



MAINTENANCE OF THE CODE

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS
Established July 2024

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE CODE

1.01 Establishment. The Code of Ethics (“the Code”) has been established by the National Board of Directors of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) under the authority of Section 8.21 of the Bylaws.

1.02 Purpose of the Code. The AIAS strives to advance leadership, design, and service among architecture students in order to empower voices, ideas, and actions for the future. Members and Chapters of the AIAS are thus dedicated to upholding the AIAS’s values of impact, community, growth, passion, perspective, and balance. The Code establishes a vision for the AIAS community to aspire towards, while enforcing a standard of conduct amongst the membership.

1.03 Type of Code. The AIAS Code of Ethics is primarily an Aspirational Code with some aspects of an Enforceable Code where appropriate.

1.031 Ethical Standards. The Code introduces a set of aspirational Ethical Standards (“Standards”) by which AIAS Members and Chapters can utilize as a framework for continued success and growth. These Standards highlight strategies for elevating the contributions of the AIAS within both academic institutions and society at large.

1.032 Rules of Conduct. The Code includes a select number of enforceable Rules of Conduct (“Rules”) that shed light on particularly relevant areas wherein AIAS members must abide by particular standards to meet the needs and agency of the organization. The process for reporting a violation of these Rules can be found in the ‘Maintenance of the Code of Ethics’ Document, and information regarding violation repercussions can be found in Section 4: Appendix.

1.04 Structural Framework. The Code leverages the 6 AIAS Values Statements (seen below) as “categories” for the ethical aspirations of an AIAS Member and/or Chapter. Each Standard has been “tagged” with the Value(s) categories that are associated with that particular aspiration. By embedding the AIAS Values within the Code in this manner, as opposed to sectioning Standards by individual Value, the Code is able to indicate that many Standards align with multiple Value Statements simultaneously. This illustrates the interconnectedness of the AIAS Values in a way that Members and Chapters can learn from and embody in their voices, ideas, and actions.

1.041 **Impact**. We advocate for and enact positive change.

1.042 **Community**. We foster an inclusive network of peers that learn from, support, and drive one another.

1.043 **Growth**. We inspire students to reach their greatest potential through meaningful learning opportunities.

1.044 **Passion**. We pursue large goals and aspirations through each member’s enthusiasm.

1.045 **Perspective**. We link the profession’s opportunities to architectural education.

1.046 **Balance**. We promote respectful relationships, an environment of diversity, and a thriving studio culture,

SECTION 2: MANAGEMENT OF THE CODE

2.0 AMENDMENTS

2.01 Amendments to the Code. Amendments to the Code can be proposed by the Board of Directors, the Council of Presidents, or a National Committee. For an amendment to be ratified, it must be approved by the Board of Directors and the Council of President by a majority vote.

2.011 National Documentation. National Bylaw Section 8.24 can be referenced for more information regarding amendments to the Code of Ethics.

2.1 ENFORCEMENT AND SUPERVISION

2.11 Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee is an on-call Standing Committee of the AIAS whose responsibilities are to review and investigate complaints, issue verdicts, issue statements on the Code, and propose amendments to the Code. Additionally, it is the responsibility of this committee to increase the awareness and accessibility of The Code of Ethics and the Violation Review Process.

Commentary: Recent updates to this section of the code are to include recent responsibilities of the Committee such as PR of the committee, reviewing the Complainant/Respondent Violation Process, etc. to more accurately reflect the activity of the Committee.

2.111 Composition. The committee is composed of 4-6 members, including a Committee Chair and one current Board Member, who are appointed by the President to a one year term from Sept. 1 to Aug. 31.

2.112 Conflict of Interest. Prior to reviewing a complaint, the Ethics Committee Chair shall ensure there are no conflicts of interest. Any Member of the committee that has a conflict of interest with any Member or Chapter involved in a complaint shall recuse themselves from the case and all associated discussions.

2.113 National Documentation. National Bylaw Section 4.116 and Rules of the Board Section 12.61 can be referenced for more information on the Ethics Committee.

2.12 Advisory Opinions. The Ethics Committee may periodically publish advisory opinions on the Code of Ethics if the Committee deems it appropriate and relevant, or if requested to do so by the Board of Directors, a Chapter, or a Member.

