Resolution for UWM Faculty Senate re Global Sullivan Principles:

WHEREAS, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) has committed itself to the pursuit and protection of human rights; and

WHEREAS, the Global Sullivan Principles represent a succinct embodiment of UWM's commitment to human rights;

NOW, THEREFORE, the UWM Faculty Senate hereby endorses the Global Sullivan Principles, to the extent that the Principles do not conflict with applicable local, state, and federal laws.

Rationale

The Global Sullivan Principles are an outgrowth of the human rights work of Reverend Leon Sullivan, a US minister who drew up the Principles to hold American companies in South Africa accountable during apartheid times. Reverend Sullivan has received over 50 honorary degrees, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and has served as a Director of the General Motors Corporation and is currently on the GM Advisory Board.

The Principles are designed to promote equal opportunity for employees of all ages, races, ethnic backgrounds and religions. They call for adequate compensation, fair competition, safe and healthy workplaces, and freedom of association. They condemn exploitation of children, abuse of women, physical punishment, and involuntary servitude. The principles are stated below in the language that applies to companies, and the hope is that the Principles will be applied to all employers, large and small, in all corners of the world.

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Statement of Global Sullivan Principles

As a company which endorses the Global Sullivan Principles we will respect the law, and act as a responsible member of society. We will apply these principles with integrity, consistent with the legitimate role of business. We will develop and implement company policies, procedures, training and internal reporting structures to ensure commitment to these principles throughout our organization. We believe the application of the Principles will achieve greater tolerance and better understanding among peoples, and advance the culture of peace.

Accordingly, we will:

1. Express support for universal human rights and, particularly, those of our employees, the communities within which we operate, and parties with whom we do business.

2. Promote equal opportunity for our employees at all levels of the company with respect to issues such as color, race, gender, age, ethnicity or religious beliefs, and operate without unacceptable worker treatment such as the exploitation of children, physical punishment, female abuse, involuntary servitude, or other forms of abuse.
3. Respect our employees' voluntary freedom of association.

4. Compensate our employees to enable them to meet at least their basic needs and provide the opportunity to improve their skill and capability in order to raise their social and economic opportunities.

5. Provide a safe and healthy workplace; protect human health and the environment; and promote sustainable development.

6. Promote fair competition including respect for intellectual and other property rights, and not offer, pay or accept bribes.

7. Work with governments and communities in which we do business to improve the quality of life in those communities—their educational, cultural, economic and social well-being—and seek to provide training and opportunities for workers from disadvantaged backgrounds.

8. Promote the application of these Principles by those with whom we do business.

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Among the companies that have endorsed the Global Sullivan Principles are British Airways, Chevron, Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, Daimler Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Manpower, Procter & Gamble, and Sunoco, and among other bodies are numerous chambers of commerce, city councils (including Milwaukee), and labor rights groups. Although the language of the GSP implies corporations, the Principles themselves apply to all employers, including universities. Moreover, universities may add their prestige to the GSP by formally endorsing them.

Reverend Sullivan is the namesake of the UWM Sullivan-Spaights Professorship, and founded Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Inc (OIC), a program with over 70 domestic and 12 international operating facilities. The OIC, whose main office is in Milwaukee, has created jobs for over a million youth in 130 US cities and eight countries, and has supported the building of over 100 schools and health clinics in South Africa alone.

Impact of endorsing the Global Sullivan Principles (taken from statement provided by UWM Legal Affairs Office)

Through a series of declarations, the GSP promote non-discrimination and cultural diversity, freedom of association and the right to pursue fair and sustainable economic growth, as well as personal and environmental safety. In other words, the GSP represent a summary of certain socio-economic rights.

In reality, a plethora of laws already "on the books" require UWM to do far more than simply support concepts of equal treatment, economic advancement, and health and environmental safety. These laws include, the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the US Constitution, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Equal Employment Opportunity Regulations, patent and copyright laws, various environmental laws, EPA and OSHA regulations, and salary and wage provisions to achieve fairness. In fact, federal and state laws mandate that UWM undertake specific
activities that promote the ideals informing the GSP, and allow the sanctioning of the University for failure to do so.

By contrast, the GSP does not require institutions endorsing the principles to undertake any specific activity or pursue the institution's mission in a particular manner. Indeed, neither Reverend Sullivan, nor any entity associated with the GSP, monitor or regulate compliance with the GSP, although each supporting company is asked to provide Reverend Sullivan with an annual update of its progress on implementing the Principles.

In short, endorsement of the GSP does not create any additional legal obligations for UWM. Instead, endorsement represents a very public and very clear statement in favor of global human rights, not because we have to as a matter of law, but because by joining those who have already done so, we strengthen the call for an international commitment to resolving human rights issues.

To be sure, individuals or organizations both internal and external to UWM will use our endorsement of the GSP to advance a particular agenda, even though the GSP does not create any new legal obligations. To the extent such activity helps UWM improve the quality of our community, that improvement represents a positive-by-product of endorsement.

Unfortunately, from time to time an individual or organization many attempt to manipulate the GSP endorsement to threaten or embarrass UWM into taking action that advances a purely self-serving agenda. As a practical matter, however, those who choose to rely on threats and manipulation to achieve a goal will do so whether or not UWM endorses the GSP. Thus, on balance, the benefits of endorsing the GSP far outweigh the potential drawbacks.

University Committee

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