

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO**

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# **OMBUDS SERVICES FOR STAFF**

**2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

**JOELLEN RANSOM**  
STAFF OMBUDS

# **OMBUDS SERVICES FOR STAFF**

**2016 ANNUAL REPORT**



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# LETTER FROM THE STAFF OMBUDS

Dear UNM Affiliate,

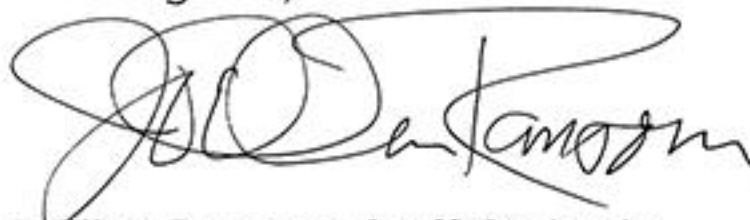
We are happy to share the *UNM Ombuds/DR Services for Staff 2016 Annual Report* which describes the role of the office and provides reportable data from our work.

Recognizing that conflict is inevitable in an environment that values diverse opinions and perspectives, UNM provides Ombuds Services to promote a campus culture that fosters dialogue and constructive conflict management. Financial challenges and changes in the organization only increase the need for skilled, neutral listening and fair process. The costs of conflict include work time spent in discussions and arguments that escalate conflict, reduced morale, limited productivity, project failure, absence from work, and high turnover. Fair process to build communication and collaboration minimizes the human and organizational costs of conflict. Engaging Ombuds Services helps employees maximize the creative potential of change and diverse perspectives.

We thank all employees who have worked with this office to address workplace challenges more constructively, efficiently, and effectively. Their engagement with Ombuds Services is essential to a thriving organization. Our survey data tells us that, by utilizing Ombuds Services, UNM employees significantly reduced turnover and time spent in discussions that escalate conflict at work. Employees consistently received fair process and felt heard at our office. The employees who engaged with Ombuds Services gained new information or perspective in the process. Those who came in left with a plan for moving forward.

We are committed to working with UNM staff and faculty supervising staff in accordance with UAP 3220, the International Ombudsman Association's (IOA) code of ethics, and the standards of practice of confidentiality, independence, informality, and neutrality. While the data contained in this report is not an indication of the total number of employees experiencing conflict on campus, it provides useful information about some of the factors influencing workplace conflict and ideas to address them. We look forward to discussing our data, systemic observations, and ways to enhance the work environment with the campus community and leadership. We hope you will use this report to better understand the concerns that bring employees to this office and how Ombuds Services works.

Best Regards,



JoEllen Ransom, Staff Ombuds



# INTRODUCING OMBUDS SERVICES FOR STAFF

## MISSION

The Ombuds Services mission to promote constructive conflict management on campus is accomplished by:

- Providing outreach, presentations, and conflict management skills development
- Listening for and supporting constructive communication in the university community
- Helping people minimize the human and organizational costs of conflict at UNM
- Helping people maximize the creative potential of change and diverse opinions

## STAFF

JoEllen Ransom, J.D., Staff Ombuds

Jon Lee, M.A., J.D., Associate Ombuds

Anne Lightsey, Associate Ombuds

Mary Margaret White, Administrative Assistant (1/16 - 6/16)

Rola Elmoued, Student Employee Administrative Assistant (8/16 - 12/16)

## THE ROLE OF OMBUDS SERVICES FOR STAFF

The Ombuds Services role is defined by:

- Listening to concerns without judgment
- Analyzing problems and exploring possible options
- Facilitating dialogue between individuals and groups
- Providing professional, fair, and impartial process
- Providing one-on-one visits
- Providing ombuds mediations
- Referring visitors to campus and community resources
- Providing training in conflict management skills
- Identifying and communicating trends in conflict management
- Providing information about policies and resources
- Advocating for fairness and respect for diverse perspectives

## **BRIEF HISTORY**

UNM Ombuds Services/DR for Faculty and Staff was originally created in 1994 as the Dispute Resolution Department. In 2010, in recognition of the department's adherence to the International Ombudsman Association's (IOA) ethical code and standards of practice, UNM DR became Ombuds/DR Services for Faculty and Staff. This report focuses on Staff Ombuds Services which serves staff and faculty supervising staff pursuant to University Administrative Policies.

This office works in collaboration with the Faculty Ombuds who serves faculty addressing academic concerns governed by the Faculty Handbook. Staff Ombuds Services provides collaborative problem solving and negotiation skills training, outreach, and process options such as visits and mediations to promote efficient and effective conflict management. The fundamental mission of Staff Ombuds Services is to promote a campus culture that fosters constructive options for managing workplace conflicts.



# IOA CODE OF ETHICS

Our practice is guided by The International Ombuds Association's Code of Ethics:

## **PREAMBLE**

The IOA is dedicated to excellence in the practice of Ombudsman work. The IOA Code of Ethics provides a common set of professional ethical principles to which members adhere in their organizational Ombudsman practice.

Based on the traditions and values of Ombudsman practice, the Code of Ethics reflects a commitment to promote ethical conduct in the performance of the Ombudsman role and to maintain the integrity of the Ombudsman profession.

The Ombudsman shall be truthful and act with integrity, shall foster respect for all members of the organization he or she serves, and shall promote procedural fairness in the content and administration of those organizations' practices, processes, and policies.

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

### **INDEPENDENCE**

The Ombudsman is independent in structure, function, and appearance to the highest degree possible within the organization.

### **NEUTRALITY AND IMPARTIALITY**

The Ombudsman, as a designated neutral, remains unaligned and impartial. The Ombudsman does not engage in any situation which could create a conflict of interest.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Ombudsman holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence and does not disclose confidential communications unless given permission to do so. The only exception to this privilege of confidentiality is where there appears to be imminent risk of serious harm.

### **INFORMALITY**

The Ombudsman, as an informal resource, does not participate in any formal adjudicative or administrative procedure related to concerns brought to his/her attention.



# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

## 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS

UNM Ombuds Services for Staff experienced a record year in several areas. The following list is of some of our notable achievements for 2016:

- In 2016, Ombuds Services for Staff hosted 288 visits and 24 two-party mediations.
- The hours of training provided to promote constructive conflict management remained high this year after tripling last year. Ombuds Services for Staff provided presentations, workshops, and trainings throughout the year through Employee Organization and Development (EOD), directly to UNM departments, and to organizations such as UNM Staff Council. The trainings included a new course developed by Ombuds Services for the new ULEAD management development program through EOD. We provided two forty-hour basic mediation skills certificate courses for UNM staff.
- In order to capture and identify systemic issues, Ombuds Services further developed protocol to capture data unattributable to individuals for reporting purposes. Such data includes time spent on visits and mediations and tracking employee concerns using the IOA Uniform Reporting Categories.
- Through regular case management meetings where we reviewed issues brought by visitors, we identified some repeated behaviors/situations/perceptions which, when left unaddressed, cause or increase conflict. These included 1) staff experiencing a lack of communication and clarity about chain of command, job duties, and goals; 2) transition at management levels that required more planning and/or communication to go smoothly; 3) personal trauma such as experiences with death, illness, disability, and divorce that were impacting work/working relationships; 4) implementation of organizational changes such as FLSA and job freezes in ways that were perceived as disrespectful or insensitive to employees; and 5) wellness issues associated with increased workload, stress, reduced job security, and low morale.
- Ombuds Services for Staff proceeded with business and offering quality ombuds services to our constituency after losing the Administrative Assistant position due to state and university budget concerns. Ombuds Services for Staff established a productive working relationship with Amy O'Donnell of Internal Audit to accomplish purchasing and time-keeping tasks important to office operations. We also hired a part-time student employee to assist with scheduling and office duties.
- Ombuds Services for Staff reviewed and made extensive improvements on internal office protocol with regards to scheduling, employee and extern onboarding, and use and shredding of documents and records in order to better align the processes of the office with standards and best practices regarding ombuds confidentiality.

