

MOTION

of the

**Committee on Women's Concerns**

with Support from Committee on Services to the Faculty and Staff,  
Committee on LGBT Concerns

March 23, 2016

Resolution to Recommend the Establishment of an Ombuds Office at Syracuse University:

WHEREAS, Ombuds programs provide neutral, independent, informal and confidential assistance in conflict resolution, problem-solving, upward feedback, and trend-tracking to universities, private industry, and government, and Ombuds programs act as an informal and independent mechanism to facilitate confidential inquiry and provide additional expert advice on working to achieve fair solutions to a wide range of issues of concerns, and

WHEREAS, Ombuds programs have operated at US institutions of higher learning since the 1960s and, recognizing the benefits to their campus communities, over 300 universities across the country have established Ombuds programs, including 67% of ACC schools,

WHEREAS, recent events at Syracuse University, including high turnover in leadership roles, the implementation of a Voluntary Separation Incentive Program, as well as much discussion on the future trajectory of the university in Strategic Planning and operations, have all resulted in widespread feelings of uncertainty and stress,

WHEREAS, the 2013 "Diagnostic Employee Survey" by Bain & Co report highlighted the need for enhanced feedback mechanisms and increased transparency, communication, and collaboration, while a report from the Fast Forward Working Group 6 recommended improving morale and campus climate by developing an ombudsperson position, and

WHEREAS, an Ombuds program gathers data on trends to help identify possible systemic issues requiring attention for university leaders, and

WHEREAS, the Women's Concerns Committee, composed of staff, faculty, and students, have after extensive research developed a "Proposal to Establish an Ombuds Office at Syracuse University" (attached) detailing the need for and benefits of such an office, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Syracuse University University Senate endorses the joint Women's Concerns Committee's "Proposal to Establish an Ombuds Office at Syracuse University" and recommends to the Chancellor that such an Ombuds Office be established, answering directly to the Chancellor, serving Syracuse University students, staff, faculty, and administrators, and annually reporting to the University Senate.