

Ombuds Office and Ombudspersons of CU FA

What is Ombudsperson responsible for?

The Ombudsperson is an independent body of the faculty addresses the issues of ethics, equal treatment and opportunities, discrimination, and conflict situations at CU FA. The office provides support for students and employees of the faculty.

You may contact the office via:

- email or phone,
- meeting in person at an arranged date and time or visiting during the office hours,
- FaceUp platform.

The Ombuds Office does not only assess problematic situation but also applies preventive mechanisms and establishes safe and supportive academical environment and education, for example by publishing recommended practices (currently only available in Czech).

In what matters can you contact the Ombuds Office of CU FA?

You may contact the Ombuds Office when you encounter any of the following issues:

- unethical treatment in CU FA academia or suspected violation of the Code of Ethics,

- discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexual, religious, or political orientation, health (including psychological and psychiatric disorders), ableism, ageism, or economic situation,
- inappropriate and unequal treatment, bullying, mobbing (collective bullying), bossing (bullying from superiors), sexual harassment or violence, and other cases of inappropriate and unequal behaviour,
- inactivity of bodies or positions who should take action (e.g., the reporting person addressed a particular university body, such as the Student Affairs Office, an institute, or the Vice-Dean, and there was no reaction or solution of the problem from their side),
- You may also contact the Ombuds Office with suggestions or recommendations for improvement.

Report Assessment Procedure

Submission of Report

You may submit a report via **the FaceUp platform**, which allows anonymous submitting. Otherwise, you may address the Ombuds Office or Ombudsperson via e-mail, phone, or during the consultation hours. From the first contact, the reporting person should receive a proposal for further action in 7 days.

Arranging an Appointment and Its Content

After the initial contact, **it is usually advisable to have an in-person meeting at the Ombuds Office**, but it is also possible to have an online meeting. The Ombuds Office often needs to ask for further information and provide the reporting person with further information so that they can decide how to deal with the reported conduct. **Each person's situation is unique**, as are their needs, and so **the Ombuds Office treats each person individually**. There is, however, a simple framework of procedure that is followed at each initial meeting.

The goal of the in-person meeting is to maintain a safe space.

The Ombudsperson may take notes during the appointment, which are used only for further questioning, not for gathering information about the particular person. The Ombuds Office is bound by confidentiality, and everything said in the meeting is confidential unless otherwise agreed.

It is entirely up to the reporting person to decide how in-depth they want to report the conduct. **It is not necessary to hear names or the names of specific workplaces at the first meeting.**

The reporting person is given enough time to describe their situation first. Then, the Ombudsperson and the reporting person identify their expectations, and the office outlines further steps. **It is up to the reporting person to decide how to proceed.** Even after the meeting (or at any later time), they can always choose not to take any further actions and stop the assessment of the report.

Options of Further Action

Any further steps the Ombuds Office proposes or chooses are based on the will of the reporting person. That may include contacting the person in charge of a particular body of the faculty (so-called early conflict resolution method), or the Ombudsperson may meet with the identified person to discuss the situation. It is also possible to hold a mediation meeting (even in a separate format), to mediate an apology meeting, or to seek another remedial mechanism. In some cases, referring the matter to Faculty Management for further action is necessary. As noted above, everything is done with the approval of the reporting person.

After the report is assessed, the **Final Report of the Assessment** is prepared by the Ombuds Office. **All interested persons or parties have the opportunity to comment on its text.** This report is then submitted to the Dean for information and possible further action. **The Dean and her**

authorised persons are also bound by confidentiality. However, reports include as little sensitive information as possible and, ideally, **no identifying information** that could compromise the protection of the reporting parties. The assessment should occur within 30 days or, in the case of more complex reports, 60 days. If the parties opt for long-term actions or there is a larger number of persons involved and these deadlines cannot be met, the Dean needs to be informed, and at least a brief interim report should be prepared, which will be provided to the reporting persons. Alternatively, the reporting persons shall be informed by other means (e.g., by the head of the particular body).

Vision

*The Faculty of Arts, Charles University, creates, maintains, and provides all students and employees with a **healthy, supportive, and positive environment** where the values of **human dignity, rights, non-violence, fair play, cooperation, and dialogue** are protected and developed.*

Mission

The Faculty of Arts, Charles University, strives to create an **environment** where, apart from acquiring excellent educational and academic **results**, **it will be a pleasure to study and work**, and the students and employees will feel **safe, free, and equal** during their study and work obligations and goals.

Pillars of work

Our work is structured around four pillars, which are also our

goals that the office advocates for at the faculty and tries to achieve them.

Transparency

- **Open and clear definition of the values and goals** via internal regulations, including amendments of processes and **bringing into accord internal regulations with Charles University Code of Ethics** and other regulations,
- **the commitment of the faculty** as a whole and its management **to the values and goals** by statements of the Faculty Management, support of activities in this area, participation in institutional support, and collaboration with other key players in this area,
- **clearly defining what kind of environment the faculty expects, creates, and will support** by addressing specific problematic situations, **training, workshops, educational events, information packages** for the broadest audience and special ones for particular target groups,
- **observing confidentiality** and spreading awareness of the Ombuds Office activities, cases handled, and actions taken or recommendations made.

