

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS

ANNUAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 10, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This document is the first annual report of the Montgomery College Office of the Ombuds and includes data gathered in Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14).

The Office of the Ombuds was established in August 2013 and served 157 employee visitors in Fiscal Year 2014, which ended on June 30, 2014, by helping to identify options to mitigate and/or resolve workplace concerns and disputes. The report reviews the background associated with the Office of the Ombuds, helping to place the office and its services in context. It also provides visitor demographics and data collected on the workplace issues and concerns expressed by visitors. As confidentiality is essential to the Office of the Ombuds, the data collected is shared in terms of categories of issues and in a manner that protects the anonymity of the visitors to the office. In addition, the report includes recommendations to affect positive change, with the hope of addressing the most prevalent category of workplace concerns, as well as the feedback provided by visitors in regard to the ombuds services provided.

Organizational Ombuds Programs

Organizations establish ombuds programs as important cornerstones in the mitigation and/or resolution of workplace issues and disputes. Such organizations recognize the positive impact ombuds programs may have on organizational culture, employee engagement, retention, and the potential reduction in employment litigation. Ombuds programs are increasingly utilized in corporate settings, where, in addition to the benefits described above, the ombuds office provides a voluntary, confidential forum for whistleblowers to raise concerns, satisfying certain federal legal requirements. The federal sector also has a number of successful ombuds programs, including the Office of the Ombudsman/Center for Cooperative Resolution established at the National Institutes of Health well over a decade ago.

In regard to higher education, many four-year colleges and universities have long established ombuds programs, and there appear to be additional programs being established and nurtured in the academic world. These ombuds programs often serve students as well as employees at the college or university. At community colleges, ombuds programs have not yet been as widely utilized. It appears that there are fewer than 20 community colleges utilizing ombuds, and that the majority of those programs limit services to students and do not include employees. In this regard, Montgomery College's commitment to providing employees with the option of utilizing an ombuds program is notable.

MC Office of the Ombuds — Background & Functions

The Office of the Ombuds was established by President DeRionne Pollard after considering recommendations from the Employee Engagement Advisory Group as well as the Integrated Conflict Management System workgroup, both of which included governance leaders and faculty and staff union leaders. The Office of the Ombuds began providing service to the Montgomery

College employee community in August 2013. Examples of the activities in which the Office of the Ombuds engages to facilitate mitigation and/or resolution of workplace conflict include:

- providing a safe and confidential forum to surface individual and group issues;
- listening to and helping to clarify employee concerns;
- helping identify underlying issues and interests;
- providing information and exploring possible options available;
- where voluntarily agreed to by all involved parties, facilitating discussions to resolve issues, if appropriate; and
- collecting and evaluating data on emerging trends and patterns at the College and making recommendations for systemic change through an annual report.

These functions supplement the formal resources available to employees, and are outlined in the Office of the Ombuds Charter, which is located at www.montgomerycollege.edu/ombuds. Each is performed in accordance with the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

IOA Code of Ethics and IOA Standards of Practice

The International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Code of Ethics requires an ombudsperson to be truthful, act with integrity, foster respect for all members of the community served, and to promote procedural fairness within the organization. The ethical principles are as follows:

INDEPENDENCE: The Ombudsperson is independent in structure, function, and appearance to the highest degree possible within the organization.

NEUTRALITY AND IMPARTIALITY: The Ombudsperson, as a designated neutral, remains unaligned and impartial. The Ombudsperson does not engage in any situation that could create a conflict of interest.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The Ombudsman holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence, and does not disclose confidential communications unless given permission to do so. The only exception to this privilege of confidentiality is where there appears to be imminent risk of serious harm.

INFORMALITY: The Ombudsperson, as an informal resource, does not participate in any formal adjudicative or administrative procedure related to concerns brought to his/her attention.

The IOA Standards of Practice provide additional guidance on ombuds best practices. The Office Charter under which the Montgomery College Office of the Ombuds operates incorporates both the IOA Code of Ethics and IOA Standards of Practice, and may be reviewed at www.montgomerycollege.edu/ombuds.

Advisory Committee to the Office of the Ombuds

The purpose of the Advisory Committee to the Office of the Ombuds is to assist the ombuds by providing constituent feedback, opinions, suggestions, and ideas related to the activities of the ombuds, and in support of the ombuds' goal to help the College community constructively and cooperatively manage conflict. Representatives from the College Council, AAUP, AFSCME, SEIU, Human Resources, Development, and Engagement, and Equity and Diversity served on the committee.¹ Much appreciation and many thanks to the following individuals who served on this committee in FY14: Ana Awwad, Bill Primosch, Jason Rivera, Michelle Scott, Carl Shorter, Laura White, and Dan Wilson.

¹ In regard to offices that have been merged or reorganized, the office names as in existence in Fiscal Year 2014 will be utilized in this report.

FISCAL YEAR 2014 OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS' VISITORS

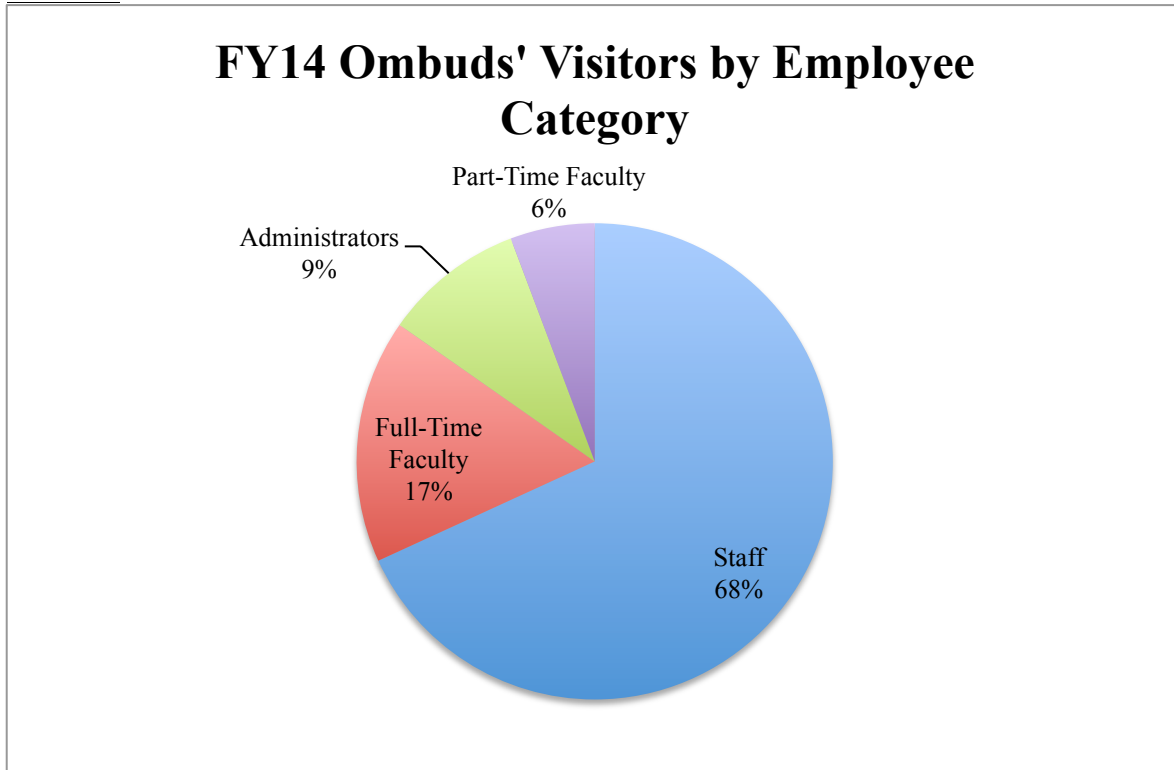
Overview

One of the benchmarks of a well established ombuds program is that it is likely to serve between three to five percent of the employee population each year. During its initial 10 months of operation in FY14, from August 12, 2013 to June 30, 2014, the Montgomery College Office of the Ombuds served 157 individual employees, or 5.7 percent of the overall employee population.² Many of these 157 individual employees had more than one appointment with the ombuds and came to discuss options to resolve multiple concerns.

FY14 Ombuds' Visitors by Employee Category

Chart A depicts the visitors to the Office of the Ombuds by employee category.

Chart A



Of the 157 individual visitors to the Office of the Ombuds, 107 visitors were staff members, 26 visitors were full-time faculty members, 15 visitors were administrators, and 9 visitors were part-time faculty members. The following reflects the percentage of employees served by the Office

² The employee population of 2,757 was derived from the October 14, 2013, Human Resources, Development, and Engagement employee report, which listed 597 full-time faculty, 846 part-time faculty, 1,229 associate and support staff (including temporary with benefits employees), and 85 administrators.

of the Ombuds by employee category: 1.0 percent of part-time faculty, 4.4 percent of full-time faculty, 8.7 percent of staff, and 17.6 percent of administrators.