SECTION 3: REPORTING A VIOLATION

3.0 COMPLAINT PROCESS

3.01 Making a Complaint. A complaint can be filed to the Ethics Committee by any individual directly aggrieved by the conduct of a Member by submitting a completed complaint form (see Section 6: Appendix) to the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

3.011 Timing of a Complaint. A complaint form should be submitted to the Ethics Committee Chair within two years of the alleged violation. The Complainant may submit a request to the Chair to extend this time limit if good cause for delay in filing is demonstrated.

3.012 Role of the Complainant. The Complainant must allege the violation of one or more of the Rules found in Section 3.0 of the Code. The burden of proof is on the Complainant.

3.0121 Burden of Proof. The Complainant has the burden of proving the facts upon which a violation may be found. In the event the Complainant's evidence does not establish a violation, the Complaint is dismissed.

3.013 Responsibility of the Complainant. The Complainant shall avoid public disclosure of the complaint. They may discuss the complaint with individuals with direct knowledge of the matter and who may act as witnesses.

3.02 Initial Ruling. The Chair of the Ethics Committee will review all complaints submitted to ensure that the alleged violation is both (a) a not trivial matter, and (b) if true, would be in violation of section 3.0 of the Code. If the Chair determines that the complaint meets this criteria, they will notify the Complainant and Respondent.

3.021 Complaint Dismissal. The Chair may dismiss the complaint if it does not satisfy these requirements, or if the Complainant does not respond to the Chair's requests.

3.0211 Notice of Complaint Dismissal. If the complaint is dismissed, the Complainant and the Respondent will be notified, at which time the Complainant will have 15 days to appeal the dismissal.

3.03 Request for Response. Each complaint that is not dismissed by the Elections Committee Chair will be sent to the Respondent for response, along with a copy of the code and details of the alleged violation.

3.031 Timing of a Response. The Respondent will have 30 days to fill out the response form (see Section 6: Appendix) and send it to the Chair.

3.032 Failure to Respond. If the Respondent fails to respond to requests from the Chair, the Respondent will be issued a 10 day notice after which time the Elections Committee will proceed with their investigation of the complaint without input from the Respondent.

3.033 Responsibility of the Respondent. The Respondent shall avoid public disclosure of the complaint. They may discuss the complaint with individuals with direct knowledge of the matter and who may act as witnesses.

3.1 INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT

3.11 Notice of Hearing. The Chair, in consultation with the Complainant and Respondent, may set a date for the hearing that is convenient for all parties involved. The Complainant and Respondent must be notified no less than 15 days prior to the hearing.

3.12 Submission of materials. The parties must submit the following materials to the Chair prior to the hearing:

1. A list of all witnesses, together with a description of their relevance to the hearing. Any witnesses that are not included in this list will not be allowed to testify at the hearing.
2. A copy of any tangible evidence that will be introduced at the hearing. Exhibits that were previously submitted together with the complaint and response forms should be resubmitted.
3. An estimation of the length of time that will be required to present all testimonies and evidence.
4. In the event that either party wishes to challenge the participation of a Member of the Ethics Committee in the hearing, they must submit a request to the chair together with a description of the grounds for the challenge. Grounds include alleged bias prejudice or conflict of interest. The Chair's ruling on this matter is final.

3.13 Details of the Hearing. The hearing will be closed to all but members of the Ethics Committee, and the parties. The hearing will be presided by the Chair, with minutes recorded by a member of the committee designated by the Chair. All attendees of the hearing shall conduct themselves in a respectful manner. Both parties will have the opportunity to question the testimony of the opposing party. 5.021 Complaint Dismissal. The Chair may dismiss the complaint if it does not satisfy these requirements, or if the Complainant does not respond to the Chair's requests.

3.2 VIOLATION DETERMINATION

3.21 Decision of the Committee. After the conclusion of the hearing, the Ethics Committee will have a closed meeting where they will consider the testimony of both parties. If the committee rules in favor of the Respondent, the complaint will be dismissed. If a simple majority of the committee decides that a rule has been violated, then the Respondent will be subject to one of the five tiers of discipline:

3.211 Tier 1 Offense - Admonition.

Commentary: Admonition is defined as "an act or action of admonishing; authoritative counsel or warning." by Oxford Dictionary. Could take the form of a formal written warning of Higher Tier responses pending any repeat or otherwise additional offenses on the part of the Respondent.