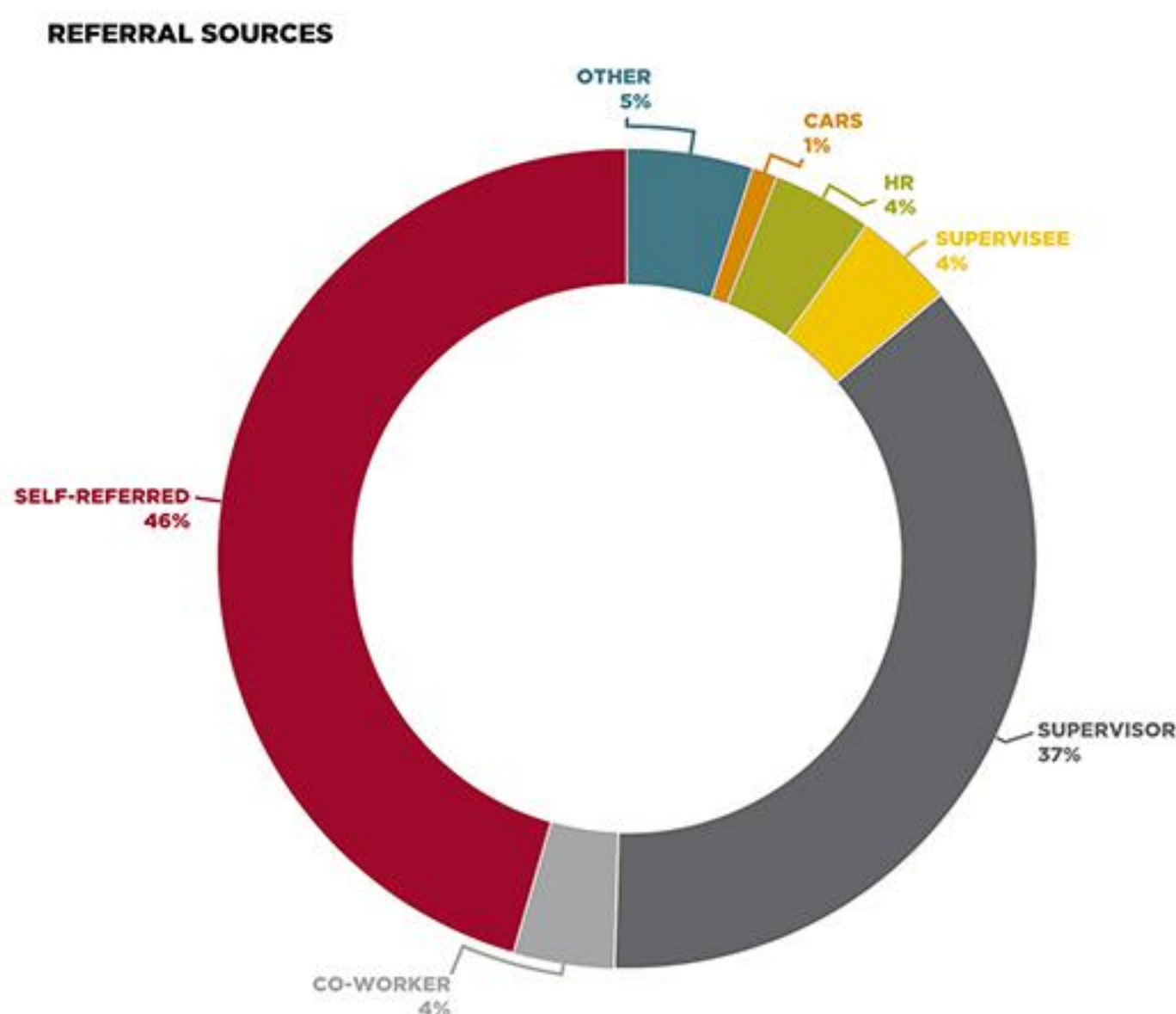


- Through an international collaboration with the Hungarian Julius Rezler Foundation, Ombuds Services for Staff hosted Júlia Horváth who served as a Visiting Research Scholar. Júlia supported the office's missions through data and metrics collection and analysis which is included in the Staff Ombuds 2015 Annual Report. When her contract ended with UNM, Júlia was hired for the highly competitive position of Assistant Ombuds at UC Berkeley where she began working in August 2016.
- In collaboration with the UNM Law School, Ombuds Services provided an externship experience for Lindsay Welton for two semesters. Lindsay was assigned research and writing on ombuds confidentiality, and she graduated with her J.D. in December 2016. The UNM School of Law ADR Externship Program is an ongoing collaboration between the school and Ombuds Services for Staff during the spring and fall academic semesters.
- In order to promote more comprehensive referrals to UNM and community resources, the office developed a resource list and depository containing flyers, brochures, and other literature for visitors seeking guidance and support.
- Ombuds Services for Staff met quarterly with the UNM Counseling, Assistance, and Referral Service (CARS) to broadly discuss mutual issues, concerns, trends, and practices. We also met at least quarterly with EOD, CARS, EHP, and the Faculty Ombuds to promote wellness in collaboration.
- The Staff Ombuds communicated with the Office of University Counsel with regards to litigation hold memos and throughout the UNM community with regards to ombuds confidentiality. An ombuds serves as the "conscience of an organization," someone to whom its members may turn in confidence with problems of a sensitive or ethical nature. Confidentiality is critical to the ombuds role of providing the safe and candid consideration of concerns and encouraging reporting of potential violations.
- This office also contributed skills coaching for Mediation Basic Skills Training at the UNM School of Law, the UNM Anderson School of Management, and the New Mexico ADR Bureau of the General Services Department.
- Ombuds Services provides quarterly reporting and mediation services to the New Mexico General Services Department, Risk Management Division, Alternative Dispute Prevention and Resolution (ADR) Bureau. We provided a mediator for the resolution of a protracted dispute among New Mexico state employees. Ombuds Services also supported the ADR Bureau in developing the 6th Annual New Mexico ADR Symposium in October 2016. UNM Ombuds Services for Staff gave three presentations for this conference and recruited another speaker from the UNM Office of University Counsel.
- Ombuds Services collaborated with the New Mexico State Magistrate Court Mediation Program. Our office provided consultation and support for the development of that program and received skills coaching for our staff trainings in return.

- The Staff Ombuds attended a regional gathering of higher education ombuds in the fall at a regional IOA conference in Crestone, CO. The result of this participation was the establishment of a productive collaboration with other ombuds offices in the region. A major topic of conversation at this gathering was the need to ensure confidentiality of ombuds communications.
- The Staff Ombuds, both Associate Ombuds, and the then Visiting Research Scholar attended the International Ombudsman Association 11th Annual National conference. Some of the workshops attended include *"Title IX and the Role of the Ombudsman," "Culture, Fairness, and the Brain: Model for Effective Conflict Management,"* and *"Ombuds United States Legal Update."*
- Ombuds Services for Staff employees participated in Title IX training. Recognizing a need for structured practice with listening skills in this context, we proposed and developed a listening workshop to better prepare UNM employees to listen and respond constructively to accounts of sexual assault. This workshop will be piloted in May 2017.

## OUTREACH

Ombuds Services for Staff continued outreach efforts through presentations and trainings provided to individual departments and staff organizations. Based on visitor responses on anonymous surveys, the growing percentage of self-referrals to our office is a result of our continuous, campus-wide efforts to promote awareness and improve understanding of the services we offer. Please see Appendix B for a detailed list of outreach and trainings.





## VISITS

From the period of January 1, 2016 to December 30, 2016 there were 288 visits with Ombuds Services for Staff.

Here are what some visitors had to say about their visit to Ombuds Services for Staff:

*"This office is the best help at UNM. I always leave feeling better, more prepared, with a game plan and focused."*

*"I'm leaving here today with better tools for communication than I had before I came."*

*"This meeting was very helpful to sort priorities and goals for resolution."*

*"This is an excellent resource for the university community. I'm grateful to know that these services are available without time constraints."*

*"Very worthwhile—I was pleasantly surprised with how much I gained and learned from one session."*

*"So grateful that this service is available! I had no idea, and really didn't feel like other options were the best solution just yet."*

*"I have never experienced communicating with such a good listener. You have a special talent to get connected and stay connected. Most adults tune out in 3 minutes. I felt cared for. Thank you for this valuable, empowering experience."*

*"I appreciate the space to be heard and to have my myriad of thoughts summarized in a way which might help me to better communicate with my supervisor."*

*"This was an extremely helpful experience for me, and I know that I have new, helpful ways of addressing the issue I came here to discuss."*

*"I think this is probably one of the most underutilized areas in UNM. Even if mediation doesn't work, being heard by a neutral party has done a lot to help me work through my feelings about what brought me here."*

*"Glad to have received information on policies."*

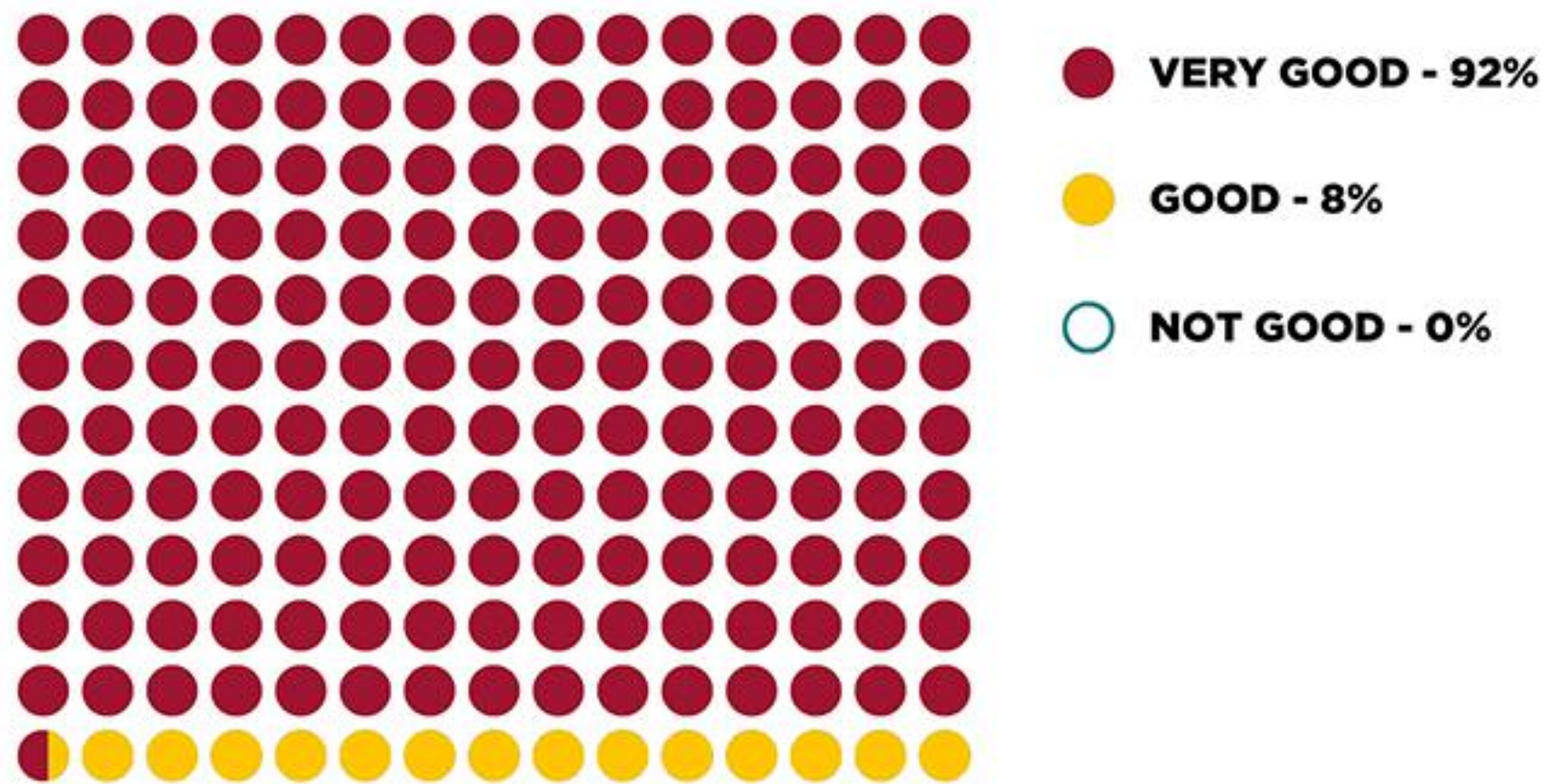
*"It is always challenging to decide what is best as you move forward in a process, and it is good to be listened to and heard to determine that my initial gut instinct is the best approach at this time. This is a very valuable service, and I appreciate how the ombuds helps you get to the heart of the problem."*

*"This was amazingly helpful. It drilled down to a granular plan of action, and I felt much better seeing my situation more clearly."*

*"I appreciate the chance to talk out the conflict and separate my initial emotional reaction from what I really believe and value. It's so helpful to talk to an impartial person, and I feel like I'm adding more tools to my communication toolkit that will help me to grow as a supervisor. Thank you!"*



