President’s Advisory Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights
Minutes

Friday, March 12, 2004
9:00 – 11:00am

Present
Kristen Ablauf, Timothy Fort, Ona Hahs, Sioban Harlow (chair), Heather Johnson (ex-officio), Veronica Johnson, Kristin McRay, Rosa Peralta, Lisa Stowe, Katherine Terrell

Absent
Larry Root

1) Review and approval of minutes/ Review of action items
Revised minutes from the January 23 meeting were approved and the February 6 minutes were approved with one modification by the committee.

2) Announcements

3) Lands End
Update on communications from Lands End
· A remediation plan has been agreed upon and posted on the FLA website for third arty complaints. The plan and actions taken to date were reviewed by the committee.
· Scott Nova of the WRC also indicated that resolution appears to be close at hand.
· Committee agreed to review the status of this issue and our recommendation at the April meeting.

4) Review of Procedures for responding to complaints
Marvin Krislov offered advice for some minor changes to the procedures which were accepted by the committee. They are to be posted on the website.

5) Bangladesh and Freedom of Association Update
FLA reported that they are now more engaged with this issue but we have no clear information from them regarding the analysis of the situation. Scott Nova of the WRC will be going to Bangladesh in two weeks to interview key parties. The committee agreed to wait for a report from the WRC and an update from the FLA, if one is available, and to discuss the issue further at the April meeting.

6) Update on other possible programs
· Peralta – April 8th 5:30-7:30 Panel discussion of women organizers- to be held in Social Work conference room with co-sponsorship by the School of Social Work. Rosa will create and distribute an email flyer to the committee.
· Harlow – Planning for a fall Workshop on Reproductive Rights in the Context of Codes of Conduct is underway. The program committee is in the process of identifying potential participants and finalizing date for the conference.

7) Request from SOLE regarding required disclosure of compensation (30 minutes).
SOLE sent a request to President Coleman for the University to consider requiring wage disclosure by its licensees. Kristin McRay presented the SOLE request and argument to the committee and noted that other schools are looking to Michigan for leadership on this issue. The University of Wisconsin has been discussing this issue since the fall and has decided to ask initially their top 10 licensees to work with the WRC on this issue. The committee began discussing the issues surrounding the pros and cons of wage disclosure, including increasing transparency and leverage, problems of obtaining accurate information, meaning/consequences of posting inaccurate information, were discussed. Questions were raised as to what the Wisconsin effort would actually entail, how information would be compiled and evaluated, and whether there are antitrust issues that need to be considered. SOLE understands that WRC will help post the information on the WRC factory disclosure website. Committee identified several points of information that are needed including what licensee’s Wisconsin is contacting as well as the aims and objectives of their effort?What a similar list of potential UM licensees might look like, which licensees might we work with if we were to consider a similar approach?

Katherine Terrell suggested we consider having the University do a serious study of violations of the compensation clause. The need for a formal synthesis of the experience of FLA and WRC in monitoring the compensation clause of the code of conduct was also discussed. Tim Fort defined three dimensions of the issue a) do we change the code or improve monitoring of the code; b) what is the impact of giving notice of the type of information we are interested in being able to review; c) how do our actions apply additional pressure, how do we effectively monitor and refine what we are interested in achieving.

The committee unanimously agreed to communicate the following to the President’s office. “The committee agrees with the concerns expressed in the SOLE letter sent on 2/10/04 regarding the importance of ensuring compliance with the compensation clause of the UM code of conduct and is concerned that we
define the best way to effectuate compliance with this clause. The committee is looking into how to effectively work with the WRC and FLA on advancing this issue and evaluating the feasibility of wage disclosure.”

The committee also scheduled an additional meeting to review information from Wisconsin, the WRC and the FLA and discuss potential recommendations on March 26th from 9-11 am.

**Action Items**

**Kristen Ablauf**

- Will identify the list of top 10 UM licensees and review overlap with Wisconsin’s list.

**Sioban Harlow**

- Speak to the WRC and inquire about how their plan of action, and the aims and objectives of their actions
- Speak with Lamarr Billups at Wisconsin for information about their planned course of action, their objectives and the licensees that they have identified to begin their dialog with.
- Formally request that the Executive Committee of the FLA University Advisory Council provide a recommendation regarding feasibility of wage disclosure as an approach to ensuring compliance with compensation clauses of codes of conduct.
- Begin identifying potential legal/antitrust issues by discussing with WRC/FLA and UM counsel on this issue.

**Katherine Terrell and Tim Fort**

- Assess whether there are faculty interested in pursuing a research project in this area and whether funding may be available within different units of the University.

8) **New business (15 minutes)**

Next meeting: Friday, March 26, 9-11, 2609 SSWB