President’s Advisory Committee
On Labor Standards and Human Rights

MINUTES
April 8, 2016, 2:00 – 3:30 PM
R6325, Ross School of Business

Attendees: Ravi Anupindi (chair), Kelsea Ballantyne (by phone), Khaled Eid, Stacey Glemser, Eni Kruja, Nicholas Rine, Rebecca Wren, Britney Rashleigh (staff to committee)

Absences: Kristen Ablauf, Sioban Harlow, and Susan Waltz

Committee Business
Minutes of the March 2016 committee meeting were approved.

Upcoming Events
Chair Ravi Anupindi reminded the committee of Research Assistants Kristine Schantz and Ian Hecker’s final presentation slated for April 22nd and taking place in R4020 of the Ross School of Business. Kristine and Ian were hired by the committee in December of 2015 to conduct an analysis by category of the University’s non-licensed goods procurement.

Chair Anupindi also made the committee aware of the forthcoming Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) University Caucus Annual Meeting on Friday, April 26th in Washington, DC. Taking place at Georgetown University, the meeting will involve presentations, updates and discussions on the WRC’s work over the past year, the deepening fire safety crisis in S. Asia, the status of the Designated Suppliers Program, problems of wage theft, and recent overall wage trends in the apparel industry.

Chair Ravi Anupindi shared that the Fair Labor Association recently held a webinar on March 29th discussing their Student Engagement program and featuring students and supervisors from California State-Long Beach, NC State, and Washington University in St. Louis who shared their experiences and answered questions about their participation in the pilot program. Staff to the Committee, Britney Rashleigh, plans to listen into the webinar’s recording and will follow up by email with a bullet point summary of major point and takeaways from the conversation. The committee agreed that future participation in the program could help to sustain and inform the work that current and future Research Assistants conduct on behalf of the committee.

Research and Educational Leadership
Chair Anupindi provided an update on the committee’s 2016 International Travel Awards and internship with Sumerra LLC. To date, recipients Mary-Catherine Goddard (graduate MPH student), Erin Collins (graduate law student), and Michael
Jenuwine (undergraduate economics and mathematics student) have all signed and submitted their acceptance letters. Staff to the Committee, Britney Rashleigh, continues to work with them on the logistics of their travel.

He also provided an update on the visit of Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, founder of BRAC, who was awarded the Thomas Francis Jr. Medal in Global Public Health bestowed by the Office of the President on a quinquennial basis. Chair Anupindi met with Sir Fazle to discuss the work of the committee, the progress made by the ALLIANCE in Bangladesh and the possibility of continued conversations between the committee and BRAC-UK.

Committee Member and Director of Licensing Kristen Ablauf was unavailable to attend the committee meeting. Chair Anupindi stated that he would follow up with her electronically to share any committee updates.

**Monitoring and Compliance**

The committee turned its attention to recent correspondence received from President Mark Schlissel on March 21st in regards to the concluded contract negotiations between the University and Nike. Of particular importance to the committee was President Schlissel’s mention that the contract requires factories making products bearing the University’s mark to be “subject to independent monitoring and investigation by agents mutually agreeable to Nike and UM” and that Nike will “provide ongoing reports of systematic monitoring.” The committee questioned who, on behalf of the University, would work with Nike to determine the appropriate independent investigator and who would receive the monitoring reports generated by the company. Committee members agreed to formally request a copy of the final Nike contract agreement for review and agreed to meet with Nike’s senior leadership team in this regard as suggested in the President’s letter.

Chair Ravi Anupindi reviewed recent email correspondence and updates received by the Worker Rights Consortium in regards to Genesis Apparel (Honduras) and the WRC’s recent call for University Licensees to request that the Chinese Government end its crackdown on labor rights advocates. A recent WRC assessment of Genesis Apparel uncovered a number of Honduran law and university code violations, including but not limited to gender discrimination and freedom of association. The WRC reported the Genesis has remedied many of these violations and has made commitments to remedy others in the near term, of which the WRC will continue to monitor. Regarding the ongoing detention and criminal prosecution of prominent labor rights advocates in Guangdong, China, a global export center for garment and factory footwear manufacturing, the WRC’s update shared of recent written requests made to Nike, VF, adidas, and Hanesbrands. The WRC has asked these companies to express their concern regarding these arrests and to ask for the immediate release and dismissal of all charges against the currently detained activists. The committee agreed to monitor this ongoing issue and welcomed the idea of submitting a letter to Nike urging them to support the WRC’s initiative.
New Business
No New Business to report.

The main meeting adjourned at 3:00PM. During the remaining 30-minutes, Research Assistants Kristine Schantz and Ian Hecker joined the group to provide an update on their semester’s work. With only a few more weeks left to complete their research project, they provided an overview of their research so far asking the committee to highlight any subject areas or topics they thought would be helpful to include in the final presentation.