



UCLA Sustainability Action Research

Plastic Policy Implementation Team

Stakeholder : Denita Toneva, UCLA Sustainability Analyst

Team Leaders : Pratika Nagpal (she/her) and Ethan Choi (he/him)

**Team Members : Alvina Zhan (she/her), Taylor McMahon (she/her),
Faheema Ahmed (she/her), Rachel Merrifield (she/her)**

Introduction

The UCLA Single-Use Plastics Policy

- Reduce plastic purchased and used at UCLA
- By January 1, 2021, replace single-use plastic disposable foodware accessory items such as utensils with reusable or locally compostable alternatives

Introduction

- UCLA Dining is currently using PLA utensils
- Athens Services no longer accepts PLA
- Reusables and fiber-based disposables are compliant
- 2021 Sustainability Action Research PPI team worked on reusable utensils

Introduction

Research Question : What are the cost implications and student reactions of implementing fiber-based disposable utensils in UCLA Dining that are compliant with the UCLA Single-Use Plastics Policy?

Purpose : Facilitate the transition to utensils that are compliant with the UCLA Single-Use Plastics Policy.

Primary Variables : Cost and Student Preference

Methods

- Stakeholder connected us with UCLA Dining management and vendor
- Researched fiber-based disposables
- Created survey for research participants
- Distributed sample utensils outside Rendezvous
 - May 4 and 5 from 11-3 PM
- Materials: utensils, flyers with QR codes, and Google Forms.



Methods

- Students filled out feedback survey
- Alternated between wooden and bamboo
- Incorporating EDI
 - Compensating students for their time
 - Ensuring a diverse set of participants
 - Eliminate confirmation bias and cherry picking



Methods - 3 Different brands of fiber-based utensils



WoodAble Utensils

\$0.11 per utensil

Concession Essentials (Spoons)

\$0.75 per utensil

Concession Essentials (Forks)

\$0.75 per utensil

Bamboo by EcoChoice

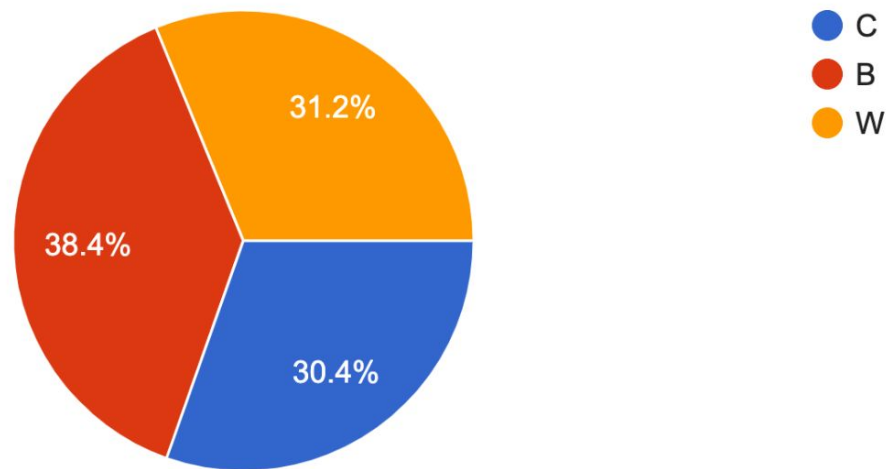
\$0.12 per utensil

Methods

- Received monthly purchasing reports from UCLA Dining vendor (IFS)
- Pulled out the data for utensils
- Calculated number of each type of utensil purchased for each month
 - Fall and Winter Quarters 2021-2022
- Calculated how much UCLA Dining was paying per unit and compared with our fiber-based options

Results

Which brand of utensils did you receive ?



Evenly distributed each **utensil brand**

Results

How familiar are you with the UCLA Single Use Plastics Policy?