Prevention

- **Sensitivity to the needs of the reporting** persons and respect for their experience using various tools, for example, questionnaires, surveys, audits, field information, or ongoing anonymous reporting,
- **a system of values, objectives, and processes is developed based on knowledge of the environment and the analysis and uncovering of mechanisms of existing phenomena** that are perceived as problematic, using **examples of good practice from other institutions,**
- the system of values, objectives, and processes,

- including possible sanctions and consequences, is widely known and understood. All persons** have sufficient information about **what actions and behaviour** are expected of them to comply with the internal rules,
- the implementation of the various preventive measures takes into account the knowledge acquired in this area and **offers the broadest possible range of tools for the individuals concerned to deal with it** (dialogue, feedback, anonymous reporting, accompaniment of the persons concerned, confidential complaint box, consultation, open door policy, restriction of non-transparent conduct, support groups and circles, training, workshops, lectures, discussions, possibility to ask questions and demand answers, setting rules for establishing intimate relations between persons in different hierarchical positions, etc.).

Safety

- All persons have **sufficient information** about their **rights, protection options, and specific procedures** for dealing with problematic situations,
- the system offers **a safe environment** for dealing with different types of problems and situations. The **reporting persons have to give their consent** to proceed,
- **the procedure is based on the articulated needs of the persons concerned**, e.g., anonymous reporting, mediation of dialogue, the possibility of non-participation in the investigation, the offer of mediation of other support services, such as psychological, psychotherapeutic assistance, cooperation with the non-profit sector, and providers of social and legal services,
- **the process of finding a solution** is based on the needs of **the reporting persons, which can vary** from clarifying positions, condemning inappropriate behaviour of the person responsible to possibly imposing appropriate

consequences and sanctions or obligations.

Restorative, Empathic, and Participatory approach

- Setting up the whole system of prevention, problem-solving, and creating a safe environment is done on the basis of the independence of the Ombudsperson position, articulation of the needs of individual target groups, and through dialogue of all parties,
- the design of the sanctioning system includes **elements of restorative conflict resolution**, including mediating dialogue, imposing training or courses to strengthen social or pedagogical competencies, etc.,
- **responsibilities and competencies** are clearly defined and respected at all levels of the academic hierarchy,
- **dialogue is encouraged and developed between all parties**: students, staff, academics, faculty bodies, and the academic administration, including voluntary and informal societies or ad hoc groups.

Contacts and Office Hours of the Ombuds Office

Reporting platform FaceUp

ombuds@ff.cuni.cz

room S160

nám. Jana Palacha 1/2, 110 00 Prague 1

Mgr. Pavla Špondrová

pavla.spondrova@ff.cuni.cz

+420 778 532 153

Mondays 3:00–5:00 pm (by phone/email arrangement during summer

holiday)

Mgr. Ing. Tomáš Pavlas

tomas.pavlas@ff.cuni.cz

+420 771 516 771

Tuesdays 10:00 am – 12:00 noon (by phone/email arrangement during summer holiday)



Mgr. et Mgr. Pavla Špondrová

Ombudswoman of CU FA

CV

Pavla Špondrová comes from Brno and lives with her family in Prague. She studied sociology, political science, and law. She worked at the Office of the Government in the Human Rights Section, and during the Presidency of the Czech Republic in the Council of the EU in 2009, she negotiated for the EU at the Council of Europe and the UN. After her parental leave, she led the "22% Towards Equality" project on equal pay at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic. She worked as a judicial assistant and a law clerk and is now a lawyer. She has long been working with the non-profit sector (e.g., the League of Human Rights, the Forum 50%, Open Society) and academia (e.g., the Centre for Gender and Science, the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, or Gender Studies at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University) She participates in meetings of government advisory bodies and trains in the field of human rights and equal treatment. She loves people, her family, meaningful leisure time, connecting adult and child worlds, sports, politics, culture and faith, truth, love and hope... and freedom and equality.



Mgr. Ing. Tomáš Pavlas

Ombudsman of CU FA

CV

Tomáš Pavlas graduated in cybernetics at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering CTU in Prague and, after several years, in Gender Studies at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University. For over twenty years, he has been working on issues related to the development of civil society and political and democratic culture in the context of gender

equality. For the last ten years, he has been working for the NGO Open Society, under which he initiated the Genderman initiative, a safe space for critical reflection on shared ideas about masculinity. Pavlas is a member of the Government Council for Gender Equality. For ten years, he taught a course in Men's Studies at the Gender Studies department at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University. He has been involved in the development of the Gender Audit Standard and other strategic and methodological materials. He continuously publishes related topics in the media. He has faith in the words written in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms introduction: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." He would like to emphasize dignity in particular and is glad that he can support it with his personal assistance through his involvement at CU FA. He recharges his energy with his family and friends, especially in the mountains and by the sea.