# ANNUAL REPORT

of the COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

For the Period: July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019 Submitted by Don Gotterbarn and Marty J. Wolf

Committee Co-Chairs

1. BASIC INFORMATION
   1. List of committee members, terms of office; begin with chair. As an appendix, attach the address list of the committee's members.

Don Gotterbarn: Chair (term expires June 30, 2020) Marty J. Wolf: Vice Chair (term expires June 30, 2020) Michael S. Kirkpatrick, Education Coordinator

Bo Brinkman, Technical Coordinator Keith W. Miller, Secretary

Karla Carter, Social Media Coordinator Catherine Flick, Outreach Coordinator Florence A. Appel

Richard Blumenthal Emanuelle Burton Ken Christensen Frances S Grodzinsky Kai Kimppa

Evelyn Lulis Denise Oram Thomas J. Owens Norberto Patrignani Tom Yeh

Note from July 1, 2018-June 30, 2020 Don Gotterbarn and Marty J. Wolf are co-chairs.

* 1. State the purpose to the committee -- its current charter. If an ad hoc committee, state the termination date.

The Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE) is responsible to: 1) promote ethical conduct among computing professionals by publicizing the Code of Ethics and by offering interpretations of the Code including responding to queries from ACM members, industry professionals, ACM governance bodies, and other key stakeholders about the intersection of computing practice and ethical behavior reflected in the Code; 2) plan and review activities to educate membership in ethical decision making on issues of professional conduct giving teacher training workshops, other public education activities; and 3) review and recommend updates to the Code of Ethics and its guidelines; 4) Carry out its role as described in the Code of Ethics Enforcement Policy.

* 1. Indicate the organization of the committee into subcommittees or other subunits; give a one-sentence description of each subunit's charter. Name the individual responsible for each subunit.

Generally the committee functions as a committee of the whole, without any sub-units. Sub-committees are formed to provide leadership on new projects and as the need arises. Work is reviewed by a committee of the whole. There is one technical support sub-unit to maintain social media and COPE’s web presence. Ad hoc subcommittees are formed for the purpose of conducting investigations when violations of the Code are reported.

* 1. List dates of committee meetings.

September 20, 2019, Sopot, Poland at the ETHICOMP Conference Skype, email, and telephone meetings occurred as the need arose

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

List all projects, of the committee or its subunits that have been active at any time during the fiscal year.

Please list active projects before passive or completed ones; and list the most important projects first.

COPE projects are of two kinds; reactive and proactive. COPE responds to concerns about behavior by individuals, organizations, or Professional Societies which are alleged to be inconsistent with the

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, ACM’s anti-harassment policy, and so on. Issues are brought to us by individuals, internal ACM committees like the Pubs Board, and by ACM HQ. Proactively COPE engages in a variety of projects to promote professionalism and ethical behavior consistent with and supportive of the ACM’s position on professional ethics. The ACM Committee on Professional Ethics works to nurture an ethical stance by practitioners and those who employ practitioners.

On-going projects:

1. Promote the Code: With the update to the Code, we have undertaken numerous efforts to ensure that members and computing professionals in general are made aware of the Code, the changes proposed and adopted, and were able to contribute to the update process. Responsible people: Gotterbarn/Wolf, with the help of other COPE members. This has been a primary responsibility of COPE since its inception..
2. Professional Ethics Column in SIGCSE Inroads Magazine: Twice a year we write a column about professionalism. Responsible people: Gotterbarn. This has been ongoing for many years..
3. ACM representative to the International Federation for Information Processing TC 9 and supports other relevant IFIP groups. Responsible people: Gotterbarn. This has been ongoing for many years.
4. Maintain COPE’s internet presence. This includes developing case studies, responding to Ask An Ethicist questions, and general website maintenance ethics.acm.org, as well as using Twitter

to engage with a broad audience. Responsible people: Brinkman, Kirkpatrick, Carter. This has been ongoing since 2016.

1. Work with ACM committees dealing with ethical issues and respond to ethics questions submitted to ACM. Responsible people: Gotterbarn/Wolf. This happens on an as-requested basis..
2. Provide support for other international computing organizations developing a codes of ethics. Responsible people: Gotterbarn/Wolf. This happens on an as-requested basis.
3. Development of Code poster. Responsible person: Gotterbarn.
4. Maintain direct relationship with ACM Pubs Board. Responsible person: Kirkpatrick.
5. Work with Professional Development Committee. Responsible person: Gotterbarn
6. Investigate complaints that alledge the ACM Code of Ethics has been violated on an on-going and as-needed basis.

Completed projects:

1. Spanish translation of the Code was completed.
2. Chinese translation of the Code was completed.
3. Publication of a booklet containing the Code, case studies, and explanations of the Code. Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Wolf, Kirkpatrick.
4. Presentation about the Code at HCC conference in Poznan, Poland. Responsible person: Gotterbarn.
5. Presentation about the Code at ETHICOMP conference in Sopot, Poland. Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Wolf, Flick, Kirkpatrick.
6. Presentation of a Special Session at SIGCSE 2019 on how computer science departments might “adopt” the Code. Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Wolf, Kirkpatrick.
7. Presentation of a Workshop at SIGCSE 2019 using the Code in teaching of technical computer science topics. Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Wolf, Carter, Kirkpatrick.
8. Presentation about the robustness of the Harm Clause and the Code at CEPE conference in Norfolk, Virginia. Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Wolf, Flick, Kirkpatrick.
9. Presentations to and support of international groups developing codes of ethics, consulting with groups in Australia, Italy, New Zealand, and the UK. Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Flick.
10. Contribution to ACM’s exploration of possible actions “in the social responsibility space.” Responsible people: Gotterbarn, Wolf
11. Guided the Institute for the Certification of Computing Professionals in their adaptation of the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. Responsible person: Gotterbarn
12. PLANS

