

Appendix 1 to the Faculty Senate minutes of September 9, 2008

- April 3, 1982 Faculty Senate recommended the creation of a position called "Faculty Advisor"
- November 9, 1982 Prof. Randall Nelson was appointed as "Grievance Advisor." He held that position until April 11, 1989.
- September 12, 1989 Prof. Lawrence Dennis was appointed "Faculty/Staff Ombudsman. Following a review of the "Grievance Advisor" position by the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee of the Faculty Senate. He also began the practice of making annual verbal reports to the Faculty Senate. Prof. Dennis retired in Spring, 1996.
- October, 1996 Prof. Robt. Wolff was appointed as Prof. Dennis' replacement. He retired in 2001 but continued for another year while a search for his replacement was under way. Interestingly, his final recommendation to the Faculty Senate was that the position be increased from 1/4 time to 1/2 time due to the amount of work he was doing. The Faculty Senate discussed this and concurred, but decided to put the matter off until the new Chancellor had a role in choosing the new Faculty/Staff Ombudsman.
- October, 2002 Prof. Ed Shay was appointed.
- July 7, 2008 I met with our new Interim Chancellor, Samuel Goldman, to introduce myself. He had earlier requested my annual written report (a practice I began in 2006 at the request of Provost John Dunn), rather than wait until the traditional reporting time of early September.
- Chancellor Goldman informed me that he had decided to eliminate the position of Faculty/Staff Ombudsman and transfer the duties to the University Ombudsman, Lynn Connley. I suggested that it would be necessary to confer with the Faculty Senate, first, as they had created the position. He told me that he had, indeed, already met with the Executive Board. I thanked him and the University for their confidence in allowing me to work in such a trusted capacity and told him I thought it was the best job I'd ever had. We both agreed that I would continue until the end of Fall Semester, 2008 and would work with Lynn Connley to provide a smooth transition.
- September 9, 2008 Today I am honored, though saddened, to provide my final annual report to the Faculty Senate.

Each year I deal with perhaps 30 to 40 requests for assistance or information. Perhaps a dozen of those requests require a substantial amount of time, from a couple of weeks and a few meetings up to a case that took 18 months to resolve. These dozen cases are reported in some detail, albeit without any identifying

information, in my annual written report to the Chancellor. As I note in every report, one of the issues I wrestle with is how to effectively communicate the nature of the issues I deal with without betraying confidential information. My answer is to provide the Chancellor with a first-person, present-tense narrative while omitting any identifying confidential information.

In addition, I maintain office hours in Wood Hall each Tuesday and Thursday morning. Many of the meetings and phone conversations take place during office hours. However, I consider myself to be on 24-hour call, seven days a week and Becky Molina, the Secretary to the Faculty Senate knows to always provide my cell number to any caller trying to reach me. Often I also make phone calls or write e-mails or letters from my home or my faculty campus office. Meetings usually take place in the Faculty/Staff Ombudsman's office in Woody Hall, but also at other offices or conference rooms across campus or at off-campus locations. My workload is very sporadic, varying between periods of little activity and times when there may be a half-dozen very pressing issues in a single week. Records are kept in Wood Hall, though I try to limit documentation in favor of face to face conversation with disagreeing parties.

Ultimately, I see my role as facilitating communication to avoid grievances or legal action.

It has been my practice to inform all clients of the nature of my office. I tell clients that I will not meet with anyone else or call anyone without their permission. Also, I tell clients that their problem is their problem. I will assist in any way possible, but they are in command of their own progress toward resolving their problem. Finally, I stress my role as a neutral, confidential advisor.

In the end, I serve two potentially conflicting interests; the welfare of individual clients and the welfare of the University. I constantly try to strike a balance, often informing clients of what is policy and what is simply appropriate. Fairness is always my guiding principle. Access to a Faculty/Staff Ombudsman provides the University community with a sense that there is a neutral instrument in place that can cut through red tape and encourage fair resolutions. As a neutral partner, I think an ombudsman has a distinct advantage in mediating between parties. It is in this role that I think I've been most successful.

The "H" for my middle name is for "Holden," and, yes, I've often pondered the irony of my name in relation to Holden Caulfield, the protagonist of J.D. Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye." Caulfield saw himself as a catcher in the rye - while standing on the edge of a cliff in a field of rye as others played tag, his role was to catch those who strayed too close to the edge. I'm no longer a teenager, though, as I'm almost 61. I've had many jobs and I've worked continuously since I was 13. I finished my formal education at the young age of 23 and became a full professor at 38. I've had a wide variety of jobs but have worked primarily at SIU for the past 30+ years. However, my work as the Faculty/Staff Ombudsman has been the most satisfying and personally fulfilling job I've ever had. I know that each year I've saved the University thousands of dollars of legal expenses. But, more importantly, I've helped many people avoid the time-consuming and onerous grievance process and therefore have saved the University community from wasting hundreds of hours to provide grieving parties due process. Thus, I'd like to publicly thank the Faculty Senate for their faith in my performance and the opportunity to be your catcher in the rye. Thank you.