



Ombuds Office

ANNUAL REPORT

2000-2001

11/01/2001

IAN DARLING

VOLUME VIII

In accordance with the terms of reference pertaining to the Ombuds Office, this annual report is submitted to the President of the College and the Ombuds Advisory Committee. The report covers the period from July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2001. This report is available to any member of the Fanshawe College Community.

ANNUAL REPORT MESSAGE

A Global Perspective:

Over the last several weeks I have struggled with attempts to write something meaningful in light of recent global events. I have heard many people express frustration and sadness at their inability to control things, or contribute in a positive manner. While tragedies on a global scale help to put our individual problems in perspective, I encourage members of the college community to focus on what they can do to increase fairness and justice in the world around them. If we can promote justice, fairness and effective dispute resolution within our community, perhaps we can incrementally improve the world around us.

Complaint Resolution

Readers of this year's report will notice that cases are reported by issue type, parties involved in the case and outcomes. It is important for us to consider this, because it helps to measure how effective we are at resolving complaints. These statistics are useful; however I caution against putting too much stake into the outcome of cases. Over the past year many fair solutions were created as a result of conscientious efforts of disputing parties. I often wonder if the College puts too much emphasis on resolving the presenting problems, rather than addressing the cause of the problems. In many instances I have seen cases resolved in favour of the respondent (department, or college employee), and the reaction from the respondent is that the outcome is an affirmation that the student was wrong, and there is no need to improve service, or understand the cause of the complaint. This approach is somewhat myopic. Rather than looking at the outcome of the case we should look to assess why students are complaining. Is the underlying reason for the complaint that a college policy is unfair; is the student reacting to how they were treated by a particular department; is the complaint the result of a legitimate misunderstanding; or is the complaint unsubstantiated? It is particularly distressing when I see repeated complaints where the underlying cause is the same. Rather than looking to the outcome to validate actions, upon resolution of a complaint, employees should assess if the

conditions, which led to the complaint, could be rectified. We live in an age where systematized processes to elicit student feedback, such as KPIs and Instructional Feedback surveys, are an integral part of college life. It seems short sighted to ignore one of the most direct sources of information about the effectiveness of the College in delivering its services. A concerted effort to understand the underlying cause of complaints can help to reaffirm the many good things at the college, while highlighting areas for improvement.

An excellent example of the approach I advocate comes from the Blueprints program in the Partnerships area. A student came to me upset that he had been dismissed from the program for not meeting conditions that were agreed upon when he entered the program. I contacted employees in the program, and the area manager. After some investigation it was found that the student's complaint was unfounded because he had not fulfilled his responsibilities. The case was therefore resolved in favour of the program. Upon conclusion of the case I mentioned to the manager that although the decision in this case was correct, there might have been some ambiguities in the internal procedures that could create conditions where a student appeal might be successful. Staff in the area then reviewed their policies and communication procedures and made changes in order to avoid subsequent problems. This response is significant because the initial complaint was resolved in favour of the Blueprints program, however they used the complaint as the catalyst for a positive change.

Contents

Annual Report Message	1
Ombuds Mandate	3
Overview	3
Advisory Committee Activities	3
Promotion and Outreach	3
Professional Development	4
Discussion of Cases	4, 5, 6
Case Studies	7, 8
Looking To The Future	8
Thanks	8

Dispute Resolution

Readers may have noticed that the new promotional material for the Ombuds Office describes the service as providing confidential dispute resolution. I contend that focussing on dispute resolution helps to place the emphasis for resolving disputes on the parties involved, rather than adjudication by a third party. With this in mind it is useful to examine the comments of a prominent American scholar, Laura Nader¹. Nader recently criticized Alternative Dispute Resolution programs in institutes of higher education, stating, "Many college students today were taught dispute resolution in elementary and secondary school, at the cost of trading justice for harmony. Often what they remember is that they were silenced for the sake of civility." Nader claims that the dispute resolution movement favours "compromise over adversarial procedures and harmony over justice." Nader contends that dispute resolution puts primary focus on harmony rather than justice, which can only be attained through adversarial means. While her criticism includes a distinctly American perspective, it is worthwhile to consider how it applies to disputes here at Fanshawe College. I would caution that if we put too much emphasis on resolving complaints, without understanding why those complaints occur, we might find ourselves giving primary consideration to promoting harmony without attempting to address the underlying causes of the dispute. Inherent in Nader's comment is the perception that justice can only be protected through adversarial inquiry. This point of view is overly restrictive. We can promote natural and social justice at the college by promoting fairness and providing disputants with the opportunity to play a role in determining the outcome of their disputes. I encourage members of the College community to consider why complaints are happening, and to use complaints as an opportunity to create a just resolution, and progressively improve how the college functions.

