



**Ombuds Office Quarterly  
Summary of Activities  
April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024**

# Introduction

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This report summarizes the activities of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Ombuds Office in the second quarter of calendar year 2024.

In this quarter, we made several changes and improvements to our services based on the feedback from the UNLV community, including creating additional workshop offerings, revamping our appointment system, and increasing outreach.

The office's primary functions are to listen to concerns, educate on options and conflict resolution, provide mediation and facilitation services, and advocate for systemic change when needed. The [Ombuds Office website](#) has a complete list of the services and programs it offers; these range from informational sessions about the office itself to one-on-one conflict coaching to interactive workshops—in person or online—that promote productive conflict resolution.

UNLV's Ombuds Office is operated in accordance with the [International Ombuds Association \(IOA\) Code of Ethics](#) and [Standards of Practice](#). This entails embodying the fundamental principles of *independence* in structure and function; *impartiality*; *informality*, in not participating in any disciplinary or legal processes; and *confidentiality*.

My intention with this report is to increase awareness of the valuable services offered by the Ombuds Office. It is my hope that by sharing information about the office's functions and capabilities, more individuals will feel comfortable reaching out for assistance. If you are uncertain about the office's scope or have any questions, please contact us. Our team is here to support you through any challenges you may be facing.

Sincerely,

*David G. Schwartz*

David G. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Ombuds

University of Nevada, Las Vegas



## Overview

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This quarterly report provides a comprehensive overview of the visitor trends and common themes that the Ombuds Office addressed during the second quarter of calendar year 2024 (April 1 to June 30).

The Ombuds Office offers consultations, mediations, group facilitations, and educational programs such as workshops. During a consultation, individuals can meet confidentially with the Ombuds to discuss a concern. Mediations facilitate a voluntary and confidential discussion between two individuals. Group facilitation can be requested by a unit to discuss predetermined topics or have an open-ended conversation. Workshops and educational programs cover various interpersonal communication and conflict resolution topics and can be tailored to specific audiences. Internal outreach involves participating in campus events and other activities to increase awareness of the office's services.



The Ombuds Office is dedicated to maintaining transparency and accountability in all its activities. To achieve this, the office consistently publishes reports on its various initiatives and operations. These reports are easily accessible on the Ombuds Office [website](#), allowing stakeholders to stay informed about the office's work.

This commitment to openness involves the regular dissemination of information every quarter. Additionally, the office provides a comprehensive annual summary report in January of the following year.

