

APPENDIX I

History

The University Ombuds enjoys a long history at Cornell University. In 1969, [Professor Alfred E. Kahn](#), Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, chaired a committee regarding the role of an Ombudsman. At the conclusion of the committee's work, Dean Kahn advocated for the University to constitute an Ombudsman office.

On August 26, 1969, Dean Kahn issued [a memo](#) to then Provost Dale Corson outlining the scope and prerogatives of the Ombudsman Office. Shortly thereafter, as President, Dale Corson used this memorandum to create the office. In 1969 President Corson appointed [Professor Alice Cook](#) as Cornell's first Ombudsman and she served until 1971.

The original Kahn memorandum states that the principles (related to constituting the office) "shall be subject to revision by whatever legislative body eventually emerges from the University." In 1971, the University's legislative body was the University Senate, which issued the "[Cornell University Senate Guidelines for the Office of University Ombudsman,](#)" on April 22, 1971.

Presently, the "legislative body" is the [University Assembly \(UA\)](#), a shared governance body composed of faculty, staff, and students. The University Assembly charter references the role of University Ombuds (the name was revised in 2022, in accord with the [International Ombuds Association](#)'s revision of its name). In 2013, the University Assembly approved updated [Guidelines](#). In 2022, the Guidelines were again updated and renamed as the Charter, to reflect changes in language, professional standards and best practices, and University organization. But the fundamental principles established in the Kahn memo and the 1971 Guidelines have remained virtually unchanged for more than 50 years. The new [Charter](#) was approved by the University Assembly on 1 November 2022, and accepted by President Martha Pollock on 26 January 2023.