



# Information Code of Ethics

## Seek Truth and Express It

Teachers and students should be honest, fair, and courageous in gathering, interpreting and expressing information for the benefit of others. They should:

- Test the accuracy of information from all sources and exercise care to avoid inadvertent error.
- Always identify sources. The consumers of your information product must be able to make their own judgment of its value.
- Always question the sources' motives.
- Never distort or misrepresent the content of photos, videos, or other media without explanation of intent and permission from the information's owner. Image enhancement for technical clarity is permissible.
- Tell the story of the human experience boldly, even when it is unpopular to do so.
- Examine your own cultural values and avoid imposing those values on others.
- Avoid stereotyping by race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance or social status.
- Give voice to the voiceless; official and unofficial sources of information can be equally valid.
- Distinguish between opinion and fact when expressing ideas. Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context.

## Minimize Harm

Ethical teachers and students treat information sources, subjects, colleagues, and information consumers as human beings deserving of respect.

- Gathering and expressing information should never cause harm or threaten to be harmful to any one person or group of people.
- Recognize that private people in their private pursuits have a greater right to control information about themselves than do others.
- Consider all possible outcomes to the information you express, guarding against potential harm to others.
- Never use information from another person without proper citation and permission.

## Be Accountable

Teachers and students are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and to each other.

- Clarify and explain information and invite dialogue about your conduct as a communicator.
- Encourage the information consumer to voice grievances about your information products.
- Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.
- Expose unethical information practices of others.

## Respect Information and its Infrastructure

Information, in the *Information Age*, is property. Information is the fabric that defines much of what we do from day to day, and this rich and potent fabric is fragile.

- Never undertake any action that has the potential to damage any part of this information infrastructure. These actions include, but are not limited to illegally hacking into a computer system, launching or distributing viruses or other damaging software, physically damaging or altering hardware or software, or publishing information that you know is untrue and potentially harmful.
- Report to proper authorities any activities that could potentially result in harm to the information infrastructure.

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