

2011

UCLA Institute of the Environment
Action Research Program
Fair Trade Education

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GO TO FAIR 
TRADE?
EVERY PURCHASE MATTERS

[**FAIR TRADE TEAM**
FINAL REPORT]

FAIR TRADE EDUCATION

ACTION RESEARCH TEAM

January – June 2011

Education for Sustainability Living Program
& Institute of the Environment



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Executive Summary

One of our main focuses is to make sure that students know the benefits of Fair Trade, but also how easy it is to opt for Fair Trade products when ordering a beverage. In order to achieve this goal, we pursued a variety of innovative approaches.

To broaden our scope, we met with Greek fraternity and sorority groups and student groups during their weekly announcement period. We aimed to garner interest and support for Fair Trade by presenting Fair Trade facts and reminding them that not only are Fair Trade products available on campus, but also to say “can I have Fair Trade” when ordering. We also made a brief announcement about the goals of our action research team and the Education for Sustainable Leaders (ESLP) program.

To increase visibility and awareness of Fair Trade on campus, we designed a marketing campaign incorporating students onto a team-designed poster board. This design was to be placed outside of the coffee shops and replace the ineffective “Fair Trade” posters currently on display. The purpose of our new design was to be concise, informative, creative, and have a familiar face so students would be more inclined to pay attention. We recruited various students to be photographed and displayed on the posters in pursuit of a “relatable” marketing approach. Because of time constraints and mixed communication between our group and stakeholders, we were unable to put our posters up. The posters are stored at the IOES and will be available for future ART groups.

The Fair Trade team gathered a lot of support from different student groups and faculty. We were fortunate to have E3 and Bruin Democrats supporting our cause as well as the rest of the ART community. They assisted us in our tabling efforts, in which our educated staff was able to have interpersonal interactions with prospective Fair Trade

purchasers, rather than only pursuing a more distant, poster-only approach. As a group, we created posters titled “Ask us about Fair Trade!” so students would be able to come to us with any questions they have. We realize many students aren’t familiar with Fair Trade certification at all, so we were happy to spread awareness and address how “change for us is change for them.”

After the approval of ASUCLA, we were able to put business card sized information cards at the registers of the five Fair Trade carrying coffee shops. These vibrant green and blue cards are available at the register when one is placing an order. The informational cards were meant supplement the posters outside with more concrete facts and Fair Trade values. Unfortunately, ASUCLA did not find it suitable for the posters to go up to supplement the information cards since the spring quarter was coming to a close. On another note, ASUCLA has decided to place “The Greater Good” stickers on Fair Trade products, with the hopes of increasing visibility of Fair Trade purchases among students.

Another huge focus of our project was Fair Trade merchandising. We ordered and distributed sunglasses printed with the slogan “Got Fair Trade?” We contacted an artist who created a creative Fair Trade design to be printed on t-shirts. None of these merchandising and printing efforts would have been possible without the funding we received. We are very appreciative of the financial support The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF) and DART was able to provide our group.

Another marketing approach we implemented was the creation of a Facebook Group in order to target the virtual crowd. We provided succinct information regarding the benefits of Fair Trade, and where to find Fair Trade on campus. We also linked

various resources on the page, such as the official Fair Trade website and other sources of information.

I. Overview and Project Objectives

Our project goals initially started out just to highlight the importance of consumer responsibility. As our campaign continued, we found that even if students considered themselves to make “conscious purchases” the major reason why they did not order Fair Trade was because they didn’t know that UCLA offered Fair Trade and/or that you had to ask for Fair Trade when ordering. In the beginning of the project, the Fair Trade team wanted to increase the visibility of Fair Trade items on the menu because we found that visually they blended in with the rest of the menu. However, ASUCLA did not find that feasible to differentiate the Fair Trade options based on their limited time and resources. This prompted us to take alternative approaches to getting students to recognize that they need to explicitly say “can i have Fair Trade” when ordering.