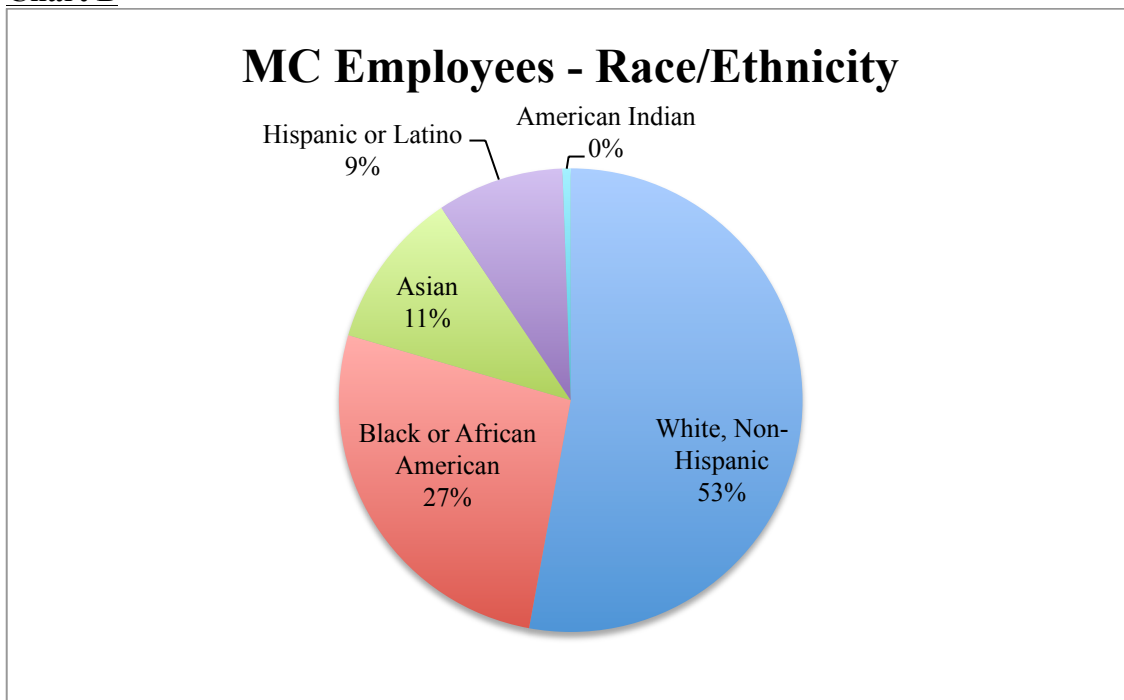
Visitors by Gender

Of the 157 individual visitors to the Office of the Ombuds, 113 visitors were female and 44 visitors were male. The following reflects the percentage of employees served by the Office of the Ombuds by gender: 7.0 percent of female employees and 3.8 percent of male employees.

Visitors by Race/Ethnicity

Chart B depicts Montgomery College’s employee population by race and ethnicity.³

Chart B



The Office of the Ombuds served the following percentage of employees in each category: 6.6 percent of White, Non-Hispanic employees, 6.6 percent of Hispanic or Latino employees, 4.4 percent of Black or African-American employees, and 2.7 percent of Asian employees.

Visitors by Length of Service

Visitors to the Office of the Ombuds were asked to provide the number of years they have worked at Montgomery College. The ombuds then categorized length of service into the following categories: more than 20 years of service, 16-20 years of service, 11-15 years of

³ This information was derived from the October 14, 2013, Human Resources, Development, and Engagement employee report and includes benefits eligible employees, full-time faculty, administrators, and staff, including temporary with benefits staff.

service, 6-10 years of service, and 0-5 years of service. For the 157 visitors, length of service is depicted below:

Length of Service	Number of Visitors
20+ Years	34 visitors
16-20 Years	22 visitors
11-15 Years	33 visitors
6-10 Years	34 visitors
0-5 Years	34 visitors
Total:	157 Visitors

Visitors by Generation

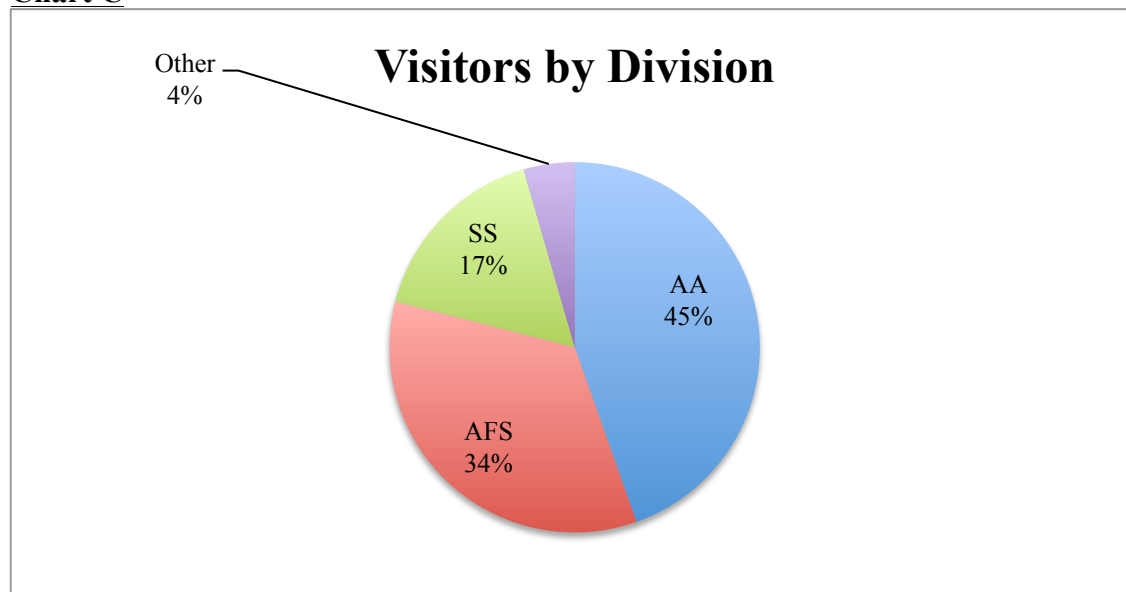
Below is a table depicting visitors to the Office of the Ombuds by generation. The generational categories have been defined as follows: Senior (born prior to 1945); Baby Boomer (born 1945-1963); X (born 1964 to 1980); and Millennial (born 1981 to 1997). The generational categories of the visitors is depicted below:

Generation	Number of Visitors
Senior	1
Baby Boomer	89
X	57
Millennial	10
Total: 157 Visitors	

Visitors by Division

Chart C depicts the visitors to the Office of the Ombuds by division. Divisions have been categorized as follows: Academic Affairs, Administrative and Fiscal Services, Student Services, and Other. Given the small number of employees assigned to and visitors of the division of Advancement and Community and Engagement as well as offices reporting directly to the president, to protect the anonymity of the visitors, they have been combined into the “Other” category.