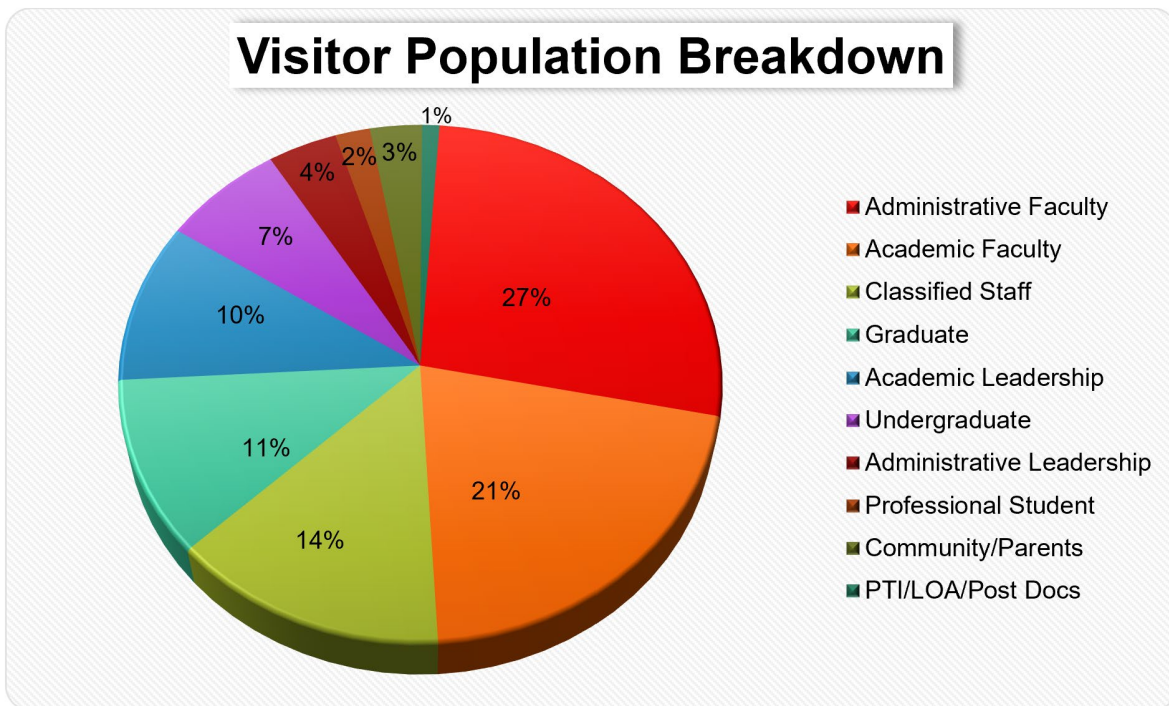
# Visitors and Contacts

A 'visitor' refers to an individual seeking personalized services from the Ombuds Office, which may include one-on-one meetings conducted either in person, over the phone, or remotely. "Visitors" do not include those who participate in workshops organized by the Ombuds Office.

A "contact" is a single interaction between the Ombuds and a visitor. A single visitor may have multiple contacts with the office over the quarter, which speaks to our ongoing support to visitors.

This quarter's visitors fell thin the following categories:

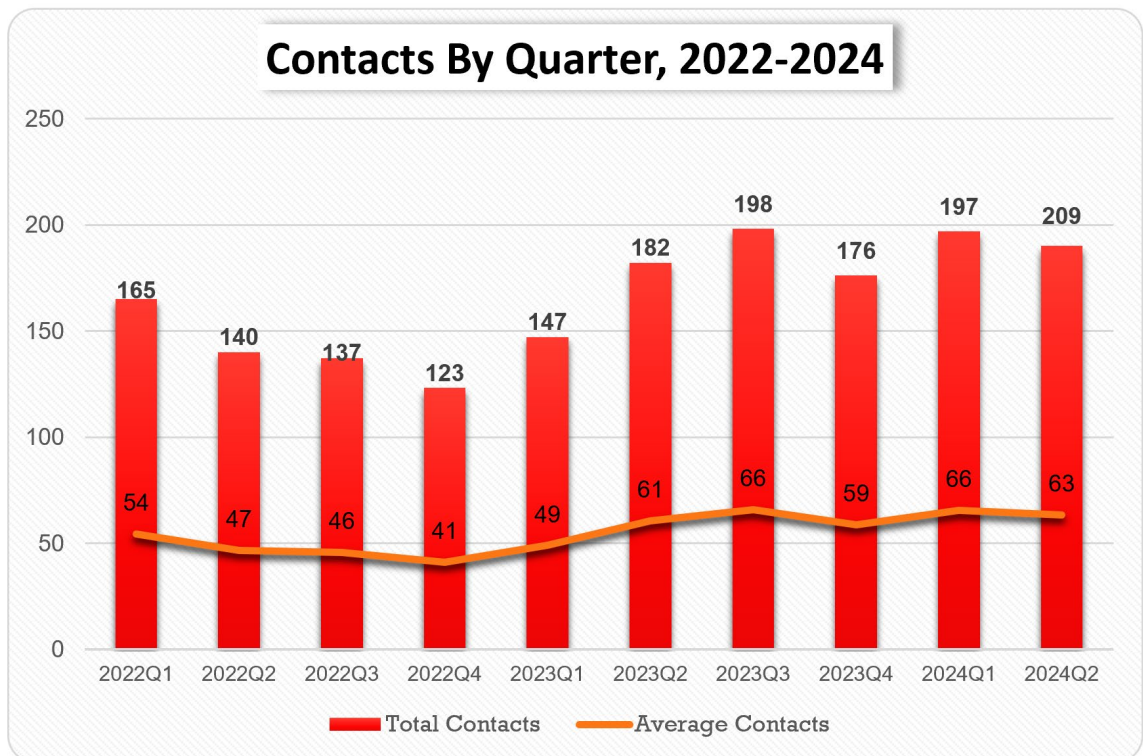
- 27 percent Administrative Faculty
- 21 percent Academic Faculty
- 14 percent Classified Staff
- 11 percent Graduate Students
- 10 percent Academic Leadership
- 7 percent Undergraduate Students
- 4 percent Admin Leadership
- 3 percent Parents/Community
- 1 percent combined PTIs, LOA, and Postdocs



The Ombuds Office recorded 209 contacts this quarter. These interactions include inquiries, consultations, and facilitative support provided. Compared to last year's second quarter with 182 contacts, this ~15% increase indicates a continuous and growing usage of our services by the UNLV community.