The Fair Trade team took a five pronged approach to raising Fair Trade awareness on campus. First, we surveyed students to establish a baseline foundation for UCLA’s general awareness of Fair Trade. Next, we met with student groups and fraternity and sorority organizations during their weekly announcement periods to remind students that Fair Trade exists at UCLA and that *every purchase matters*. Third, we designed professional quality information cards and posters to supplement our educational campaign. Fourth, we tabled outside of Kerckhoff coffee house, meeting with students on a more personal basis. Lastly, we created a campaign guide called the “Bruin’s Guide to Fair Trade”, that would help future ART groups implement a successful campaign at

UCLA. Underlying all of our campaign approaches were giveaways such as stickers, sunglasses, and magnets--all Fair Trade related. These giveaways were crucial in garnering student interest.

II. Fair Trade at UCLA

The Fair Trade ART group was born out of the vision of Seigi Karasaki. As the Fair Trade leader of UCLA's student sustainability group, Seigi wanted to take the campaign to another level. The ESLP program was a perfect medium for achieving this because of the structure of the ESLP program. Not only would ESLP be able to recruit the best and most qualified UCLA students, but ESLP would be able to access more resources and funding opportunities. Joined by Joseph Lee, a student who had work experience with Fair Trade certification companies and a passion for Fair Trade values, Seigi and Joseph were able to pool their knowledge and resources to start the Fair Trade ART.

The Fair Trade group was interested in studying the potential impact that Fair Trade education would have on UCLA's demand for Fair Trade coffee and related products. Their goal was to increase student, faculty, and staff awareness of the Fair Trade movement and highlight the importance of consumer responsibility in supporting socially and environmentally sustainable businesses. Fair Trade is a market-based approach that joins producers, manufacturers, retailers, and consumers in a stable business practices. Highly volatile international markets and lack of regulatory institutions create high entry barriers to fledgling producers. Fair Trade provides small

producers with the opportunity to become competitive in their respective market, without forfeiting product quality and sound business ethics.

III. Initial Conditions at UCLA

Fair Trade has been part of the UCLA food system for more than ten years. Since the introduction of Fair Trade coffee into UCLA's cafes, there have been student groups involved in raising Fair Trade awareness. These groups left a wealth of resources such as fliers, brochures, and campaign materials and ideas. When starting the project, what we saw was that Fair Trade campaigns in the past were largely focused around a single event or single outreach strategy. Because of our limited time, resources, and human capital, we decided to take a more sustained, educational approach. It was our hope that this method would yield different results from the past.