Chart C



CONCERNS RAISED BY VISITORS TO THE OMBUDS

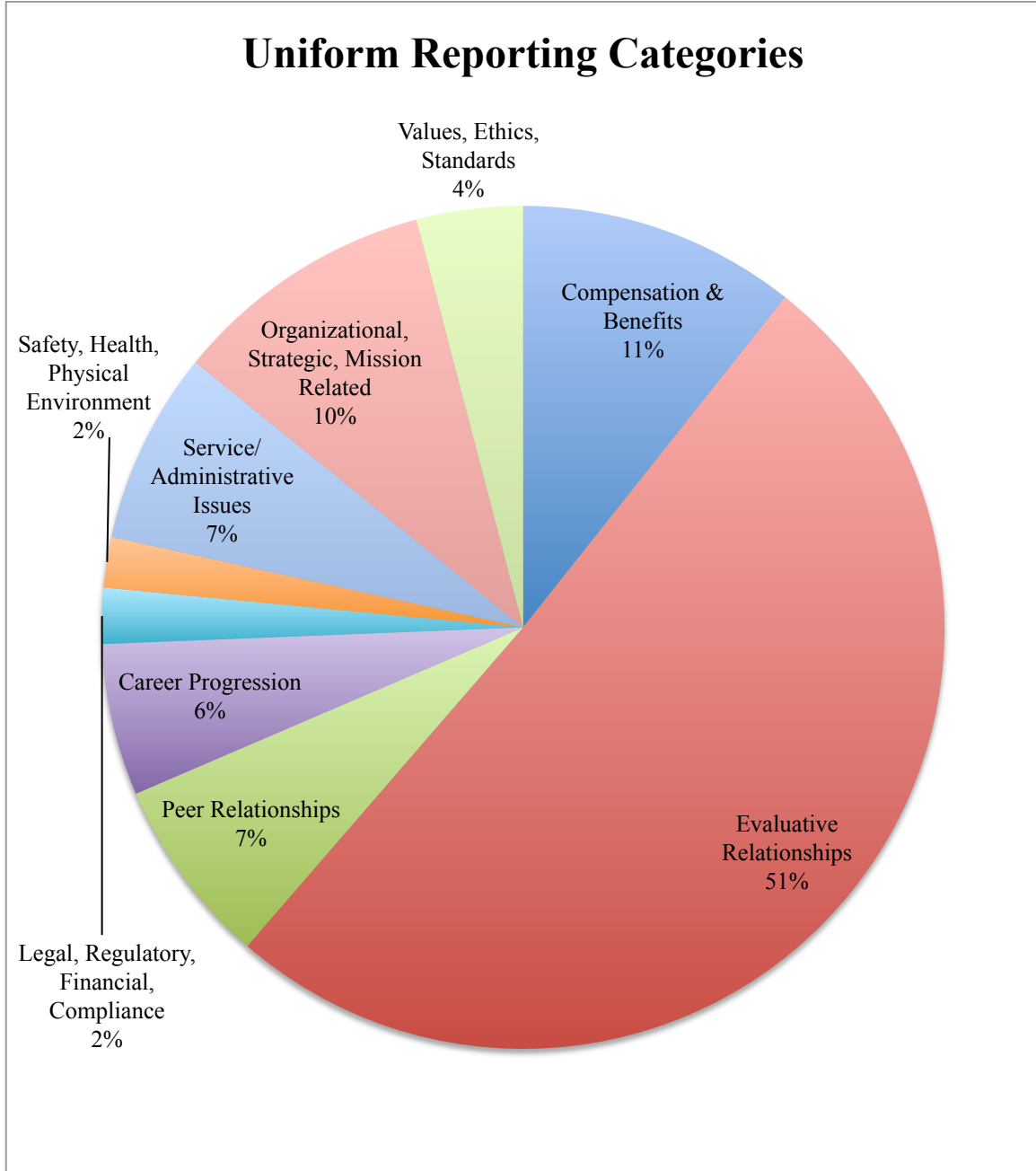
IOA Uniform Reporting Categories

The Office of the Ombuds identified concerns raised by visitors utilizing the IOA Uniform Reporting Categories (2007), of which there are nine, with multiple sub-categories associated with each category (see Attachment A):

- (1) **Compensation & Benefits:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about the equity, appropriateness and competitiveness of employee compensation, benefits, and other benefit programs.
- (2) **Evaluative (supervisory) Relationships:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries arising between people in evaluative relationships (i.e. supervisor-employee, faculty-student).
- (3) **Peer & Colleague Relationships:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries involving peers or colleagues who do not have a supervisory-employee or student-professor relationship (e.g., two staff members within the same department or conflict involving members of a student organization)
- (4) **Career Progression & Development:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about administrative processes and decisions regarding entering and leaving a job, what it entails (i.e., recruitment, nature and place of assignment, job security, and separation).
- (5) **Legal, Regulatory, Financial, & Compliance:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries that may create a legal risk (financial, sanction, etc.) for the organization or its members if not addressed, including issues related to waste, fraud, or abuse).
- (6) **Safety, Health, and Physical Environment:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about Safety, Health and infrastructure-related issues.
- (7) **Services/Administrative Issues:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about services or administrative offices including from external parties.
- (8) **Organizational, Strategic, & Mission Related:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries that relate to whole or some part of an organization.
- (9) **Values, Ethics, & Standards:** questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about the fairness of organizational values, ethics, and/or standards, the application of related policies and/or procedures, or the need for creation or revision of policies, and/or standards.

Multiple issues are often identified after speaking with each visitor. Chart D depicts the 520 issues raised by visitors during Fiscal Year 2014:

Chart D



Evaluative Relationships

A little over half of all the issues raised by visitors involved the Evaluative Relationships category. The Evaluative (supervisory) Relationships category is defined as: “questions, concerns, issues or inquiries arising between people in evaluative relations” (supervisor-employee). When analyzed by employee category, division, race/ethnicity, length of service, generation, and gender, the category of Evaluative Relationships generates the largest percentage of issues for each demographic. In regard to the employee category, 65

percent of the issues attributable to part-time faculty, 54 percent of the issues attributable to staff, 53 percent of the issues attributable to administrators⁴, and 30 percent of the issues attributable to full-time faculty fall within the Evaluative Relationships category.

By division, 56 percent of the issues attributable to visitors in Administrative and Fiscal Services, 49 percent of issues attributable to visitors in Academic Affairs, 48 percent of issues were attributable to visitors in Student Services involved the Evaluative Relationships category.⁵ The ombuds provided trend information regarding two units within Administrative and Fiscal Services (AFS) to senior leadership, noting particular concerns in regard to evaluative relationships within those units, as well as one unit within Academic Affairs.

In regard to race and ethnicity, the Evaluative Relationships category accounted for 72 percent of issues raised by Hispanic or Latino visitors, 55 percent of issues raised by Black or African American visitors, 46 percent of issues raised by White, Non-Hispanic visitors, and 40 percent of issues raised by Asian visitors. The evaluative relationship category in regard to Hispanic/Latino visitors falls so far away from the mean as to warrant a recommendation for further examination by the administration, particularly given the potentially negative impact on recruitment and retention of an employee group already underrepresented in the Montgomery College workforce.

In regard to length of service, the Evaluative Relationships category accounted for: 61 percent of issues raised by visitors with five or fewer years of service, 60 percent of issues raised by visitors with more than 20 years of service, 46 percent of issues raised by visitors with six to 10 years of service, 46 percent of issues raised by visitors with 11 to 15 years of service, and 39 percent of issues raised by visitors with 16 to 20 years of service. By generation, the Evaluative Relationships category accounted for 53 percent of issues raised by Baby Boomers, 51 percent of issues raised by Millennials, and 45 percent of issues raised by group X. In regard to gender, the Evaluative Relationships category accounted for 52 percent of issues raised by females and 47 percent of issues raised by males

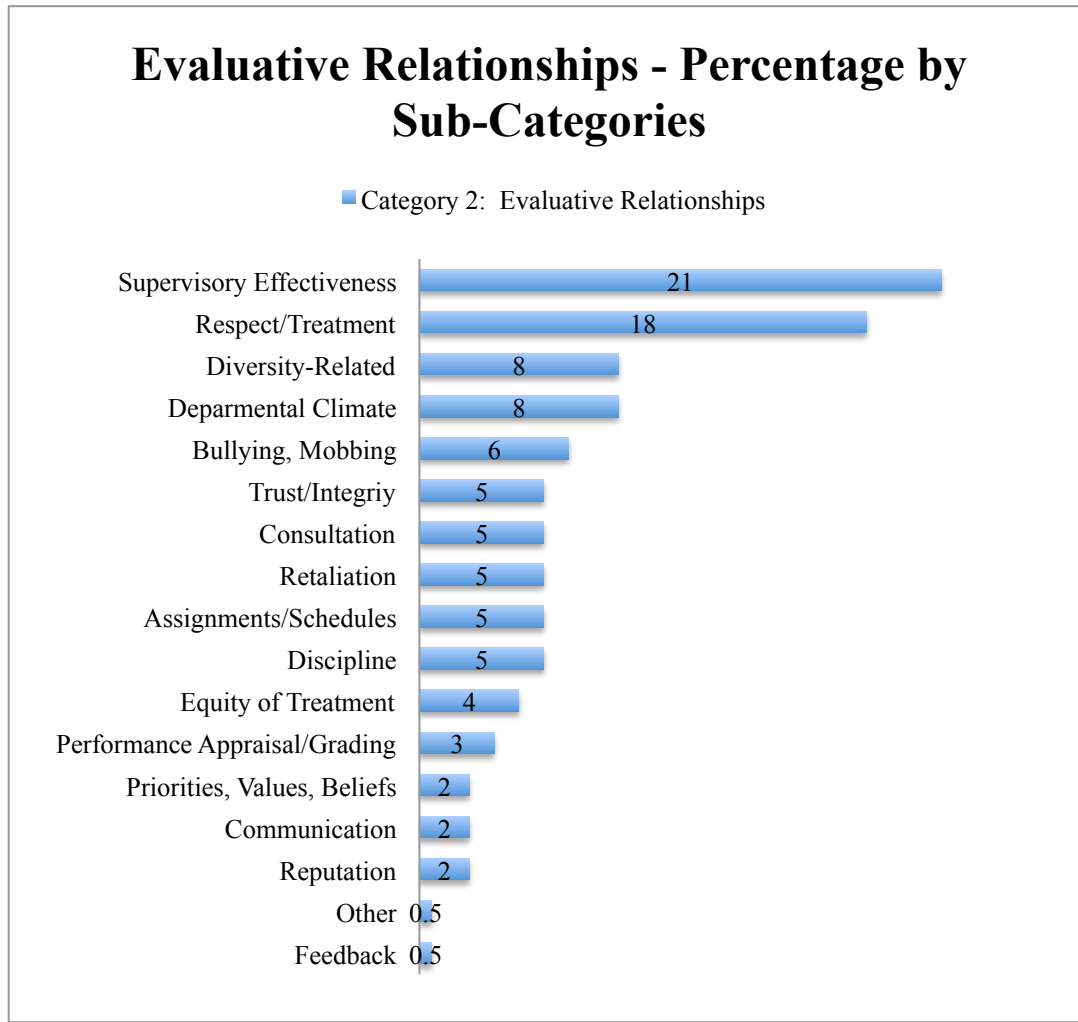
Further considering the subcategories associated with the Evaluative Relationship issues, supervisory effectiveness accounted for 21 percent of issues identified. The subcategory of supervisory effectiveness is defined as: “management of department or classroom, failure to address issues.” Concerns related to respect and treatment by employees from their direct supervisor accounted for 18 percent of issues. The subcategory of respect/treatment is defined as: “demonstrations of inappropriate regard for people, not listening, rudeness, crudeness, etc.” Eight percent of issues were attributed to diversity-

