

# **The Community Trade Co-op**

## **1. Overview**

### **Mission Statement**

Through the establishment of a student run lounge and fair trade coffee shop, The Community Trade Co-op will create a closer campus community, make local and global trade available to students, heighten political, artistic and environmental awareness, and offer an alternative to the existing amenities available on the Lewis and Clark campus.

### **What is The Community Trade Co-op?**

The Community Trade Co-op, or simply the Co-op, is the vision of a student organized, implemented, and operated non-profit fair trade coffee shop and lounge in the renovated Templeton Student Center. The Co-op would like the coffee shop and student lounge to be the central location in Templeton for student life, a “hang out” space that will foster on-campus community and student networking.

The Co-op is envisioned as a convergence of the many facets of student life that characterize the Lewis and Clark campus. In addition to being a place to buy food and drink, the coffee shop would like to sell crafts, magazines, music and other products students create, t-shirts for campus groups, the plants and herbs from the community garden, exhibit student art work, and broadcast KLC radio and LCTV. The student lounge will be a place to relax with friends, do homework, meet with groups, and be a central location for clubs and student groups to congregate or post their information as a way to encourage student activity and involvement. The space will also be used for musical and theatrical performances. Additionally, the Co-op has already begun a book swap, bike swap and “free stuff” swap that will be expanded and improved. Like many colleges that have systems of exchange among students, the Co-op will provide an opportunity for Lewis and Clark students to exchange materials among one another without using outside sources.

The Co-op wants to encourage political, environmental, creative, and social awareness on campus through connecting students to each other in a stimulating, fun location. The Co-op’s fair trade and environmental policies will heighten the sense of campus global responsibility that is so important to the Lewis and Clark community, and the centrality of the space will provide an umbrella for the various campus interests that currently exist in factions.

### **Why is this necessary?**

Currently, the Lewis and Clark campus lacks both a feeling of community among the students and a space that is properly conducive to creating such solidarity. There is no true student lounge or appropriate “hang out” space, and privately owned companies

dominate the campus- casting a corporate shadow on student life. Students are not attached to Templeton, which is supposed to be the hub of student services, as it has a sterile office-building atmosphere and a convoluted layout that is not conducive to student life. The existing “student lounge” in Thayer is an impersonal space in an inconvenient location, and students do not feel any ownership of it or any desire to be in it.

In contrast, the Co-op would be the focal point of student life on campus and as students would run it, student interests would directly be accommodated. Although The Rusty Nail currently exists as a student run performance space and eatery, it is primarily a concert venue that operates under limited hours and serves a very narrow niche of students from a very specific location. The Co-op would serve to fulfill a broader purpose on campus in a more open, inviting area.

## **2. Fair Trade**

### **General**

An important component of the Co-op’s vision is implementing Fair Trade practices into the Lewis and Clark community. Fair trade is a trading partnership that actively engages in supporting producers and farmers in developing countries. Most food purchases are made through free trade, a practice that is dominated by large corporations who purchase from farmers through the use of middlemen who inadequately pay farmers. This is a humanitarian concern similar to the exploitation of sweatshop workers, and a syndrome that does not have to persist. Fair trade practices can be implemented easily, through purchasing coffees, teas, and chocolate directly from farmers in developing countries.

Additionally, the other goods sold and products used in the coffee shop will adhere to the specific dietary and environmental concerns that are important to Lewis and Clark students, such as offering vegan and organic options and utilizing recycled paper products.

### **Global Trade**

The Co-op will build relationships with underdeveloped communities by purchasing items from fair trade organizations and making them available to the Lewis and Clark community. Consequently, the Co-op will make available products that support developing communities, while providing a non corporate service to students, that will create a friendlier and more community oriented atmosphere at the school in general.

This is a list of potential products the Co-op could provide students that promote a developing community in a humane and environmentally friendly way. These products demonstrate unique alternative trade options and allow the Lewis & Clark community alternative food and goods that support sustainable living and development. We hope not only to support an alternative global community but also to connect with our trade

partners on a human-to-human level. The Co-op would be taking a stand against the increasingly unfair free trade by supporting the fair trade movement.

- **Coffee**

- Fair trade gives fair wages to farmers and promotes sustainable community development. In the face of a volatile market, coffee prices have fallen from \$1 per pound in 1990 to \$.50 per pound today. We plan to use Transfair, which provides coffee at \$1.26/ pound and organic coffee at \$1.46/ pound.

