

Minutes working SOA meeting on SOA Code of Ethics

August 27, 2025, 11am Pacific to 12:20pm Pacific time via ZOOM

Present: Connie, Jim, Rob G., Laura, David F., David P. (6/6)

Overview of agenda

- I. Determine number of votes to pass a proposal
 - II. Agreement that SOA needs a code of ethics
 - III. Scope of Ethics
 - IV. Shared Values
 - V. Next step: Process to implement code of ethics
 - VI. Next date: 31 October 10am Pacific, 1pm Eastern, 7pm Europe
- Agenda: Review process to implement code of ethics

Welcome and Mokuso

- I. Determine number of votes to pass a proposal for these working meetings on code of ethics. Connie reviewed there is no specified number of votes needed to pass proposals in SOA bylaws. Generally, the attempt is for unanimous. This proposal is for 5 out of 6 yes votes for passing a proposal. Proposal Connie, seconded by seconded by Rob. Six yes votes. Motion passed unanimously.
- II. Agreement that SOA needs a code of ethics. Connie presented the need to confirm SOA needs a code of ethics and a process to implement the code. Proposed by Connie, seconded by Rob G. Six yes votes. Motion passed unanimously.
- III. Scope of ethics. Connie raised a question that was actively being discussed over email. Does the code of ethics apply only to keiko, or does it apply to both keiko and external activities? Discussion followed. David F. presented to have code of ethics currently apply to keiko, gasshukus and related to Shintaido activities and add external activities at later date. Jim wants the public/students to make ethical complaints without restrictions and then have the ethics committee determine if the ethical complaint merits further investigation or action. David P. recommended to not have the code of ethics locked in nor be specific, rather an overarching document. Connie stated that her experience says that most financial and sexual abuses/harassment happen outside of keiko so need to be included. Rob stressed the need to say about power dynamics such as student-teacher; senior student -teacher. David suggested the process could include an internal statement of higher priority to events within keiko and outside a lower priority. Jim suggested that the ethics committee/reviewers would make that

determination and overtime there would be case examples as guidelines of prior decisions. David F. reports his concerns felt heard and can agree with the group. Connie confirmed the decision is for an overarching document without specific examples within the code of ethics. Group agreed that this is the decision.

IV. Shared values.

Rob shared one working document to list the shared values of respect & integrity, student safety and wellbeing, professional conduct, instruction and mentorship, confidentiality and trust, and accountability. Rob requested to clarify if our code of ethics is reactive or proactive. Proactive Rob means training and guidelines are provided on a regular basis. Rob gave an example of the power of dynamics and ways it was handled. David P. liked a draft of FAQ where Connie gave possible examples of what might not be an ethics complaint such as dojo etiquette. Group agreed most of the listed values are acceptable with concerns about professional boundaries, cultural variants, and the ability of any given person to exemplify these values all the time.

Group then reviewed a draft from David today that streamlined the code and review process. The group agreed that shared values listed from 2.1 – 2.5 are overarching values that fit our organization.

David excused himself at this point in the meeting.

V. Process to implement

The group looked at the rest of David's document. David P. suggested everyone read and make modifications on the google doc. Some questions were about verbal complaints versus written. Also, the time limits to prior concerns to adopting this code of ethics. One suggestion was to have a form online for the written complaint.

VI. Next date: Friday 31 October 10am Pacific, 1pm Eastern, 7pm European.

Agenda: review the process to implement the review of a complaint. Determine if ready to accept the handbook with both the code and the process to investigate at the December board meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Connie Borden

8/27/2025