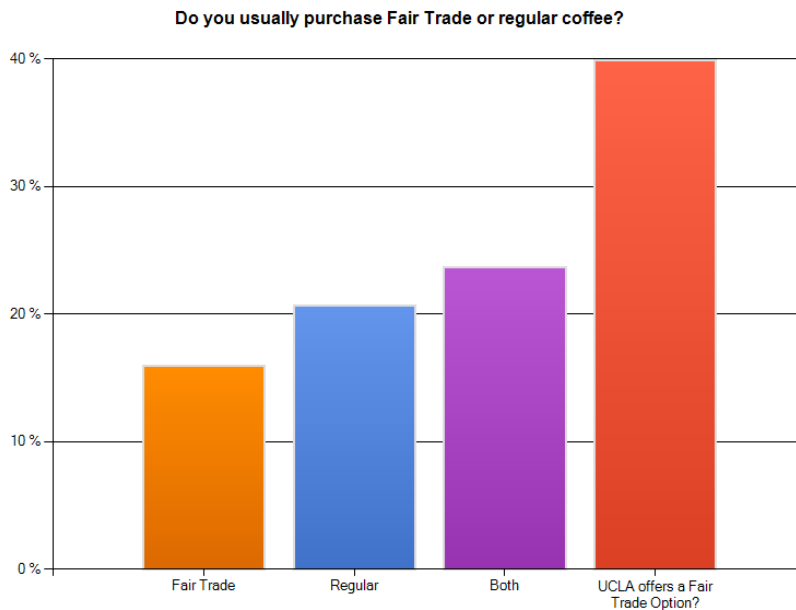
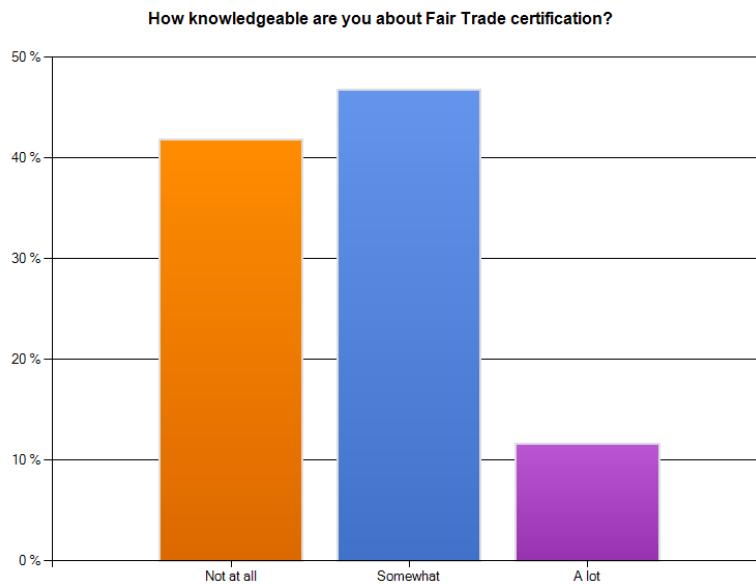
Our campaign started out by surveying students using SurveyMonkey.com, an online survey generator. This baseline survey would inform the rest of our campaign. The survey also served to show tangible evidence that the UCLA community has a higher potential for consumer responsibility if they were more educated on the environmental and equity benefits that Fair Trade offers.

