Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights  
University of Michigan  

Minutes: Meeting of March 14, 2003  
2733 School of Social Work

Present: Sioban Harlow (vice chair), Lauren Heidtke, Mary Gallagher, Veronica Johnson, Larry Root (chair), Emily Squires, Ada Verloren (staff to committee). 
Absent: Kristen Ablauf, Louis Green, Kathy Terrell, Matt Wittman.

The draft minutes from the February 14 meeting were accepted as written.

1. Morgan Linen Services. In response to SOLE’s request for support from the Committee regarding the labor dispute at Morgan Linen Services, the Committee voted in favor of sending the following letter to Marvin Krislov, General Counsel at the University of Michigan:

   “SOLE presented to the Committee serious concerns about the labor situation at Morgan Linen Services. Although this issue is not within the jurisdiction of the Committee and we have not had the opportunity to hear all sides of this issue, we would like to convey that our experience suggests that timeliness in resolving labor disputes is critical. We would encourage the University to continue its efforts to explore and resolve this situation as soon as is practical.”

2. Budget. The Committee was budgeted $5,000 for the academic year. The chair reviewed the expenditures for the WRC-FLA presentation, co-sponsorship of the conference on labor issues in China, and upcoming expenditures for attending the annual WRC and FLA meetings for university representatives.

3. Co-Sponsorship with SOLE of Cardenas lecture. The Committee, in coordination with ILIR’s Labor and Global Change program is providing support for the March 19 lecture by Luis Cardenas, a former union leader from Coca Cola bottling company in Colombia who fled after witnessing the murder of another union leader. Mr. Cardenas is currently in this country with the support of US unions, such as the United Steelworkers of America.

4. Information from the WRC and FLA. Sioban Harlow agreed to draft a letter to WRC and FLA to request information that they might have on compliance in two specific areas: hours of work and wages. The UM code restricts mandatory overtime to 60 hours and requires reporting to the University if extraordinary circumstances might result in more overtime. The Committee is requesting information about employment that has exceeded these hour limits that may be documented in either external or internal reviews, or in cases that the WRC and FLA have evaluated in response to complaints. The Committee would also be interested in a report on instances and circumstances under which wages have not met minimum wage requirements or industry norms.

5. Plans for next year. Sioban Harlow proposed a seminar that will address concerns that the World Health Organizations has raised regarding reproductive health services and potential conflicts with codes of conduct.

The next meetings of the Committee will take place on April 18 (9:00-11:00), with another meeting scheduled for April 23 (10:00-12:00), if needed.