⁴ Of the 53 percent of issues raised by administrators involving evaluative relationships, 22 percent involved supervisory consultations and 31 percent involved all other evaluative relationship subcategories.

⁵ Given the relatively few visitors in the divisions encompassed in the “Other” category, information regarding the categories of issues pertaining to these visitors are not included in this report in light of preserving confidentiality and anonymity.

related concerns associated with a direct supervisor and departmental climate, respectively. The subcategory of diversity-related is defined as: “comments or behaviors perceived to be insensitive, offensive, or intolerant on the basis of an identity-related difference such as race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation.” The subcategory of departmental climate is defined as: “prevailing behaviors, norms, or attributes within a department for which supervisors or faculty have responsibility.”

Chart E



Compensation and Benefits

Eleven percent of all the issues raised in FY14 concerned Compensation and Benefits. When further examining the sub-categories associated with this reporting category, over half of all the issues raised concerned Compensation, a sub-category defined as: “rate of pay, salary amount, job salary classification/level.” Here, the concerns could be further divided into two categories for staff employees, compensation equity concerns and classification. For full-time faculty members and administrators, equity concerns were

most prevalent. In regard to equity concerns for staff and administrators, Administrative and Fiscal Services (AFS) leadership has already identified a strategy to re-examine compensation philosophy and programs and suspended the Equity Review programs identified for current employees and new hires in Montgomery College Procedure 35001CP–Compensation Programs. This suspension and examination presents the possibility of resolving the concerns associated with compensation.⁶ For full-time faculty members, concerns regarding compensation equity are subject to collective bargaining.

In regard to classification, concerns focused in large measure on the quality of the outside consultants utilized to assist internal human resources staff with classification reviews. Per 33001CP–Staff Classification Systems and Position Descriptions, there are three opportunities to seek review of an employee’s classification: as part of the five-year maintenance review conducted each year by grade (a program which has not been suspended and, per Senior Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services Janet Wormack’s June 30, 2014, memorandum, will be continued in Fiscal Year 2015); individual requests for classification review occurring each September (a program which has been suspended per the memorandum referenced above); and out-of-cycle reviews upon approval of the vice president of human resources, development, and engagement (HRDE) where certain circumstances warrant, for example, reorganization (a program that has not been suspended). To address classification concerns expressed by visitors, HRDE may consider addressing quality concerns associated with the use of the outside consultants. Additionally, the suspension of the September window for individual requests may well compound concerns associated with classification as individual staff members will not be afforded an opportunity to request examination of their particular classification based on assigned job responsibilities and duties outside the maintenance cycle.

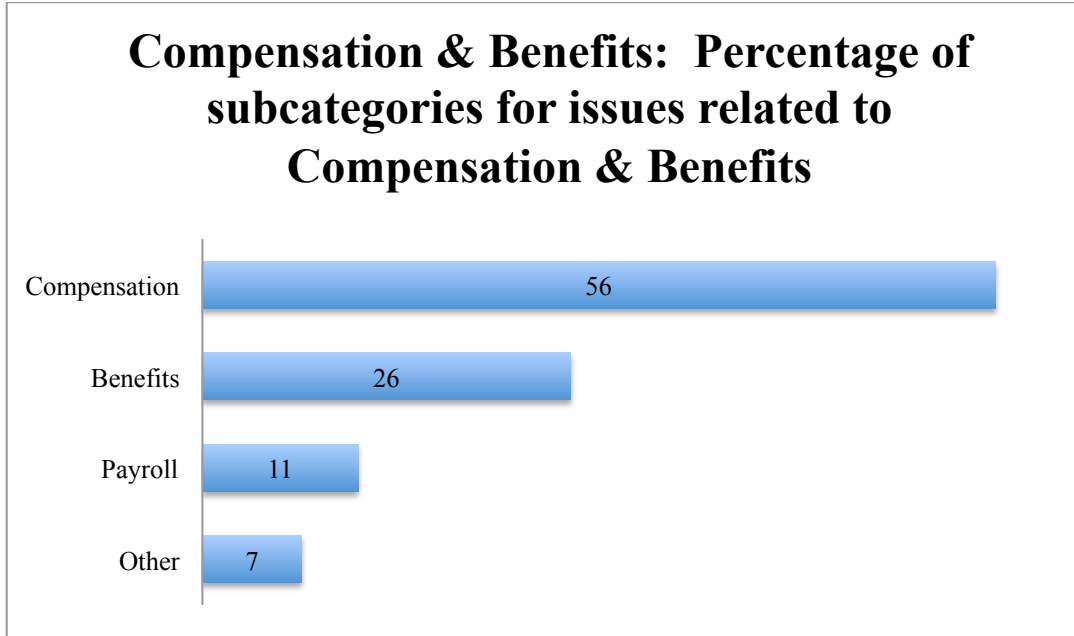
For part-time faculty, two overarching issues were associated with Compensation and Benefits. The first involved a pay practice where, once an underpayment to a part-time faculty member was identified, the error was corrected by spreading the underpaid amount through the remainder of the semester. This treatment was inconsistent with how an underpayment would be remedied for a full-time faculty member, staff member, or administrator. By facilitating conversations with the offices of Business Services, Business Processes and Internal Audit, and HRDE, the issue was resolved with a commitment to treat part-time faculty members in an equitable manner (issuing timely retroactive payment to correct for underpayment).

The second compensation issue affecting part-time faculty raised with the Office of the Ombuds involved part-time faculty rank advancement. A recommendation was made by the ombuds to HRDE and SEIU Local 500, to discuss and work collaboratively to clarify the requirements of and address inconsistencies within 32203CP–Academic Rank and

⁶ A portion of the compensation issues was also attributable to a violation of 35001CP, regarding the impact of new hires on existing staff, which was brought to the attention of senior leadership and recently remedied.

32103CP–Allocation, Recruitment, Employment, and Salary Placement and Advancement of Part-Time Faculty, and the Faculty Handbook.

Chart F



Organizational, Strategic, Mission Related

Ten percent of all issues raised involved the Organizational, Strategic, Mission Related reporting category. Of those issues, 45 percent were associated with the subcategory of Leadership and Management, defined as: “quality/capacity of management and/or management/leadership decisions, suggested training, reassignments and reorganizations.” The ombuds only categorized issues raised concerning Montgomery College administrators within this subcategory. Additionally, 30 percent of issues were associated with the subcategory of Restructuring and Relocation, defined as: “issues related to broad scope planned or actual restructuring and/or relocation affecting the whole or major divisions of an organization, e.g. downsizing, offshoring, outsourcing.” By employee category, Organizational, Strategic, and Mission Related concerns accounted for 7 percent of issues raised by staff, 10 percent of issues raised by full-time faculty, and 28 percent of issues raised by administrators. Given the percentage of concerns raised by administrators, senior leadership may consider strategies to foster additional opportunities for administrators to raise concerns and enhance constructive, collaborative dialogue.

Chart G



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

1. Collaboratively develop, adopt, and implement both a Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct for all Montgomery College employees.