IV. Research Methodology and Data Analysis

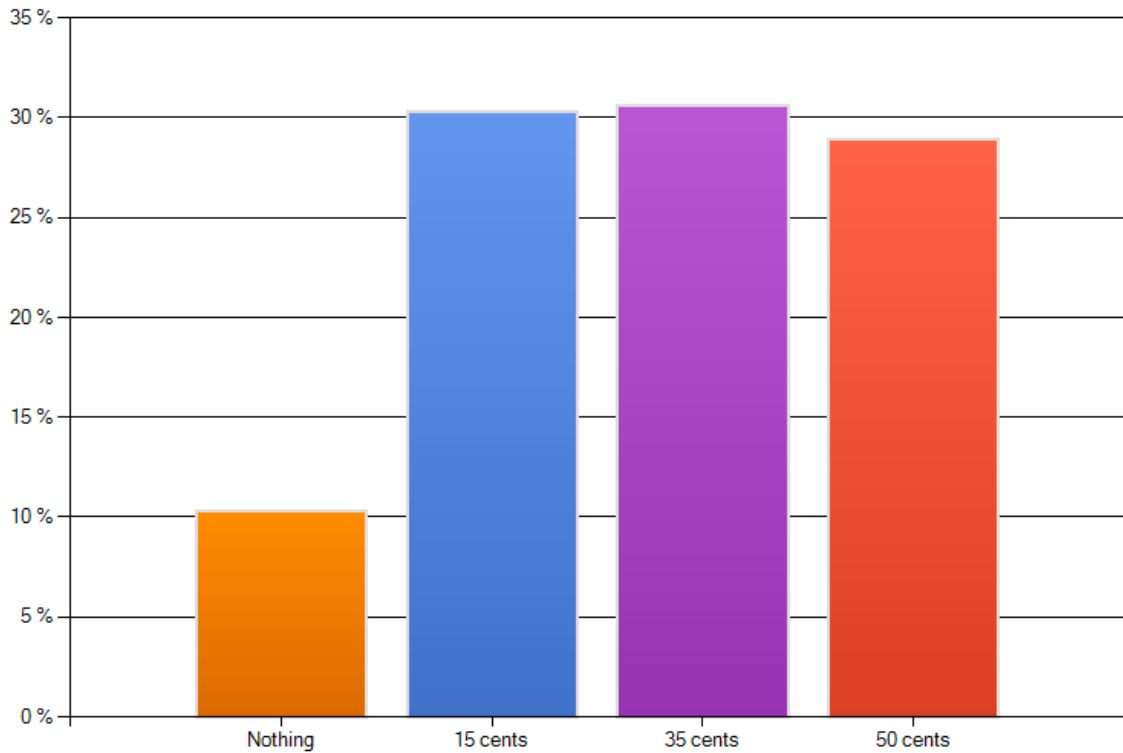
A. Winter 2011

The initial task we set for ourselves was to investigate whether or not increasing the sales of Fair Trade coffee on campus was a feasible goal. To accomplish this, we created a survey with questions that would give us an idea about students' current level of

awareness of Fair Trade certification. These surveys indicate the practicality of improving awareness, and evaluate the likelihood that this improvement could lead to increased consumption of Fair Trade coffee at UCLA. We sent the survey out using list-serves from various student organizations as well as Facebook to extend the survey to as many students as possible. We received positive results (some of which are shown below) that suggest our goal was a realistic one.



A Fair Trade certified product is produced in a environmentally sustainable manner and ensures decent living wages and working conditions for producers and farmers. How much more would you be willing to pay for these benefits for a \$2 cup of coffee?



Fundamental to the success of our group’s project was establishing relationships with stakeholders who would be able to assist us in achieving our goals. ASUCLA attendees to our initial stakeholder meetings included Roy Champawat (Student Union Director), Karen Noh (Director of Special Projects), Cindy Bolton (Director of Food Services), and Jessica Dawson (Restaurants Division Manager). We were very lucky to find supportive stakeholders whose interests aligned with ours regarding the implementation of Fair Trade education on campus. They were instrumental in guiding our group and letting us know what is within the feasible scope of action. Also, they supplemented our ideas with ideas of their own. For example ASUCLA designed stickers

that will be put on all Fair Trade coffee purchases indefinitely, an idea that was inspired by our group to increase the visibility of Fair Trade purchases around campus.

Alongside support from our stakeholders, we received funding for our project through an application process of The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF). TGIF money was used to make our posters. In addition to TGIF, we used DART funding to purchase a 150 plastic sunglasses fitted with “Got Fair Trade” on the side. We distributed them to incentivize Fair Trade purchasing. We believed that creative approaches to increasing awareness would be successful, as it would make students excited about the cause.

We took a few additional steps to prepare for our Fair Trade campaign, one of which was contacting Fair Trade USA and a Fair Trade student group at the University of California at San Diego (UCSD). Both sources were willing to aid us in our effort. Also, we created a Facebook page for Fair Trade at UCLA.

B. Spring 2011

We started off the spring preparing our campaign materials. As the quarter started, we were busy designing the Fair Trade info cards. The info cards took more than 10 hours of designing and redesigning. Eventually a group consensus was met and we outsourced the printing to a company called “Vistaprint.” We initially ordered 1000, but we quickly realized that this would not be enough. Because the constant sales and deals put forth from Vistaprint, we were able to purchase more info cards without difficulty. At the same time, we designed and ordered our sunglasses from “Pinnacle Promotions.” Once the sunglasses arrived, we were able to start our campaign.