3.212 Tier 2 Offense - Censure.

Commentary: Censure is defined as "to formally reprimand, or express official condemnation" by Oxford Dictionary. This could take the form of a formal statement barring the Respondent from conducting similar activities, or simply bringing awareness to the issue and stating disapproval of the situation.

3.213 Tier 3 Offense - Suspension of National competition programming and suspension of local programming to be determined in cooperation with the local Chapter.

Commentary: The case by case nature of this response as well as the clarification of 3.2131 provides an accurate picture of the course of action necessary by the Committee.

3.2131. Specificity of Tier 3 Repercussion. If a Member is found to be in violation of a Tier 3 offense, the Ethics Committee will specifically tailor the associated repercussion to the violation and Chapter

in question.

3.214 Tier 4 Offense. Suspension of service on the local Executive Board (if applicable) and suspension of National programming/opportunities, including eligibility for service on the National Board of Directors, eligibility for AIAS Honor Awards, and attendance at National AIAS Conferences.

Commentary: Limiting the Respondent to only local chapter programming is adequate for Tier 4 considering the tremendous value proposition offered by conferences and other national programming.

3.215 Tier 5 Offense - Suspension/termination of membership for a period of time as recommended by the committee and submitted to the BoD by the committee chair.

Commentary: Seems to be the maximum extent of the Committee's reach/jurisdiction. The 2023 Committee explored expanding or re-evaluating this reach to little result. The final decision on time of suspension and/or full termination is made by the BoD after a formal notice of the committee's recommendation upon hearing the case on its merits.

3.22 Reporting. The Committee shall publish the rulings and advisory opinions of the Chair and Committee periodically and in a timely manner. Names of parties involved and associated Chapters shall not be included in the report.

Commentary: Per Legal Consult, The Committee is not allowed to publish private information regarding real Ethics Violations and Cases; However, The Committee can provide anonymized case studies to the membership for educational and advisory purposes.