Visitors were asked to rate their experience with Ombuds Services for Staff:



To assess the usefulness of our services, we asked our visitors to anonymously provide feedback about their visit experience:

**100%**

of the visitors who responded on exit surveys reported

- The process seemed fair and impartial
- They felt heard
- They would recommend Ombuds Services to others

**97%**

of the visitors who responded on exit surveys reported

- They received new perspective or useful information

## MEDIATIONS

Mediation provides a structured process allowing coworkers to communicate with one another and identify a mutually crafted and acceptable agreement with which to move forward in their situation. The following is a definition of mediation underpinned with quotes from mediation participants taken from their post-mediation surveys:

### **“A CONFIDENTIAL...”**

*“I was able to express issues, feelings, and perspectives in a safe environment that I might not have felt comfortable during prior one-on-ones.”*



**“...VOLUNTARY PROCESS...”**

*“I’m glad we came because I don’t think this conversation could have taken place if not for this mediation.”*

**“...WHERE A NEUTRAL THIRD-PARTY...”**

*“The mediators helped open conversation and ensured participants had time to say what was on our minds before the other person spoke.”*

*“I am thankful for the removed third-parties to help explain what I say so I’m not stuck in a loop.”*

*“It was helpful to have that third-party repetition to help solidify what I said.”*

**“...FACILITATES COLLABORATION BETWEEN TWO PARTIES...”**

*“The structure was very productive.”*

*“It was good the way they realigned the conversation.”*

**“...MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE WORKING AGREEMENT ON POSSIBLE OUTCOMES.”**

*“The mediation was very productive. Viewpoints were candidly expressed and guidelines and expectations for the future were established.”*

*“It helped to alleviate some of my stress but also let me feel like I would continue talking/working through when I was honestly feeling like shutting down.”*

*“I feel I understand the viewpoint of the supervisor better.”*

*“I have a better understanding of what the issues are and how to move forward.”*

When asked to rate their experiences with ombuds mediation:

100%

- of the mediation participants who responded on exit surveys reported
- They found it helpful to have mediators present for the conversation
  - They felt heard during the mediation

99%

- of the mediation participants who responded on exit surveys reported
- They understood the other person better
  - They thought that the other person understood them better



# IOA UNIFORM REPORTING CATEGORIES

Ombuds Services for Staff presents these reporting categories to visitors asking them to anonymously identify which concerns are applicable to their situation.

This list of concerns was developed by a group of ombuds professionals representing corporate, higher education, government agencies, and international agency sectors so that ombuds across sectors can:

- Classify the kinds of issues for which people use an ombuds
- Identify trends in requests for services
- Develop professional development needs

The concerns are organized into categories which are listed below, and each category includes sub-categories detailed in the pages to follow:

**CATEGORY 1: COMPENSATION & BENEFITS**

**CATEGORY 2: EVALUATIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

**CATEGORY 3: PEER & COLLEAGUE RELATIONSHIPS**

**CATEGORY 4: CAREER PROGRESSION & DEVELOPMENT**

**CATEGORY 5: LEGAL, REGULATORY, FINANCIAL, & COMPLIANCE**

**CATEGORY 6: SAFETY, HEALTH, & PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**CATEGORY 7: SERVICES/ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

**CATEGORY 8: ORGANIZATIONAL, STRATEGIC, & MISSION RELATED**

**CATEGORY 9: VALUES, ETHICS, & STANDARDS**

The highest reported concerns reported by visitors to Ombuds Services for Staff in 2016 were all under Category 2: Evaluative Relationships. They were Respect/Treatment with 69% (2.B, p. 16), Communication with 67% (2.E, p. 16), and Trust/Integrity with 51% (2.C, p. 16).



### **CATEGORY 1: COMPENSATION & BENEFITS**

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries about the equity, appropriateness, and competitiveness of employee compensation, benefits, and other benefit programs

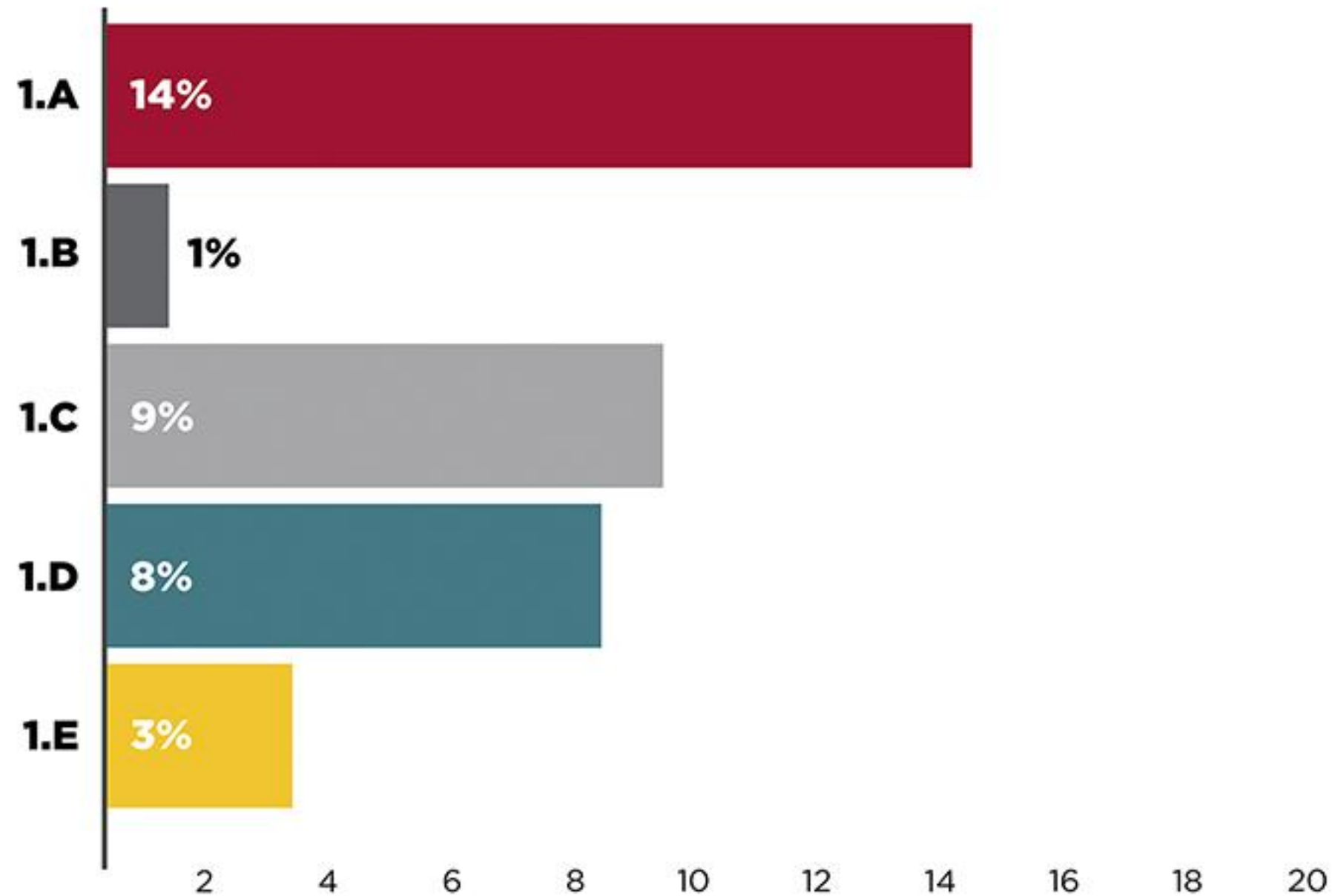
**1.A Compensation** (rate of pay, salary amount, job salary classification/level)

**1.B Payroll** (administration of pay, check wrong or delayed)

**1.C Benefits** (decisions related to medical, dental, life, vacation/sick leave, education worker's compensation insurance, etc.)

**1.D Retirement, Pension** (eligibility, calculation of amount, retirement pension benefits)

**1.E Other** (any other employee compensation or benefit not described by the above sub-categories)



## **CATEGORY 2: EVALUATIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries arising between people in evaluative relationships (e.g.: supervisor-employee)

