

**Committee on Professional Ethics**

# **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

2019 Midwinter Meeting – Seattle, Washington

As chair of the Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE), I am pleased to report on the committee's activities since the 2018 Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

## **Charge**

The council Committee on Professional Ethics shall augment the Code of Ethics by explanatory interpretations and additional statements, prepared by this committee or elicited from other units of ALA. When units of the association develop statements dealing with ethical issues, a copy will be sent to the committee on professional ethics for review so that it may be compared to the existing ALA code of ethics in order to determine whether or not conflicts occur.

## **Conference Programs Proposal**

COPE submitted a program to be presented at ALA Annual Conference 2019. It was declined. This will be the first time the committee will not be presenting at conference. The committee is looking for alternative avenues to present their program on ethical dilemmas in librarianship.

## **Endorsements**

The Committee on Professional Ethics endorsed:

- *Library Bill of Rights*, Article VII
- Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*
- A Resolution in Support of Civil Rights Protections for People of Diverse Gender Identities

## **Advocating for Intellectual Freedom**

This spring COPE will be collaborating with the Intellectual Freedom Committee to convene a working group to develop language on the importance of supporting and raising awareness of intellectual freedom within the library profession. The two committees will determine if the document is proposed as ALA policy language or an interpretation of the Code of Ethics.

## **Review and Update of Ethics Documents**

Members of COPE and volunteers worked diligently from June 2018 until January 2019 reviewing and revising documents. Some of the documents will be included in the updated 10th edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual* edited by Martin Garnar and Trina Magi.

The committee adopted revisions to “Copyright: An Interpretation of the Code of Ethics,” “Enforcement of the Code of Ethics Q&A,” and “Ethics and Social Media Q&A.” The revised documents will be uploaded to the ALA website ([ala.org/tools/ethics](http://ala.org/tools/ethics)). Work will continue on “Speech in the Workplace Q&A” and “Conflicts of Interest Q&A” with the deadline of Annual 2019.

The document “Copyright: An Interpretation of the Code of Ethics” will be presented to ALA Council III for approval.

## **COPE Liaisons in ALA**

Andrew Harant continued to serve as COPE liaison to the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee. He has actively raised ethical issues and concerns in email conversations, in comments on documents, and in virtual and in-person IFC meetings. Sara Dallas participated in two ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee working groups; the revised document “Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*” working group and a new working group drafting questions and answers on meeting rooms.

## **Action Item**

The Committee on Professional Ethics moves the adoption of the following action item: ALA CD #24.1\_act “Copyright: An Interpretation of the Code of Ethics.”

## **Thank You**

The Committee on Professional Ethics thanks the division representatives and the OIF staff for their commitment, assistance, and hard work. COPE thanks President Loida Garcia Febo and the Executive Board for their confidence in the committee and for allowing them to serve ALA.

Respectfully Submitted,

## **ALA Committee on Professional Ethics**

Sara Dallas (Chair)

Miranda Bennett

John DeSantis

Sonja Eyler

Andrew Harant

Scott Muir

Steven Phalen

Leigh Rifenburg

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