- -Using a movie theater pop corn cooker the trade co-op can roast its own coffee, thus enabling it to pay individual coffee farmers more per pound than normal fair trade prices. The co-op will be able to pay somewhere around \$6 per pound for coffee, and we would still pay \$2 less per pound than we would pay a roaster. The co-op will pay the farmer the same price and the \$3.50 per pound of coffee went toward the purchase of a coffee roaster for the farm or better yet a co-opted community of coffee farmers, we could use volunteers and excess money to train the coffee farming community, and the coffee farm could vastly increase its net income, employ a large number of employees whom could be well paid. The roasting production or the revenue from the increased coffee price will be controlled by an NGO such as AgroMercados in Oaxaca(who works to create sustainable social development in Oaxaca through small agricultural producers) that specialized in sustainable economic, environmental and social development and could use the funds to promote infrastructure, waste management and so on, thus creating sustainable industrial, and economic grown that was environmentally conscious. Tansfair has a very similar program but the amount that goes directly to the infrastructure is quite small and they do not invest in improved technologies to encourage production of raw materials in the cities. By manufacturing a product in the area of production an economy is not pressed to exploit vast quantities of land, and the country that controls the natural resources would also have more control over the market value of their product, which is the way it should be. One problem with this models in most underdeveloped countries in that the US and EU put a 9%-10% tariff on agricultural imports that are processed outside of the importing country, and leave raw material imports duty-free, making it hard for producers to compete. This, however, is one highlight of NAFTA, this tax does not apply to Mexico when exporting to the US or Canada. Making it easy for this model to prosper.

The current problem is the lack of skills and technical infrastructure and the extremely high cost of infrastructure for underdeveloped communities, however the co-op will work to sufficiently help organize, promote, and implement such a model.

We will be able to do this because of our low overhead costs created by volunteer work with incentives by discounts. No owner who expects great profits, low pay to part time and full time employees and the cut payment of employees by offering credit for various skilled and relevant positions (see managerial section). This will give the co-op room to donate profits to sustainable development projects.

This sort of model will bring students interested in economics, international affairs, and social and environmental justice together, and engage with an exciting real world issue that they can easily get involved with and learn from. This would create community, provide the campus with socially conscious goods and promote awareness, education and direct contact with an underdeveloped community.

- **Tea**
  - Indian Tea co-ops employ over 1,000 people and implement micro credit agencies, waste management and infrastructure programs and health care programs for employees on the farms.
    - A similar process that was done with coffee could be done with tea. Manufacturing could be promoted in the area of purchase
- **Chocolate**
  - Ghana chocolate co-ops ensure environmentally friendly use of land, employ 30,000 farmers and have created a power political organization to implement social welfare.
    - Chocolate could also be manufactured in the area of purchase
- **Clothing**
  - **A Silk Screen Machine**
    - The Co-op would like to own a silkscreen machine as to promote the buying of sweatshop free and organic cotton t-shirts as well as encourage art and creative design on campus. The Art Director would oversee the usage of the machine, which various campus clubs and groups could pay to use for clothing unique to their causes and organizations
    - Regular new silk screen equipment package = \$699 from [silkscreenbiz.com](http://silkscreenbiz.com)
    - Sweatx provides an assortment of clothing manufactured in non-sweatshop conditions by union labor.

- **Rain forest harvested products**
  - The NGO Cultural Survival encourages rainforest harvesting of products that grows naturally in the rainforest, as opposed to products that exploit the resources of the forest. These natural products include shampoo, soap, nut buttons, and nut candy.
- **Work with South Campus Garden**
  - One very important goal the Community Trade Co-op would like to strive for is the creation of an intimate relationship with the south-campus garden. We would like to sell campus-grown spices and produce at the store as well, adding another source of sustainability to the Co-op. In order to do this we would like to advocate to expansion of funds, resources and size of the garden.

### **3. Management**

-The Co-op will be operated as a non-profit business.

-The first people to hold the positions we have created will work to put together the individual systems needed for the Co-op to run smoothly.

- A general manager and a financial manager will work as the chief officers to hold together the entire system. Each will be paid by a monthly salary and will be hired on a semester basis by the prior semester's managers. The first managerial team will be picked from among interested members and voted on by the Co-op student group. The general manager and the financial manager will be expected to hold office hours and meet together on a regular, frequent basis.

#### **General Manager and Financial Manager**

They oversee the entire operation. The financial manager will be in charge of the monetary aspects of the entire process, and the general manager will oversee more supply-oriented tasks. Together they will be in charge of the operation of the coffee shop, including the hiring, firing, supply orders, and coordinating all aspects of the Co-op together. Will work with school administration.

-During renovation will oversee that the proper systems, products and machinery are implemented to properly operate the coffee shop. Will be in charge of running the coffee shop and managing the various coffee shop workers. In charge of equipment and maintenance, adherence to health codes, products, etc.