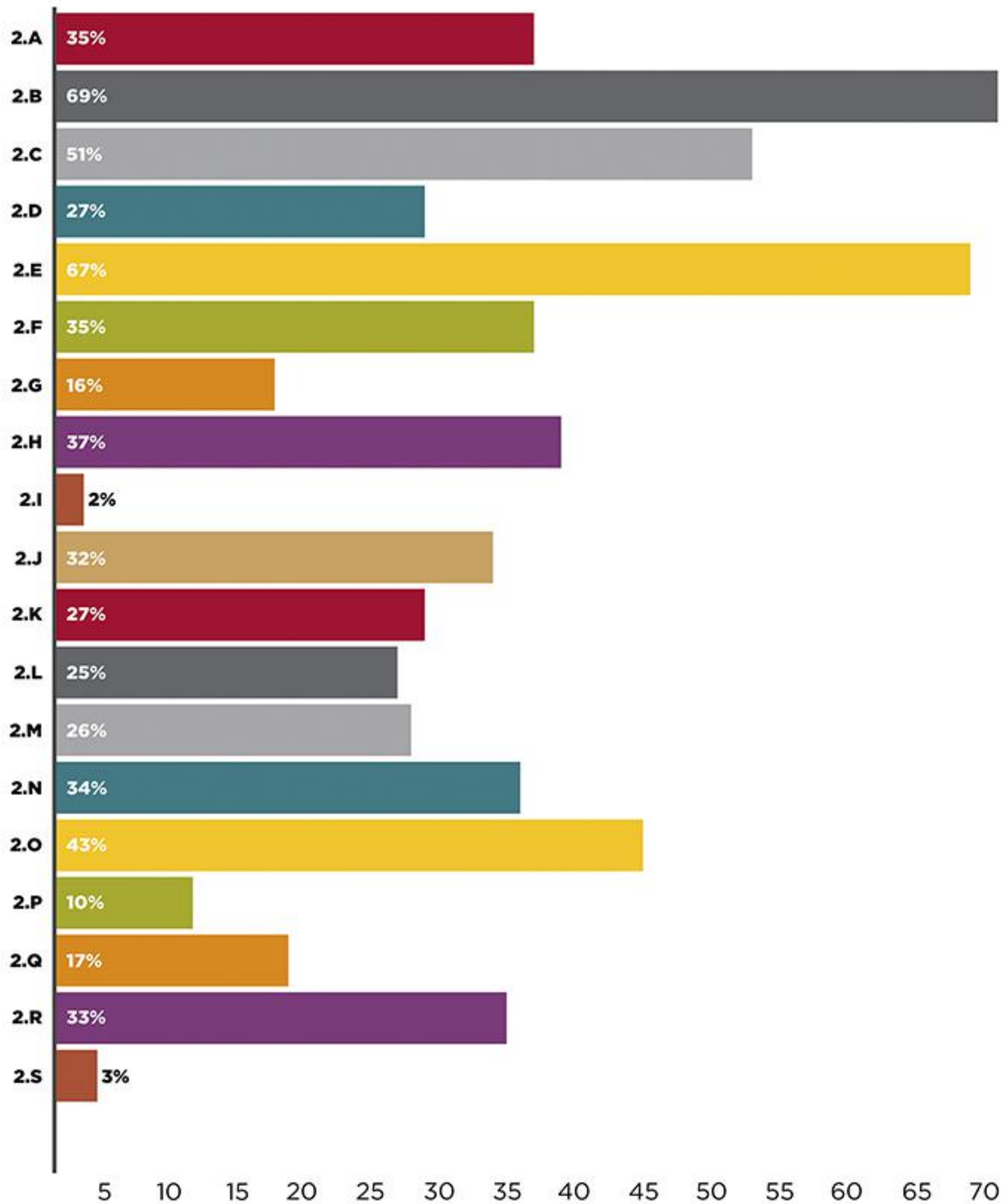
- 2.A Priorities, Values, Beliefs** (differences about what should be considered important—or most important—often rooted in ethical or moral beliefs)
- 2.B Respect/Treatment** (demonstrations of inappropriate regard for people, not listening, rudeness, crudeness, etc.)
- 2.C Trust/Integrity** (suspicion that others are not being honest, whether or to what extent one wishes to be honest, etc.)
- 2.D Reputation** (possible impact of rumors and/or gossip about professional or personal matters)
- 2.E Communication** (quality and/or quantity of communication)
- 2.F Bullying, Mobbing** (abusive, threatening, and/or coercive behaviors)
- 2.G Diversity-Related** (comments or behaviors perceived to be insensitive, offensive, or intolerant on the basis of an identity-related difference such as race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation)
- 2.H Retaliation** (punitive behaviors for previous actions or comments, whistleblower)
- 2.I Physical Violence** (actual or threats of bodily harm to another)
- 2.J Assignments/Schedules** (appropriateness or fairness of tasks, expected volume of work)
- 2.K Feedback** (feedback or recognition given, or responses to feedback received)
- 2.L Consultation** (requests for help in dealing with issues between two or more individuals they supervise or with other unusual situations in evaluative relationships)
- 2.M Performance Appraisal/Grading** (job performance in formal or informal evaluation)
- 2.N Departmental Climate** (prevailing behaviors, norms, or attitudes within a department for which supervisors have responsibility)
- 2.O Supervisory Effectiveness** (management of department, failure to address issues)
- 2.P Insubordination** (refusal to do what is asked)



**2.Q Discipline** (appropriateness, timeliness, requirements, alternatives, or options for responding)

**2.r Equity of Treatment** (favoritism, one or more individuals receive preferential treatment)

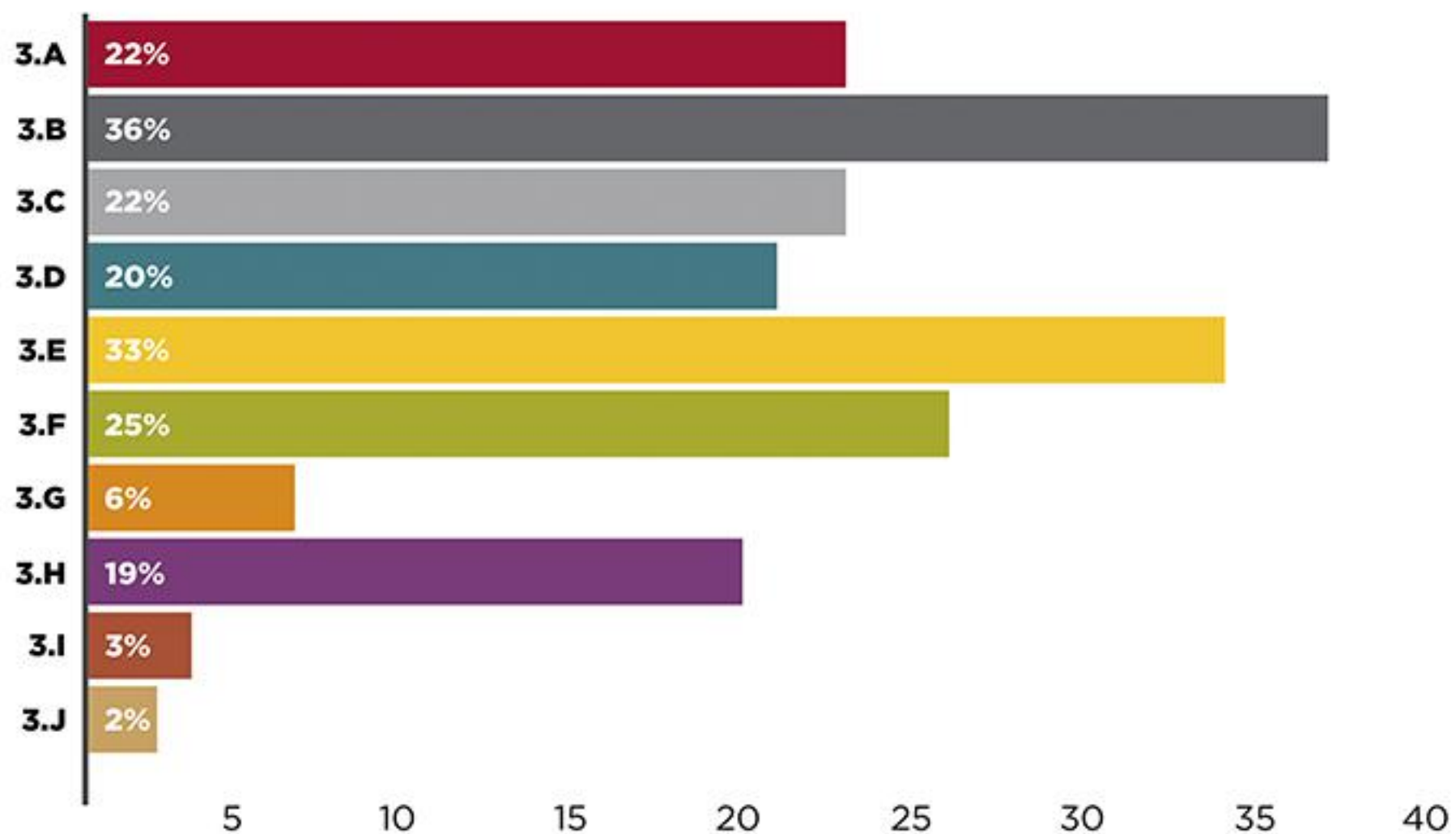
**2.s Other** (any other evaluative relationship not described by the above sub-categories)



### CATEGORY 3: PEER & COLLEAGUE RELATIONSHIPS

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries involving peers or colleagues who do not have a supervisory-employee relationship (e.g.: two staff members within the same department)

- 3.A Priorities, Values, Beliefs** (differences about what should be considered important—or most important—often rooted in ethical or moral beliefs)
- 3.B Respect/Treatment** (demonstrations of inappropriate regard for people, not listening, rudeness, crudeness, etc.)
- 3.C Trust/Integrity** (suspicion that others are not being honest, whether or to what extent one wishes to be honest, etc.)
- 3.D Reputation** (possible impact of rumors and/or gossip about professional or personal matters)
- 3.E Communication** (quality and/or quantity of communication)
- 3.F Bullying, Mobbing** (abusive, threatening, and/or coercive behaviors)
- 3.G Diversity-Related** (comments or behaviors perceived to be insensitive, offensive, or intolerant on the basis of an identity-related difference such as race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation)
- 3.H Retaliation** (punitive behaviors for previous actions or comments, whistleblower)
- 3.I Physical Violence** (actual or threats of bodily harm to another)
- 3.J Other** (any peer or colleague relationship not described by the above sub-categories)

