Minutes of the Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights
November 16, 2000

Present: Louis Green, Robert Howse (via telephone), Veronica Johnson, Kevin Kolben, Larry Root, Stevan Rosenberg, Scott Trudeau

Members Absent: Kristen Ablauf, Alan Deardorff, Sioban Harlow

Prior to the meeting, representatives of Students Organizing for Labor and Economic Equality (SOLE) requested the opportunity to address the Committee. While it was noted that the Committee would like more advance notice in order to consider such requests, there were no objections to allowing the presentation.

SOLE representative read a statement expressing the group’s concern about the length of time it is taking to have a Code of Conduct incorporated into the University’s licensing contracts. The SOLE statement requested the Committee to commit to a deadline of having a final code recommendation to President Bollinger by December 7 and a decision to include that code communicated to the Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC) by December 11. Students also expressed the hope that decisions about these issues would not be taken during vacation or break periods when most students are away. In the ensuing discussion, Committee members noted that setting a deadline at this stage of Committee deliberation appeared premature. The Committee acknowledged the concerns of the group and expressed support for the idea of moving expeditiously on this issue, with focused attention on both the U-M code and assessing whether other extant codes might also fulfill our goals.

Following this discussion, most of the SOLE representatives left the meeting. Three remained as observers.

The Committee then continued with its review of the draft code. It was reported that 285 e-mails were sent to current licensees on November 8, requesting their review of the draft code (as amended through 11/2/00). Thirty-six of these e-mails were returned because of address problems. Twenty-three replies were received as of 11/15/00. A list of the licensees sent e-mail was circulated and a one-page excerpt of 8 examples of responses was distributed. These examples were selected as representative of the type of responses received. It was suggested that the Committee should have access to all of the responses. The Chair will work with the licensing office to make these available prior to the next meeting.

The Committee then looked at the section of the draft code on “Hours of Work and Overtime.” It was decided to change the last sentence of this to read: “All overtime shall be remunerated at an appropriate premium rate.”

The Committee began discussing the section on “Compensation.” It was noted that this section goes well beyond international law and what is usually included in “human rights.” It was also suggested that discussions of compensation standards should include consideration of productivity levels, local economic conditions, and the negative potential impact on jobs in producing countries. The Committee discussed the possibility of adding language which defined “basic needs” (e.g. the WRC language). Discussion of this section will continue at the next meeting.

The next meeting will take place on November 30th, 8:30 – 10:00, in Room 2609, School of Social Work (International Institute).

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence S. Root, Chair