

Hospitality Services - University of Guelph

Job Description

Hospitality Services Food Ombudsperson

Description:

The Office of the Ombudsperson provides an open, impartial and easily accessible channel for two-way communication between Hospitality Services and the students, faculty and staff who use its services at the University of Guelph. Through this office, information is passed on, opinions are expressed and recommendations and suggestions are forwarded to those who can act upon them.

To be effective the Ombudsperson must consciously develop an attitude of impartiality in all dealings with the various segments of the university community. The personal integrity of the incumbent is of the utmost importance in order to maintain the credibility of the position.

The Ombudsperson is in the unique position of knowing the positions of all the various groups with vested interests in Hospitality Services. This broad knowledge should be used to initiate positive action and to complement the efforts of existing bodies. This proactive function differs from the traditional reactive orientation of an Ombudsperson.

Terms:

Ombudsperson means the *Hospitality Services Ombudsperson*

HSAC stands for the *Hospitality Services Advisory Committee*.

HSAC consists of individuals from all areas of the university community. In total there are 26 voting members and various non-voting members who primarily act as resources during discussions and meetings. On HSAC, the voting members consist of: fifteen (15) students that represent various Hall Councils in the student residences on campus, three (3) Interhall Council representatives, two (2) off-campus student representatives, a representative from OVC Student Federations, a Graduate Student Association representative, a representative from the Faculty Association, a representative for the University Centre administration, a staff member from Student Housing Services (SHS) and a representative from the Steelworkers Local 4120. In addition to the voting members, the non-voting members of the committee include the: Secretary, Ombudsperson, Executive Director of Hospitality Services, Chairperson, Student Nutrition Awareness Program (SNAP) Coordinators, and all of the Hospitality Services management staff.

HSAC, Hospitality Services and the Ombudsperson work closely together to ensure the smooth operation of Hospitality Services for all students, staff and faculty. HSAC, as a whole, meets biweekly. The 5 Sub-Committees of HSAC, who also meet on a biweekly basis are: Financial/Pricing, Ombudsperson Selection & Direction, Menu Planning, Communications/Environmental, and Retail Planning.

Responsibilities:

1. To familiarize themselves extensively with the operational and organizational functions of Hospitality Services. This familiarization must include:
 - (a) Tours of all food and retail outlets, and meetings with the individual Managers in order to acquire an understanding of each operation. These tours should be done within the first month of the fall semester.
 - (b) Meeting with the following within the first two weeks of the fall semester.:
 - (i) Executive Director of Hospitality Services
 - (ii) Assistant Director, Finance
 - (iii) Assistant Director, Information Systems
 - (iv) Assistant Director, Food & Retail Operations
 - (v) Assistant Director, Community Services
 - (c) Meet with the SNAP Coordinator before the end of the winter semester, in which elected, to ensure open lines of communication are established.
 - (d) Reviewing all of the previous Ombudsperson's files.
 - (e) Attending and helping to organize any excursions to other institutions to look at other hospitality services.
2. Be aware of all current and developing issues pertaining to Hospitality Services.
3. To establish effective communication with all parties on campus who are using Hospitality Services' facilities through the use of any appropriate means of advertising, appearances and active participation in central events.
4. To familiarize themselves with the existing channels for the processing of both informational enquiries and formal grievances. To assess grievances from members of the University community who feel that they have not been justly treated in their particular circumstances in matters pertaining to Hospitality Services. Once assessed, inappropriate enquiries must be redirected to the appropriate person/area, while justified grievances must be thoroughly investigated. Redress shall then be sought in the event that a grievance merits consideration that was not accounted for under existing policies and procedures.
5. The incumbent, along is to meet with all Interhall Council members and SHS Residence Life Team, during their training sessions in August, to explain the position and hand out any necessary information for promotion.
6. Spend one meal period during the first month the fall semester at each dining location greeting students and introducing oneself as the Ombudsperson.
7. Dining Hall shirts should be designed and ordered by August in order to arrive for the first HSAC meeting.
8. To act as an advisor, resource person, and non-voting member for HSAC.
9. To report to HSAC any initiatives or programs that he/she is undertaking that falls within his/her realm of responsibility.
10. To submit a formal report from the Office of the Ombudsperson to HSAC at the end of the Fall and Winter semesters, outlining and giving a review of progress and initiatives completed thus far.

