President’s Advisory Committee
On Labor Standards and Human Rights

MINUTES
October 1, 2018, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
2065 Fleming Building

Attendees: Ravi Anupindi (chair), Kristen Ablauf, Omolade Adunbi, Khaled Eid, Monika Johnson, Paul Labute, Richard Neitzel, Safia Sayed, Kiyoteru Tsutsui, Emma Waitzman, and Stephen Yaros (staff to committee)

Guests: Mark Schlissel, President, University of Michigan

Visit from the President

Chair Anupindi called the meeting to order at 10:30am and welcomed President Schlissel, who joined for the first 30 minutes of the meeting.

The President thanked everyone for their participation on the committee, and expressed how important the shared commitment by the University to labor standards and human rights is. The president acknowledged that this is not always easy, but important work.

The President mentioned how helpful it is to have an existing structure in place to work on challenging questions and dilemmas regarding these topics. In this way, both predictable and unpredictable issues can be handled effectively, and it is reassuring that the committee exists to provide thoughtful recommendations to him. The President also mentioned how important the committee charge is.

Chair Anupindi then took an opportunity to highlight several important aspects for the committee. He mentioned that committee work not only covers operational concerns, but also research on related topics. He stated such a mandate is seldom found at other Universities and that UM provides robust support from the President’s Office on these issues. He went on to mention the two student research projects that took place last year around supplier engagement and environmental issues.

Regarding supplier engagement, Chair Anupindi mentioned the barriers that small and medium University licensees face, and how several licensees are unclear how to meet their obligations regarding reporting or labor standards and human rights issues. Regarding environmental issues, Chair Anupindi mentioned that we should potentially make this an aspect of the University’s code of conduct. The committee could explore this in the coming year.

President Schlissel then spoke about the future of sustainability on campus, and asked if there is anything in our code of conduct regarding it. Committee member Paul Labute stated that although guidelines exist for licensees in different ways, there is not one explicit standard
around sustainability. Chair Anupindi stated that the committee can and will explore this space more.

Chair Anupindi went on to mention that he has been working with University Stakeholders to plan a one-day conference to learn about challenges, opportunities and best practices around sustainable food procurement by institutions. This would involve looking at what other universities are doing, what UM is currently doing, and where we should go moving forward. This conference could spur future research on the topic.

President Schlissel mentioned the commitment by President Emeritus Mary Sue Coleman regarding environmental issues such as decreasing University greenhouse gas production. The goals set by her were tough, but the University has been making great strides in achieving them. Ultimately, President Schlissel stated that the environmental work we do moving forward must have a broad impact that involves the city, county, and state. We should be a model for other universities and cities to follow.

Chair Anupindi agreed and stated that although previous discussions have taken place about calculating the environmental footprint of the University, more work would need to be done on the topic to fully understand the impact. This means there are many potential projects the committee could tackle to aid in this effort.

President Schlissel thanked the committee again for their service, stated he is excited to see their work over the upcoming year, and then he departed the meeting.

**Committee Business**

Chair Anupindi provided committee members a copy of the 2018-2019 committee charge and gave a brief overview of the committee’s responsibilities. Chair Anupindi 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), Fair Labor Association (FLA), and IMG College Licensing (IMGCL).

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 *2017-2018 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.

Future meetings for 2018 will take place on November 12 from 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM and on December 3 from 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM. The committee will schedule 2019 meetings at a later date. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed for urgent issues that may arise.

Research and Educational Leadership

In preparation for the committee’s 2019 summer internship travel awards, Chair Anupindi shared the call for applications for the graduate international travel award. The call will go out for applications in the coming weeks with applications due in January 2019. As for the domestic travel award, last year’s student spent time in Washington DC with the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The experience was positive, but the committee will discuss which organization to sponsor for the summer of 2019 award in the near future.

Chair Anupindi also mentioned the student projects from Winter 2018 again around supplier engagement and environmental issues. He asked the committee to read each group’s report before the November 2018 meeting so they could both be discussed. Specifically, Chair Anupindi wanted to see how the committee can act on any of the report recommendations.

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 FLA’s e-learning modules.

Committee discussion then ensued regarding these e-learning modules and their effectiveness. As part of the committee’s review of the 2018 student report on supplier engagement, Chair Anupindi asked members to take note of report comments on the modules. This could certainly be a topic the committee deliberates more during this academic year.

New Business

Based on the previous discussion earlier in the meeting regarding UM’s code of conduct for licensees, Chair Anupindi asked PLabute to find another member of the University’s procurement team to talk about our current code and what future changes and or considerations would look like. Chair Anupindi mentioned there are potential opportunities to have a broad impact on a variety of issues through an enhanced code of conduct for University vendors in our procurement process.
Chair Anupindi went on to mention the one-day conference on responsible University food procurement again, and how it would potentially take place in March 2019. Committee member Monika Johnson reported that so far four students had signed up to help with the planning and execution of the event. Committee discussion followed on the potential for the event and the importance of the continued focus on the topic in relation to labor standards and human rights.

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.