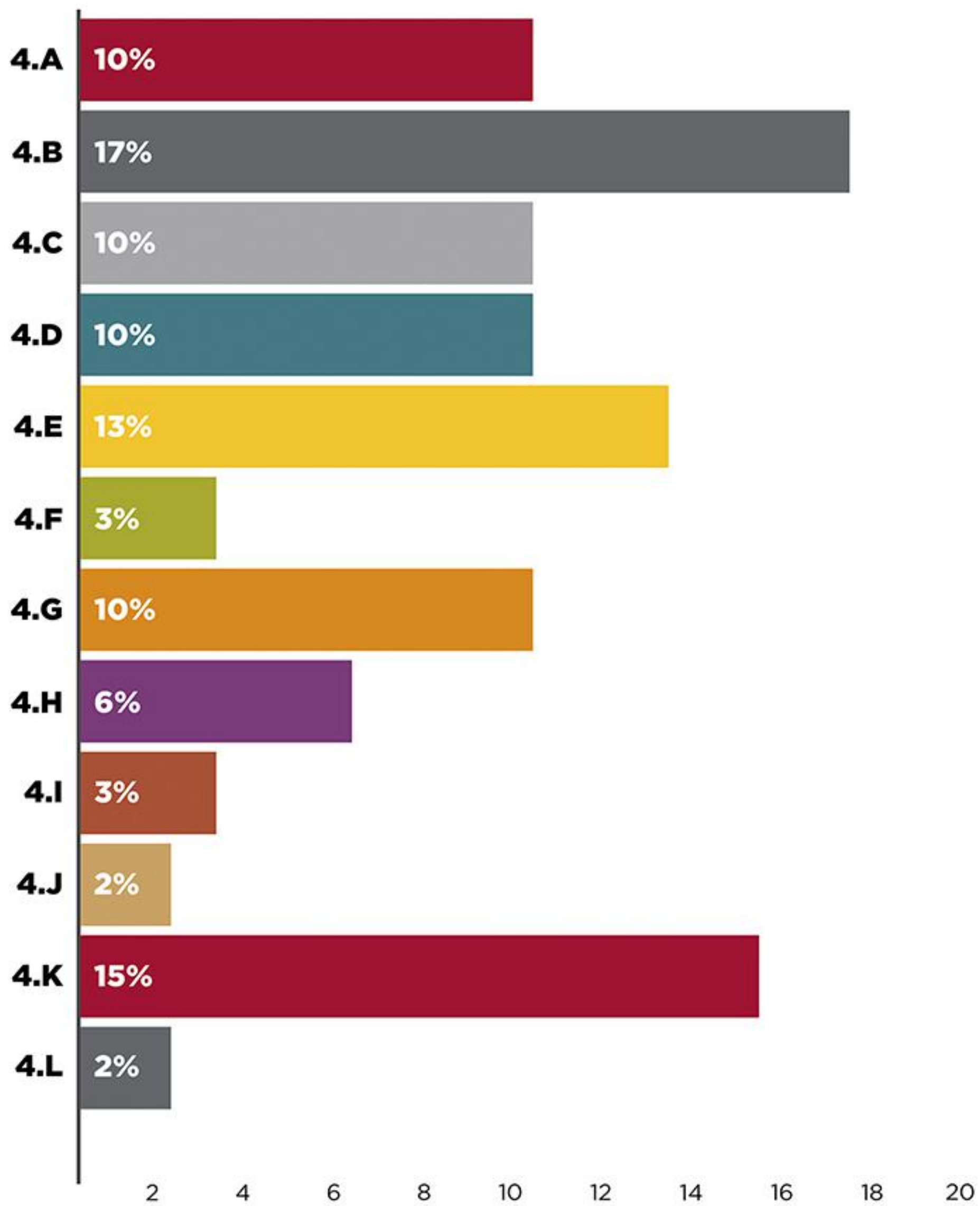




#### **CATEGORY 4: CAREER PROGRESSION & DEVELOPMENT**

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries about administrative processes and decisions regarding entering and leaving a job, what it entails, (e.g.: recruitment, nature and place of assignment, job security, and separation)

- 4.A Job Application/Selection and Recruitment Processes** (recruitment and election processes, facilitation of job applications, short-listing and criteria for selection, disputed decisions linked to recruitment and selection)
- 4.B Job Classification and Description** (changes or disagreements over requirements of assignment, appropriate tasks)
- 4.C Involuntary Transfer/Change of Assignment** (notice, selection and special dislocation rights/benefits, removal from prior duties, unrequested change of work tasks)
- 4.D Tenure/Position Security/Ambiguity** (security of position or contract, provision of secure contractual categories)
- 4.E Career Progression** (promotion or reappointment)
- 4.F Rotation and Duration of Assignment** (non-completion or over-extension of assignments in specific settings/countries, lack of access or involuntary transfer to specific roles/assignments, requests for transfer to other places/duties/roles)
- 4.G Resignation** (concerns about whether or how to voluntarily terminate employment or how such a decision might be communicated appropriately)
- 4.H Termination/Non-Renewal** (end of contract, non-renewal of contract, disputed permanent separation from organization)
- 4.I Re-employment of Former or Retired Staff** (loss of competitive advantages associated with re-hiring retired staff, favoritism)
- 4.J Position Elimination** (elimination or abolition of an individual's position)
- 4.K Career Development, Coaching, Mentoring** (on-the-job and varied assignments as training and developmental opportunities)
- 4.L Other** (any other issues linked to recruitment, assignment, job security or separation not described by the above sub-categories)





## CATEGORY 5: LEGAL, REGULATORY, FINANCIAL, & COMPLIANCE

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries that may create a legal risk (financial, sanction etc.) for the organization or its members if not addressed, including issues related to waste, fraud, or abuse.

**5.A Criminal Activity** (threats or crimes planned, observed, or experienced, fraud)

**5.B Business and Financial Practices** (inappropriate actions that abuse or waste organizational finances, facilities or equipment)

**5.C Harassment** (unwelcome physical, verbal, written, e-mail, audio, video, psychological, or sexual conduct that creates a hostile or intimidating environment)

**5.D Discrimination** (different treatment compared with others or exclusion from some benefit on the basis of, for example, gender, race, age, national origin, religion, etc.[being part of an Equal Employment Opportunity protected category - applies in the U.S.]

**5.E Disability, Temporary or Permanent, Reasonable Accommodation** (extra time on exams, provision of assistive technology, interpreters, or Braille materials including questions on policies, etc. for people with disabilities)

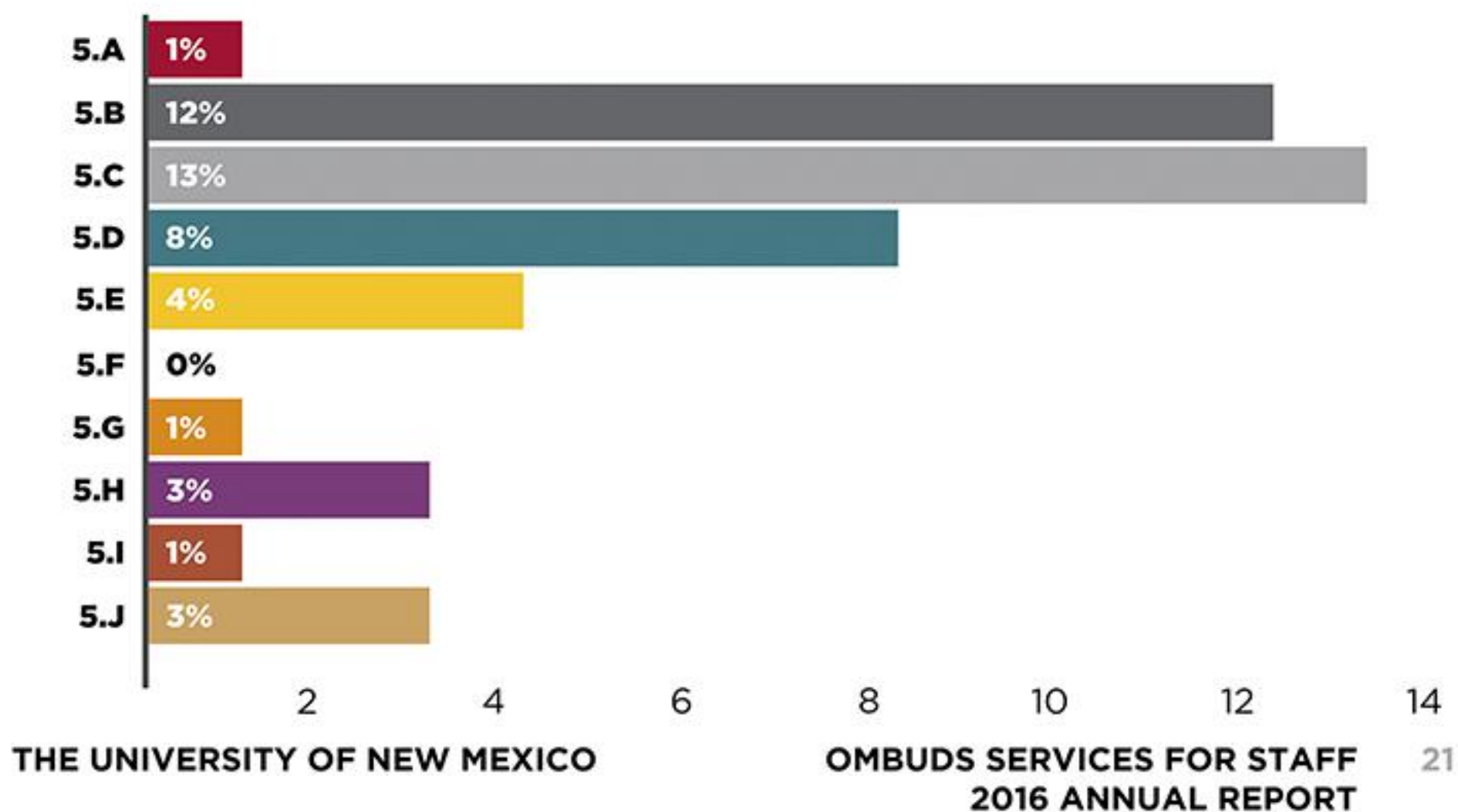
**5.F Accessibility** (removal of physical barriers, providing ramps, elevators, etc.)

**5.G Intellectual Property Rights** (e.g., copyright and patent infringement)

**5.H Privacy and Security of Information** (release or access to individual or organizational private or confidential information)