Students, Incivility and Customer Service Expectations:

In conversations with other College and University Ombudspersons I have noticed a trend where students express their dissatisfaction with aspects of college life by relating their concerns to customer service expectations. This appears to be part of a broader trend where education is seen as a commodity². I often hear comments that illustrate students' frustration caused by paying high tuition fees, and receiving a product or service they deem inconsistent with what they

have paid. This trend can become magnified in Community Colleges and professional programs where the overall success of a program is often measured by final employment rates, rather than skills developed through the course of the program.

Increased customer service expectations can have both positive and negative effects. I have seen both aspects of these expectations at Fanshawe College. It is reasonable for students to expect a level of professionalism from College employees (including faculty, support staff and administration), and to be disappointed when those expectations are not met. At the same time, it is reasonable for the college, and individuals who work here, to expect students to adhere to the standard of behaviour described in the Student Code of Conduct. Students should be aware that paying tuition is not sufficient to guarantee them a certificate or diploma; but the college must recognize the legitimacy of students' expectations about the quality of the service they receive. In face of these changing expectations I strongly suggest that college staff should consider how students might interpret their level of customer service, and improve it as necessary. Department managers should actively encourage this reflective process, and where appropriate, take steps to promote customer service. Many complaints could be effectively resolved if representatives of the College took ownership over the cause of problems, and they appeared genuinely concerned with the students' sources of frustration. Similarly, the college's expectations of students should be stressed. Teachers should discuss expectations about respectful communication in classes and model the type of behaviour they expect of students; this should translate to respectful behaviour outside the classroom. Anger and frustration about a problem is not a sufficient excuse to be rude or abusive to anyone in the college.

For a more comprehensive discussion on the implications of student's expectations and incivility in the classroom I would recommend those interested consult Morrissette's article on dealing with incivility in the classroom. It discusses measures that colleges can implement to make students aware of expectations, in order to reduce disruptive situations in classes. This might help to reinforce that students have legitimate expectations about their rights, and the service they receive, while asserting the College's perspective that inherent in these rights are a series of responsibilities which students are expected to uphold.

Ian Darling
September, 2001.

¹ Nader, Laura. "Harmony Coerced is Freedom Denied" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, (July 13, 2001).

² Morrissette, Patrick J. "Reducing Incivility in the University/College Classroom" *International Electronic Journal For Leadership in Learning: A refereed academic journal*. Volume 5, Number 4, May 14, 2001. Available on-line at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~iejll>

OMBUDS MANDATE

The Ombuds Office was established in October 1993 through a joint agreement between the College and the Student Union, where the Student Union and the College equally share the office's expenses. This financial arrangement helps to maintain and promote the independence and impartiality of the office.

The general mandate of the Ombuds is to investigate complaints raised by any student regarding academic matters; services to students; operation of the Student Union; treatment by other members of the College Community; or campus environmental issues. The Ombuds is given the power to investigate and to recommend solutions. Although the office is set up to investigate student complaints, the Ombuds is not a student advocate. That role remains the mandate of the Student Union. An Ombuds hears student complaints, but strives to remain impartial, looking at different sides of an issue before advocating for justice.

2000-2001 OVERVIEW

643 members of the College community were in contact with the Ombuds office this year, regarding 287 files. This represents a significant increase over last year (28% in cases), and reverses a trend where the number of cases dropped over the previous two report years. Although this increase may appear to indicate that students are encountering more problems than in years past, I do not think this is the case. This year's total cases are consistent with the number of cases reported in 1996-1998.

The majority of visitors to the office this year were students, but College employees also used the office and therefore account for a portion of the numbers shown. Although the Ombuds mandate is to handle student inquiries and complaints, the office is available to the entire College community as a resource. All members of the College community are welcome and are guaranteed confidentiality when they visit.