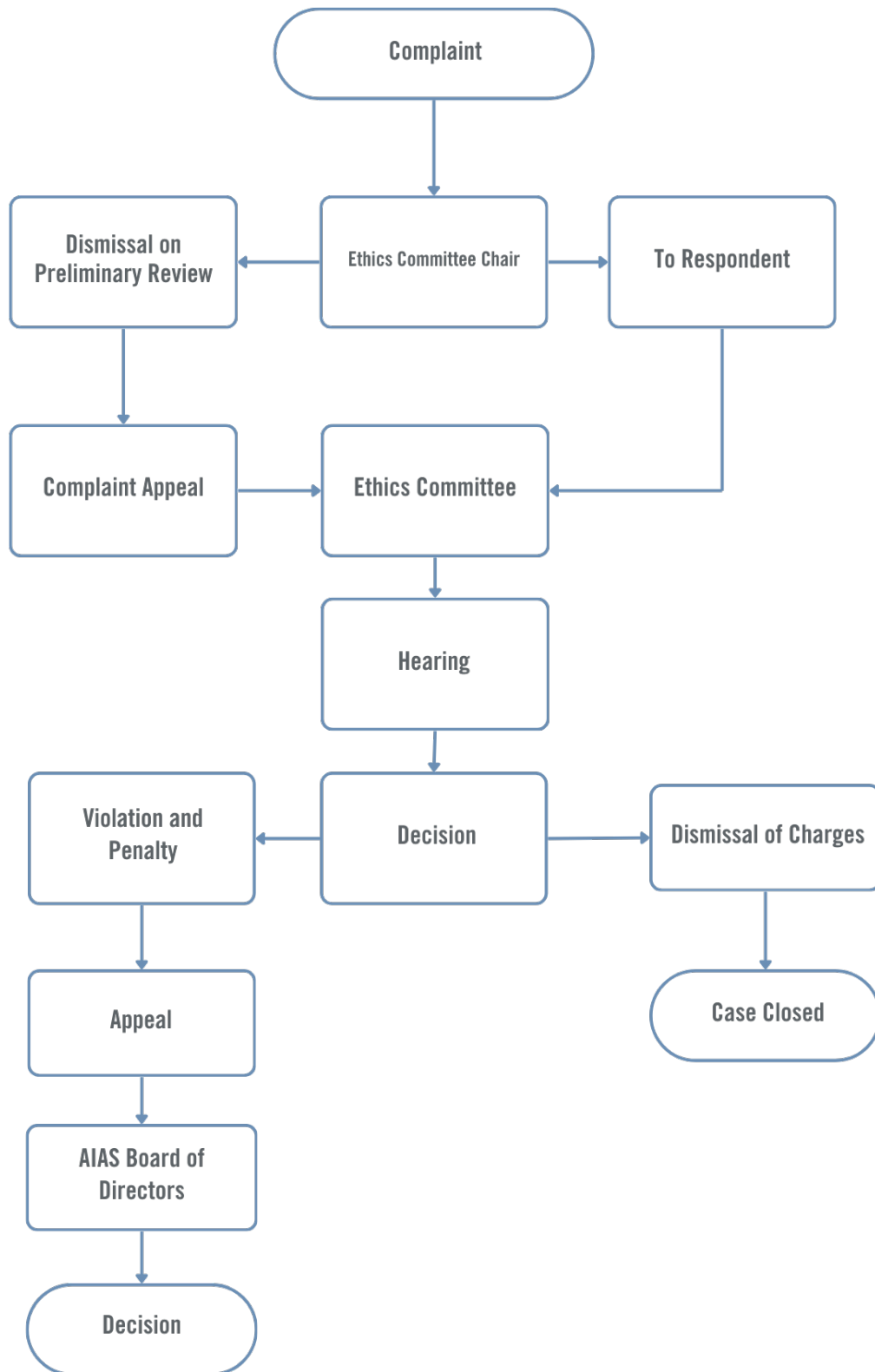
3.3 APPEAL PROCESS

3.31 Circumstances for Appeal. An appeal may be submitted by (1) the Complainant or (2) the Respondent. The two circumstances in which an appeal can be submitted are described below.

3.32 Appeal by the Complainant. A Complainant may file a notice of appeal to the Ethics Committee if the complaint is dismissed by the Chair without a hearing. The Complainant must submit a notice of appeal within 15 days of receiving notice of the decision from the Chair. The decision of the Committee will be final.

3.33 Appeal by the Respondent. The Respondent may file a notice of appeal to the Board of Directors if the Committee rules in favor of the Complainant. The Respondent must submit a notice of appeal within 15 days of receiving notice of the decision from the Chair. The decision of the Committee is not final and will not be implemented until the time to file an appeal has passed, or the decision has been upheld by the Board of Directors. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

3.4 COMPLAINT PROCESS FLOW CHART



SECTION 4: APPENDIX

4.0 KEY DEFINITIONS

4.01 Member. A Member is any individual who has paid the dues required of the national office and their local chapter, or has been granted membership allowed by the Nation Bylaws. Membership includes: general members, affiliate members, associate members, faculty advisors, legacy members. National Bylaw Section 2.5 can be referenced for more information on AIAS Membership.

4.02 Chapter. The jurisdiction of each chapter shall be confined to the student body of a single school except as provided for in the National Bylaws. See Bylaw Section 2.3 for more information on Chapters.

4.03 Board of Directors. The AIAS Board of Directors is the governing body that establishes national policy, controls the organization's assets, and promotes the interests of the organization. The Board is composed of the President, Vice President, 4 Quadrant Directors (West, South, Northeast, Midwest), 3 Collateral Liaisons (AIA, NCARB, ACSA), and the Executive Director. Additional members of the Board may be appointed to represent additional organizations and/or particularly underrepresented membership regions as needed. National Bylaw Section 3.021 can be referenced for more information on the Board of Directors.

4.04 Council of Presidents. The Council of Presidents (COP) is the governing body that represents the membership, and exercises oversight of and elects the Board of Directors. The COP meets bi-annually at the Grassroots and FORUM Conferences. The COP is composed of Chapter Delegates from Chapters in Good Standing. National Bylaw Section 3.022 can be referenced for more information on the Council of Presidents.

4.041 Delegates. COP Delegates are typically Chapter Presidents. If a Chapter President cannot attend a COP meeting, another Chapter Member may be designated as the Chapter's Delegate. If no Member from a Chapter can attend a COP meeting, a proxy Delegate from another Chapter in their Quadrant or Region may be selected to participate on their behalf.

4.05 Ethical Standard. Aspirational Statements that set goals for members to strive for.

4.06 Enforceable Rule. Regulations established within the Code that set a standard of conduct for members.

4.07 Complainant. The individual who submits a complaint, alleging a violation of a Rule within the Code.

4.08 Respondent. The individual accused of violating a Rule within the Code.