Labor Standards and Human Rights Committee
April 14, 2006 9:00 – 11:00 am
ROOM: 2609 SSWB

Minutes

Attending: Kristen Ablauf, Kevin Ferrell, Mary Gallagher, Diana Parker, Rosa Peralta, Steven Ratner, Larry Root (chair), Katherine Terrell, Ada Verloren (staff to committee).

The committee invited the following participants to answer questions about the Designated Supplier Proposal:
- Scott Nova, Worker Rights Consortium (WRC)
- Jorge Perez-Lopez, Fair Labor Association (FLA)
- Bruce Siegal, Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC)
- Joe Bozich, Knights Apparel

Approximately 10 observers also attended the meeting.

Absent: Sarah Bookbinder, Veronica Wilkerson-Johnson.

1. Review and approval of minutes
   The committee approved the minutes from March 10, 2006.

2. Discussion of USAS’ Designated Supplier Proposal (DSP)
   The discussion of the DSP started with the chair giving a summary of the open campus forum on Thursday, April 13, 7:30-9:00, in the Hussey Room, Michigan League, titled Labor Standards and University Apparel: Perspectives on USAS’ Designated Supplier Proposal.

   Among the issues that the committee discussed with Scott Nova (WRC), Jorge Perez-Lopez (FLA), Bruce Siegal (CLC) and Joe Bozich (Knights Apparel) were the following:
   - The source of the problem regarding labor conditions that violate codes of conduct;
   - The estimated number of factories that would be needed to supply collegiate apparel;
   - The DSP’s standards of a living wage and freedom of association;
   - The contrast between the DSP and the FLA’s approach, which covers workers beyond the collegiate sector and involves licensees;
   - The possibility of putting more responsibility on licensees to prove adherence to labor standards. This might mean that the University would work with a smaller number of licensees who are committed to labor code compliance, and who have the infrastructure, systems and staff to know the actual cost of production and to calculate a fair price;
   - The issue of protecting trade secrets when factories manufacture items for different licensees in the same facility;
   - The difficulties of negotiating a fair price;
   - The WRC’s capacity to administer the DSP;
   - The difficulty of synchronizing codes of a large number of universities;
   - The possibility that the DSP will adversely affect workers in countries that restrict freedom of association.

The next meeting of the committee will be on April 21, 9:00 a.m., 2609 SSWB. During this meeting the committee will discuss or vote on possible recommendations regarding the DSP and upgrading code enforcement standards/oversight.