

Committee on Professional Ethics

REPORT TO COUNCIL

As chair of the Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE), I am pleased to report on the committee's activities since the virtual LiblearnX event in January 2022.

Charge

The council committee on professional ethics shall augment the *Code of Ethics* (ala.org/tools/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.

Q&A on Ableism

The Q&A on Ableism group is charged with drafting a formal document to provide probable answers to concerns and questions related to accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities, particularly inspired by the *ALA Code of Ethics*' ninth principle. The working group members created a community input form that garnered 113 individual responses. This input served to inform gaps in the preliminary Q&A draft. The working group plans to continue its work with current volunteers from across the globe.

Q&A on Sexism

The Q&A on Sexism group, composed of 5 committee members and liaisons from various ALA units, roundtables, and committees, is drafting a document to provide guidance to ethical issues on sexism through the *ALA Code of Ethics*. After receiving community input, the working group drafted additional questions and answers expanding the document to include responses to intersectionality, age, gender identity, and social justice in libraries. The working group will continue its work further refining the document for public use.

Outreach

The Outreach group, composed of 5 committee members and liaison focused on submitting conference proposals. This is an attempt to continue to create ethics education on a larger scale and make COPE more accessible to library workers. The group will continue to work with other units in the future to submit program proposals and promote other professional development opportunities related to ethics.

Preamble

The Committee has begun to revise the *ALA Code of Ethics* preamble to add context for the newly added ninth principle. The group prepared a draft of the preamble with the original text side by side for community input. The committee received ample feedback and suggestions, which were reviewed. The Committee considered the ongoing work of the Core Values Task Force and the feedback during additional editing. The working group will continue to work further on the Preamble to reach a final revision to submit to the Council for adoption at a future conference.

Ethics Bibliography

The Associates Entry Point project is led by two COPE associates, Dr. Sheri Edwards and Richard Wade, as an introduction to prospective librarians and library workers, providing various resources about ethics, its meaning, and application. Collected resources include carefully analyzed articles, videos, and websites. The final bibliography will be added as part of the Committee website as an additional resource for Ethics education.

Professional Ethics Liaisons

COPE committee members and associates have demonstrated further commitment to the ALA core values by serving as liaisons to other working groups and projects.

One committee member currently serves on the Core Values Programming Subgroup and has contributed to drafting, collaborating, and presenting programs at ALA conferences. The group has representatives from IFC, IFC Privacy Subcommittee, COPE, IFRT, and FTRF.

One committee member and one associate currently serve on the Critical Race Theory Toolkit working group. The charge of this group, “comprised of ALA staff and ALA members — is creating a toolkit to prepare library workers for censorship challenges to critical race theory in curriculums, anti-racist materials, and diversity staff trainings. The subgroup's goal is to create a resource that will prepare library workers to defend their collections, counter falsehoods, and engage their communities in important conversations about racial injustice and empowering everyone to fully participate in our

democratic society.” COPE members are contributing revisions to the second draft of the toolkit, participating during upcoming meetings, and reporting back to COPE members on the subgroup progress.

To this end, COPE relies on the time and energy devoted by liaisons of divisions, round tables, and affiliates. Thank you to Mary Keeling (AASL Liaison); John Budd (LRRT Liaison); Marna Clowney-Robinson (SRRT Liaison); Lourdes Johnson (NMRT Liaison); Lea Wentworth (RRT Liaison); Leslie Campbell Hime (EMIERT Liaison); Margaret Danhof (United Liaison); Jennifer Ferriss (SustainRT); Kelsey Ford (YALSA Liaison); Andrew Horbal (FMRT Liaison); Carol Leibiger (LHRT Liaison); Shatha Baydoun (COSWL Liaison); Nichelle Hayes (BCALA Liaison); Megan Oakleaf (ACRL Liaison); Kelvin Watson (PLA Liaison); and Eboni Henry (ALA Executive Board Liaison).

Thank You

The Committee on Professional Ethics thanks the OIF staff for their commitment, assistance, and hard work. In particular, Kristin Pekoll, for serving as staff liaison, assisting with meetings, and guiding the Committee when questions arise. COPE thanks President Patty Wong and the Executive Board for their confidence in the committee and for allowing them to serve ALA.

Respectfully Submitted,

ALA Committee on Professional Ethics

Johana Orellana Cabrera (Chair)
Kim Becnel
Nancy Bolt
Erica Freudenberger

Rory Patterson
Catherine Smith
Amy Wiggins
Sheri Edwards (Committee Associate)

COMMITTEE INFORMATION UPDATE

Committee Name: Committee on Professional Ethics

Conference Year: 2021-2022

Committee Chair: Johana Orellana Cabrera

Staff Liaison: Kristin Pekoll

Committee Members:

Johana Orellana Cabrera (Chair)
Kim Becnel
Nancy Bolt
Erica Freudenberger

Rory Patterson
Catherine Smith
Amy Wiggins
Sheri Edwards (Committee Associate)
~~Richard Ward (Committee Associate)~~

Date of meeting(s)	Meeting format (in-person or virtual)	Number of members present	Total in attendance
January 19, 2022	Virtual	6	18
March 23, 2022	Virtual	5	16
May 25, 2022	Virtual	7	14
June 25, 2022	In Person		

Committee Charge:

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for review so that it may be compared to the existing ALA code of ethics in order to determine whether or not conflicts occur.

Objectives of the committee for this conference year, including any planned activities:

1. LibLearnX program: “Advancing Social Justice Through the 9th Principle of the Code of Ethics” with speakers Andrew Harant, Emily Knox, Sarah Houghton.
2. Draft two Q&A documents to expand on the ALA Code of Ethics; Sexism and Ableism.
3. Create outreach ideas to promote COPE and create awareness of professional ethics in the association and profession.
4. Collaborate with COPE Associates to create a bibliography to serve as an entry point for new members and nonmembers. This is particularly critical for accessibility and as a resource for non-degreed librarians or administrators in rural communities.
5. PLANNED: Draft guidance for collection development practices that balance 2nd principle (censorship) and the 9th principle (social and racial justice).
6. PLANNED: Reevaluate the ALA Code of Ethics preamble to include a historical perspective and add context for 9th principle.
7. PLANNED: Translate the Code of Ethics into Spanish.

Describe interactions with other units within ALA:

1. Annual conference and LibLearnX program proposals with ALA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee and Intellectual Freedom Round Table.
2. Liaisons with AASL, LRRT, SRRT, NMRT, RRT, EMIERT, United for Libraries, YALSA, FMRT, LHRT, COSWL, BCALA, ACRL, PLA, and the ALA Executive Board.

Synthesis of activities (summarize discussions, decision(s) or motion(s) reached, and note follow-up action(s) required:

1. Sub groups formed to work on various COPE documents and projects.
2. COPE members volunteer to work with:
 - a. Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice Subgroup
 - b. Joint Professional Values Programming Subgroup
 - c. Challenges to CRT and Diversity Training Toolkit Subgroup

If unable to achieve desired committee outcomes, what hampered the ability to achieve stated goals (lack of resources, member participation, communication issues, procedural delays, etc.?)

Objectives are in progress.

Priorities/recommendations for the upcoming year:

Further expand the profession's and the association's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion with documents to enhance the new article to the ALA Code of Ethics.

Other comments/information you believe will help the Association in its work:

Submitted by: Kristin Pekoll

Date Submitted: May 31, 2022