

Approved by the National Council, March 15, 2014, subject to bylaws revisions to be voted on by the ASPA membership in November, 2014.

Proposal to Create the Ethics and Standards Implementation Committee in ASPA

We propose the creation of the **Ethics and Standards Implementation Committee** as a standing committee of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). Our recommendation builds on the proposal developed by the Working Group to Review the ASPA Code of Ethics. The core purposes of the Committee are to—

- Advance awareness and commitment to ethical principles and practices in ASPA and to promote the importance of ethics in public service in general.
- Offer educational materials and programs and assessment tools to members
- Provide advice and assistance to members in handling problems in ethics and dealing with sanctions imposed on them for actions they have taken to uphold the Code.
- Advise ASPA's National Council (Council) on measures that could be taken to promote ethics in the public sector.
- Review and seek to resolve ethics complaints.
- Advise the ASPA Council in cases in which ASPA members have acted in violation of ethical practices, as identified by information collected by the Committee or formal proceedings by third parties.
- At its own initiative or the request of the executive committee, investigate matters relating to unethical practices that might have arisen within the work of ASPA.
- Speak for ASPA in cases involving the serious challenges to ethical administration in the United States and the violation of human rights of public administrators world-wide.

The Ethics and Standards Implementation Committee (Committee) will seek to ensure that the training, teaching, and research of ethics by all sections and programs of ASPA are advancing the goal of promoting ethical competence among all those who serve the public. The Committee will look to the Ethics Section to take the lead in activities related to university teaching and research related to ethics.

In addition to its educational activities, the Committee will investigate allegations of misconduct and recommend to the Council actions (including but not limited to termination of membership) that should be taken when a member violates the Code of Ethics. Specific policies and procedures for handling complaints will be recommended by the Committee and approved by the Council to ensure the fair treatment of members in handling complaints.

1. Membership

- The Committee will have six members appointed to staggered three-year terms (after the start-up year). With this ongoing rotation, two new appointments will be made to the Committee each year after the initial formation year.
- The president will appoint committee members with the advice and consent of the council, and will name the chair who may be selected for a second or third consecutive year.
- Members may be appointed anew after at least one year off the Committee.
- The Council and members of the Committee will suggest candidates to the president for appointment, and the president will consult with the chairperson of the Ethics Section before proposing appointments. Members of ASPA will be invited to nominate themselves as well.
- The ASPA executive director shall be an ex-officio member of the committee without vote.
- Committee decisions should be made by consensus as much as possible. If there is not a consensus, then two-thirds (4) of the members must be in favor of a decision for it to be adopted. Less than four votes results in a default decision to not adopt.
- Some committee activity may require action with complete discretion and committee members should be prepared to maintain many matters in confidence.

2. Duties/Responsibilities:

- Monitor and promote ethics
 - Recommend to the Council ways to increase the awareness of ethical standards and expand ethical competence inside and outside ASPA and recommend activities to increase the utilization of the ASPA Code of Ethics by members, chapters, and sections.
 - Monitor ethical issues and shortcomings in public administration and highlight major ethics challenges in panels at ASPA conferences, reports to members, and suggested programs for chapters.
 - Produce ethics educational material for members (including orientation materials for new members) and develop guides for ethics assessments at the individual, unit, and organizational level in conjunction with the Ethics Section and ASPA staff.
 - Provide general information and advice about issues in response to inquiries from members or ASPA committees.
 - Coordinate activities with ASPA's Ethics Section, which has the primary responsibility for advancing university teaching of ethics and research on ethics.
 - Work with other associations of public and academic professionals in promoting complementary approaches to advancing ethical competence and commitment to action.

- Advise the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) on ethics in MPA and MPP programs
- Review practices supporting the implementation of the Code of Ethics at least every three years and recommend changes for review by the Council.
- Review and seek to resolve complaints about a member whose actions may have violated the Code of Ethics as well as requests from members for review of actions they have taken to advance the Code that have led to sanctions being imposed on them.
 - The Committee will seek to clarify the nature of the behavior that prompted the complaint and will encourage voluntary corrective action by the member to demonstrate compliance with the code.
 - In cases of refusal by the member to take action to correct a serious violation of the Code or evidence that serious harm has occurred that cannot be corrected, the Committee will make a recommendation to the ASPA National Council about appropriate action.
- Upon receiving information, based on due process proceedings by other parties, that an ASPA member has formally been determined to have violated ethical standards in public administration practice or scholarship, make a recommendation to the ASPA National Council about appropriate action.
- At the initiative of the Committee or upon request of the ASPA executive committee and with resources authorized by the executive committee, investigate concerns related to ethical practices that arise within the work of ASPA, such as its journals, meetings, governance, and administration, such as allegations of plagiarism, harassment, conflict of interest, or malpractice.
- Beyond actions focused on individual members, investigate and educate public administrators in dealing with situations that challenge their ability to uphold ethical standards. Draw attention to actions that threaten the human rights of administrators.
- Handle other matters and address other issues referred to it by the Council.
- In circumstances calling for investigations or assessment of determinations made by other parties, the committee will adopt the following processes:
 - The chair of the Committee will make an initial determination of how the circumstance is to be handled and make a recommendation to the Committee. An ASPA staff member will assist in providing information, e.g., confirming membership of the person named in the complaint and determining whether relevant complaints have been received before.
 - The Committee will make recommendations to the National Council regarding sanctions based on the information it has collected and received, and the Council will decide what action to take. The Committee with the approval of the

executive committee will handle commendations in support of members who have seemingly been sanctioned inappropriately by others.

- Advisory opinions will be provided directly by the Committee to members seeking guidance, acting in confidence and advising the member that the committee's opinion is not to be made public unless the council has otherwise determined.
- Possible actions to be taken:
 - Persons found to have violated the code could receive a private sanction (notification of the member alone), a public sanction, termination of membership, or some other action appropriate to the seriousness of the offense and protection of the reputation of ASPA.
 - The Committee may suspend any action against a member if after being notified about a complaint the member corrects the actions that were the basis for the complaint or inquiry.
 - The Committee may also discuss important ethical issues based on its investigations and advisory opinions through a range of outlets: *PA Times*, panels at national and regional conferences, electronic communications.
 - As part of its overall educational mission, the Committee will seek to prevent unethical behavior by proactively informing members of ethical challenges identified in its work.
- Annual Report: The Committee will develop an annual summary of ethics actions and issues in ASPA for the Council. After review by the Council, the report will be made available to all ASPA members.

3. Arrangements for initial appointments:

In the formation of the Committee, six members will be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Council as indicated herein. The positions will be divided equally into three-year, two-year, and one-year terms. In subsequent years, new appointments will be made for the members of the Committee whose terms are ending. *Initial one- or two-year appointments will not be restricted from consecutive appointments to the committee.*

4. Names of Ad Hoc Code of Ethics Implementation Committee members:

- Jim Svara, Chairperson
- J. Paul Blake
- Patria Julnes
- Jim Nordin
- Suzanne Piotrowski
- Jonathan West