During weeks 5-9 our multi-faceted campaign was really able to take off. We started off meeting with Bruin Democrats. This was a good way of learning how to talk to big groups of people, and we realized that club meetings were great mediums of outreach, balancing quality (group intimacy) with quantity (group size). A few of the other club meetings we spoke at were for the Nikkei Student Union, Jazz Reggae, and the General Representative Office 2. Our team also arranged to table outside of Kerckhoff coffeehouse for fourteen hours over the span of two weeks, engaging in grassroots outreach to students entering and exiting the café. We found this method to be highly effective – most of the students that approached us were genuinely interested. It helped a lot to have promotional give-aways (especially sunglasses) at the table to attract students as well.

As the final portion of our marketing push, we ordered \$950 dollars-worth of “Got Fair Trade?” shirts, and \$324 dollars-worth of “Got Fair Trade?” posters. Unfortunately, we were unable to utilize either for the tabling portion of our campaign as we had initially planned. However, both are of lasting quality, and will undoubtedly be able to be used in future campaigns.

Lastly, we wanted our campaign to have lasting sustainability over the years to come. Though Fair Trade has repeatedly popped up on the agenda of various interest groups on campus over the past years, it has never retained a continuous vision or direction. In order to mitigate this issue, we decided to author a “Bruin’s Guide to Fair Trade” training manual for future groups. Written primarily by Joseph Lee, it outlines the various nuances of the system here at UCLA, and suggests courses of action to focus on. Its other purpose is to serve as a baseline calibrator for Fair Trade education and

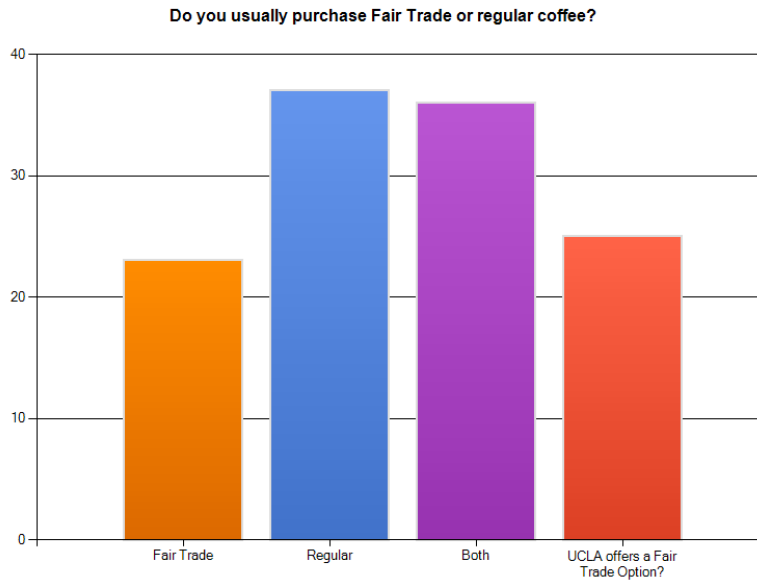
knowledge within the team. By reading the manual prior to starting a project, future teams will be able to start off with strong background knowledge and a shared understanding of the Fair Trade movement. Our hope is that this training manual will help ensure the sustainability and continuity of our vision for years to come.

V. Key Findings

Early on we established that raising education and awareness would be the most effective way to increase student demand for Fair Trade coffee. Our project runs on the assumption that the average UCLA student, faculty, and staff member is socially conscious and willing to make investments and purchases based on informed decision making. An analysis of our initial surveys tells us that more than 25% of people on the UCLA campus are willing to pay an added 50 cents to the cost to their coffee purchases solely based on their current knowledge (or lack thereof) of Fair Trade's benefits. While the sample can only tell so much about the larger population of coffee drinkers on the UCLA campus, the survey results reveal a promising outlook for Fair Trade coffee sales once UCLA students, faculty, and staff become more aware of their beverage options and the benefits of Fair Trade.