Once again, students were referred to the Ombuds Office from a variety of sources, including; Faculty, divisional offices, Counselling and Student Life, The President's Office, Student Union, other students, and advertising. If you are unsure if you should refer a student to the Ombuds Office, please do not hesitate to ask. We can discuss the mandate of the office and how I might be of assistance. During the year I have met with staff and students to discuss a wide range of issues, including; policy questions, principles of conflict resolution and the issues at stake in a dispute. Over the year many fair solutions were found to difficult problems with the co-operation of all constituencies within the College

OMBUDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The members of the Ombuds Advisory Committee during this report period were: John Beaumont (Student Union President); Grant Meadwell (Manager of Counselling and Student Life Services); Pat Kirkby (Health Sciences Chairperson); Leslie McIntosh (Local 109 Representative); Joy Warkentin (Academic Vice-President); Kay Wigle (Local 110 Representative) and John Young (Student Union Building Manager/Programmer). The Committee is co-chaired by the Manager of Counselling and Student Life Services and the Student Union President.

The Committee met once during this reporting period to discuss the 2000-2001 annual report. The committee was unanimous in their acceptance of the report, were supportive of the work done by the Ombuds office during this report year. The committee were also helpful providing their advice on an informal basis throughout the year.

PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

During the 2000-2001 year I engaged in variety of different promotion and outreach activities. These included presentations to orientation sessions for new students in September and January in London, and at the area campuses throughout the year. In August I conducted a workshop with the Student Union Executive focussing on Conflict Resolution and Dealing with Difficult People. In January I made a presentation with Frances Bauer, the Ombudsperson at UWO, to the London Area Mediator's Association. We discussed how mediation was used as a tool to facilitate conflict resolution in Academic institutions. Throughout the year I was active in planning the Staff and Student Services Professional Development Day in June 2001.

Last year's annual report appeared as an article in the Interrobang. A second article featured a general discussion of the Ombuds role within the college. A paragraph outlining the Ombuds' mandate appeared again in the mini calendar and program guides; the continuing education newsletter; the student handbook; Counselling brochures, the Focus newsletter and the information package sent to new registrants.

In addition to these promotions, I attended various meetings to promote the office, answer questions and to act as a resource to groups and committees. During the year I met with divisional chairs, area campus principals, members of the student union executive, faculty and staff to discuss a variety of issues. On-going plans include attending divisional meetings, orientation and information sessions. These are excellent opportunities for me to discuss the role of the Ombuds Office and hear concerns from a variety of stakeholder groups. I will continue to make myself available to groups or individuals who would like to meet and discuss issues related to the Ombuds Office.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

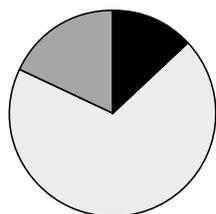
In November I attended a workshop entitled “Community Colleges, Students and the Law”. This informative session focussed on areas where Colleges and students can come in contact with the law. During the year I participated in a variety of activities as a member of the Association of Canadian College and University Ombudspersons, including their mid-year meeting and annual conference. During the annual conference I presented a session entitled “Ombudsmen and ADR: Tools to complement our work”. The presentation was well received and the conference a worthwhile experience. I subscribe, and participate in several e-mail listservs dedicated to issues related to Ombudsmen and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

DISCUSSION OF CASES

This section provides a statistical breakdown and analysis of this year’s caseload. A total of 287 files were generated from the complaints/inquiries of 336 persons. The first breakdown involves the difference between information, advice, and contacts where some form of intervention was necessary. Cases reported as information were ones where I provided case-specific information to the client. Cases are classified as advice when we discuss a student’s concern, identify possible paths toward resolution, and help the student to assess which path is most appropriate to their circumstances. The forms of intervention ranged from the most common type, which involved a form of shuttle diplomacy to mediation, or a more formal investigation. In some cases, merely clarifying an issue resolved the problem. Whenever possible, I attempt to empower students to pursue their own solutions in an informed and appropriate manner. By spending time discussing expectations, fairness and options with students, they are better able to make wise choices and take effective action on their own. This strategy has been found to be of more value to students and preferable to College employees.

The first table and graph illustrate this breakdown:

Case-related Contacts, 2000-2001



OMBUDS ACTION

- Information
- Advice
- Intervention

Type of Case	# of Cases	% of Total
Information	38	13%
Advice	197	69%
Intervention	52	18%
Total	287	100%

Advice was given in the highest proportion of cases, which is consistent with previous years. The number of cases where the Ombuds intervened decreased this year, from 33% during the 1999-2000 report period to 18% for the current period. The number of files where advice was given increased slightly from 56% during the 1999-2000 report period to 69% and information remained relatively similar to last year.

