

The three R's

1) Take **responsibility:**

Remember that the onus is on you to be familiar with the requirements and expectations in your department and faculty at UVic. Be curious and proactive. Not knowing isn't ground for an appeal.

2) get to know the **rules:**

The Calendar (web.uvic.ca/calendar) and your program and faculty websites have academic regulations you must know. Look up regulations for registration, fees, GPA requirements, plagiarism, etc.

3) Identify **resources:**

Use your instructor's office hours and contact information, meet your program's undergraduate or graduate advisor, discover the services provided by your student society, and use support services such as counseling, health services, and workshops on study skills.

If in doubt, ask the ombuds to point you in the right direction before a situation becomes too serious.

The ombuds is a resource to assist in resolving student fairness issues.

The ombuds can provide you with information, advice, and assist with problem solving.

Inquiries are confidential.

Student Union Building, B205
(upstairs, over Cinecenta box office)

Phone: (250) 721 – 8357

Email: ombuddy@uvic.ca

Drop-in Hours:

Monday and Tuesday
9:30 – noon

Monday and Wednesday
1:00-4:00

For more information find resources for undergraduate and graduate students on the ombuds website.

uvicombudsperson.ca

Tips for Resolving Problems

From the ombuds office at the University of Victoria



BECAUSE FAIRNESS MATTERS

How should I approach this issue?

For example, you disagree with a grade you received. Pause to *ask yourself*:

- 1) *Have I fact-checked?* Get all the information you need and stay objective by double-checking your assumptions about the issue. Ask for feedback.
- 2) *What am I trying to accomplish?* Are you trying to learn how to do better for the next assignment? Or do you simply want the grade checked?
- 3) *Who can do something about this?* Should this be brought to your TA, your professor, or a higher level?
- 4) *What are the possible implications of my options?* For example, doing nothing, speaking directly with the instructor, involving a third party, requesting a review, or making an appeal will have different consequences.

Before reacting, ask for feedback!

Ben is worried about his grade because he thinks his instructor is singling him out for his political orientation. The professor doesn't share Ben's ideas, so when she asked him not to post certain messages on the class forum, Ben responded angrily that he had a right to express his opinions. It turned out that Ben's email identified people in a way that breached confidentiality, and the professor warned him this was considered unprofessional in the School.

Process is key

Check your assumptions: Ben assumed the instructor disagreed with his postings because of his political views.

Check your expectations: Ben expected that the class forum was an area for discussing any matter related to course themes.

Get accurate information: Ben didn't know about confidentiality and professional behaviour requirements in his School, nor that they applied to the class forum. Do your homework by keeping notes, understanding the requirements, researching relevant policies and asking for feedback.

Take responsibility where it is due: Ben can apologize for misunderstanding and behaving unprofessionally.

Present your perspective and treat people respectfully: Ben responded angrily. Even when making a complaint, raise your concerns constructively. Keeping a calm and professional attitude goes a long way. Use a respectful statement to raise the issue constructively.

A respectful statement of concern has 3 parts

1) **The situation:** A short and factual description that shows the problem, but does not attack the person.

2) **The impact on you:** Such as how it's affecting your ability to learn.

3) **A future-focused statement:** How you hope to resolve the issue, best expressed as a need or a request.

A possible statement for Ben:

"I know we don't have the same political opinions and I've been very vocal about my views. I'm beginning to feel silenced on the class forum because no one picks up on the points I make. I have no idea how I am doing in this course and I'm worried about the report we have to write. I would appreciate some input on how to relate my perspective to the class topic."