President’s Advisory Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights
March 9, 2009, 8:30-10am
Palmer Commons, Boardroom 1

MINUTES

Attending: Kristin Ablauf (via conference phone) Amy Cocuzza, Brad Farnsworth, Siobhan Harlow (Chair), Allen Hicken, Peter Jacobson, Brian Talbot, Nancy Vander Kuyl (staff to committee), Efua Van Dyck (UM African Presidential Scholar), Ada Verloren, Leigh Wedenoja.

Absent: Jennifer McLaughlin

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Announcements, Review of Agenda
   The Chair introduced Efua Van Dyck, a UM African Presidential Scholar, from Ghana. Her research area is Occupational Health and Safety in garment production units and she will be shadowing Professor Harlow during her stay.

2. Review of minutes and next meeting dates
   The April meeting will include President Coleman. The meeting date is not yet determined.

3. Planning for March 19th FLA/WRC visit van Heerden, Coleman and WRC rep
   - 8:30-10am Committee Breakfast with FLA, Palmer Commons Boardroom
   - 12:1-30 Public Forum, 100 Hatcher, Graduate Library (Title: University Licensing and International Labor Standards: Reflections on the First Decade and Challenges for the Next)
   - 1:30-3pm Committee Lunch with WRC
   - Filling Schedule Gaps. There are still open meeting times that are available to students, student groups, and faculty. Cocuzza will contact the MILLA group.
   The Chair asked the committee to form an initial set of questions for the breakfast/lunch meetings with the FLA/WRC. Committee suggested that we inquire further into the Russell case and why the FLA and the WRC produced two very different reports, how the current economic situation will affect efforts to enforce labor standards, balancing a better/living wage with increasing job opportunities. (Chair commented that the recently circulated article by Professor Katherine discusses role of wages in stimulating development. Committee may include her in a fall/winter seminar series next year.)

4. Enhancing Curricula and Educational Opportunities
   The committee should consider extending an invitation to Liz Kennedy (VP for Collegiate Licensing Corporation) for a Fall 2009 symposium or lecture event on the topic of compliance. She will be on campus on with Bruce Siegel and meet with Athletics and Licensing Department on April 2. Committee expressed that compliance and its enforcement is a daunting issue and there is a need for greater communication on the subject. The committee is working with FLA to host one or more of their compliance workshops this spring/summer on UM’s campus.

5. Compliance/Licensing Issues
   Knights Apparel: Licensing needs clarification as to whether the company is producing garments that will be marketed under a new label that will require a new license or whether it will be producing existing garments at this production facility. Regardless, Licensing can facilitate their relationships with bookstores (KA is not currently distributing to bookstores). KA currently has the exclusive right to produce mens tee’s and fleece through the mass channel. Ablauf will seek to clarify and identify appropriate mechanisms to support KA's initiative.

   Jerzees de Honduras. Committee continued discussion of the JdH case considering how we move forward and what the generalizability of the University’s response might be, considering what messages we may also be sending to potential licensees. Concern was expressed that we not just accept a series of statements but that we need clear benchmarks of compliance. Potential benchmarks might include re-opening of the plant, leadership in promoting freedom of association, re-hiring of works in other Russell factories etc. A subcommittee was appointed to monitor and review relevant communications and Russell's remediation efforts. Committee includes Brian, Brad, Amy and Ada. Ablauf cautioned against setting a precedent where a contract is cut and then more standards are created particular to that situation and potentially outside of the code.

6. International Partnership Building Grant 2009-2010 Call for Proposals. The Committee had limited discussion about possibilities to generate a proposal for this funding award, specifically, working with NGO's in Africa, perhaps Ghana. The proposal would be stronger if processed through this committee.