**5.I Property Damage** (personal property damage, liabilities)

**5.J Other** (any other legal, financial and compliance issue not described by the above sub-categories)

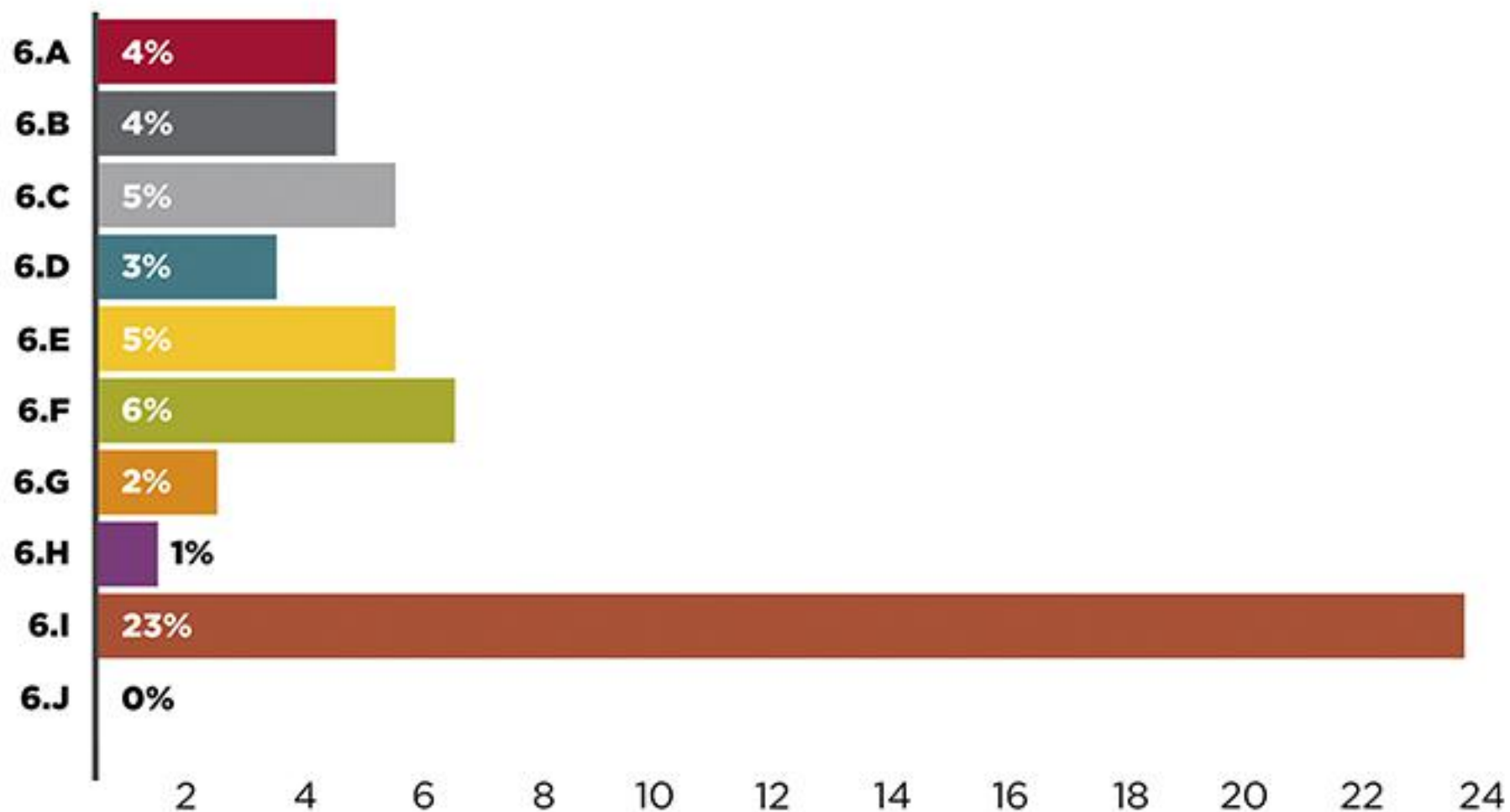




## CATEGORY 6: SAFETY, HEALTH, & PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries about safety, health, and infrastructure related issues.

- 6.A Safety** (physical safety, injury, medical evacuation, meeting federal and state requirements for training and equipment)
- 6.B Physical Working/Living Conditions** (temperature, odors, noise, available space, lighting, etc)
- 6.C Ergonomics** (proper set-up of workstation affecting physical functioning)
- 6.D Cleanliness** (sanitary conditions and facilities to prevent the spread of disease)
- 6.E Security** (adequate lighting in parking lots, metal detectors, guards, limited access to building by outsiders, anti-terrorists measures (not for classifying “compromise of classified or top secret” information))
- 6.F Telework/Flexplace** (ability to work from home or other location because of business or personal need, e.g., in case of man-made or natural emergency)
- 6.G Safety Equipment** (access to/use of safety equipment as well as access to or use of safety equipment, e.g., fire extinguisher)
- 6.H Environmental Policies** (policies not being followed, being unfair ineffective, cumbersome)
- 6.I Work Related Stress and Work-Life Balance** (Post-Traumatic Stress, Critical Incident Response, internal/external stress, e.g. divorce, shooting, caring for sick, injured)
- 6.J Other** (any safety, health, or physical environment issue not described by the above sub-categories)





## **CATEGORY 7: SERVICES/ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries about services or administrative offices including from external parties.

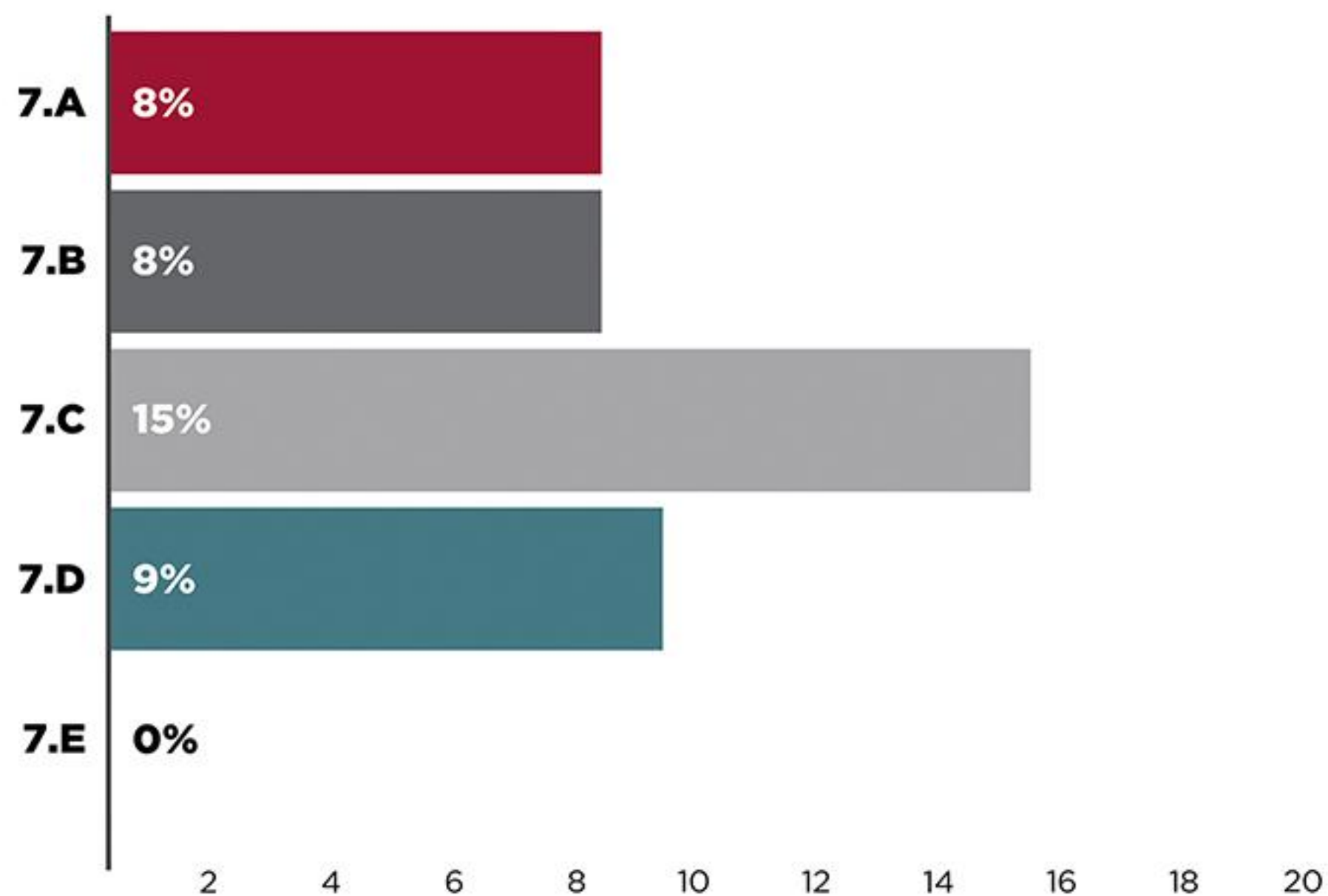
**7.A Quality of Services** (how well services were provided, accuracy or thoroughness of information, competence, etc.)

**7.B Responsiveness/Timeliness** (time involved in getting a response or return call or about the time for a complete response to be provided)

**7.C Administrative Decisions and Interpretation/Application of Rules** (impact of non-disciplinary decisions, decisions about requests for administrative and academic services, e.g., exceptions to policy deadlines or limits, refund requests, appeals of library or parking fines, application for financial aid, etc.)

**7.D Behavior of Service Provider(s)** (how an administrator or staff member spoke to or dealt with a constituent, customer, or client, e.g., rude, inattentive, or impatient)

**7.E Other** (any services or administrative issue not described by the above sub-categories)



**CATEGORY 8: ORGANIZATIONAL, STRATEGIC, & MISSION RELATED**

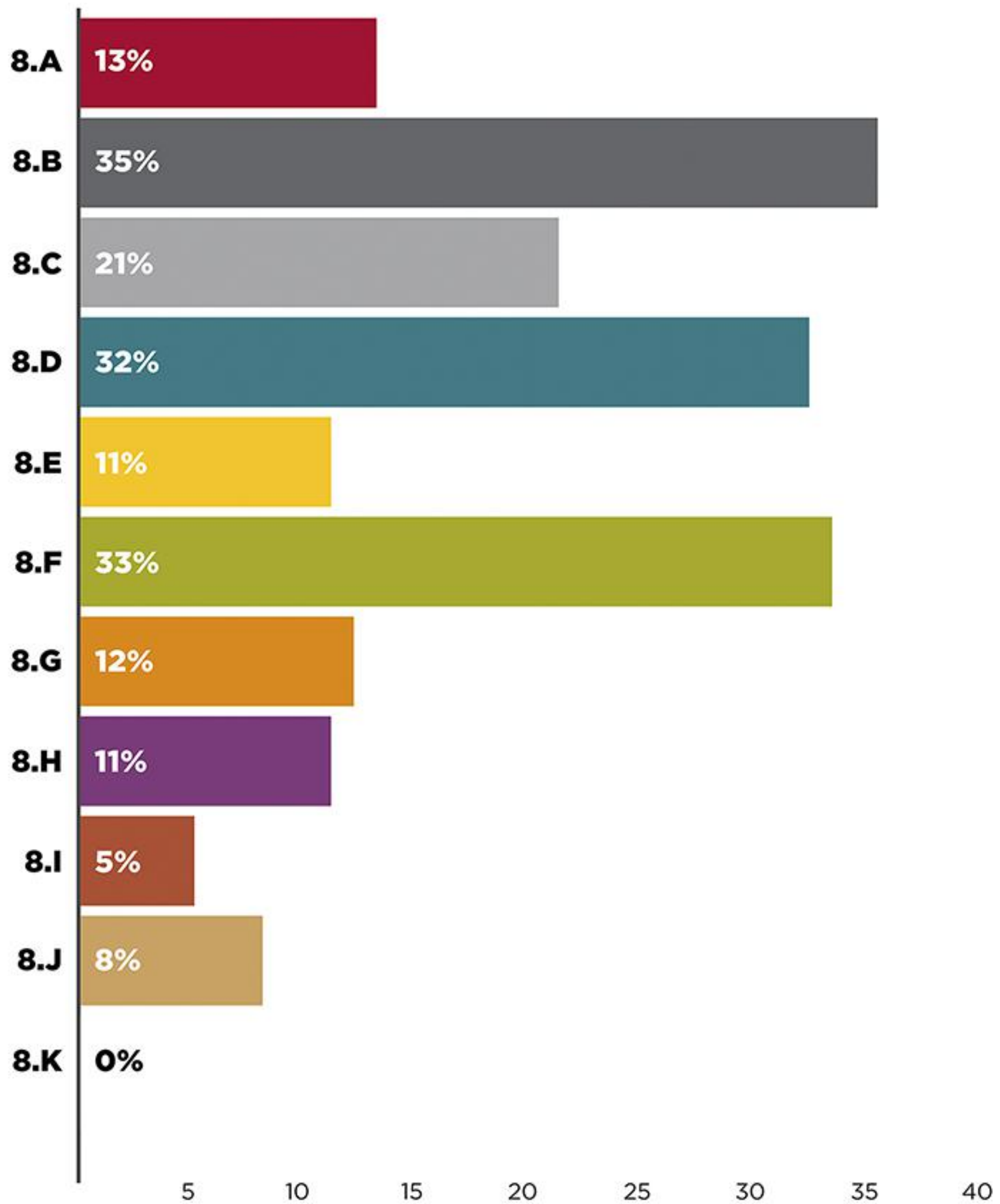
Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries that relate to the whole or some part of an organization.