While the College has adopted integrity as a core value of the organization, there is no policy and procedure that provides comprehensive guidance of and sets expectations as to the ethical behavior expected of all employees.⁷ Formally setting ethical expectations, rewarding employees whose decisions and actions embody the core value of integrity, and holding accountable those who choose not to meet the set expectations, would help to foster decision-making where ethical considerations are routinely and transparently considered. Similarly, updating the 31102CP–Employee Responsibilities, to reflect the Standard of Conduct expected of all employees, again, rewarding exemplary conduct and holding accountable those who choose not to meet such expectations, would provide clarity for all levels of employees within the organization. While a code of ethics often involves the “why” of decision-making, standards of conduct involves the “how” behavioral expectations are actualized. Thus, there appears to be a need for both.

This recommendation is intended to enhance both evaluative relationships as well as confidence in leadership and management by transparently setting ethical and professional expectations for all employees. Such clarity is expected to reduce confusion and disagreement regarding expectations and standards, to the benefit of both non-supervisory and supervisory employees. While there is expected to be healthy disagreement over direction and priorities, having the backdrop of a shared Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct may enhance the constructive nature of those discussions. If adopted, training should be required of all employees in the organization.

2. Support and enhance managerial competencies and best practices by regularly soliciting feedback from employees and building professional development plans considering the results of 360-degree evaluations.

360-degree evaluation tools allow organizations to solicit feedback for individual employees from a variety of sources, including peers and direct reports. Currently, administrators participate in 360-degree evaluations every two years (including the current year, FY15). Past use of the tool imposed some limitations on its effectiveness. To better enhance the effectiveness of the tool and subsequent professional development, it is recommended that as many direct reports as possible be included in the survey, and that, if the number of direct reports exceeds the maximum allowed by the tool, the direct reports selected to participate are randomly selected by HR. It is further recommended that these 360-degree evaluation results

⁷ Montgomery College Policy and Procedure 31003–Conflict of Interest, provides some guidance in regard to prohibited, unethical conduct.

be shared and discussed between administrators and their administrative supervisors to assist in the determination of a professional development goal(s) to be included in the next fiscal year's goal plans.

Additionally and importantly, the expansion of a 360-degree evaluation tool to all managers/supervisors is recommended, with the same modifications discussed above, to be conducted every other year.

3. Critically examine the employee experience, particularly for underrepresented minorities, to ensure an inclusive workplace.

The anecdotal evidence previously discussed suggests that further scrutiny is warranted, particularly within the AFS division.

4. Assist and support administrators, staff with supervisory responsibilities, and department chairs by providing and requiring additional training. Further, reward those exhibiting the skills developed in these training and hold accountable those who choose not to exhibit those skills.

The purpose of the additional training is to assist in:

1. developing skills in creating and nurturing inclusive workplaces that promote respect for and appreciation of diversity;
2. promoting respectful communication; and
3. creating a culture of civility.

5. Consider the creation of a competitive, developmental cohort program or programs to help develop future model managers and administrators.

While Recommendations 2 and 4 focus on providing additional support to existing managers and administrators, this recommendation is intended to help identify and develop the future managers and administrators of Montgomery College. Given the issues associated with the evaluative relationships category, a development cohort(s) would present an opportunity to competitively select, mentor, and train the future managers and administrators of the College, by providing intensive training and leadership development opportunities for those selected to participate in the program. The creation of a cohort program or programs to “build” model leaders could be created separately from or be accomplished by changes made to the existing administrative associate structure.

VISITORS EVALUATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS

This information was compiled from the 50 completed evaluations that were returned to the Office of the Ombuds in Fiscal Year 2014⁸ yielding a 32 percent rate of return. Please note that five possible responses were provided for survey questions: “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neither”, “agree”, and “strongly agree”. The feedback was as follows:

- ❖ 94 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “The Office of the Ombuds provides an informal, off-the-record resource for all employees.”
- ❖ 92 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “I trust the ombuds to maintain confidentiality.”
- ❖ 89 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “The Office of the Ombuds acts independently from other organizational units and management.”
- ❖ 94 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “The ombuds responded to my e-mail(s)/phone call(s) in a timely manner.”
- ❖ 94 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “The ombuds listened carefully to my concerns.”
- ❖ 94 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “The ombuds treated me fairly, without prejudice or bias.”
- ❖ 90 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “The ombuds helped me identify and evaluate the options available to address my concerns.”
- ❖ 90 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “I found the ombuds to be knowledgeable about relevant institutional policies and procedures.”

⁸ Surveys to visitors assisted prior to October 14, 2013, were distributed via e-mail. Subsequent surveys were provided to visitors in person, and visitors were asked to complete and return the survey via interoffice mail (with an envelope provided). For visitors assisted over the phone, surveys were provided via e-mail (with the same instructions requesting return through interoffice mail).

- ❖ 94 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “I would refer others to the Office of the Ombuds for assistance.”
- ❖ 92 percent of visitors responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the statement: “Overall, I was satisfied with the assistance I received from the Office of the Ombuds.”

Representative comments received by visitors on the evaluations included:

I'm impressed and proud that the college has supported the existence of the position of Ombuds and I look forward to reading the reports that are issued from this office.

I found my visit extremely helpful, and the Ombuds to be sensitive, responsive, empathetic, and well-informed. I left feeling validated and empowered to take action – whatever action I felt appropriate. The Ombuds helped lay out options without actually pushing me to take any particular action. Thank you.

I felt that the Ombuds responded to my email in a timely manner. She was also very personable and was able to allay my fears about the issue by helping me to think rationally. Finally, by following her good advice, I was able to resolve the issue. Thank you for this service.

I am so happy that I decided to meet with the ombuds. I feel more confident about my approach to my situation. I also feel that I was actively listened to and respected in the process.

The ombuds office worked with me to identify options and resolve a multiparty issue in a more productive way than I hoped would be possible.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS STAFFING & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Office of the Ombuds is staffed by a part-time temporary-with-benefits staff member, Sarah Miller Espinosa. Beginning in October 2014, the hours of the ombuds will be increased to 30 hours per week (.75 temporary-with-benefits position), which will allow the ombuds to provide services for two days a week on the Rockville Campus and one day per week on both the Germantown and Takoma Park/Silver Spring campuses. President DeRionne Pollard has indicated her commitment to transition this position from a temporary-with-benefits to a regular status position during Fiscal Year 2015.

To ensure the independence of the ombuds, it is of particular importance to create a regular status position rather than a temporary position as the unstable nature of the employment relationship may affect the perception of the ombuds' independence. It may also be useful to survey existing academic ombuds to determine viable options as to the nature of the employment relationship. Additionally, given the utilization rates and the challenges inherent in a one-person office, the investment in creation of an Associate Ombuds position is strongly recommended.

With the transformation of the ombuds from a temporary to regular status position, the incorporation of the Office of the Ombuds, its role, responsibilities, and ethical obligations, into Montgomery College Policies and Procedure Manual is recommended. It may also be useful to discuss whether to expand the services of the Office of the Ombuds to include students in those able to access assistance. Any such expansion could not, however, be accomplished with the current level of staffing.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional Information – By Employee Group

Charts H, I, J, and K reflect the category of issues presented within each employee group.

