MINUTES
April 15, 2010 8:15-9:45am
Palmer Boardroom 1

Attendance: Kristen Ablauf, Brad Farnsworth, Sioban Harlow (chair), Allen Hicken, Kristin King, Jennifer McLaughlin, Brian Talbot, Nancy Vander Kuyl (staff to committee), Dean Yang. Absent: Megan Vogt

1. No new announcements

2. The committee unanimously approved the minutes. This marks the last meeting of the academic year. Members provided the chair with their summer email availability for any issues requiring immediate attention.

3. Monitoring Compliance
   - KAblauf reported that Russell finalized the licensee process with UM.
   - The WRC circulated an email last week about fatal fires at two export apparel factories in Dhaka, Bangladesh. These have focused renewed attention to the need for industry-wide solutions in the critical area of workplace safety.

4. Research and Educational Leadership
   - Update on CoLSHR and CIBE sponsored Bangladesh internships for Summer 2010. Along with Sarah Kanter, Charles Clark accepted the 2nd internship fellowship in Bangladesh. He is a joint degree student in public policy and business. He will be doing a living wage analysis project lasting for 8-10 weeks. BFarnsworth will look into the South Asian Brown Bag as a possible venue for these students to give a public talk on their internships in the fall.

5. Operational Leadership
   - ER6 –Kristen reported that some changes are being implemented for the next group of renewals in order to ensure licensees are aware that a new component of the renewal process exists and that they should identify the appropriate people to complete the questionnaire within their organization. Overall, the committee and licensing department are pleased with the results of the first phase. At issue is the task of how to more effectively communicate with licensees on the new requirements. This year’s addition of the questionnaire to the renewal packet added last minute time pressures to companies that delegated the packet to specific employees without reviewing it first and noting the questionnaire. Thus some companies sent the questionnaires to individuals who did not have the knowledge to complete them. This learning curve is to be expected as the program develops. If the need arises, the committee expressed its willingness to generate a statement recommending UM’s continuation in the program.
   - Recommendations re: WRC & FLA fees: Chair posed the question of whether the committee should make a formal recommendation regarding source of funds in the report to the UM President this year. Committee agreed to bring up the issue but not make a formal recommendation at this time.

6. New Business
   - The WRC announced Knights Apparel’s readiness to launch its new brand: Alta Gracia. This project will provide apparel to university bookstores that is made at a living wage and with full respect for workers’ associational rights. A powerpoint presentation about the brand can be found at this link (this update).
   - Report to President: This year’s report to the president will highlight the ER6 program. Committee finds that the current funding for the program is satisfactory but suggests that any increase should be reviewed by them in their advisory role. Collaboration with the International Institute’s Title VI applications will also be highlighted.
   - Discussion of 2010-2011 meetings. Committee agreed that monthly meetings should be scheduled but that meetings need not be held if no new monitoring issues arise and no new business needs discussion.