Approximately 25% of interactions this quarter involved returning visitors. Their decision to return for further discussion underscores the quality of support and guidance the office offers to all. This positive trend highlights how effectively our services meet the needs of visitors.

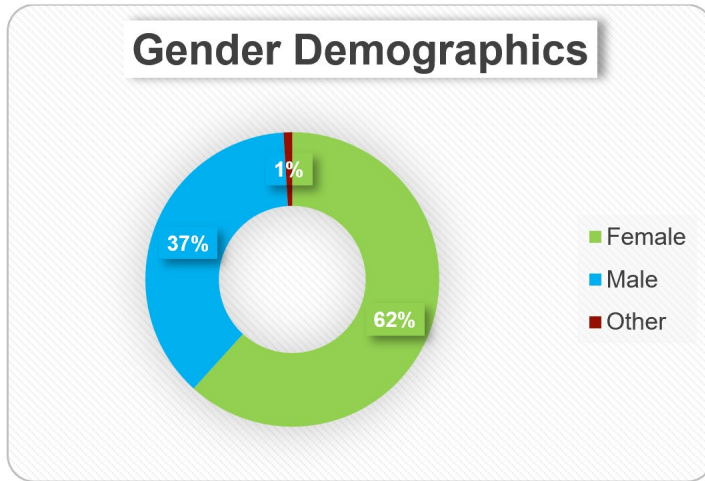


From 2022 Q1 to 2024 Q2, the average number of contacts per quarter has trended upwards. Starting from an average of 54 contacts in 2022 Q1, there was a slight decline through 2022, reaching a low of 41 contacts in Q4 of that year. In 2023, the average contacts started to increase again, peaking at 66 in Q3 before a small dip to 59 in Q4. The upward trajectory continued in 2024, with the average contacts reaching 66 in Q1 and further increasing to 68 in Q2. This may indicate even more growth in the future.

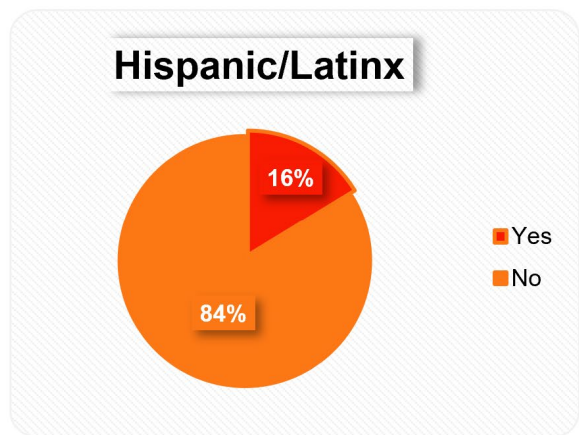
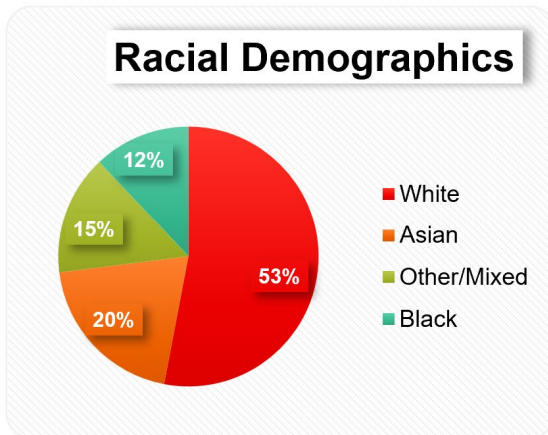


# Visitor Demographics

In the second quarter of 2024, the office experienced a shift in the gender demographics of its visitors compared to the same period in the previous year. Specifically, 62% of visitors identified as female, which marks a 10% decrease from the 72% recorded in the second quarter of 2023. Conversely, the proportion of male visitors increased to 37% in 2024, reflecting a 13% rise from 24% in 2023. The percentage of visitors identifying as non-binary remained consistent at 1% for both years.

