President’s Advisory Committee
On Labor Standards and Human Rights

MINUTES
October 16, 2017, 10 – 11:30 AM
B1584 Ross School of Business

Attendees: Ravi Anupindi (chair), Richard Neitzel, Nicholas Rine, Kristen Ablauf, Fatima Nasir, Lauren Smith, Monika Johnson, Khaled Eid (phone), Stephen Yaros (staff to committee)
Absent: Omolade Adunbi, and Michael Counts

Welcome and Introductions
Chair Anupindi called the meeting to order at 10:08 AM. Chair Anupindi welcomed committee members, new and old. New members include: Richard Neitzel, Associate Chair, Department of Environmental Health Sciences and Associate Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health; Monika Johnson, Graduate Student, Stephen M. Ross School of Business and School for Environment and Sustainability; Lauren Smith, Graduate Student, School of Public Health; and Fatima Nasir, Undergraduate Student, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Returning members include: Kristen Ablauf, Director of Licensing, Intercollegiate Athletics; Khaled Eid, Senior Contract Administrator, Finance Sponsored Programs; and Nicholas Rine, Clinical Professor of Law, Law School. Michael Counts, Strategic Sourcing Manager, Procurement Services and Omolade Adunbi, Associate Professor of Afroamerican and African Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, were also introduced as returning members despite not being able to attend the meeting. Committee members were provided a copy of the full committee roster.

Committee Business
Future meetings for 2017 will take place on November 1st from 9:00 – 10:30 AM and on December 4th from 8:30 – 10:00 AM. The committee will schedule 2018 meetings at a later date. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed for urgent issues that may arise.

Chair RAnupindi provided committee members a copy of the 2016-2017 committee charge, providing a brief overview of the committee’s responsibilities, and notified them that President Mark Schlissel will attend the November meeting to deliver his 2017-2018 charge. Chair RAnupindi 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 Association (FLA), receiving regular updates from both organizations via email. He also mentioned the role played by the Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC) is assisting the University Licensing office. 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 2016-2017 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.

Research and Educational Leadership
In preparation for the committee’s 2017 – 2018 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 three summers, the committee has funded one domestic internship experience for an undergraduate student with Sumerra LLC.

Chair Anupindi mentioned to the committee last year’s visit from Dr. Linda Greer, Interim Director of the UM Biological Station and Senior Scientist at the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC). In March 2017, Dr. Greer presented her work on environmental issues in the apparel industry under a program called "Clean by Design (CBD)" to the committee. Among her many points in that presentation, Dr. Greer explained that no University is looking at the CO2 footprint in their purchasing. She cited a few studies that showed at least half of a University’s carbon footprint is in what it buys and not in what it produces. UM could take a leadership role to look into the environmental footprint of its licensed goods supply chain. Chair Anupindi has continued to engage with Dr. Greer on this topic, and they are currently writing a joint case study to explore future research possibilities.

Chair Anupindi also mentioned the student project completed last academic year concerning University non-licensed goods procurement. Specifically, the project looked at food and electronic purchases by the University. He expressed that the creation of standards and transparency are key and that this sort of study is the next step in labor standards work and will require a long-term commitment to fully engage with and improve. He reported of his meeting with the President to discuss these next steps.

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 (ESEP). KAblauf also informed the committee that the CLC was acquired by IMG College Licensing but anticipated a smooth continuation of our relationship with them.

New Business
There was a brief discussion following Chair Anupindi’s description of the committee’s purpose and background. Chair Anupindi asked committee members to express any questions they had on topics already discussed or opinions on other topics related to the committee’s upcoming year.

Committee member MJohnson asked about the University’s auditing structure. Chair Anupindi described the different roles that the FLA and WRC play and how the University engages with them.

Committee member RNeitzel inquired whether there is anything on environmental certification. Chair RAnupindi reported that the committee had until now exclusively focused on labor standards and human rights, which included occupational health and safety. Whether the committee should expand focus to include environmental issues could be discussed during the coming year.

KAblauf mentioned the University of Michigan questionnaire that is filled out by University vendors when they are certified or re-certified. It has changed over the years and there are always opportunities for improvement. Most licenses are renewed annually on the quarter, and most are renewed with conditions that must be met. Sometimes this includes a licensee’s required partnership with Sumerra LLC or the need to go through a learning module series with FLA. One issue is that suppliers often reach a plateau when it comes to social responsibility and it is unclear how to have them improve further.

KAblauf described a developing code of conduct for licensees and how this can create some consistency. But, even if a new code is developed, licensees will not always know exactly how to apply it, so we should be able to properly inform them and provide the necessary resources.

Perhaps this is an area where the University could provide some guidance. Chair Anupindi said that, under the committee’s Research and Education charge, the University could contribute to developing licensee guidance. He reported that last year a team of students began work, in collaboration with University Licensing and the CLC, to create a licensee guidance document for small / medium size licensees. A report is due by end of this year. In the future, students could be engaged to take such a document to the next step of perhaps creating training materials, etc.

MJohnson emphasized the value of incorporating the supplier perspective. Doing so would be an opportunity for a larger conversation around social responsibility.
Chair Anupindi agreed and such a conversation could take many forms, including perhaps hosting a forum / workshop on campus.

RNeitzel inquired of there has been any longitudinal analysis of licensee social performance. Chair RAupindi reported that there hasn’t been one but perhaps worth investigating.

Chair Anupindi recognized that this a huge opportunity for the committee and the University to follow up on these discussions through appropriate actions in the coming year. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:31 AM.**