

Advisory Committee on Corporate Responsibility in Investment Policy (ACCRIP)
Minutes on the Meeting of October 18, 2013

Present

Christopher Bull (chair)
Naoko Shibusawa
Sara Matthieson
Ian Trupin
*Anne Sharpe
*Sandra Seibel
Vazira Zamindar
Daniel Moraff
David Muller
Julie Vanier
Michael Satlow
Stanley Griffith
Marie Langlois

*Indicates non-voting members of the Committee

Agenda

1. Approval of minutes from October 4 meeting,
2. Discuss BSJP motion
3. Discuss of letter to Pres. Paxson regarding coal options
4. New business
5. Adjourn

Prior to the meeting, Brown Students for Justice in Palestine read and dropped off a letter and delivered approximately 70 postcards, each signed by a different individual. The text of the letter and postcards can be found at the end of the minutes.

Prior to the approval of the minutes, an unexpected change in membership was discussed. The Chair was notified on October 8th that a new faculty member had been appointed on May 24th to replace the faculty member whose term expired at the end of June. The faculty member being replaced had been unaware of the process as it was occurring and thus did not seek re-appointment, and neither the committee nor the faculty member were informed until October 8. Concerns were raised about how this affects the integrity and functioning of ACCRIP and the ensuing discussion took most of the time available.

Motion: the Chair will draft a letter seeking clarification for this case, with a period for committee members to add to the letter and to approve it before it is sent. The motion passed with two abstentions and no opposition.

The website, as well as the first set of minutes in forthcoming years, should include the ends of terms next to each member's name.

1. Approval of the October 4 minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

2. Discussion of BSJP Motion

It was noted that the subcommittee drafting the motion changed the criteria. Because of the limited time available, substantial discussion was postponed until the next meeting.

3. Discussion of letter concerning coal divestment

Several minor errors were corrected and the letter was approved unanimously.

4. No new business was raised

5. The meeting was adjourned at 10:48.

Addendum

The BSJP letter read as follows:

"Dear ACCRIP,

We would like to express our gratitude for your actions in helping to bring to light the ethical implications of investing in companies involved with the illegal occupation of Palestine, as outlined in the letter you sent out in November of last year. Along with our allies, Brown Students for Justice in Palestine has been heeding your call to further the campus dialogue on this pressing issue, and all discussion has made even more clear the necessity of divestment.

We thank you for the work ACCRIP has put into this issue over the last three years. We hope this spirit of maintaining Brown's ethical standards invites continuing progress in the near future.

We stand with ACCRIP for human rights and justice in Palestine.

Signed:

Africana Studies DUG

Brown Students for Justice in Palestine

International Socialist Organization

Students for a Democratic Society

Student Labor Alliance

Queer Alliance.

The Queer Alliance is excited to support BSJP and ACCRIP in furthering the campus dialogue on this issue. We especially would like to draw attention to the strategy known as "pinkwashing" by which Israel promotes the values of LGBTQ rights and feminism as proof of its progressiveness, when in reality it carries out egregious violations of human rights and international law. We look forward to continuing to work with the university to ensure that Brown is renowned for its recognition of LGBTQ communities both on College Hill and beyond."

The postcards read as follows:

"Dear ACCRIP,

I would like to express my deep support for your November 2012 letter. Thank you for your meticulous work.

As a member of the Brown community, I am deeply concerned that my University may be invested in companies that contribute to violence against Palestinian civilians, the destruction of Palestinian homes, and the illegal Israeli occupation. I applaud ACCRIP for acknowledging these fact [sic] and for taking action.

I stand with ACCRIP for human rights and justice in Palestine, and I stand with divestment!

Sincerely,
[each postcard was signed individually]"