The most frequent first statement is, “I am not sure if this rises to the level of a grievance, but …” This is a sure sign that the faculty member has arrived at the right place at the right time.

Contact information:
Email: Mary.Shultz@Tufts.edu
(Note: no c in my brand of Shultz!)
Office: Pearson-100D

Best method for contact:
Email with a phone number
(I will call you.)
Or voice message (7-3477) with contact information

To keep confidentiality, leave few details other than that you want to meet with me.

History
The bylaws of the faculty of Arts Sciences and Engineering at Tufts University established the position of ombudsperson as part of the Grievance Panel. Recently, the position was modified to conform with the ethical standards of the International Ombudsman Association.

These standards include:
Independence The ombudsman is not part of the administration. The ombudsman reports to the Grievance Panel and through it to the AS&E faculty.
Impartial The ombudsperson is not an advocate for either side of a dispute.
Informal All meetings are informal, no notes are kept.
Confidential This is the cornerstone of the ombudsman’s role. The ombudsperson does not reveal who has come to see them nor why. One practical consequence of this is that the ombudsman is not a mandatory reporter for matters involving discrimination against a member of a protected class, for research ethics or other matters for which faculty are mandatory reporters. Discussion with the ombudsperson does not constitute notice to the University. Grievant identity is revealed only with consent of the grievant and at the grievant’s request.
What is an ombudsperson?
Nearly everyone asks this one!
An ombudsperson is a neutral, independent, impartial person who hears issues in an informal setting, keeping everything confidential. The focus is to resolve issues when they are small.

What the ombudsperson can and cannot do:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Can</th>
<th>Cannot</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Listen confidentially</td>
<td>• Make changes or decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Answer questions or refer you to someone who can</td>
<td>• Enforce any action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explain policies and procedures</td>
<td>• Duplicate a formal grievance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify options/help resolve issues</td>
<td>• Provide legal advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstorm solutions</td>
<td>• Testify in formal procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mediate/facilitate conversation/resolution</td>
<td>• Conduct any investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recommend changes in policies while maintaining confidentiality</td>
<td>• Be an agent of notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicate how the grievant can move to formal complaint</td>
<td>(Note: For issues involving protected class issues, the ombudsperson is only required to report if there is an imminent danger. The ombudsperson can accompany a grievant to start a formal grievance only if so requested.)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How can the ombudsman help?
By listening, helping to calibrate a grievance, brainstorming actions to improve the situation.

What kind of issues can the ombudsman help with?
Any matter that affects faculty life at the University. The AS&E ombudsman specifically assists faculty in the school of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering.

Do I need to contact the ombudsman before filing a formal complaint?
No. The role of the ombudsman is to facilitate resolution of issues at a lower level of investment than the formal process. You are not required to go to the ombudsman first.

Can I come to the ombudsman during or after a formal hearing?
In most cases, it would not be appropriate to contact the ombudsman for a complaint that is in formal hearing.

Can the ombudsperson represent me?
No. The ombudsperson is impartial. Another member of the grievance panel can accompany you to a formal process.

Will my identity and matter be kept confidential?
YES - With only one exception: The ombudsperson believes you are a danger to yourself or others.

When should I contact the ombudsperson?
Anytime you need a sounding board that is impartial and confidential. You think you have been treated unfairly. You need a mediator or facilitator. You are not sure whether or where to seek assistance. The best time is when an issue has not yet spiraled to a major one.

What happens when I call or email?
If you email, the ombudsman will contact you. Most often, a face-to-face meeting is arranged. It is my practice to meet somewhere off campus for a confidential discussion.

Where is the ombudsman?
I am located in Pearson 100D: the chemistry department. There is no formal ombudsman office.

How does the ombudsman follow up?
Usually the first meeting consists of brainstorming next steps. Those are always your choice. Usually that meeting takes place off campus, ensuring complete confidentiality.