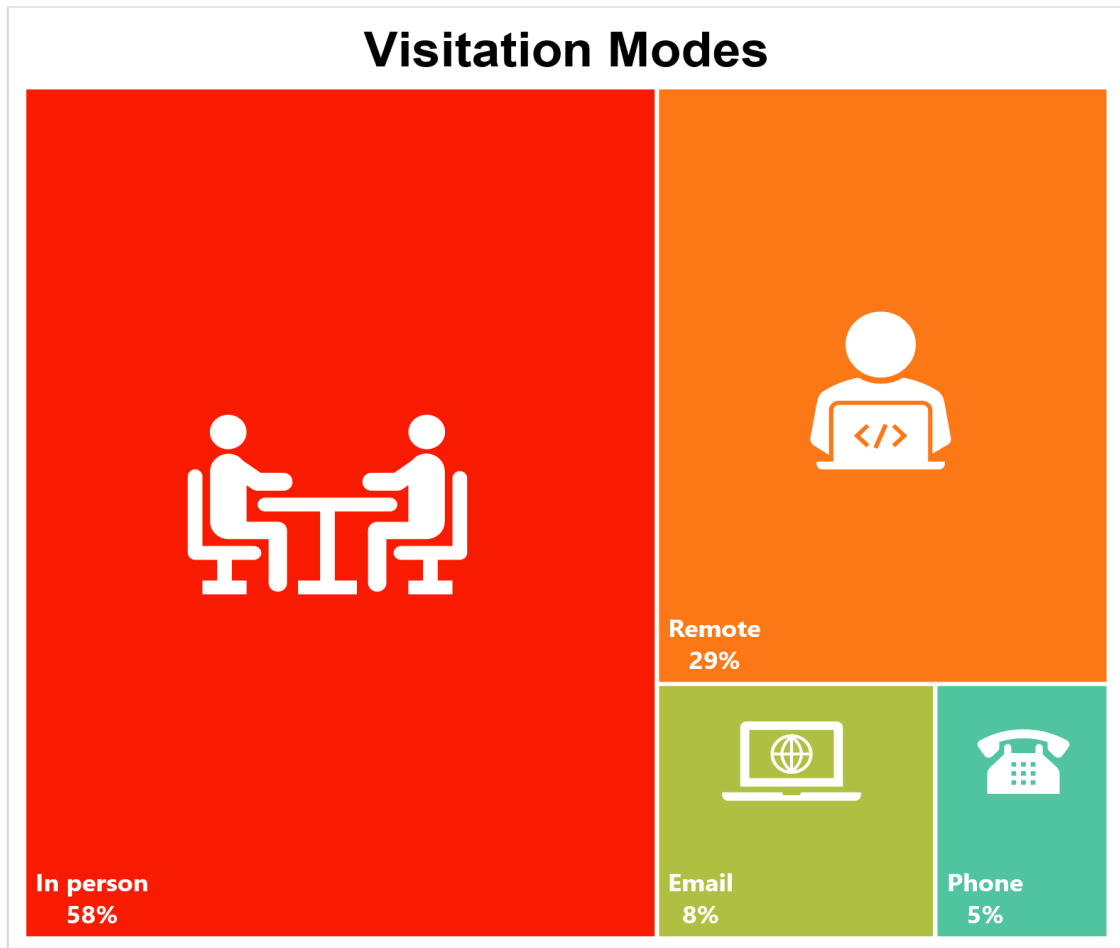


In this quarter, there were noticeable changes in the demographic composition of visitors. The percentage of visitors identifying as White increased slightly to 53%, continuing to be the largest group served. The proportion of visitors identifying as Asian rose to 20%, indicating a 5% increase from the previous year. However, the percentage of visitors identifying as Black decreased to 12% from the prior year's 17%. Those from other or mixed-race backgrounds constituted 15 percent of the visitor population, a slight decline from the previous year. Meanwhile, the percentage of visitors identifying as Hispanic or Latinx increased to 16 percent. These changes year over year highlight a shifting demographic landscape among the visitor population, with notable increases in the proportions of Asian and Hispanic or Latinx visitors.