At the close of our educational campaign, we conducted a follow-up survey to discern whether or not our efforts were aimed in the right direction. Although due to timing we did not receive as many results as we did for the initial survey (about 130 compared to 311), we feel that this still-significant amount of responses is enough to gauge an accurate reading of the impact made by our campaign. The results from the second survey reinforce our initial findings that Fair Trade coffee can successfully have a

place at UCLA, and also that we did indeed make an impact with our campaign. The two graphs below show two specific areas in which great strides were made.



As seen in the first graph in section E, almost 40% of students were completely unaware that UCLA offered a Fair Trade option at its coffeehouses. However, after our campaign, only 20.7% of students reported not knowing about the Fair Trade coffee options at UCLA. The fact that we cut this number almost in half is very promising for the success of Fair Trade coffee at UCLA because 89.8% of students reported being willing to pay more in exchange for the benefits of Fair Trade, but they cannot order something they do not know is an option. Therefore, we need to ensure that every single student is aware of Fair Trade so that up to 89.8% of the student population will choose Fair Trade at the register.



Similar to the issue of students being unaware that UCLA offers Fair Trade coffee options is the problem that many students are unaware of what Fair Trade certification means. Besides decreasing the percentage of students who are unaware of the meaning of Fair Trade from 41.7% to 33.9%, an outstanding step in the right direction, we also increased the percentage of students who trust Fair Trade with their dollar from 51.9% to 63.5%. The correlation between these two results shows that the more students understand about the benefits of Fair Trade certification, the more they will trust what Fair Trade certification ensures and contribute to the increase of Fair Trade coffee sales at UCLA.

VI. Cost Analysis

Below is a table outlining the funding our team received from TGIF and DART, and how the money was used.

Funding	Item	Amount Approved	Amount Spent
TGIF	Posters	\$943.92	\$324
Total		\$943.92	\$324
DART	“Got Fair Trade” shirts	\$437	\$950
	Sunglasses	\$298.50	\$261.81
	Pens	\$147.50	n/a
	“Black Gold” DVDs	\$122.97	n/a
Total		\$1007.97	\$1211.81
Extra	Info cards	n/a	\$56.72
	Painter’s tape	n/a	\$29.15

In addition, Fair Trade USA supplied us with a plethora of promotional materials, including: buttons, stickers, training manuals, brochures, and magnets. It goes without saying that their resources proved invaluable in structuring the framework of our campaign. Another ‘hidden’ cost worth mentioning are the ASUCLA Fair Trade stickers present on every cup of Fair Trade coffee bought in the campus cafes. ASUCLA has been kind enough to agree to fully pay for the new stickers for an indefinite period of time.

Though it would have been a better idea to put a little more thought into our funding applications more ahead of time, both TGIF and DART made it very easy to apply for and receive the funds necessary to move forward with our campaign. We found the flexibility of the DART application to be very useful, primarily because it didn’t follow a strict timeline like TGIF.

VII. Conclusion

The Fair Trade Action Research Team set out at the beginning of this year to identify the dearth of awareness vis-à-vis Fair Trade options in UCLA campus cafes among students and faculty. Once the issue was established through a comprehensive survey issued at the end of winter quarter, the team spent the entirety of spring quarter conducting numerous marketing campaigns and establishing a foundation for future

efforts to increase student body education levels. Though we encountered a number of bureaucratic obstacles along the way, each was a valuable learning experience, and gave us further insight into the nature of such campaigns. We have made sure to include recommendations in dealing with these challenges in the proceeding section. We are excited to pass our experiences and knowledge onto future students in hopes of creating a continuous vision for increasing Fair Trade awareness and consumption on the UCLA campus. Our survey results have only served to solidify our conviction that the Fair Trade process can really establish its roots here at this university. UCLA students and faculty are more than willing to support the Fair Trade movement, and the vast majority align themselves with the movement manifesto. However, due to a combination of factors inherent within the café system (e.g. lack of signage, option visibility, non-Fair Trade default), many have found it challenging to remind themselves to specifically mention it when placing their order. Our hope is that our work will help set the groundwork for future campaigns to work towards establishing Fair Trade as the popular standard on our campus.