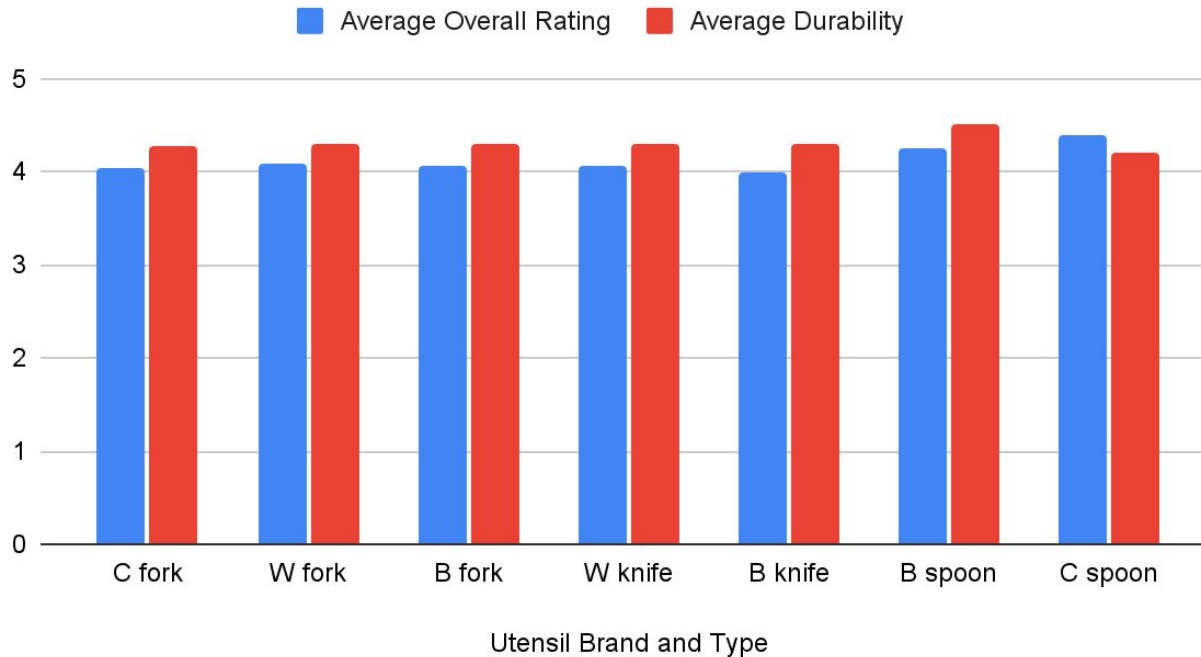
136 responses



Majority unfamiliar or unaware of the **policy**

Results

Average Overall Rating and Average Durability

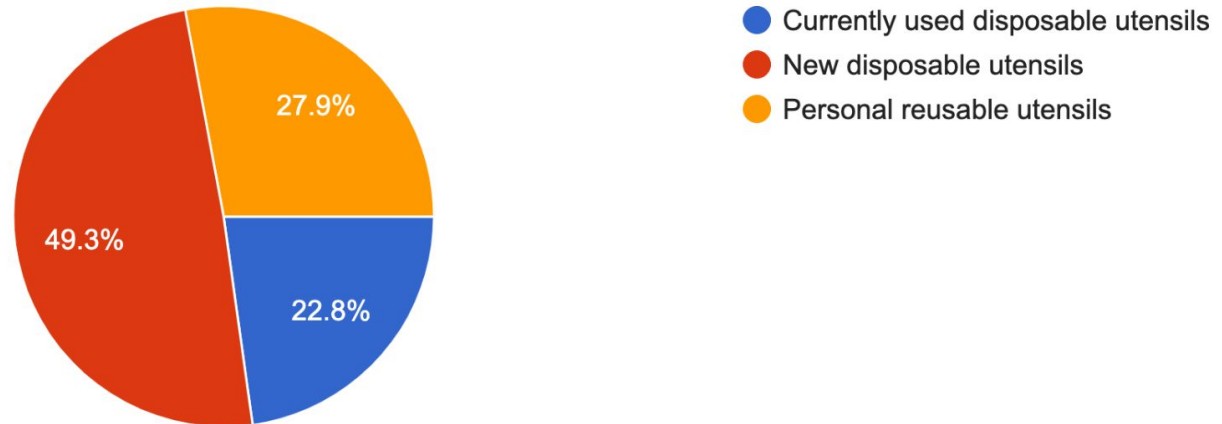


Low
variability
in **Overall
Rating &
Durability**

Results

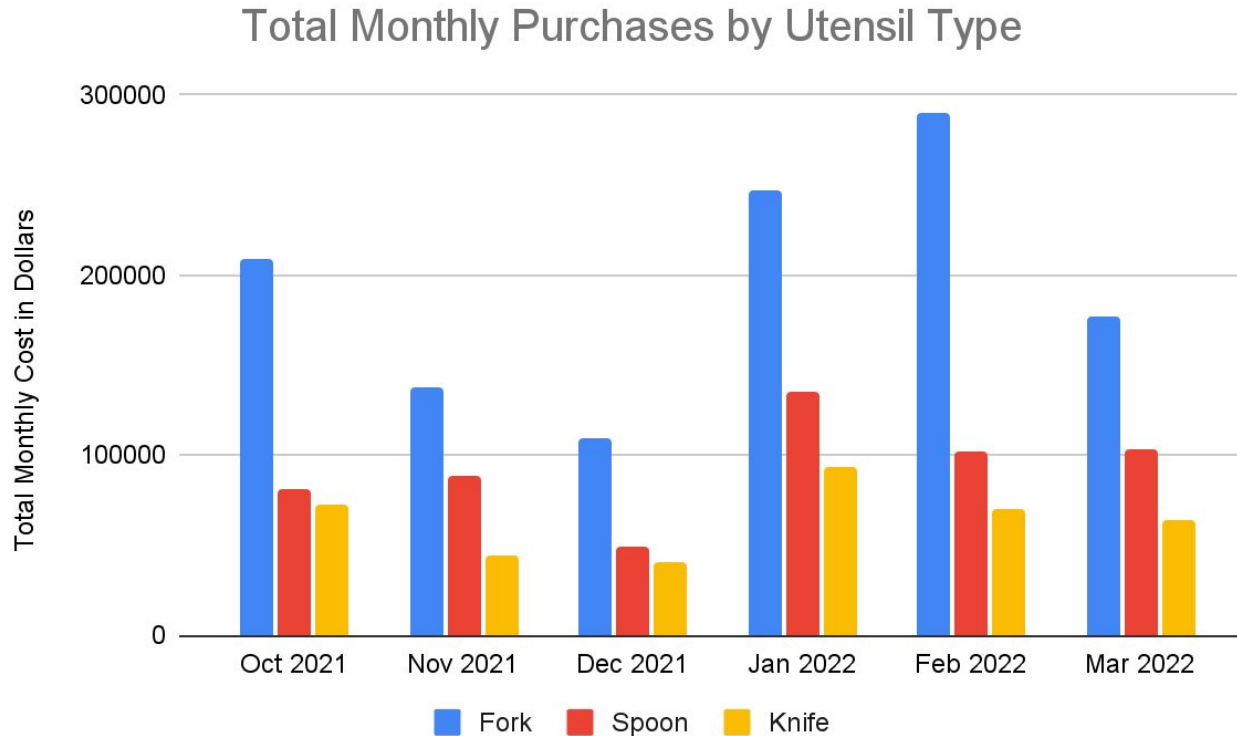
Which of these options would you prefer the most?

