

UC code of conduct for trademark licensees



The University of California supports humane and enforceable labor standards in the manufacture of products bearing its name.

- In August 1998, UC became one of the few universities in the country to adopt a code of conduct for its trademark licensees, companies granted a right to manufacture products with the university's name.
- In January 2000, UC President Richard C. Atkinson issued a strengthened code of conduct with recommendations from an advisory group of students, faculty and campus administrators.
- In March 2000, the university convened a new systemwide advisory group of students, faculty and administrators to study enforcement and monitoring issues and to report to the UC administration periodically on the progress made by national models.

NEW CODE STANDARDS

The current UC code requires licensees and their contractors to pay a living wage, to comply with environmental and health and safety laws, and to not discriminate against employees on the basis of pregnancy or collective bargaining activity. Under the revised code, all names and addresses of the licensees' contractor and manufacturing plants will be made public. All new and renewed licensees are required to adhere to the code. The code can be found at the following Web site: <http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/policy/1-05-00code.pdf>

QUESTION OF MONITORING

UC joined four other universities in 1999 to work with a team of consultants to gather and analyze information on global apparel manufacturing in seven countries. The report, the Independent Universities Initiative, was released in October 2000.

The study found sub-par working conditions in apparel factories in all of the countries visited, spotty enforcement of labor standards, an insufficient awareness of codes of conduct and monitoring efforts to promote compliance, skepticism about the efficacy of monitoring and a difficulty in gathering information from workers about conditions in factories. The report also identified several other issues of concern, as well as best practices and opportunities for universities to contribute to the improvement of conditions. An electronic copy of the 147-report is on the UC Web site at: <http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/policy/initiative-report.pdf>

Other universities involved in the study are Harvard, the University of Michigan, Notre Dame and Ohio State. Information on workplace conditions was gathered by representatives of PricewaterhouseCoopers. They were accompanied on one-half of their visits by representatives of the Business of Social Responsibility Education Fund, the Investor Responsibility Research Center and Dara O'Rourke, assistant professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In response to the report, Senior Vice President Joseph P. Mullinix said, "As a result of joining the Independent Universities Initiative, we now know that much more work is needed to address the widespread existence of substandard working conditions. Our commitment to fair and humane work standards is strong. We will continue to assess and review our policies as we work with our student-faculty monitoring group and other interested universities."

The same day that the report was released, Vice President Mullinix sent a letter to the top 25 companies that have licenses to manufacture UC apparel. The letter asked the companies at their earliest possible convenience to contact the campus that manages their contract with assurance that their company is conforming to the UC Code of Conduct for Trademark Licenses.