## Visitation Modes

How did these visitors use the Ombuds Office? Primarily, in four ways.



A majority of this quarter's contacts, 58%, preferred in-person meetings. This percentage aligns with the trends observed in previous quarters. People seem to prefer seeing the Ombuds in person.

Twenty-nine percent of contacts were virtual, a convenient and flexible option for visitors who may not be local or have time constraints.

Eight percent of contacts were via email, and 5% opted to use the phone as their preferred mode of communication. It is important to note that both email and chat are generally discouraged as mediums for confidential discussions, as they cannot guarantee the same level of security and privacy as other communication channels.



## Top Visitor Concerns by Category

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To safeguard the confidentiality of its visitors, the Ombuds Office tracks the concerns brought forward through non-specific demographics. This method allows for the identification of common trends and patterns within the campus community without disclosing specific individual details.

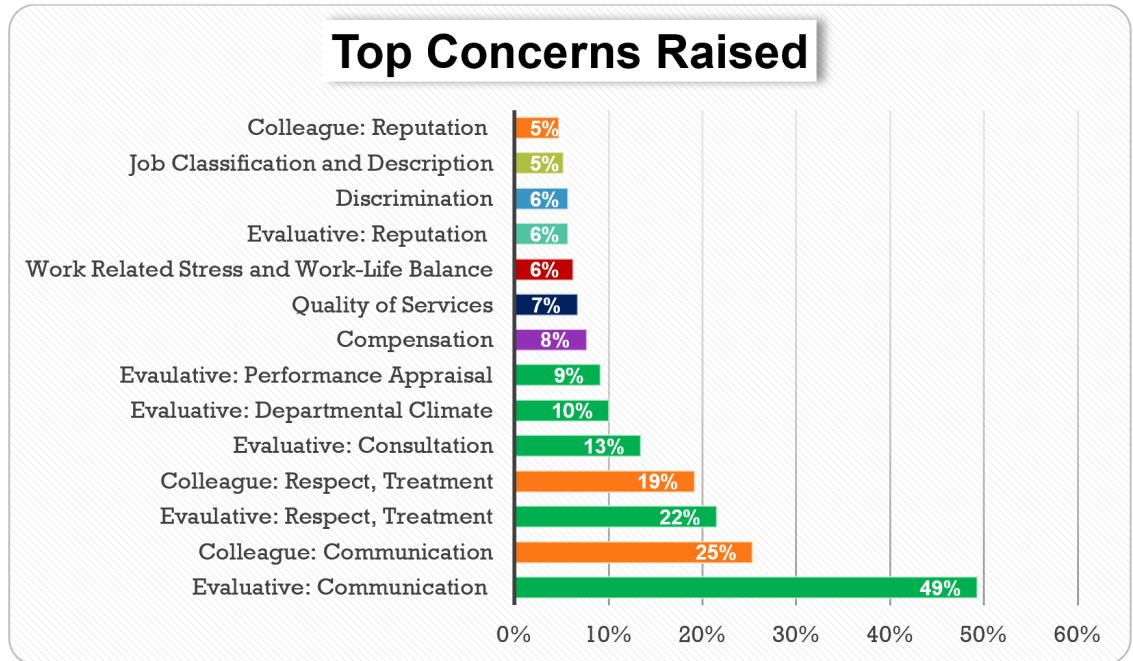
Adhering to IOA best practices, the ombuds logs those concerns using the IOA's Uniform Reporting Categories (URC). The URCs reflect concerns typically brought to ombuds offices around the world. These issues are classified under nine main categories:

1. Compensation & Benefits
2. Evaluative Relationships
3. Peer and Colleague Relationships
4. Career Progression and Development
5. Legal, Regulatory, Financial, and Compliance
6. Safety, Health, and Physical Environment
7. Services/Administrative Issues
8. Organizational, Strategic, and Mission Related
9. Values, Ethics, and Standards

Within those groupings, concerns are further organized into dozens of discrete classifications. For example, an issue relating to an employee's job classification is identified as **1.a**; a concern about communication between an employee by their supervisor is **2.e**; comments and behaviors perceived as insensitive by peers is **3.g**; questions about career development, coaching and mentoring are **4.k**.

