

DECEMBER 2, 2008 MINUTES

At a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing, held on Tuesday, December 2, 2008, in the Burden Room, 206 Low Library, the following members participated:

Jack McGourty, Faculty (Chair)	Hannah Lee, Student
Mary Ellen Bianco, Alumna	Shearwood McClelland, Alumnus
Tom D'Aunno, Faculty	Shahid Naeem, Faculty
Alex Feerst, Student	Anne Sullivan, Administrator
Ray Horton, Faculty	

The following members sent an explanation of their absence:

Peggy Kauh, Alumna	Walter Sweet , Alumnus
JJ Keyes, Student	Ben Weiss, Student

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and Tom D'Aunno introduced Sherry Glied, Chair of Health Policy and Management at The Mailman School of Public Health.

Call to Order and Introduction of Guest Speaker

Sherry Glied of The Mailman School of Public Health addressed the Committee on the subject of Healthcare Reform. Sherry provided a brief history of healthcare reform, stating that the current problems have been around for some time, and will continue to be around, but in a different guise. She went on to compare the healthcare systems in other countries to the U.S., noting how much more per capita the U.S. spends on healthcare despite their inability to cover the whole population. Sherry discussed the disparity in healthcare spending between the states, citing a lack of correlation between spending and health. She stated that healthcare spending as a percentage of the GDP is increasing in the U.S., as is the number of uninsured. Sherry discussed healthcare reform initiatives, such as access to doctors earlier in the morning and later at night, shortened waiting time in the doctor's office, and reminders from doctors for routine check-ups. She closed by introducing two opposing theories on healthcare reform: "not enough markets" versus "get rid of private industry". She stated that it didn't matter what system of reform the U.S. employs, it just needs to cover everyone. Sherry's presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

Presentation by Guest Speaker

The Committee approved the minutes of its meeting on October 14, 2008.

Approval of Minutes

Hannah Lee provided a brief update on the work of the Sudan Divestment Subcommittee to-date. The Sudan Divestment List looks similar to last year's list, and SDS criteria remains closely linked to the Sudan Task Force. The SRI Manager will circulate the final list to the Committee on Friday, December 5th for review before the next Committee meeting on Tuesday, December 9th. The final list will be voted on at the December 9th meeting.

Sudan Divestment Monitoring
Process / Subcommittee

The Chair discussed his outreach to the student groups who presented at the Town Hall meeting on November 18th. He has been in discussions with Community Impact regarding the issue of Sustainability, the Partnership for Responsible Endowment (PRE) and the Law School Human Rights Clinic regarding the issue of Community Investing, the PRE and United Students Against Sweatshops regarding the issue of Labor Rights, and the Columbia Queer Alliance regarding the issue of LGBT Friendly Companies. He has continued discussions from last year with Burma 88 regarding the issue of Chevron in Burma, and the Student Coalition Against War regarding the issue of Arms Divestiture.

Annual Town Hall Meeting

The Chair discussed a new course he will be teaching next semester, Existing Science, Technology, and Society (service-learning), to pilot SRI-related curriculum and projects. The Committee will serve as the class "client" and potential student team projects may include: proxy guidelines by major category, research on such topics as community investment strategies, alternative energy investments, and LGBT issues, and creating a more effective student engagement process. The class is at capacity with 45 pre-registered students.

Existing Science, Technology, and
Society Course

The Chair introduced co-filing shareholder proposals as a new initiative the Committee should consider for this year or next year, depending on timing of the co-filing process. The Committee wrote letters to the management of Chevron and Dow Chemical last year and did not receive a response from either company. Co-filing a shareholder proposal is the next step in shareholder engagement. After some discussion it was decided that the Committee will not have enough time to present the initiative to the Trustees and allow them ample time to review it before the co-filing deadline in December. It was decided that the Committee will do more research on co-filing this spring, with the intention of co-filing in the Fall 2009.

Co-Filing Shareholder Proposals

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Kelley Manager, SRI