Chart H

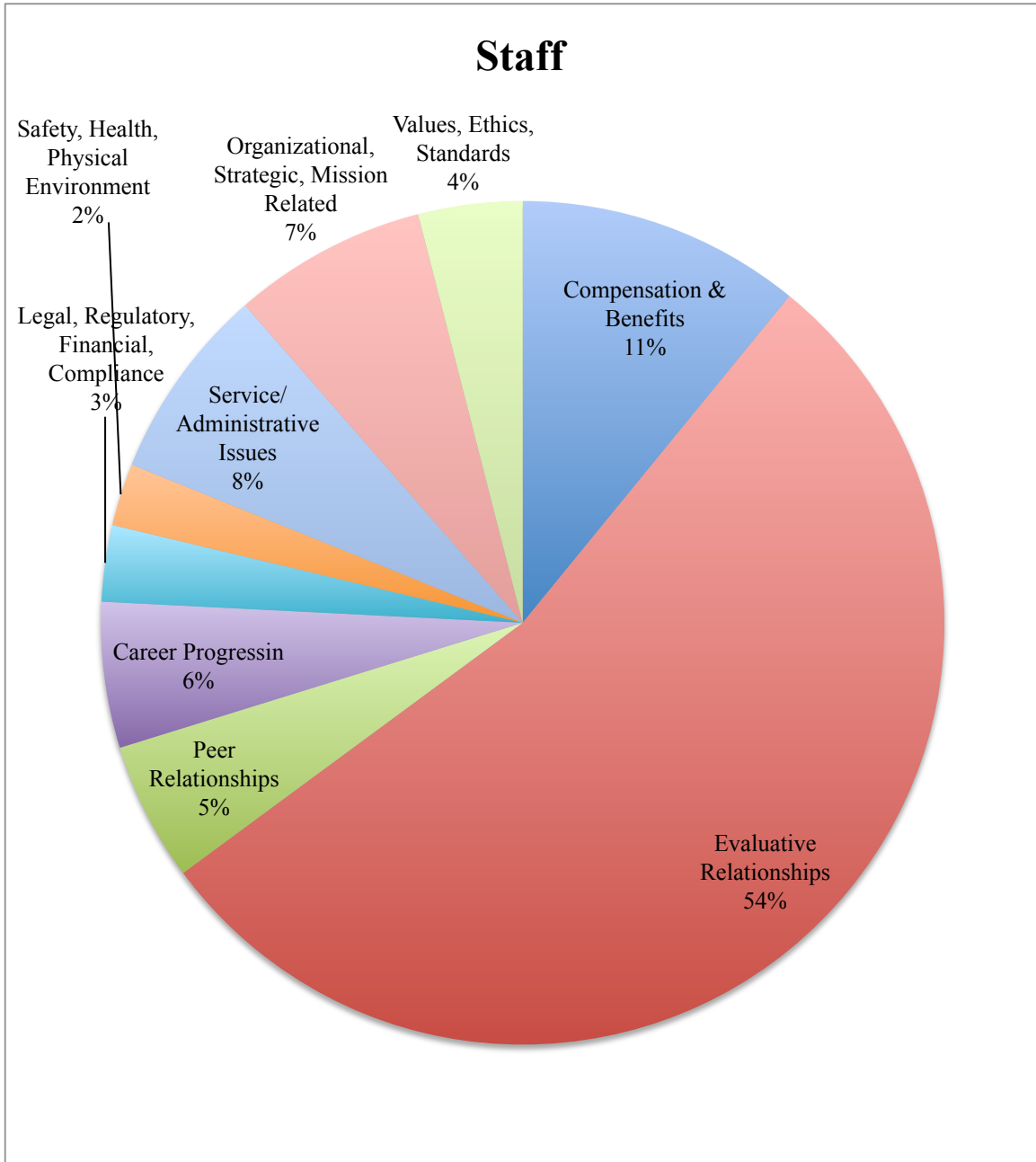


Chart I

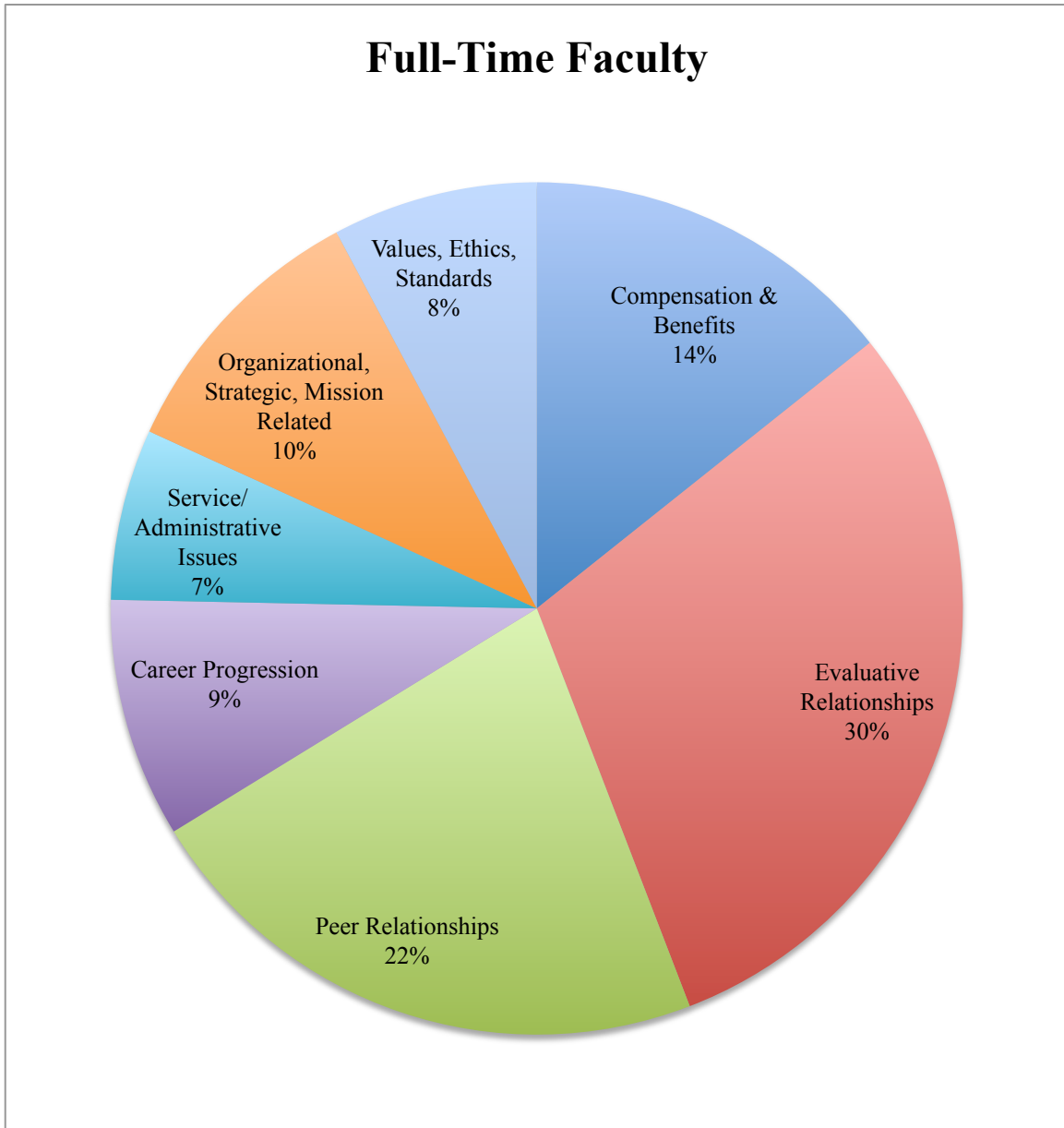


Chart J

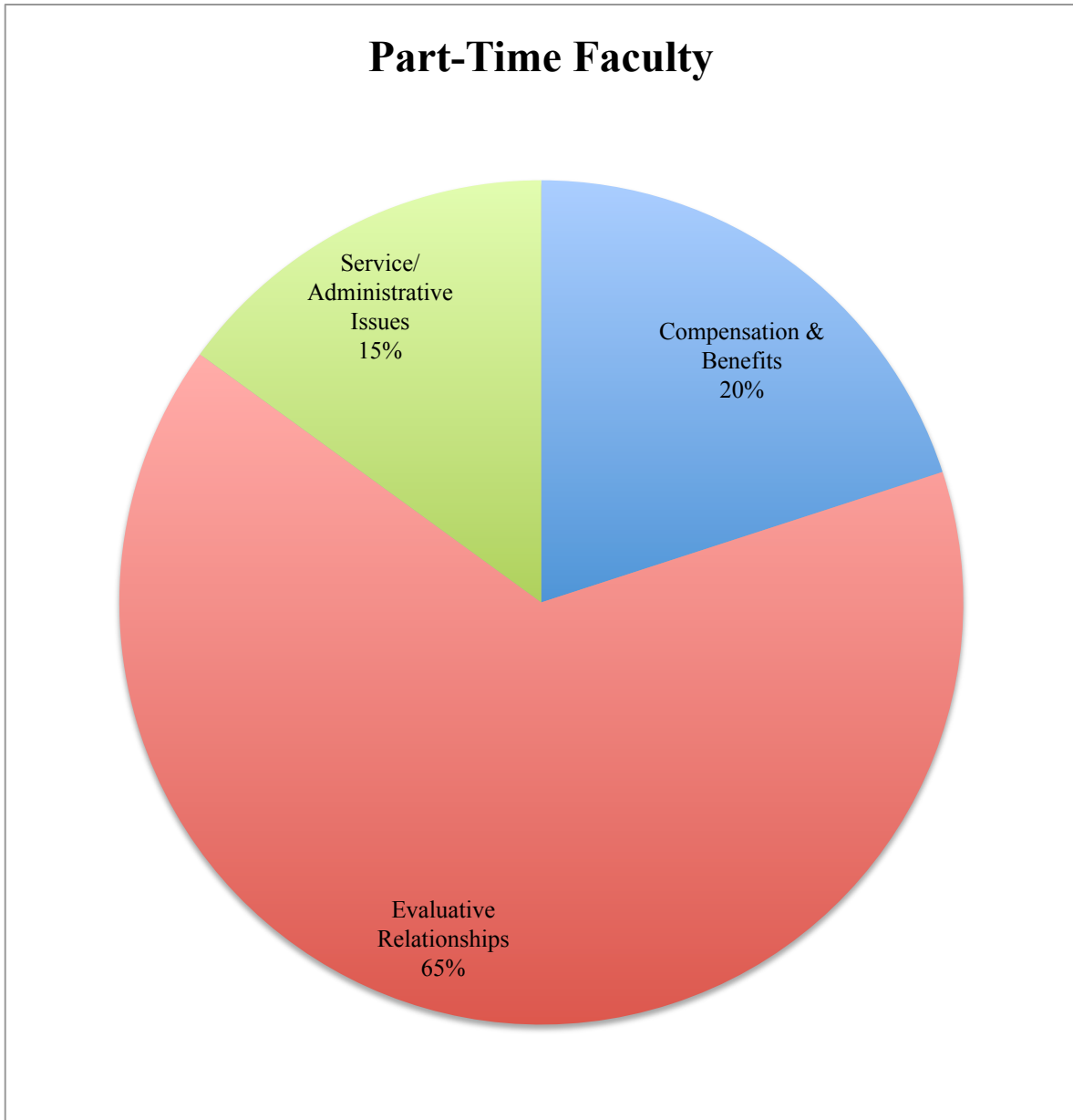