3.1 List projects that will be completed or terminated in the coming year.

* 1. Development of Code posters.
  2. Presentation of a Special Session at SIGCSE 2020
  3. Develop video materials to share on the web
  4. Work with ACM to develop a TechTalk webinar centered on the Code
  5. List important changes or milestones in active projects during the coming year. None are anticipated.
  6. List new projects or programs which are proposed or contemplated.
     1. Identify ad hoc opportunities to promote the Code (and thus the ACM) to new groups in potentially new ways and venues.
     2. Identify ways to make the Code relevant to practitioners.
     3. Develop a way for organizations to adopt the Code.
     4. Discuss and develop guidelines for membership on COPE. Identify expectations of members, ways for contributing to advancing COPE’s mission.
     5. Establish working meetings to develop additional case studies.
     6. Establish working meetings to develop Code support materials.
  7. Indicate how well the committee composition reflects diversity with respect to younger members, geographic representation, a balance with respect to industry/academia, gender, and other under-represented groups. If there are areas that need improvement, list the details of a plan to increase the diversity of the committee membership.

The committee has eighteen members. Three are from outside the USA and seven are women. COPE’s mission is to support professional conduct rather than to develop advanced philosophical concepts about ethics; so accordingly, we are also concerned to have representation of computer scientists, IT practitioners, and those with philosophy backgrounds. This year we will continue to address membership on the committee.

1. COMMENTS

List any comments you wish brought to your Board's or Council's attention. Please provide a brief (paragraph) summary of one or two of your activities that would be of interest to the broad ACM community (or provide a link to a write-up of such information).

COPE is interested in reaching out to practitioners and bringing the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to them as a mechanism to support their professionalism. As noted above, Catherine Flick has been successful doing this in the UK( e.g. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tlh81Pvxwsc).](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tlh81Pvxwsc)) Other members of COPE are willing to participate in such events as well.

# APPENDIX

List of all committee members, subcommittee or subunit chairs and members, and other persons responsible for projects.

Note that members of the committee are called upon to serve on subcommittees to investigate complaints that allege violations of the Code when the complaint warrants.

Name: Donald Gotterbarn

[Email: don@gotterbarn.com,](mailto:don@gotterbarn.com) [chair@ethics.acm.org](mailto:chair@ethics.acm.org)

Responsibility within the Committee: co-chair, stuff no one else wants to do

Name: Florence Appel

[Email: appel@sxu.edu](mailto:appel@sxu.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes ideas to teaching of computing ethics

Name: Richard Blumenthal

[Email: rblument@regis.edu](mailto:rblument@regis.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: crosswalk the Code with curricula

Name: Bo Brinkman

Email: Brinkman (dr.bo.brinkman@gmail.com).

Responsibility within the Committee: Technical Coordinator: Web, Twitter, Youtube Channel

Name: Emanuelle Burton

[Email: emanuelle.burton@gmail.com](mailto:emanuelle.burton@gmail.com)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to guiding COPE direction

Name: Karla Carter

[Email: karla.carter@bellevue.edu](mailto:karla.carter@bellevue.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: social media, especially Twitter.

Name: Ken Christensen

[Email: christen@cse.usf.edu](mailto:christen@cse.usf.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to guiding COPE direction

Name: Catherine Flick

[Email: cflick@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:cflick@dmu.ac.uk)

Responsibility within the Committee: Code outreach, especially to practitioners

Name: Frances Grodzinsky

[Email: grodzinskyf@yahoo.com](mailto:grodzinskyf@yahoo.com)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to the teaching of computing ethics.

Name: Kai Kimppa

[Email: Kai Kimppa Finnish Information Processing <kakimppa@utu.fi>](mailto:kakimppa@utu.fi) Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to guiding COPE direction

Name: Michael Kirkpatrick

[Email: kirkpams@jmu.edu](mailto:kirkpams@jmu.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: Website assistance, responsible for managing Case Studies

Name: Evelyn Lulis

[Email: ealulis@aol.com](mailto:ealulis@aol.com)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to guiding COPE direction

Name: Keith Miller, Orthwein Endowed Professor for Lifelong Learning in the Sciences

[Email: millerkei@umsl.edu](mailto:millerkei@umsl.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: Case study/Ask an Ethicist content development

Name: Denise Oram

[Email: d.oram@glyndwr.ac.uk](mailto:d.oram@glyndwr.ac.uk)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to case studies, guiding COPE direction

Name: Thomas J Owens

[Email: thomas.j.owens@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.j.owens@gmail.com)

Responsibility within the Committee: industry representative, contributes to guiding COPE direction.

Name: Norberto Patrignani

Email: Norberto Patrignani (norberto.patrignani@polito.it)

Responsibility within the Committee: contributes to case studies, guiding COPE direction

Name: Tom Yeh

[Email: tom.yeh@Colorado.edu](mailto:tom.yeh@Colorado.edu)

Responsibility within the Committee: crosswalk the Code with curricula, especially K-12

Name: Marty J. Wolf

[Email: mwolf@bemidjistate.edu,](mailto:mwolf@bemidjistate.edu) [ethics@acm.org](mailto:ethics@acm.org)

Responsibility within the Committee: co-Chair, manages documents for COPE.