The average time it took to conclude a file this year was shorter than in previous years. It took an average of 3.9 days this year to conclude a file as compared with 5.3 and 4.4 days for the previous two years.

The following table describes the types and number of files received. Fourteen categories are used to record the issues. At times, the nature of complaints and inquiries are difficult to categorize if they overlap or are unclear. In some cases there are multiple issues involved in a complaint. While I classify cases according to both primary and secondary issues, only the primary issues (which are recorded according to the best matching issue description) are contained in this report.

Description of Issues Handled, 2000-2001

Issue	# of Cases	% of Total
Academic	166	57.8
Financial Aid	30	10.5
Other	23	8.0
Registration	12	4.2
Policy	12	4.2
Fees	11	3.8
Outside Mandate	6	2.1
Disability	6	2.1
Other Student	5	1.7
Personal Differences	5	1.7
Harassment & Discrimination	3	1.0
Conduct	3	1.0
Student Union	4	1.0
Residence	2	0.7
Total	287	100%

The numbers in each category remained consistent with previous years’ statistics. There are several new issue classifications included in this report. These include reporting complaints about fees and registration as two categories; adding a designation for complaints about the residence, and complaints that were outside the mandate of the office.

The following two tables illustrate distribution of files into constituent areas. The first table reports on the number of files according to the area from which the complaints originate. The second table reports the number of files directly relating to the area about which the complaint is being made. The difference between these tables is significant. For example, a Technology student may complain about a service area outside his or her own. The first table would reflect the fact that a student from Technology made a complaint, and the second illustrate the area against which the complaint was

directed. The tables do not reflect the differences in size between areas nor do they indicate the nature of the files.

Please note that the following charts report the number of individuals in contact, rather than the number of cases. During the 2000-2001 report year, the Fine Art program switched from Communication Arts to the Art and Design division. This caused difficulty reporting the number of cases and their respective division. Efforts have been made to ensure this problem does not reoccur.

Caseload by Constituency of Client, 2000-2001

Division of Client	# of Clients	% of Total
Alumni	6	1.78
Art And Design	22	6.5
Building Technology	15	4.46
Business Studies	41	12.2
Communication Arts	22	6.5
Counselling and Student Life Services	2	0.6
Electrical/Electronics Technology	9	2.67
General Studies	27	8.03
Health Sciences	39	11.6
Human Resources	1	0.3
Human Services	33	9.8
Information Technology	26	7.7
James N. Allan Campus	4	1.2
Manufacturing Sciences	15	4.4
Millennium Project	1	0.3
Motive Power Technology	1	0.3
Office Of The President	2	0.6
Other	16	4.7
Oxford County Campus	7	2.08
Partnerships	2	0.6
School Of Continuing Education	16	4.7
Tourism & Hospitality Studies	14	4.16
Complainant's Division Unknown	15	4.46
Total	336	100%

The “unknown” category has greater numbers in the first table because there were a number of complainants who remained anonymous. The category of “other” in the first table refers to persons who are not presently students, for example; applicants or former students. The category of “other” in the second table has smaller numbers because this

year’s report includes the specific division of the parties involved in a complaint. In years past, some students and College employees did not fall into any of the other constituency categories. This form of reporting attempts to rectify that problem.

Caseload by Constituency of Respondent, 1999-2000

Division	# of Resp.	# of total
Academic Services	1	0.3
Ancillary Services	4	1.3
Art And Design	12	3.9
Athletics	1	0.3
Building Technology	6	1.9
Business Studies	13	4.2
Communication Arts	11	3.58
Community Access and Development	1	0.3
Community Fitness Centre	1	0.3
Counselling and Student Life Services	1	0.3
Electrical/Electronics Technology	4	1.3
Facilities Maintenance	1	0.3
Financial Aid Services	27	8.79
General Studies	18	5.86
Health Sciences	30	9.77
Human Services	19	6.18
Information Technology	11	3.58
James N. Allan Campus	3	0.9
Manufacturing Sciences	11	3.58
Motive Power Technology	1	0.3
Occupational Health, Safety & Security	2	0.65
Office Of The President	1	0.3
Other	3	0.9
Other Student	5	1.6
Oxford County Campus	6	1.95
Partnerships	3	0.9
Registrar's Office	24	7.81
School Of Continuing Education	9	2.93
Student Residence	4	1.3
Student Union	4	1.3
Tourism & Hospitality Studies	10	3.25
Total of Respondents with Division	247	
Respondents without Division	8	2.6
Cases without respondent	52	16.9
Total	307	100

