

**Society of American Archivists
Council Conference Call
January 20, 2016
2:00-4:00 pm EST**

**Annual Report: Committee on Ethics and Professional Conduct
(Prepared by Senior CEPC Co-chair Robert Riter and
Junior CEPC Co-chair Tiffany Schureman)**

The year 2014–2015 saw CEPC members continue in their work of publishing ethical case studies on-line, with continued assistance and support from SAA staff and its Council Liaison. During the past year three case studies were published; additional case studies are in progress. Additionally, during this time CEPC worked to formalize its workflow procedures and advertising. Policy documentation was developed to codify review processes and its advertising approaches.

CEPC and the Committee on Education (CoE) initiated a collaboration to support the development of an archival ethics module, in support of SAA's Archival Arrangement and Description Certificate Program. CEPC will serve an advisory role, supporting course developers and instructors in their development and deployment of education modules.

CEPC also provided expertise on archival ethics concerns. CEPC was asked to discuss, and provide a statement, regarding the University of Texas Ransom Center's purchase of the Gabriel Garcia-Marquez papers – specifically issues related to making public the financial terms of the acquisition. The Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy (CAPP) was also asked to provide a statement. These documents informed the formal comments issued by SAA. CEPC also responded to a query from colleagues at Harvard University regarding the development of internal processing policies governing the treatment of materials that might be viewed as objectionable/personally offensive. The Committee compiled a bibliography of resources that could be used to inform policy decisions.

Detailed Activity Summary:

1. CEPC holds regular conference calls.

Time frame: Monthly and/or as needed.

CEPC held conference calls as needed to communicate regarding case studies and other Committee business.

2. CEPC reviews and offers comment on Gabriel Garcia Marquez papers acquisition by The University of Texas Ransom Center.

Time Frame: December 2014

On December 12, CEPC received a memorandum from Kathleen Roe, requesting a review of the University of Texas Ransom Center's decision not to release the financial terms of acquisition, as had been done in previous instances. This was in response to queries from SAA members and external constituencies. The Committee met as a whole and drafted a statement, which was delivered on December 19.

3. CEPC responds to SAA member's ethics query.

Time Frame: January 2015

On January 12, CEPC was contacted by a colleague charged with facilitating the development policies related to the processing of sensitive materials. Of particular concern was if there was any precedent for providing an opt-out clause, for staff unable or unwilling to work with materials that they find objectionable. While the committee felt it was not appropriate to provide a comment on a specific course of action, we did assemble a resource bibliography, including case studies, that could be used to inform/support the institution's reviewing and policy drafting activities.

4. Initiated educational partnership with CoE.

Time Frame: March 2015–Present.

In March 2015, CoE initiated a dialog with CEPC regarding a partnership to support the development of an archival ethics module. CEPC voted to pursue this partnership and drafted a policy statement defining our Committee's role in supporting this partnership. CEPC is currently engaged in the recruitment of course instructors and developers.

5. Committee develops advertising strategy and policy.

Time Frame: September–November 2015.

During this period CEPC discussed and drafted advertising policies, along with a formal policy and working directory of contact organizations.

6. Call for case study proposals reissued.

Time Frame: December 2015

CEPC reissued its *Call for Papers* in December. This is in line with a new policy to distribute the call three times each calendar year. CEPC developed a strategy to distribute the call to national and regional organizations, along with selected partner organization.

At this stage, CEPC is concerned with the maturation of the publication, and with increasing its profile. This work was accomplished with the assistance and guidance of Chris Prom, Publications Editor.

Administrative Information:

Following the annual meeting in Cleveland, Nancy Freeman rotated off CEPC as senior co-chair. Robert Riter currently serves as senior co-chair, Tiffany Schureman serves as junior co-chair, and Pam Hackbart-Dean serves as CEPC's Council liaison.

Committee member Tiffany Schureman continues to maintain the Committee's website. In 2015 she drafted a history of the evolution of the Code of Ethics, which is now accessible online: <http://www2.archivists.org/groups/committee-on-ethics-and-professional-conduct/code-of-ethics-history>.