**8.A Strategic and Mission-Related/Strategic and Technical Management**

(principles, decisions and actions related to where and how the organization is moving)

**8.B Leadership and Management** (quality/capacity of management and/or management/leadership decisions, suggested training, reassignments and reorganizations)**8.C Use of Positional Power/Authority** (lack or abuse of power provided by individual's position)**8.D Communication** (content, style, timing, effects and amount of organizational and leader's communication, quality of communication about strategic issues)**8.E Restructuring and Relocation** (issues related to broad scope planned or actual restructuring and/or relocation affecting the whole or major divisions of an organization, e.g. downsizing, off shoring, outsourcing)**8.F Organizational Climate** (issues related to organizational morale and/or capacity for functioning)**8.G Change Management** (making, responding or adapting to organizational changes, quality of leadership in facilitating organizational change)**8.H Priority Setting and/or Funding** (disputes about setting organizational/departmental priorities and/or allocation of funding within programs)**8.I Data, Methodology, Interpretation of Results** (scientific disputes about the conduct, outcomes and interpretation of studies and resulting data for policy)**8.J Interdepartment/Interorganization Work/Territory** (disputes about which department/organization should be doing what/taking the lead)**8.K Other** (any organizational issue not described by the above sub-categories)





## CATEGORY 9: VALUES, ETHICS, & STANDARDS

Questions, concerns, issues, or inquiries about the fairness of organizational values, ethics, and/or standards, the application of related policies and/or procedures, or the need for creation or revision of policies, and/or standards.

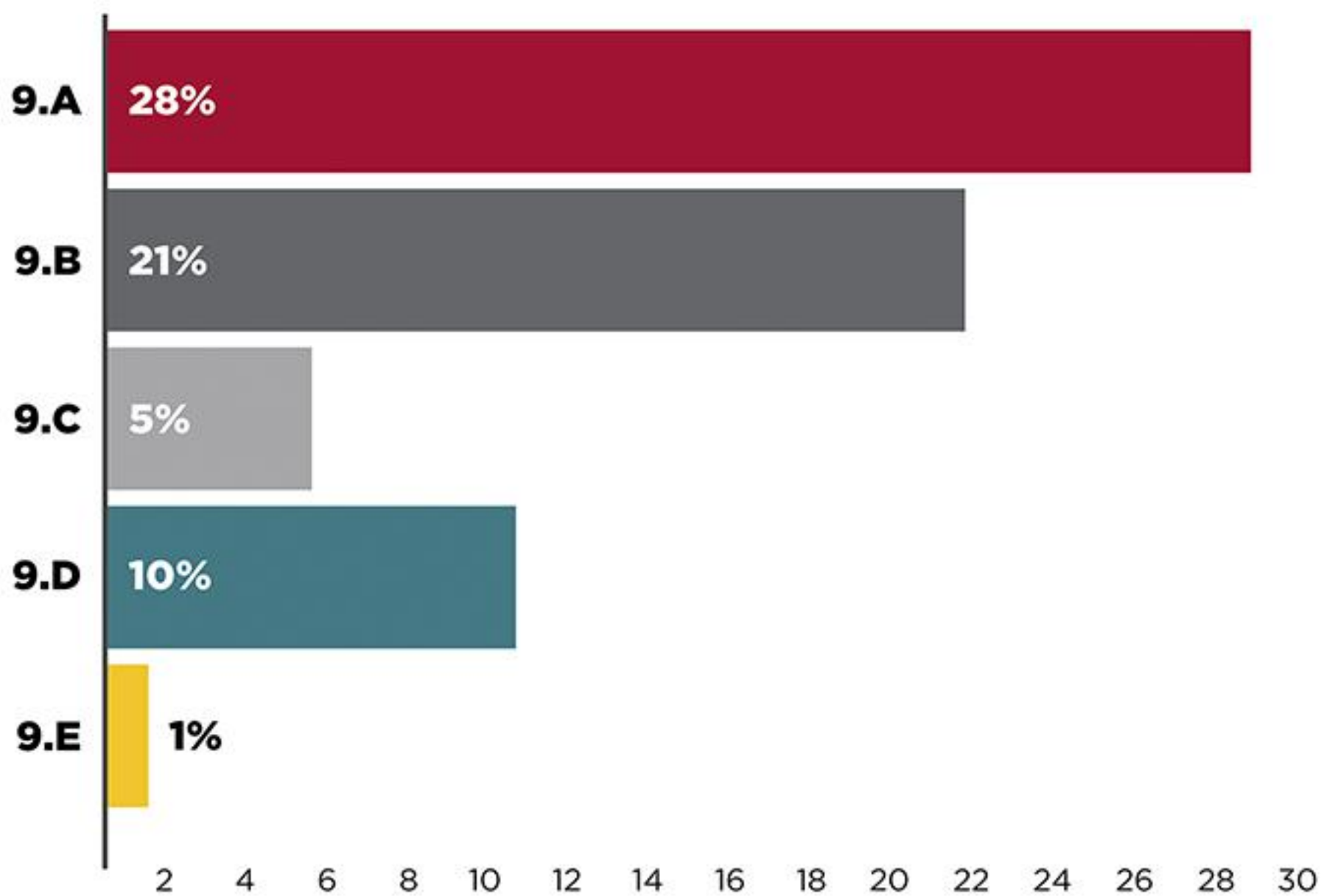
**9.A Standards of Conduct** (fairness, applicability or lack of behavioral guidelines and/or Codes of Conduct, e.g., Academic Honesty, plagiarism, Code of Conduct, conflict of interest)

**9.B Values and Culture** (questions, concerns or issues about the values or culture of the organization)

**9.C Scientific Conduct/Integrity** (scientific or research misconduct or misdemeanors, e.g., authorship; falsification of results)

**9.D Policies and Procedures NOT Covered in Broad Categories 1 thru 8** (fairness or lack of policy or the application of the policy, policy not followed, or needs revision, e.g., appropriate dress, use of internet or cell phones)

**9.E Other** (Other policy, procedure, ethics or standards issues not described in the above sub-categories)





# THE COSTS OF CONFLICT

As we reported last year, conflict has been claimed to be one of the most significant and reducible costs to organizations.<sup>1</sup> Conflict is inevitable and can be expensive for the individual and for the organization. Some examples of opportunities for conflict include perceptions of fairness related to the application of policies; evaluation criteria; salary and other kinds of limited resources; priorities; appropriate use of power; interpretations of rules; cultural differences, values, and attitudes; interpersonal differences; and perceived insensitivity.<sup>2</sup>

Too often, conflicts are managed only through administrative hearings, formal grievances, lawsuits, or left unmanaged. All of these options drain institutional resources. Those costs are realized by the individuals involved, the university, and by the students and communities served by the university.

Thomas Kosakowski, Associate Director of the Office of Ombuds Services at UCLA, gave a TEDxUCLA talk where he discussed the cost savings of ombuds programs. Citing a report by Pacifica Human Communications, he stated,

“Pacifica Human Communications, a consulting company that helps set up ADR programs, looked at the benefits of the first year of the ombuds program at The Halliburton Company. Pacifica found a \$20:\$1 return on the investment. It cost Halliburton a little more than a million dollars to set up the program, and the return was nearly 25 million dollars.”<sup>3</sup>

The role of a campus ombuds office is to promote more equitable, efficient, and effective management of workplace issues. We call this constructive conflict management, minimizing the human and organizational costs of conflict, and helping employees maximize the creative potential of conflict, diverse perspectives, and change. With a duty to maintain neutrality and confidentiality, and without authority to propose solutions or impose sanctions, Ombuds Services models fair and respectful communication and provides information and resources that help individuals move forward more constructively. When engaging Ombuds Services results in improved communication and collaboration, it pays off for the individuals involved and for the people served by the university.

When Ombuds Services results in improved communication, collaboration, and/or employee retention, it tends to be a “win-win” for UNM and for the individuals involved.