Outcome of Cases

Ultimately, the effectiveness of the Ombuds Office is often measured by its ability to facilitate the resolution of complaints. The following table illustrates the outcomes of the 287 cases in the 2000-2001 report year. It is interesting to note that the Ombuds Office was established with the goal of encouraging complaints to be resolved informally at the

lowest level. The following table indicates that over 50% of cases were resolved through Compromise, Referral or through the Ombuds providing information related to the case. This compares with only 16% of the cases going through the formal appeal or complaint process.

Cases by Outcome.

Outcome	# of Cases	%
Appeal	42	14.6
Complaint Filed	6	2.1
Compromise	58	20.2
Complaint Withdrawn	33	11.5
Favoured Complainant	30	10.5
Favoured Respondent	27	9.4
Ombuds Withdrew	4	1.4
Provided Information	38	13.2
Referral	49	17.1
Total	287	100

CASE STUDIES:

The following three case studies are offered to illustrate principles of natural justice and to give community members a more detailed view of the Ombuds office work. Each features a brief summary of the case with some comments. These cases are fictionalised accounts of actual cases. Therefore, details have been modified or omitted to protect the identity of individuals and departments. The cases are chosen for their interest and educational value only.

Non-Refundable Deposit

A male student who was living in the residence over the summer attended the Ombuds Office with a complaint. When he moved into the residence he paid a \$250.00 refundable security deposit. The agreement was that the deposit would be returned to him when he moved out, assuming there were no repairs required in his room. At that time the student was planning to stay in residence throughout the school year. The student enjoyed his first few weeks in residence and applied, and was granted a space in the residence for September to April. In early August, the student decided that he was unhappy staying in residence and asked to be released from his commitment for the school year. Residence staff agreed and made arrangements for the student to move out at the end of the month. The student asked for his damage deposit to be refunded and was refused. After several unsuccessful attempts to resolve the problem the student visited my office. He was upset because he had kept his room in impeccable condition, and he felt that the residence was unjustified in withholding the refund. After discussing the matter with the student, we decided that I might be able to better assist the student if I understood both of the disputing perspectives.

I met with residence staff and they explained that when the student applied to stay in residence for the September-April school year, residence administration applied the student's initial security deposit to the deposit to hold the room. This \$250.00 deposit, which was required as an initial payment of the residence fees for the upcoming year, was refundable until July 7, 2000. The student had asked for the refund after the deadline for refunds. Residence administration showed me the student's application, which outlined the fee payment

schedule and refund dates, and included the student's signature. Following this meeting I discussed my findings with the student, and explained how the security deposit had been changed into the first instalment of the residence fees. We discussed the student's concerns, and the student left my office satisfied that there had been no impropriety on the part of the residence.

Comments:

The student felt aggrieved because he did not understand how the deposit was changed; however he had signed a form that indicated that the \$250.00 would be considered non-refundable after the July 7 deadline. This situation could have been prevented had the student exercised caution when signing the form. Students should ensure they make an effort to understand how the college applies its rules and deadlines. The college makes its rules available, but expects that students will make an effort to read and understand those rules.

The dispute could have been resolved when the student first complained to residence staff. When the student voiced his concern, residence staff sought to explain why the deposit would not be refunded after the July deadline. This explanation was not sufficient because the student did not understand that the security deposit had been used as the initial payment of residence fees for the September-April period. In a different case, a student commented to me that she found it difficult to resolve the situation because she did not know what questions to ask in order to get reliable information. This case is an excellent example of that problem. Had the residence employee sought to understand the student's perspective, and asked some questions in order to ascertain what information the student required, they would have been better prepared to resolve the misunderstanding.

This case illustrates how miscommunication can happen, and how easy it is for simple misunderstandings to become more complicated. While the issue in question relates specifically to a service area, the causes of this dispute are often the same in complaints regarding academic issues.

