

American Library Association  
Committee Information Update

Please note: ALA and Council committees are required to **submit an update of their activities within one-month after each Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference.** This form will be sent to the ALA Council and the ALA Committee on Organization.

Report for Annual Conference   2017  

Name of Committee: ALA Committee on Professional Ethics

Committee Chair: Sara Dallas

Committee Members Present: Sara Dallas, Chair  
Scott Muir; Steven Phalen; Andrew Harant

Committee Members Absent: Rosanne Cordell, Xiaoyu Duan, Angela Fisher Hall

Others Present: John DeSantis, Executive Board Liaison; Danise Hoover, RUSA; Adrienne Lim, ACRL; Jodi Spillane, ALCTS; Hilda Weisburg, AASL; Nancy Bolt, ASCLA; Abigail Leigh Phillips, YALSA; Catherine Soehner, LLAMA; Kristin Pekoll, OIF Staff; Jamie LaRue, OIF Staff

Accomplishments [at this meeting], a concise account:

- Educational Programming -- [Desegregating Public Libraries: The Tougaloo Nine](#)  
In 1961, Geraldine Edwards Hollis and eight of her fellow students from Tougaloo College entered a whites-only library in Jackson, MS and were arrested. This act of protest helped spark the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi yet it has been largely lost to history. More than fifty years later, Ms. Hollis connected with a public library director and an artist from North Carolina and her story is being retold and remembered. At this program, Ms. Hollis will tell the story of the Tougaloo Nine, reflect on the Civil Rights movement, and inspire participants with both the story of her struggle and her enduring love of reading and libraries. Co-sponsored by the Committee on Professional Ethics, Public Library Association and Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services
- Awareness of Professional Ethics Survey -- Chair, Sara Dallas widely distributed an [online survey on the Awareness of Professional Ethics](#) to librarians and library workers. The purpose of the survey was to examine the awareness of professional ethics and principles within our profession. The 981 respondents identified many trends and concerns and expressed a need for continuing education opportunities.

Planned activities for upcoming year, a concise account:

- The committee is working on creating a public document that highlights the feedback from the online survey on the Awareness of Professional Ethics.
- Prior to midwinter, the committee will draft an Interpretation of the Code of Ethics addressing personal beliefs and professional ethics.
- The Committee on Professional Ethics is collaborating with the Office for Intellectual Freedom and the editorial board of the [Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy](#) to write a column for

every issue that will be titled, "How Do You COPE"? Each column will address ethical issues that people in the library profession face in the workplace.

- Committee members have volunteered to coordinate with other divisions and to submit multiple program proposals for the 2018 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Issues that affect the committee's work and their implications for the future:

The navigation and communication within the structure of ALA continues to be a challenge for the committee. While the committee utilized every opportunity available to disseminate the survey, there were still so many active association members who had not seen it. Many of the results of the survey, identified similar problems.

Interactions with other units within ALA:

The committee's staff liaison has personally connected with unit leadership to encourage appointments for division liaisons on the committee. The committee hopes that with more communication about our purpose to division leadership there will be more enthusiasm.

The division liaisons have increased their communication between their divisions and the committee. This has been extremely valuable.

Relationship of the committee's work to the ALA strategic plan:

Not much attention was devoted to the ALA strategic plan this year but we will reflect on the committee's role and how to strengthen the mission of ALA in the future.

Current level of committee members' involvement:

There has been a decrease in attendance to conference meetings by both members, liaisons, and interns. Those that are involved are enthusiastic and provide hard work and thoughtful input.

Committee self-check on its value and viability:

The general consensus is that the committee is undervalued and unknown. The representatives from units across the Association bring up valid concerns that the Ethics committee is willing to work on but there is little awareness of the committee and its charge to the greater organization. A few members that were appointed to the committee were not aware of its existence prior to appointment.

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

Submitted by: Kristin Pekoll

Date Submitted: 7/1/17