136 responses

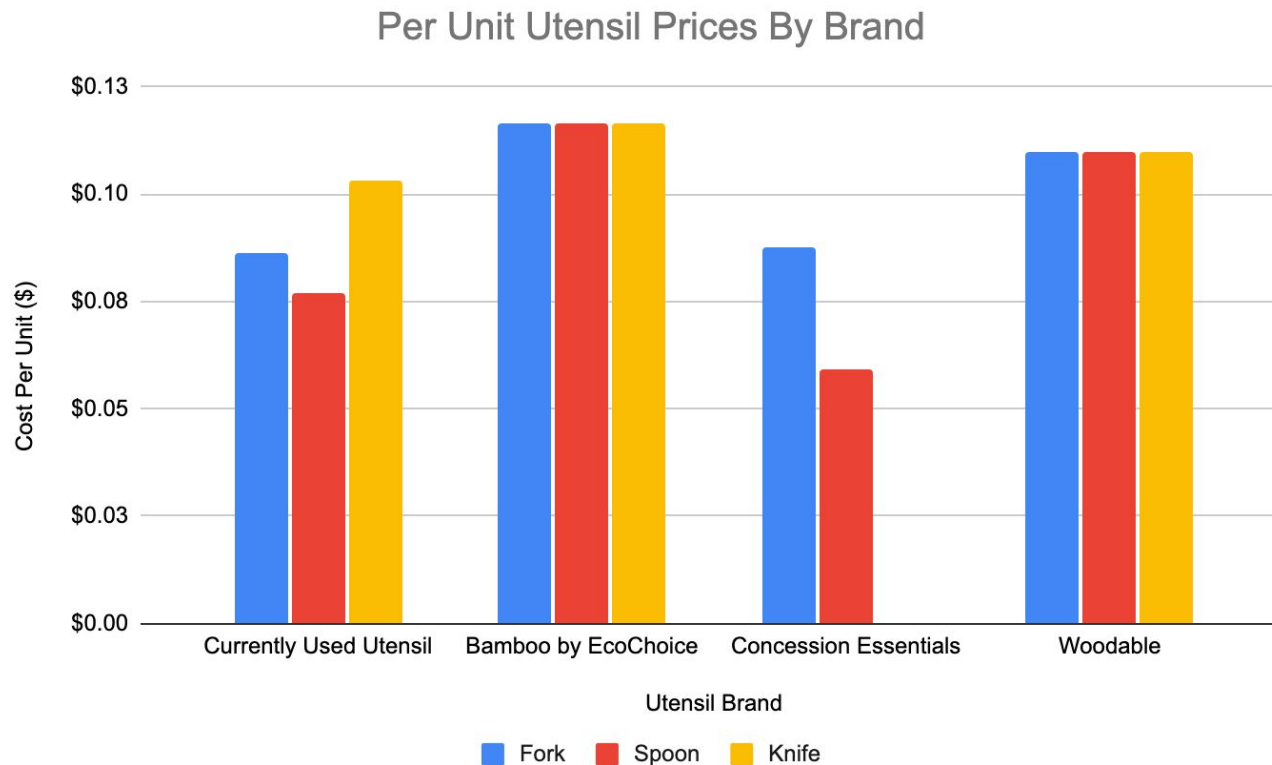


Majority prefer new **disposable utensils**

Results



Cost Analysis



Significance

- Positive student feedback for fiber-based disposables
- Important data to help UCLA Dining transition
- Compliance with Single-Use Plastic Policy
- Can be applied campus wide
- Provides user data for future SAR teams

Conclusion

- Students want sustainable alternatives
- Fiber-based disposable utensils show promise
- Cost per unit is comparable to current utensils

Next Steps:

- Informational Pamphlet for UCLA Dining
- Future SAR projects on reusables or fiber-based packaging

Thank You
