1. Introductions

The committee benefits from the knowledge and passion of faculty and students who bring together a variety of experiences and expertise on matters of labor standards and human rights. Committee members have expertise in areas such as international labor standards, international law, human rights, social work, labor law and labor relations in the United States and elsewhere, occupational safety and health, hazardous materials in the workplace, protecting environmental resources, green manufacturing, sustainable supply chains, economics, public health and epidemiology, technical assistance to small businesses and assistance to communities in economic development, women factory workers’ health in export processing zones, analysis of economic growth patterns, management of businesses, growth and diversification efforts on American Indian reservations.

2. UM licensing contract provision

Through its licensing agent, the Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC), the University of Michigan has added to its code a provision requiring each licensee to document all monitoring activities that it undertakes to ensure its compliance with the University’s code of conduct. The University may request information at any time during the term of the license agreement concerning the licensee’s monitoring of its compliance with the code of conduct. A licensee will be expected to forward all requested information to the University in a timely manner at the licensee's expense.

Contracts of licensees come up for renewal on a quarterly basis during the year. The committee will seek to use the FLA’s Enhanced Licensee Program (see below) as one initial way to get information on licensee monitoring efforts. In addition to using this multi-university pilot, the committee will determine whether additional efforts are needed to access the information from licensees, evaluate the information, and what recommendations it will make on the basis of the information.

3. FLA’s Enhanced Licensee Program

The FLA has launched a new pilot initiative, the Enhanced Licensee Program, focused on bringing smaller, Category C Licensees into compliance with the FLA company obligations. The FLA will be piloting the Enhanced Program starting this fall. Currently there are 10 universities participating in the pilot and over 100 potential pilot licensees. The 10 pilot licensors are: Princeton University; Ohio State University; Pennsylvania State University; University of Maryland; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; University of Texas at Austin; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Michigan; University of Notre Dame; and Washington University in St. Louis.

Three licensee training sessions were conducted this summer: at University of Notre Dame, at the University of Maryland and at UCLA. A total of over 60 licensee representatives attended the three training sessions. The FLA also conducted a licensor training session on October 24 in Washington, D.C.

The FLA’s online tools for the Enhanced Program are currently under development and will be ready for beta testing later this month. Later this fall, pilot licensees will be asked to complete individual online self-assessments. The self-assessment questionnaire is designed to obtain information about a licensee's current status of compliance and provide an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the company's existing compliance program. The results of the self-assessments will be made available to the pilot licensees, their pilot licensors, the licensing agents and the FLA. During the pilot year, licensees will be required to begin implementation of improvement plans designed to fill the compliance gaps identified in the online self-assessment results.

The committee discussed using the FLA’s data collection to get information from UM’s licensees, if the information will be available in a timely fashion. The committee will at its next meeting review the FLA’s questions and the anticipated timing of reports about licensees’ monitoring. It will then determine how it will access reports from licensees, and how it will evaluate the reports.

4. Russell Athletic/Jerzees Choloma

The committee took note of the findings by the FLA and the WRC of the violations of associational rights at two factories owned by
Russell Athletic, Jerzees Choloma and Jerzees de Honduras. Russell has agreed to take the actions necessary to achieve the fullest remediation that can be accomplished at this juncture. Before its next meeting, the committee would like an update on Russell’s implementation of the remedial action.

5. Other business; announcements

A committee member suggested that the committee take time during the next meeting to prioritize its activities for the rest of the year and draw up a list of discussion topics.

The committee will try to arrange a public presentation by a representative from adidas to talk about the company’s corporate social responsibility program. There was a suggestion that the educational goal of the public presentation would be enhanced by also inviting a commentator to look at the issues from a different perspective.

The committee discussed the possibility of organizing a special seminar for students to hear from faculty in different disciplines, and to bring in guest speakers representing perspectives from industry, labor, monitoring organizations and others, to inform the University’s overall approach with its licensees.

The committee will meet next on November 27 (12:30-2:00 p.m.) and December 11 (1:00 -2:30 p.m.).