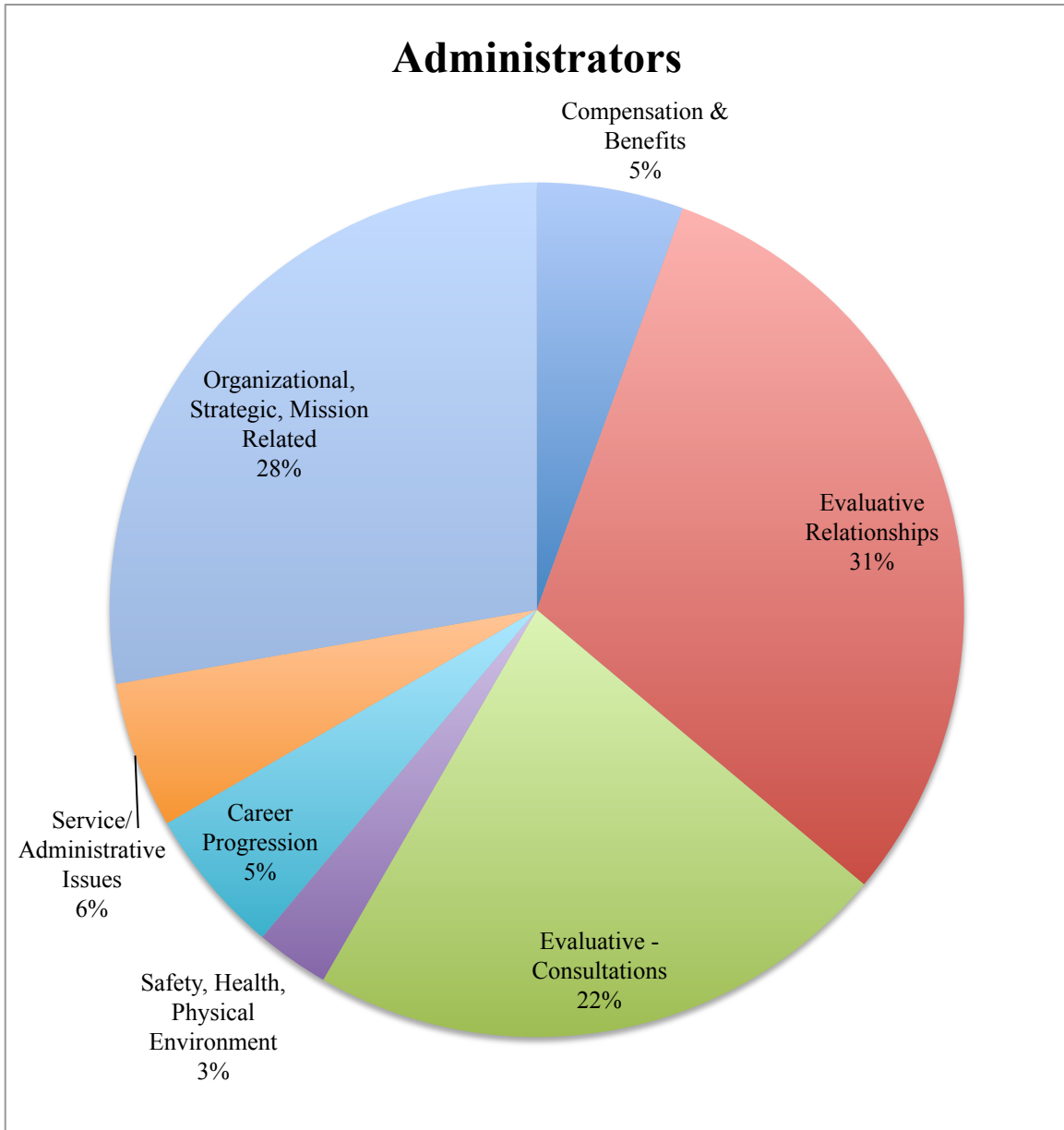


Chart K



Additional Information – By Division

Charts L, M, and N reflect the category of issues presented within each division.