Visitors often report multiple concerns, in which case multiple category codes are recorded.





Communication remains a significant concern, accounting for nearly half of all reported issues. Specifically, 49 percent of visitors raised concerns about **Evaluative Communication** and 25 percent about **Communication with Colleagues**. **Respect and Treatment** are critical concerns, with 22 percent highlighting issues at the evaluative level and 19 percent at the colleague level. **Evaluative Consultation** at 13 percent is a new prominent category, suggesting that supervisors are reaching out proactively to address potential issues. **Departmental Climate** concerns represented 10 percent of contacts. The **Performance Appraisal** process was a concern for 9 percent of contacts, who mostly had concerns about annual evaluations.

**Compensation** was another notable concern, with 8 percent expressing concerns about pay and benefits. The **Quality of Services** provided by the organization was a concern for 7 percent of respondents, reflecting potential issues with service delivery standards. Six percent of contacts sought support and resources to manage **Work-Related Stress and Work-Life Balance**, underscoring the importance of employee well-being in maintaining a productive workforce.

**Reputation** concerns, both at the evaluative level (6 percent) and among colleagues (5 percent), suggest that people are concerned with how they are perceived. **Discrimination**, raised by 6 percent of respondents, indicates issues related to fairness and equality in the workplace. **Job Classification and Description** concerns, mentioned by 5 percent of contacts, chiefly include role clarity and job expectations.

Overall, the data indicates a need for focused efforts to improve communication, respect, compensation, and the overall work environment to enhance employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

## Workshops, Presentations, & Facilitated Discussions

In the second quarter, the Ombuds Office organized and facilitated a variety of engaging events to support our campus community. These included nine interactive workshops and guided discussions, as well as 10 informational outreach events. Throughout the quarter, participants had the opportunity to explore various topics related to enhancing communication and conflict resolution skills.



The workshops and discussions covered areas such as interpersonal communication, effective listening, recognizing different conflict styles, understanding group conflicts, and addressing interpersonal conflicts. Whether you are seeking to improve your communication skills, resolve conflicts, or enhance your understanding of various conflict styles, these events offer a wealth of knowledge and support. Explore the full list of workshops and informational sessions on our [website](#).



## Spotlight: Guided Conversations

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A guided conversation or facilitated discussion, led by the Ombuds, helps teams navigate and resolve a wide range of challenges, from the interpersonal to the institutional. The process begins with the Ombuds meeting individually with all members of the unit or team, including leadership, to gather background information and “learn the language.” Following this, a brief survey is sent out to all unit members, inviting them to discuss the unit’s issues and suggest potential solutions. This

information is shared with the unit without attribution. This transparency fosters a shared understanding of the issues and potential solutions, creating a foundation for collaborative problem-solving.

The core of the guided conversation is a two-hour discussion where the agenda is shaped by the feedback provided in the survey responses. Team members, not the Ombuds or any external figures, drive the conversation and agree on solutions or methods for achieving them. If no immediate solutions are found, actionable steps are identified for the next 30 days. After the discussion, the Ombuds Office solicits feedback on the experience and provides a summary of the discussion and any agreements reached. Follow-up sessions may be arranged.

This structured, confidential process ensures all participants can speak freely, fostering an environment of trust and openness, and empowering staff and leadership to take ownership of the changes, leading to sustainable and impactful outcomes.

## In Closing

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The Ombuds Office serves UNLV by providing an informal channel for conflict resolution and strives to increase collegiality, happiness, and satisfaction on campus.

By sharing our work, we hope to foster a deeper appreciation for the value of that work and to help people feel more comfortable with using the office.

The Ombuds Office continues to develop ways to serve the UNLV community, through individual consultations, group work, and workshops. If you have any questions, or are interested in having the Ombuds work with you to develop a workshop, facilitated discussion, or other programs for your unit, please contact us at [ombuds@unlv.edu](mailto:ombuds@unlv.edu).

For more information about Ombuds Office programs and services, please visit the [Ombuds Office website](#).



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