"Its Only \$10.00"

A student visited the Ombuds office after getting into an argument about a refund because they were unhappy about a college service. In the course of our conversation the student stated that the issue was important, but because the monetary value of the service in question was so low they were not likely to pursue the issue too far. The student was more upset by the argument with the college employee. After discussing the problem it was decided that I would approach the manager of the service and get their perspective. During the meeting the manager stated that "It is only \$10 we are disagreeing about, I am willing to give the student what they want to make the problem go away." After further discussion with the employee and student, and consulting departmental policy, we were able to come to an understanding that the student had a right to a partial refund. The student was satisfied with the explanation and reported that her complaint was resolved.

Comment:

This case is interesting, because the college employee was right in not granting the full refund, but was willing to do so just to make the problem go away. This is a dangerous approach to adopt because the position is inherently indefensible. For instance, if another complaint occurred where the circumstances were the same it would be difficult to argue against the precedent where the student received a refund. If employees are fair and decisions can be supported by department policies and procedures, then the amount in dispute should not matter. This example cites monetary differences, however the same situation can occur in academic situations. The same degree of vigilance should be expected for matters where the amount in dispute is small, as larger issues. An effective and fair resolution of these smaller issues helps to prevent problems from becoming more significant.

Parking Lot Altercation:

This case was initiated by a staff member who asked me to mediate between two students, Sally and Margaret, who had been in an argument. I spoke with both sides in the dispute and was told that they were in a car accident on College property. Sally's car had contacted Margaret's while she was reversing. When the accident first occurred they had decided that the damage was not sufficient for them to exchange insurance information. Margaret had later taken her car to a repair shop and discovered the repairs would be more costly than initially anticipated, but had no means of contacting Sally. The next week the two met in the hallway and a confrontation ensued. Following this altercation the staff member referred the two students to me.

This situation was difficult to resolve because the students had chosen not to exchange insurance information, or file a report of the accident with security. In separate meetings we examined the students' rights and responsibilities at the college, possible application of the Student Code of Conduct in this case, expectations of their insurance companies and how the students might resolve the dispute. The students left these meetings with strategies to resolve the issues. Several weeks later both students reported that they were working to resolve the issues with their respective insurance companies, and acknowledged that it would have been much easier to resolve the matter if they had exchanged information and reported the incident when it first happened.

Comment:

We often gravitate to informal ways of resolving issues, and at times this can be a very beneficial approach; however it can also have negative consequences. In the past year, several small problems were aggravated because disputing parties would delay confronting the problem. In these cases, and this case study, the problems were much more difficult to resolve because the disputants attempted to avoid conflict at a time where engaging in the conflict would have lead to a quick resolution, and prevented the issues from becoming exacerbated. I encourage disputing parties to take responsibility for understanding the cause of the problem, and actively seek an appropriate resolution to the situation.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

In addition to the activities discussed above, I have submitted several informal recommendations, and advised of areas where improvement can be made to specific departments. In several cases I have seen positive changes result from these recommendations. I trust that the consideration and implementation of these recommendations will help to improve the College's capacity to respond to Students' concerns, and serve to prevent problems from becoming more significant

This year will be the ninth year of operation for the Fanshawe Ombuds Office. The College continues to develop new initiatives and projects, while attempting to foster student access and success. I look forward to working with members of the college community to promote effective dispute resolution, fairness and quality services for students.

I have recently been asked to provide a college-wide report on cheating. The Registrar's Office and Planning Services have agreed to contribute statistical reports of actual incidences and student's perceptions of cheating. It is hoped that this initiative will raise awareness about cheating, appropriate sanctions and ensuring the cheating policy is applied effectively.

The 2000-2001 report year was in many ways both satisfying and frustrating. Highlighted by a heartfelt thank you card from a student after I helped her resolve a complaint. On the other hand, I also noticed that many of the issues identified over the past nine years of the office's existence remain problematic. I am happy with the continued support I receive from all college constituent groups, and I hope that in the coming months we can work to improve these troubling issues.

THANKS

I thank those people who supported the Ombuds office this past year, including: the Ombuds Advisory Committee for their work and support; the many people who have found fair solutions to difficult problems; the Student Union personnel; the College personnel with whom the Ombuds deals regularly - from departments, including, Counselling and Student Life Services, Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, The President's Office; Chairs, Co-ordinators, Faculty members and Support staff who have worked to resolve a variety of student complaints. Finally, I thank the students who have used the Ombuds Office.

Ian Darling,
Fanshawe College Ombuds,
September 2001.