Chart L

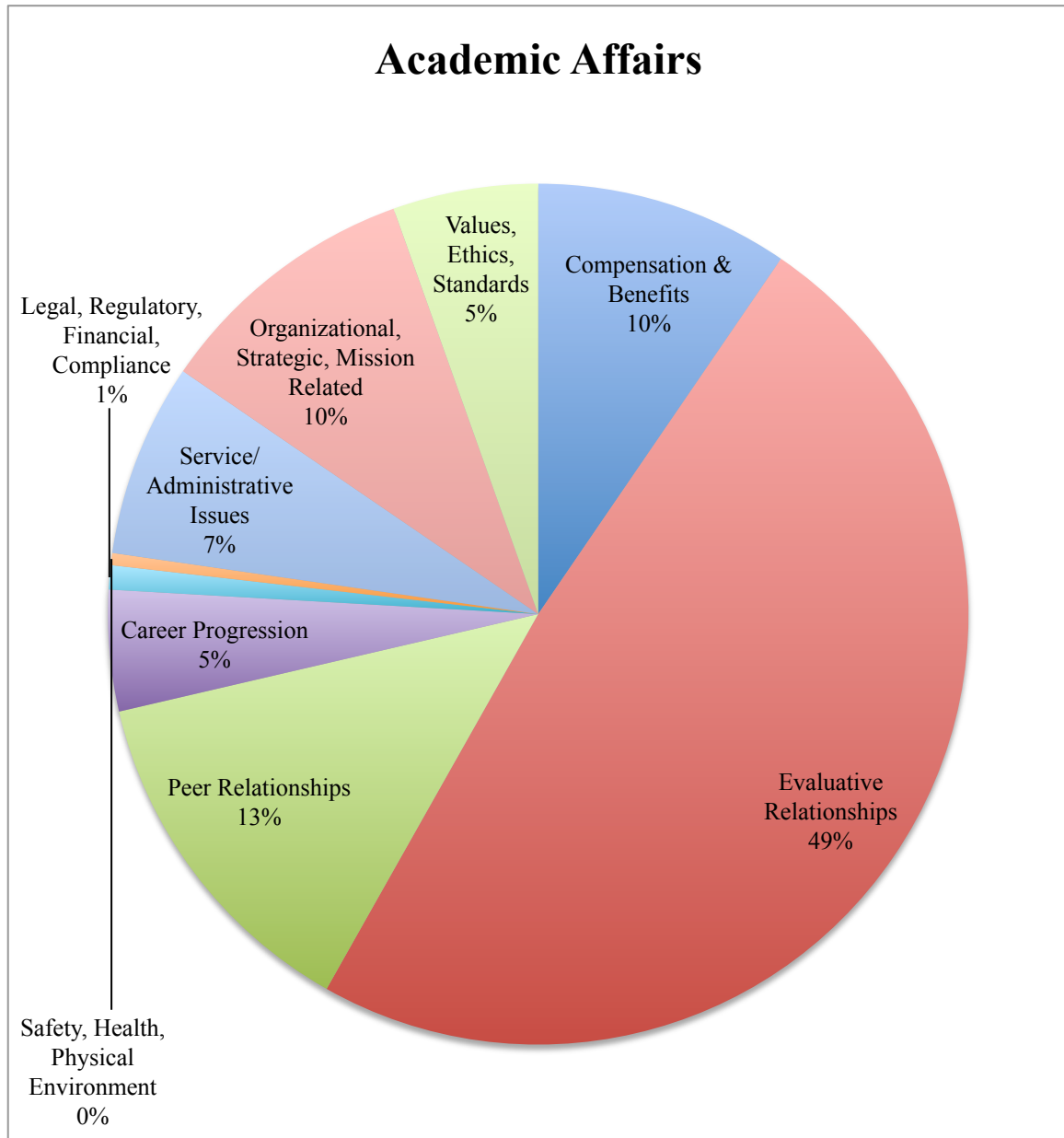


Chart M

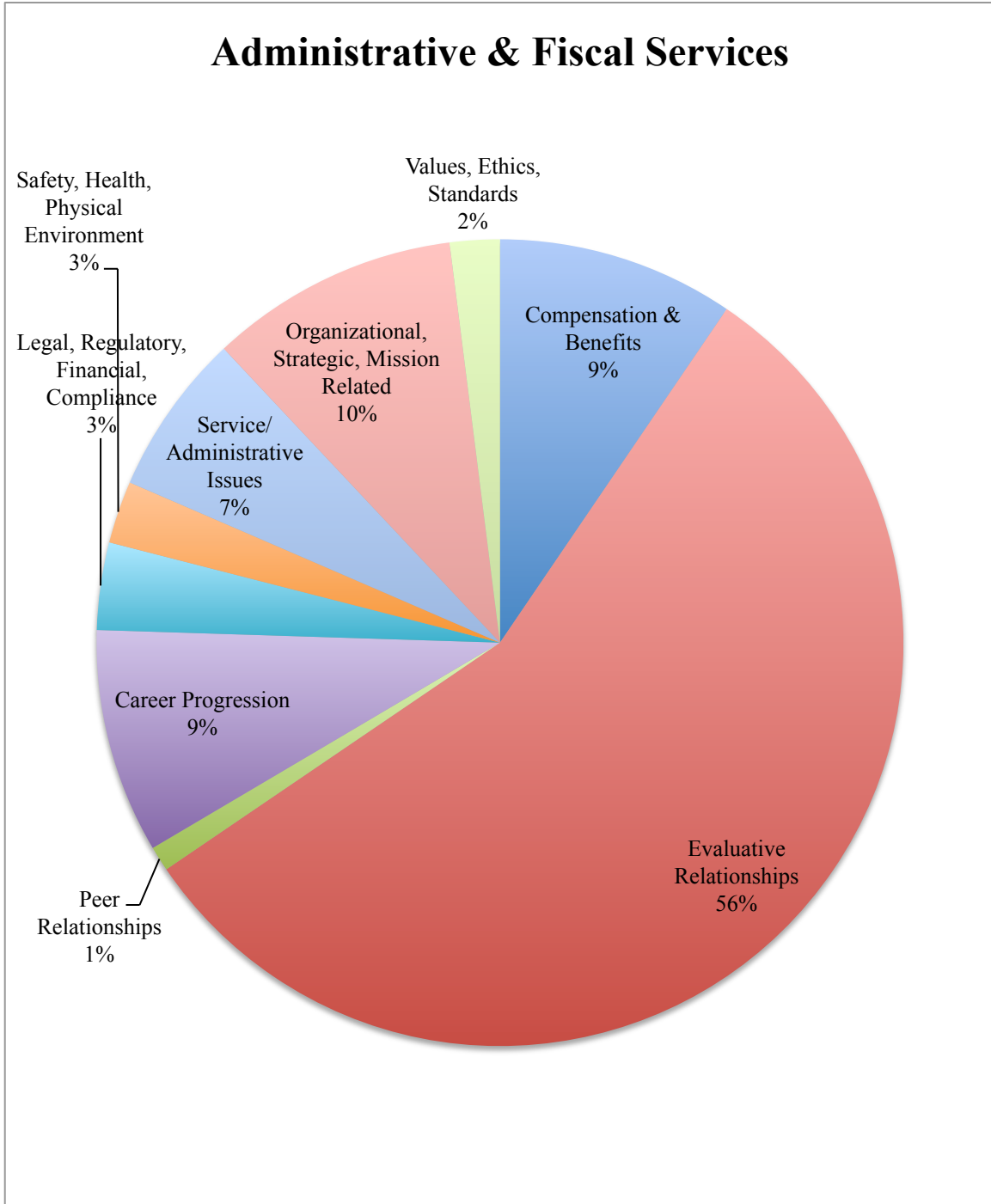
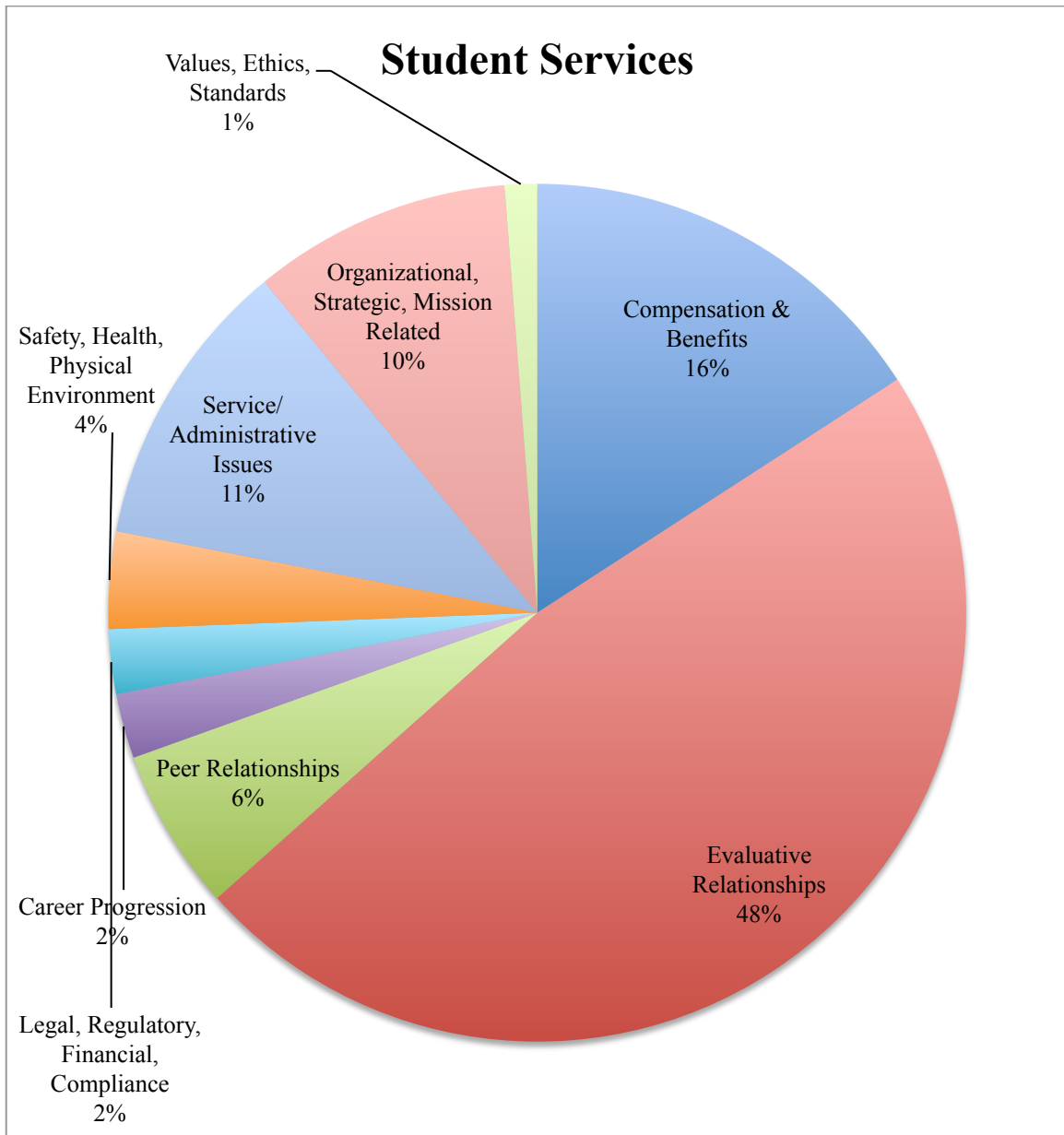


Chart N



CONCLUSION

The establishment of the Office of the Ombuds has provided visitors with assistance to identify and evaluate their options, and in many cases, resolve workplace issues and concerns. Almost without exception, units throughout the College worked collaboratively with the Office of the Ombuds when contacted to obtain information or collaboratively work to resolve issues. The ongoing support of President DeRionne Pollard, Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer Stephen Cain, governance and union leaders, and the College community is much appreciated and essential for the continued effectiveness of the Office of the Ombuds.

It is both a privilege and rewarding challenge to serve in this capacity.

—Sarah Miller Espinosa, Ombuds

Appendix A – IOA Uniform Reporting Categories

See www.montgomerycollege.edu/ombuds