VIII. Recommendations

It's a no brainer, but you want people who are passionate and committed but also people that you will get along with. There are many issues within Fair Trade so it's important that the people who are involved are willing to put forth the time to become well-versed in the subject. It's hard to run a successful campaign if everyone is on different levels of understanding. On the same note, you're going to be spending a lot of time together, so making sure you're compatible will help keep things fun.

Keep in mind: people can lose interest quickly. You need to be able to distribute work evenly or else it will all fall on the shoulders of one or two people. This goes back to having a sustained project. If there are things that can get done on a weekly basis, it's easier for work to be spread across group members.

Be sure to spread the responsibilities out. Make sure your group members can take an active role in apply for funding and other more administrative things. That will make life a lot easier because when push comes to shove, they will be able to deal with those things in the case that you or your co-leader is unavailable. Also, if you give more responsibility to your group members early on, they will be more confident that they can do other more “big boy” tasks.

Overall, pick a group of people you're going to have fun with. These projects are about making a difference, meeting cool people, and have a good time while doing it!

The key is to not build your campaign around a single event or a single lofty goal, but rather a bunch of smaller, high impact campaigns—think of the campaign as more of a sustained effort. Meeting with student groups for a few minutes at the beginning or end of their meetings, posting posters, and handing out flyers and free product can all be part of your campaign repertoire.

It's important to build a strong relationship with ASUCLA or anyone that might have a stake in your project (Stakeholders). Ultimately these “stakeholders” will be the ones that can either approve disapprove your project ideas. Don't try to *barge* it.

Make sure your stakeholders are supportive of the projects you take on. If you try to do things without their approval, you could ruin the very relationship with the people

that ultimately can make the most difference. Furthermore, try not to front the money on your project; it'll bite you in the butt, so apply for funding early!

A. Contacts

1. ASUCLA or food services:

Roy Champawat, *Director - Student Union, ASUCLA*

Karen Noh, *Director - Special Projects, ASUCLA*

Cindy Bolton, *Director - Food Service, ASUCLA*

These are the stakeholders. They are all part of ASUCLA and ultimately have the power to make or break your project. Karen Noh was our main contact during our campaign. She helped set up meetings with the other stakeholders and helped get our ideas pushed through “the system”. Keep your eye out for the special projects director and the director of the student union (Roy). They will help make your project awesome. The Director of Food Service (Cindy Bolton) will be critical with Fair Trade campaigns because she knows the most about what goes on in the cafes and eateries. Getting in contact with these stakeholders will be a great place to start once you've gotten your ideas and your team together.

2. ART –ESLP

Seigi Karasaki – avoidseigi@gmail.com

Joey Lee – josephkanglee@gmail.com

We're the ones writing this guide. If you have any questions or want access to Fair Trade USA, feel free to get into contact with us.

3. IOES: Institute of the Environment and Sustainability

Carl Maida – cmaida@ucla.edu

Cully Nordby – nordby@ucla.edu

If none of the people above are responsive, go to the IOES on the 3rd floor of La Kretz.

Carl and Cully ran the ART projects our year and are extremely helpful and supportive.

B. Funding

UCLA has a wealth of funding options that are available to student groups. In our project we used The Green Initiative fund (TGIF) and DART funding (DART is the company that makes Styrofoam cups and because they feel bad for their environmental footprint, they donated a lot of money for sustainable projects at UCLA!).

Like we mentioned earlier, make sure that you spread out the funding application responsibilities. Make sure your group members know as much about the funding as you. A lot of the project will revolve around having access to money to do the things that you want to do, so get them involved!

The funding applications take time and are very specific. They require that you put the exact dollar amount each product will cost and then the total amount of funding money you want based on the items that you list.

Each funding option will have different uses. For example, TGIF money isn't really supposed to be used for product giveaways whereas DART funding is.

