President’s Advisory Committee
On Labor Standards and Human Rights

MINUTES
October 11, 1:00 – 2:30 PM
R2218, Ross School of Business

Attendees: Ravi Anupindi (chair), Kristen Ablauf, Omolade Adunbi, Sabrina Bilimoria, Michael Counts, Khaled Eid, Sioban Harlow, Nicholas Rine, Rebecca Wren, Britney Rashleigh (staff to committee)
Absent: Mary-Catherine Goddard

Welcome and Introductions
Committee Chair Ravi Anupindi welcomed committee members, new and old. New members include: Omolade Adunbi, Associate Professor of Afroamerican and African Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; Sabrina Bilimoria, undergraduate student, College of Literature Science and the Arts; and Michael Counts, Strategic Sourcing Manager, Procurement Services. Returning members: Kristen Ablauf (Director of Licensing, Intercollegiate Athletics), Khaled Eid (Senior Contract Administrator, Finance Sponsored Programs), Sioban Harlow (Professor of Epidemiology, School of Public Health), Nicholas Rine (Clinical Professor of Law, Law School), and Rebecca Wren (Undergraduate Student, College of Literature, Science and the Arts). Mary-Catherine Goddard, graduate student at the School of Public Health was also introduced as a new member despite not being able to attend the meeting. Committee members were provided a copy of the committee roster and notified that member Sioban Harlow was appointed Vice-Chair to provide continuity should the Chair ever need to step away from his/her responsibilities for the short- or long-term.

Committee Business
Future meetings for 2016 will take place on November 2nd from 3:30 – 5:00 PM and on December 5th from 9:00 – 10:30 AM. The committee will schedule 2017 meetings at a later date. Additional meetings will be scheduled for urgent issues that may arise.

Chair Anupindi provided committee members a copy of the 2015-2016 committee charge, providing a brief overview of the committee’s responsibilities and notifying them that President Mark Schlissel will attend the November meeting to deliver his 2016-2017 charge. Chair advised members that the committee serves in an advisory capacity to the President and is responsible for monitoring the University’s code of conduct with respect to licensed goods. To do so, the committee works in partnership and collaboration with the Worker’s Rights Consortium (WRC) and Fair Labor Organization (FLA), receiving regular updates from both organizations via email. Chair Anupindi also highlighted the research and educational role played by
the committee, mentioning the committee’s annual support of three summer student internship experiences – one domestic and two international. He also discussed past seminars and special guests hosted and sponsored by the committee, urging members to freely suggest opportunities to do so in the future.

Committee members were also provided a copy of the University Code of Conduct, Committee Guiding Principles, Procedural Guidelines for Acting on Complaints, and the committee’s 2015-2016 Annual Report submitted to the President. In reviewing each document, Chair Anupindi stressed the importance of regular committee member attendance to meetings, urged the committee to review the University Code of Conduct as well as process for responding to labor standards and human rights issues that may arise in the future, and asked new members in particular to review the committee’s 2015-2016 annual report to acquaint themselves with last year’s committee activities.

**Research and Educational Leadership**

In preparation for the committee’s 2016 – 2017 summer internship travel awards (domestic and international), Chair Anupindi advised the committee that calls for applications will need to be finalized and publicized starting in December. During the past two summers, the committee has funded one domestic internship experience for an undergraduate student with Sumerra LLC. Chair Anupindi plans to connect with representatives from Sumerra LLC to discuss potential opportunities during the summer of 2017. Alternately, there are opportunities with the FLA that the committee could support student engagement with.

Chair shared with the committee a memo written to President Schlissel regarding the committee’s 2016 Research Assistantship program, providing a brief overview of the program for new members and discussing next steps identified in conjunction with the President and members of his office staff. During the 2016 winter semester the committee funded two research assistantships focused on investigating social responsibility practices in University non-licensed goods procurement. Research Assistants, under the supervision of select committee members and with support from University Procurement Services, analyzed the current state of UM’s procurement spend and its social responsibility practices, conducting benchmarking studies of practices of other universities as well as select companies in the private sector, seeking inputs from subject matter experts both within and outside UM, and assessing UM student perspectives on the issue. During the 2016 -2017 academic year, the committee will build upon this research concentrating primarily on two categories of University spend and identifying actors and actions necessary to ensure social responsibility in University procurement in these categories. The committee jointly agreed that food and electronics procurement should be the two categories to focus the research work on.

**Operational Leadership**

Committee member Kristen Ablauf shared that the office of Intercollegiate Athletics continues to review licensee applications for renewals on a quarterly basis and
provided information on this process. Information is collected on licensee sales, corporate responsibility standards, and supply chains. As a condition of some renewals, licensees are required to participate in Sumerra LLC’s Ethical Supplier Chain program (ESP). Committee members inquired about the number of University licensees currently enrolled in the ESP program and if there was a fee to participate. Kristen planned to follow up electronically with information on participation rates of current licensees, along with additional details on the ESP program. She confirmed there is a fee to participate in ESP.

**Monitoring and Compliance**
Chair Anupindi reminded the committee of accusations brought against Nike by the WRC in late 2015 regarding Hansae Vietnam and the company’s reluctance to allow the WRC into its supplier factory to investigate allegations of labor standards and human rights violations. While Nike maintained its inability to require supplier factories to allow the WRC within its doors, the FLA was contacted to conduct an investigation and vowed to do so in collaboration with the WRC. Chair Anupindi updated the committee that the FLA and WRC’s joint investigation is now complete and of his plans to contact both organizations (FLA and WRC) for an update. He will share his findings with the committee.

New committee members requested background information on the WRC and FLA, to which Chair Anupindi agreed to follow-up with electronically.

**New Business**
Chair Anupindi called the committee’s attention to current language regarding the recognition of employee unions, as specified in the ‘Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining’ section of the Code of Conduct for University of Michigan Licensees. Some countries do not recognize any union other than the one sponsored by the state (e.g. China, Vietnam). Under these circumstances, implementation of the relevant clause in the code becomes challenging. Chair Anupindi informed that other civil society organizations (e.g., Ethical Trading Initiatives) have recognized this issue and made provision for alternatives; e.g., ETI now has language as follows: “where freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under law, an employer must facilitate, and not hinder, the development of ‘parallel means’ for independent and free association and bargaining”, explicitly stating that it is applicable only to those countries in which freedom of association is denied by law. He proposed that the committee look into the issue and explore updating the University code of conduct to reflect this additional language with inputs from University’s Office of the General Counsel. The committee agreed to think and discuss this topic more in future meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.