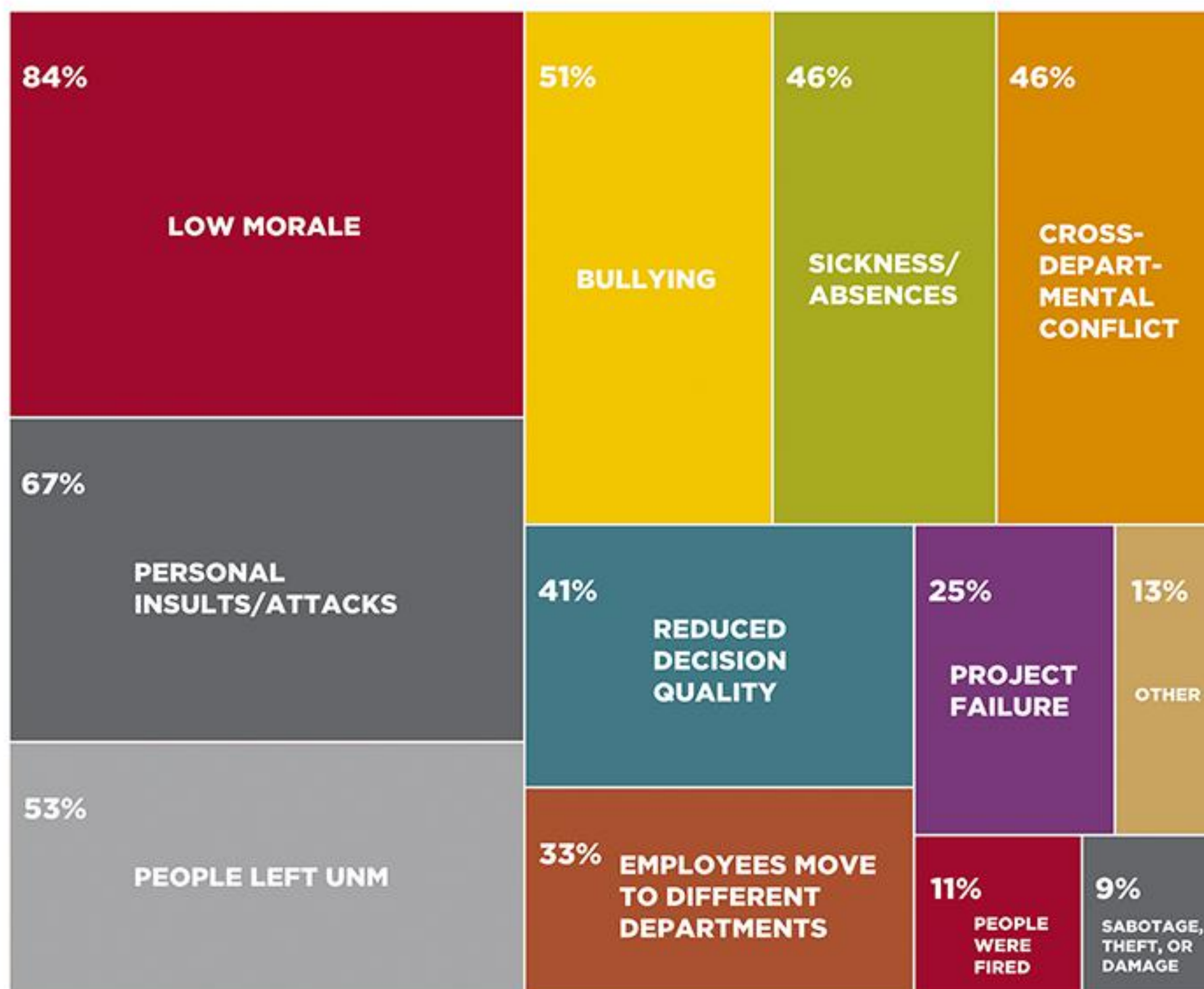
<sup>1</sup> Freres, M., (2013). *Financial Costs of Workplace Conflict*, Journal of the International Ombudsman Association, Volume 6, Number 2, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Hoppe D., Culhane B., Fenili M. L., Sagen M. & Sebok T. (2011). *Nuts and Bolts: Establishing and Operating a College or University Ombuds Office* University and College Ombuds Association (UCOA) Handbook.

<sup>3</sup> Kosakowski, T. (2014, July). Thomas Kosakowski: *Ombuds—an emerging resource for organizational conflict* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXu0XFrryE>.

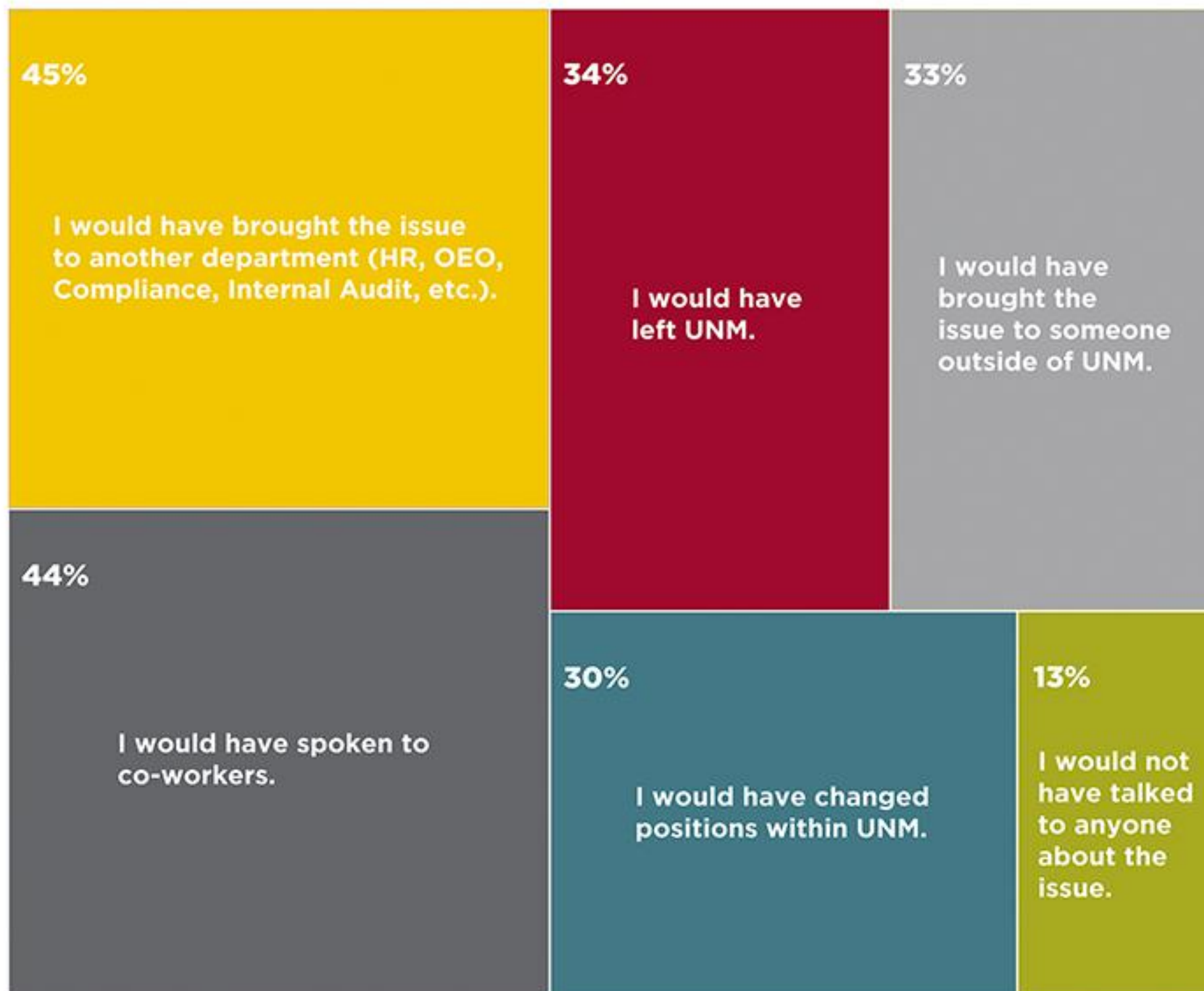
The following two charts illustrate costs of conflict at UNM. After their visit, each first-time visitor was given an anonymous survey to complete, and the data represents responses to visitor surveys between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2016. One chart below illustrates the negative outcomes of conflict witnessed by visitors and the other illustrates potential costs identified as results of unmanaged conflict:

#### NEGATIVE OUTCOMES OF CONFLICT





**RESULTS OF UNMANAGED CONFLICT (WHAT PEOPLE WOULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT OMBUDS SERVICES)**



# APPENDIX A

## ABOUT THE VISIT

The visit is a private conversation with a skilled neutral in which the visitor can think out loud about a workplace situation, gain clarity and perspective, and receive information about policies that might offer guidance, resources, and possible constructive approaches. Afterwards, the next steps are entirely up to the visitor. Over 90% of those who come to the office do so for a visit.

Ombuds offices typically refer to those seeking services as “visitors” rather than clients to avoid any confusion about the informal, non-legal, and non-therapeutic nature of the Ombuds function. This term also distinguishes ombuds services from those that are based on advocacy and alignment with the party or parties involved.

## SCHEDULING A VISIT

UNM staff or faculty supervising staff can call 277-2993 to schedule a visit. The visitor schedules to meet for at least an hour with an ombuds. Visits typically take place within a couple of days unless the visitor wants to come at a later date.

## UPON ARRIVAL

Ombuds staff will greet the visitor when they arrive. The visit will be confidential and begins with a review of ombuds confidentiality. An ombuds will not reveal the name of a visitor or any of the content of the conversation to anyone without the visitor's permission unless the ombuds determines that there is a need to break confidentiality to address an imminent threat of serious harm. We support the visitor's own efforts to build direct communication.

## THE CORE OF THE VISIT IS A CONVERSATION

The visit is an opportunity for the visitor to talk/think out loud about their workplace situation without being judged. This is a rare opportunity for the visitor to have a skilled, neutral, and respectful sounding board. The value of being heard without judgement in this process cannot be overstated.

Once the visitor has said what they want to say about the situation and the neutral ombuds has listened to the visitor, the ombuds can do the following:

- Help sort through many concerns to clarify what happened and how the visitor feels about it, and to help the visitor identify his or her priorities going forward
- Help the visitor consider the perspectives of other stakeholders
- Coach the visitor on how to express concerns and ideas constructively
- Coach the visitor on available policies and resources for guidance in moving forward
- Help the visitor to evaluate options for addressing the visitor's priorities in search of an approach with which the visitor feels comfortable



# APPENDIX B

## TRAINING & OUTREACH LOG

### TRAININGS PROVIDED

#### Brown Bag Sessions

- 7 sessions
- 9 hours
- 31 people reached

#### Individual Department Presentations/Outreach

- 24 sessions
- 23.75 hours
- 329 people reached

#### Individual Department Trainings

- 8 sessions
- 20 hours
- 256 people reached

#### EOD Trainings

- 7 sessions
- 23 hours
- 112 people reached

#### UNM Staff 40-hour Basic Mediation Skills Trainings

- 2 sessions
- 80 hours
- 30 people reached

#### TOTALS

- 48 sessions
- 155.75 hours
- 758 people reached

### OUTREACH MEETINGS

#### Staff Council

#### S.M.A.R.T. Committee

#### Unified Wellness Alliance

#### Wellness Alliance

#### CARS

#### Ombuds Services Open House

#### Whistleblower Policy Committee

#### UNM Welcome Back Days Tabling

#### UNM Staff as Students Event Tabling

#### UNM Law School Externship Program

#### UNM Board of Regents Meeting

### TRAININGS RECEIVED/PRESENTATIONS ATTENDED

#### Clery Act Presentation

#### IOA Annual Conference

#### Email and Electronic Privacy

#### Collective Impact

#### Title IX (OEO Training)

#### Project ECHO

#### Rethinking Violence Prevention

#### Everyday Interventions

#### Mental Health First Aid

#### Active Shooter

#### Cascade/Website Management

#### UNMPD Campus Safety

#### Indigenous Dispute Resolution and Coaching

#### Dignity and Rank (Faculty Ombuds)

#### NM ADR Symposium

#### Moving Beyond Civility

# **OMBUDS SERVICES FOR STAFF**

**[HTTP://WWW.OMBUDSFORSTAFF.UNM.EDU](http://www.ombudsforstaff.unm.edu)**

**(505) 277-2993**