

Code of Ethics for Librarians

Proclaimed: October 30, 1997

Librarians, as the central force of library administration that contribute to the development of society through the transmission of the memories of nations and the humankind, have heavy responsibilities. These responsibilities can be finally fulfilled only when the critical self-awakening and moral sensibility is alive in every aspect of their professional activities. We, hereby, as an oath to ourselves and as a promise to the people, establish an ethical guiding post by which we will find our direction, and declare it today.

1. **Social responsibility:** Librarians contribute to the development of democratic society in which the freedom and the dignity of the humankind are ensured.
 - A. Librarians contribute to the facilitation of people's right-to-know that is guaranteed by the constitution.
 - B. Librarians promote the people's willingness to self-growth and support the efforts.
 - C. Librarians protect the freedom of libraries and the users, and establish the equal access to information.
 - D. Librarians become the cultural leaders who open up a mature knowledge society.
2. **Self-growth:** Librarians, through a consistent self-improvement, grow along with the history and develop with the civilization.
 - A. Librarians are not negligent in improving themselves, and consistently devote themselves to the research and practice.
 - B. Librarians realize that it is their duty to preserve the history and to transmit the facts.
 - C. Librarians develop the ability to actively handle social changes and demands of users.
 - D. Librarians, armed with the pioneer spirit, overcome daily obstacles, and work with enthusiasm, perseverance, courage, and hope.
3. **Professionalism:** Librarians fulfill their duties as professionals by means of thorough awareness of the professional knowledge and protection of autonomy.
 - A. Librarians do their best to obtain necessary professional knowledge and technique regarding their work.
 - B. Librarians demonstrate the autonomy as professionals and obtain appropriate social status by themselves.
 - C. Librarians, in case a standpoint of the parent organization is against the principles of the professionalism, are responsible to oppose to this position based on their professional beliefs.
 - D. Librarians understand the importance of the professional organizations and take active parts in these organizations.
4. **Cooperation:** Librarians promote efficiency in the organizational management through strengthening the cooperation.
 - A. Librarians first of all strive to enhance the competitiveness of their local libraries that are the foundations of the cooperation.
 - B. Librarians then consistently develop the system of cooperation among libraries.
 - C. Librarians extend their domain of activities through the cooperation with other social agencies.
 - D. Librarians, although it might not be beneficial to their own organizations, maintain the will to cooperate.
5. **Service:** Librarians serve people with devotional attitude, and induce the social awareness of the real value of libraries.
 - A. Librarians strive for the professional service relevant to wide variety of demands of the

- users.
- B. Librarians do not discriminate against users based on their ideological orientation, age, gender, or social status.
 - C. Librarians always perform their duties with kind and friendly manners.
 - D. Librarians endeavor to obtain the rightful social recognition of libraries.
6. **Collection:** Librarians, as the ultimate authority to collect, organize, preserve knowledge resources, and to make them available for free use, resist any interference that interrupts these activities.
- A. Librarians are responsible to protect the national cultural heritage and social memories.
 - B. Librarians should be free from prejudice, interference, or temptation of any kind in selecting knowledge resources.
 - C. Librarians strive for standardization in organization of knowledge resources.
 - D. Librarians protect personal information of the users and are not forced to disclose this information.
7. **Dignity:** Librarians maintain dignity as professionals engaged in public organizations.
- A. Librarians always perform their duties with pride as professionals.
 - B. Librarians always maintain honest attitude and self-esteem.
 - C. Librarians do not attempt to gain any illegitimate benefit related to their work.
 - D. Librarians sincerely observe the professional ethical code.

Proclaimed at the Korean Library Association National Convention after one year of preparation. The Korean Library Association (KLA), in accordance with the decision made at the 47th Annual General Conference in 1996, pursued a project to establish the "Code of Ethics for Librarians." Since September of 1996, a total of 10 committee meetings were held, as well as two public hearings and another two open discussions through the KLA Bulletin. As a result, the 3rd draft for the "Code of Ethics for Librarians" was produced, and finally, with the approval of the board of trustees, the Code came to a confirmation. The Code was proclaimed during the 35th KLA National Convention held at Sorak Hanhwa Condominium conference hall from October 30 to November 1, 1997. The "Code of Ethics for Librarians" consists of 7 sections and 28 specific points under a foreword. The procedures for the preparation of the code and the entire code are as follow:

PROCEDURES

- 3. 18. 1996 The project adopted at the 48th Annual General Conference
- 9. 21. 1996. "Committee for the Foundation of the Code of Ethics for Librarians" organized. The first committee meeting.
- 10.19. 1996 The Committee reorganized to be "Special Committee for the Establishment of the Code of Ethics for Librarians." Committee members: Kyu-Seob Hyeon (Chair, Professor, Kongju National University); Jung-Gun Kim (Professor, Pusan National University); Kyung-Ku Lee (Director of Public Service Division, National Library of Korea); Yong-Hun Lee (President, Librarians Association of Korea); Won-Ho Jo (Secretary General, Korean Library Association)
- 11. 1. 1996 Mid-term report presented and opinion survey conducted at the 34th KLA National Convention.
- 12. 17. 1996 Third Committee meeting to discuss the issue.
- 1. 31. 1997 Fourth Committee meeting.
- 2. 14. 1997 Fifth Committee meeting.
- 2. 24. 1997 Sixth Committee meeting.
- 4. 12. 1997 First draft prepared at the seventh Committee meeting.
- -- Opinion survey conducted through the KLA Bulletin (3/4, 1997).
- 6.26-28, 1997 Public hearing held at the Joint Scholarly Conference hosted by the four library and information science societies in Mujoo.
- 8.28. 1997 Second draft prepared at the eighth Committee meeting.
- -- Second opinion survey through the KLA Bulletin (7/8, 1997) conducted.

- 9.29. 1997 A general public hearing held at the National Library of Korea auditorium.
 - The third and final draft of the committee produced and reported to the KLA office at the ninth Committee meeting.
 - 10.16.1997 Presented to the KLA executive board and reviewed. Concluded to be declared as scheduled, with minor revisions on fifteen points suggested.
 - 10.21. 1997 Code of Ethics for librarians confirmed after exhaustive review and consideration of the executive board suggestions at the tenth Committee meeting.
 - 10.30. 1997. Proclaimed at the 35th Korean Library Association National Convention.
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Translated by the KLA Ethics Committee