



Surveying the Campus

By April Linton and Parker Townley
(With Quotes from: *Fair Trade From the
Ground Up* – by April Linton)

Key Takeaways:

- 1) Analyze the needs of administration officials
- 2) Work to change perceptions

Analyze the needs of administration officials

As the second Fair Trade University, advocates at the University of California (UC) San Diego were required to invent new strategies to address the concerns of important stakeholders on campus. Early on the campaign recognized the need to demonstrate on-campus demand for Fair Trade products:

“The administration’s position when we first approached them about Fair Trade was, ‘Look, students don’t care. All our students care about really is the price.’ So of course our initial response was, “Well *we’re students.*” **We got together and planned ways to show them that students care.**” Jeremy Seymour – former student

Work to change perceptions

First, the UC San Diego Fair Trade campaign set out to change perceptions on campus. They believed that students and faculty did in fact care about Fair Trade but did not yet have the ability to express their preferences at retail locations on campus. With this in mind a dedicated group of students got together and embarked on an ambitious **petition and survey campaign** to help convince administration officials of the need for Fair Trade:

“By spring 2008, One Earth One Justice (OEOJ, the student group behind the campaign) had **collected over 1,000 signatures** in support of expanding the Fair Trade options on campus. That summer, the university’s House, Dining and Hospitality (HDH) unit, announced that it would start using Peet’s Fair Trade Blend for all brewed coffee.”



When administrators were later asked about what helped convince them of the need to offer Fair Trade products, many referred back to the wealth of information provided by students demonstrating demand for Fair Trade products on campus. **In addition to** the petition project,

“OEOJ surveyed over 400 students about waste reduction and sustainability, including whether respondents were willing to pay more for Fair Trade coffee in the dining halls.”

By including other topics in their survey UC San Diego linked Fair Trade with other sustainability movements on campus, helping to broaden the perception of Fair Trade.

As you begin your campaign think carefully about the need to provide **hard evidence** of demand to administration officials and food service providers. Consider the best way to gather and present your data and make the most of the required time, energy and commitment.



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Writer

April studies transnational social movements, global development, and international migration. Her work on Fair Trade includes articles about NGO-business alliances and corporate social responsibility in the coffee industry and social transformation in the South African wine industry. She is co-editor of *The Global Governance of Food* (2009, Routledge). Her book *Fair Trade from the Ground Up: New Markets for Social Justice* was published on July 1, 2012 (University of Washington Press).