11. Responsible for maintaining Ombudsperson files, ensuring a solid base for the next Ombudsperson to work from and updating the "Ombudsperson Transition Manual".
12. The Ombudsperson will prepare the agenda for and chair all Ombudsperson Selection & Direction Sub-Committee meetings. The Ombudsperson will attend other sub-committee meetings when necessary.
13. Attend and supervise a minimum of four dining hall surveys per semester at the various Hospitality Services dining halls on campus. It is the Ombudsperson's responsibility to present results at the next HSAC meeting and to discuss results with the appropriate management team member.
14. Must conduct one survey that examines Hospitality Services as a whole annually that will be sent out online.
15. Must eat at least once a week at the Pit and LA Café, Creelman, UC, Prairie and Mountain; twice a month at Gryphs, Pages, the Daily Grind, OVC, and Eastside Variety; once a month at the Grab'n Go's including Macks, MacDonald Institute Coffee Shop, Tim Horton's at the Arena, Williams at the Library, the Brass Taps, the Bullring, Second Cup in the Atrium, the Animal Science coffee cart and OVC Second Cup; and once a semester to use the services of all Off Campus locations.
16. Responsible to ensure that Dining Hall Managers are maintaining the "Customer Service" boards.
17. Begin proceedings to deal with all concerns, suggestions, complaints and the like, whether it be follow-up communication or preliminary inquires to all affected parties, within two (2) working days of receipt.
18. Write an Article for "Herd the Werd" (Interhall Council's residence magazine) to be sent out during Orientation Week, and when applicable in other student publications, to inform the university community of what HSAC's and the Ombudsperson's role are and what they are doing.
19. Participate in meetings in residences, as requested by RLS or IHC members.
20. The Ombudsperson Selection and Direction committee is to revisit Ombudsperson job Description every two (2) years.
21. Develop a proactive promotions schedule for recruiting the Ombudsperson by the last sub-committee meeting of the fall semester.
22. Maintain the Hospitality Ombudsperson Facebook and Twitter accounts.
23. The Hospitality Services Ombudsperson will directly report to HSAC, which represents the interests of all those using food and retail services both on and off campus.

Authority:

1. The Hospitality Services Ombudsperson will be authorized to call meetings between interested parties in pursuit of their responsibilities.
2. The Ombudsperson also shall be authorized to have complete access to Hospitality Services policy manuals, HSAC meeting agendas and minutes, any Dining Hall Committee meeting agendas and minutes, any reports submitted to HSAC, and the Hospitality Services' budget and financial statement, except for the details of managerial salaries.

3. The Ombudsperson is authorized to discuss any aspect of the Hospitality Services program except those matters pertaining to union employees and any contract-related grievances that they might have.

Qualifications:

The Ombudsperson must be a full-time diploma or undergraduate student who lives in residence and participates in the dining hall contract program.

In addition, any other positions sought after and/or accepted by the applicant must be reviewed by the Ombudsperson Selection and Direction Sub-Committee and HSAC.

Duration of Position:

The duration of the Ombudsperson position is from May 1 until April 30th of the following year.

During the last week of August the Ombudsperson works full-time to establish programs, meet with the various individuals he/she will be working/liasing with, and make presentations for the SHS Residence Life Team and Interhall Council members during their training sessions.

Selection Criteria:

For selecting the applicant who will become the next Ombudsperson, the following criteria are employed by the Ombudsperson Selection and Direction Sub-Committee and HSAC:

1. Having prior experience with HSAC is considered an asset.
2. Having a basic working knowledge of the role Hospitality Services plays and how Hospitality Services operates.
3. Having prior knowledge and/or experience in the hospitality/food industry.
4. Having an understanding of the role the Ombudsperson plays and the fundamental characteristics and responsibilities of the position.
5. Having a basic understanding, from the perspective of a student, of the financial aspects of Hospitality Services, as well as the hospitality/food industry in general.
6. Having new ideas and approaches in terms of how they will fulfill the role of Ombudsperson.
7. Being able to commit the required time and effort, without conflicts with their current program of study. (Applicants must be able to demonstrate that taking the job of Ombudsperson will not negatively impact their studies.)
8. Having any other related knowledge that could apply to them, as an applicant, being more suited for the Ombudsperson position.
9. Possessing effective/flexible communication, organizational and interpersonal skills that can also be demonstrated from past experiences..
10. Having demonstrated skill in diplomacy, humility and professionalism. The Ombudsperson is also expected to present oneself in a friendly manner and demonstrate a well-rounded temperament.

Selection Timeline:

1. For selecting the applicant who will become the next Ombudsperson, the below timeline is used:
 - (a) The job is posted in the beginning of the Winter semester.
 - (b) Applications are generally due in mid-February.
 - (c) The applications that are received are reviewed and potential applicants are invited to the interview stage.
 - (d) Interviews commence at the beginning of March.
 - (e) Generally, the top three (3) applicants are chosen from the interview stage by the Ombudsperson Selection and Direction Sub-Committee and are invited to make a 5 minute presentation to HSAC.
 - (f) Generally, after the top three (3) applicants make their presentations to HSAC, HSAC then selects the new Ombudsperson for the following term via their voting procedure.
 - (g) The successful applicant, who will become the new Ombudsperson, is notified during the same HSAC meeting and is required to attend all following HSAC meetings of the semester.

Last Revised: January 2011