015, but not for long. A long-time advocate for an ombuds position at MacEwan, Cathryn returned in 2016 as their first student ombudsperson. In her role, Catherine worked independently of university administration and student government, offering impartial and objective assistance to help students find solutions to well-founded complaints. While working at MacEwan, Cathryn received honorary membership from the Students' Association and the university's highest award, the MacEwan University Medallion. Cathryn attended many ombuds conferences, and presented at the first joint ACCUO ENOHE Conference in Vienna. She also helped to create the Alberta Network of Ombudspersons in Higher Education and hosted these meetings twice. Sadly, MacEwan University has announced that the ombuds position is to be eliminated due to provincial funding cuts. Cathryn will continue to serve students until the end of the winter term on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.