Ombudsperson Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

1.0 Mandate

1.1 To provide advice and guidance to or at the request of the Ombudsperson or the Chair of the Committee, that supports the delivery of confidential, independent and impartial Ombudsperson advisory services to Students.

1.2 To advise the Ombudsperson regarding their annual operational plan for the Office of the Ombudsperson including any questions and recommendations relating to systemic reform that will be reviewed.

1.3 To advise how the annual budget plan of the Office of the Ombudsperson, including the level of staffing resources, might be allocated according to the contributions made respectively by the Simon Fraser Students Society (SFSS), the Graduate Students Society (GSS) and the University (SFU).

1.4 To review the expenditures of the Office of the Ombudsperson to ensure a balanced budget.

1.5 To review a draft and provide feedback on the Ombudsperson’s annual calendar year report to the University Community.

1.6 To review the disposition of recommendations the Ombudsperson previously made in an annual report.

1.7 To respect the confidentiality of the Ombudsperson’s casework. The Committee shall not have access to any confidential information from Office records that identifies individuals or groups of individuals.

1.8 To submit, as individual members, an annual confidential written appraisal of the Ombudsperson to the Chair of the Ombudsperson Advisory Committee. The appraisal will evaluate the Ombudsperson’s performance in relation to the Terms of Reference for the Office of the Ombudsperson.

1.9 To respond to any alleged violation of the Office of the Ombudsperson’s Terms of Reference.

a) If a member of the University Community believes that the Ombudsperson has violated the Terms of Reference with respect to any matter to which the member has been a party, a written complaint detailing the alleged violation can be submitted to the Chair of the Ombudsperson Advisory Committee. The Chair will convene the Committee to review the concern. The Committee will advise the Chair regarding a course of action.
1.10 To be consulted by and to advise the University administration regarding proposed changes to the Ombudsperson’s reporting relationship.

1.11 To serve as the Search Committee for the Ombudsperson.

   a) The Chair of the Advisory Committee will be the Chair of the Search Committee. The Committee will seek applications from interested individuals and recommend a candidate for appointment by the Chair.

2.0 Membership

2.1 The Committee will comprise six members:

   a) The senior executive who supervises the Ombudsperson will chair the Committee,

   b) One student member appointed by the SFSS,

   c) One student member appointed by the Executive Committee of the GSS, and

   d) Three members appointed by SFU: one Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies appointee, one Vice Provost and Associate Vice President Students and International appointee, who shall be from the Registrar’s office, and one Vice President Academic and Provost faculty member appointee.

2.2 Term of Office: The SFSS, GSS and SFU will each decide the term of office for their respective appointee(s) made under section 2.1, having regard for staggered terms to provide continuity in the Committee’s administrative oversight of the Office of the Ombudsperson.

2.4 Absences: If any member of the Committee misses more than two (2) scheduled meetings in a row, their Organization shall be notified in writing by the Chair of the Committee. Organizations have the authority to replace their member in the event that they are not fulfilling the duties of a Committee member in an adequate manner.

2.5 When a change in membership is made, the Organization will notify the Chair in writing who will notify the Committee.

3.0 Meetings

3.1 The Committee will meet once a semester and at the call of the Chair. Meetings will be scheduled with a minimum of four (4) weeks advance notice before the meeting date and preferably held during the middle of a semester.

3.2 Meeting agendas, minutes and supporting materials will be produced, distributed to all Committee members at least one (1) week before a scheduled meeting, and
maintained for all committee meetings. The office of record will be the senior executive who supervises the Ombudsperson.

3.3 **Quorum:** Quorum shall be the Chair and three members, at least one of whom must be a student member and one a SFU appointed member.

3.4 **Conflict of interest:**

a) A member who believes they may have a Conflict of Interest must identify the conflict to the Chair in writing prior to the Committee meeting or verbally at the Committee meeting if the conflict arises without notice. A member who believes another member has an undeclared conflict of interest should specify in writing the basis of this potential conflict to the Chair. The Chair shall decide if a member is in a conflict of interest and inform the Committee. A member who has a conflict of interest must, at the decision of the Chair, either recuse themselves from the proceedings during discussion or voting on that particular matter or refrain from discussion or voting on that particular matter.

b) When the Chair believes they may have a Conflict of Interest, the Chair must identify the conflict to the Committee in writing prior to the Committee meeting or verbally at the Committee meeting if the conflict arises without notice. The Committee shall decide if the Chair is in a conflict of interest and, if in the affirmative, will require that the Chair either recuse themselves from the proceedings during discussion or voting on that particular matter or refrain from discussion or voting on that particular matter. Members may request in writing that the committee discuss a potential conflict of interest of the Chair.

3.5 **Motions:** In the case of a tie vote on a motion, the motion is defeated.

4.0 **DEFINITIONS**

4.1 **Conflict of Interest** means a real, potential, deemed or perceived conflict of interest that arises when a member’s other interests may put into question the independence, impartiality and objectivity that members are obliged to exercise in the performance of their Committee mandate.

4.2 **Students** means a person who is applying for admission to the University; an undergraduate who has been enrolled at the University for one or more of the last three terms, including the current term, and is eligible to continue; a graduate student who is enrolled at the University in the current term and is eligible to continue; a graduate student who is not enrolled in the current term but is eligible to enroll at the University when the approved leave ends; a visiting, exchange or special audit student who has been admitted to the University for the purposes of taking courses or to take part in an approved research term; or a person enrolled at the University in a non-credit program or course.

4.3 **Organization** means the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS), Graduate Student Society (GSS) and Simon Fraser University (SFU).
4.4 University Community means all students and employees of the University and all people who have a status at the University mandated by legislation or other University policies, including visiting and emeritus faculty, and post-doctoral fellows.