Also, just because you get a bunch of money doesn't mean you will be able to access it directly. Most of the time, you will either use purchase orders or filling out

reimbursement forms. As we mentioned earlier, try not to use the reimbursement option, especially on high cost purchases.

The way the purchase orders work:

1. Go to the website of whatever product or service company you're interested in.
2. Figure out how much the order will cost, including shipping.
3. Ask for an invoice for the order from the company
4. Send it to the purchasing director at the IOES or whoever is dealing with your money.
5. If everything checks out...Voila!

IX. References

-<http://www.transfairusa.org/>

-UCLA Climate Action Plan 2008

-Rebecca Miller, Uma Bhandaram, Allen Lee, Victor Weisberg, Susanna Nordrum, Selina Rivera, Joanna Wheaton., "Sustainable food Systems at UCLA". *ART Sustainable Food Systems Report*, 2009-2010

X. Appendices

A. Challenges and Obstacles

Fair Trade is an emerging market based alternative to the dominant free trade model. While Fair Trade is relatively young, the presence of Fair Trade in the market is growing. With the rising demand of Fair Trade, ethical issues within the fair model are beginning to surface. Although Fair Trade has had a relatively short history, the growth in third party certification companies, each with varying certification standards, has made understanding the complexities of the supply side and demand side of Fair Trade

difficult. While Seigi and I have had a longer relationship with Fair Trade prior to the ART program, Jeremy and Miranda had only an elementary understanding of the costs and benefits to Fair Trade certification. Thus an initial challenge was making sure that we as a group had a similar understanding of Fair Trade.

The second significant challenge that our team had to overcome this quarter was the successful distribution of our initial survey. Meant to establish a baseline measurement of Fair Trade understanding within the UCLA community, we needed enough responses to ensure that the survey results could be considered scientifically significant. Our initial goal was to land somewhere within the range of five hundred to one thousand respondents. However, as we neared the end of our allotted surveying period, we were forced to reevaluate our expectations. Though we have fallen short of our goal at three hundred respondents, we believe that this is still large enough of a response to use as a baseline for our research project. Another challenge we had anticipated in the surveying process was the aggregation and analysis of results. With a small team of four members, going through and categorizing all the responses would have taken a substantial amount of time and effort. Our decision to work through SurveyMonkey, an online provider of web-based surveying, effectively solved this problem. Their website is incredibly simple to navigate for both the surveyor as well as the respondent, and aggregates results in a way (graphs and statistics) that is very visual and easy to understand.

The third and last challenge that we encountered for our project this quarter was dealing with the food systems bureaucracy of the university. As we had expected, there are a number of inherent constraints and limits with working with an entity like

ASUCLA, our stakeholder(s) - while they largely align with our team's Fair Trade manifesto, they are nonetheless tethered by the demands of students and their vendors (people that they buy coffee and product from). Not only must a product must be proven to be in demand and profitable, but its marketing must be fair and on level playing field with the other (non-Fair Trade) product options. This, along with other limitations concerning the nature of cafe operation (prioritization of quick service, efficient usage of space, et cetera) has prevented us from moving forward with drastic and straightforward pushes for Fair Trade promotion (e.g. cashiers asking customers). However, it is important to mention that the ASUCLA representatives we have been working with have been extremely supportive and easy to work with.

As far as challenges within the group, there was a lack of communication at times. Since we only met once a week, much of our communication had to take place through e-mailing, where things can be misconstrued and not as thorough as in person. The team leaders had the resources to do many things the team members couldn't, and as a result, their roles were different and often disproportionately heavy. This was also a result of not enough delegated to team members on a consistent, weekly basis. Overall, this was the source of much of our individual growth throughout the ART process.

B. Time constraints

The last thing to keep in mind about this project is its length of duration. Since it heavily relies on bureaucratic change driven by social demand, it is necessary to realize that one may not see as much 'change' as one would like within the span of two quarters, and that it is important to keep project goals and objectives realistic and feasible.