Working under the managerial team will be the directors, who are individually in charge of a various aspect of the Co-op. The Co-op would like to provide a way for the people who have these jobs to get academic credit through the department of relevance to their position in the Co-op, similar to the system KLC uses to receive music credit. (For instance, the art director could get credit through the art department.) The directors will also hold office hours, and once a week there will be all-staff board meetings.

### **Fair Trade Director**

In charge of all fair trade products associated with the Co-op. Must maintain a solid understanding of fair trade and how to institute it. Will secure fair trade products, goods, services and opportunities for the Co-op. Orders products from other countries and maintains relationship with farmers and contacts that export the raw materials. Also will be in charge of securing on-campus fair trade materials, such as vegetables or plants from the school garden or products from individual students.

(Economics)

### **Art Director (Art)**

During the renovation will be in charge of the Co-op's interior decoration including painting, furniture, lighting, etc. Organizes students to design and work on aesthetics. Organizes art shows/exhibitions, rotation of artwork, bulletins, etc. In charge of silkscreen program and arts based activities in the Co-op. In charge of silkscreen machine.

### **Events Director (Communications)**

Oversees all events connected with Co-op and manages the calendar. Arranges and encourages students to play music or put on shows in Co-op, poetry slams and other types of performance, and organizes cooperative activities between student groups. In charge of club activities, working with other student organizations like KLC, and structuring student participation in the Co-Op.

### **Swap Director (Economics)**

Organizes, implements, maintains and evolves the various "swap" programs associated with the Co-op, including but not limited to the Free Boxes, Bike Swap, and Book Swap.

### **Publicity Director (Communications)**

In charge of the advertising and promotional activity for the Co-Op. Establishes and maintains the Co-Op website and any literature associated with the Co-op, for instance a potential newsletter, etc.

### **Coffee Shop Workers**

Will work in the Co-op and run the coffee shop. The number of employees needed and the length of shifts will be determined later. The coffee shop workers will get paid minimum wage (and tips), like a normal job.

## **3. Swaps**

An important part of the Co-op's vision is implementing a system of exchange among students. Such a system will reduce waste and expenses for students, and represents the Lewis and Clark commitment to being a socially and environmentally conscious community.

### **Free Boxes**

In order to promote reduction of consumption through the reuse of all products, we have already implemented "free boxes" in the Thayer student lounge and in all the campus dorms. People can put things they do not want any longer—clothes, books, cookware, whatever—into the boxes and anyone can take them. If the boxes were to get piled too high with stuff we would donate it to Goodwill, however thus far things have been traded on a frequent basis.

### **Bike Swap**

The shuttle is wonderful but further transportation is often needed. First year students are not allowed to have cars on campus, and for those students who can, a \$300 parking pass, car payments, insurance and maintenance costs are daunting. Additionally, cars are environmentally unsound! The Co-op would like to obtain several bicycles that students could rent. The Co-op has begun searching used bike stores around Portland, and there are some abandoned bikes in the bike room next to the Platteau. The bike swap program would be connected to the bike shop already on campus, and the Co-op would work with students who are skilled bike mechanics to initiate a system to obtain bike parts and for repairs. We may hold bike maintenance classes where we fix up bikes for the Co-op's use. A bike swap is an excellent way to achieve a more environmentally and financially sound system for students at a very low cost for the Co-op.

Once the bikes are prepared, The Co-op will allow students to rent out bikes. The payment in fact would only be a deposit, and upon returning the bikes undamaged students would get back their deposit, rendering the entire rental process free for students. This process will be handled by the fair trade store. We will not be able to start the bike swap until we have a staffed storefront, but we would like to start obtaining the bikes as soon as possible.

### **Book Swap**

The book swap will promote the growth of a reading community on the LC campus and the recycling of textbooks and literature. We plan to implement the book swap in two ways: connecting swappers through a website and having a physical library

situated in the Co-op. The website will allow students, faculty, and staff to trade any sort of reading material online, including novels, textbooks, and 'zines. Users will be able to search through a list of members of the community who own a specific book and are willing to swap it as well as download original publications written by other members of the community. In addition, the Co-op will keep a physical inventory for students to peruse while in the coffee shop. We hope the book swap will give our community more access to text on our campus and encourage the reading community to grow. Students putting their books up for swap will have the choice of selling them or simply giving them away.

## **4. Design and Location**

### **a. Long Term Proposal**

The Co-op is envisioned to be in a central location in Templeton that will experience a high volume of student traffic. Ideally, the space where the Trail Room currently is would make a great location, however any hub position in Templeton would work. The Co-op will be situated in a well-lighted and spacious area, making it an open and inviting atmosphere. The Co-op can only live out its purpose in connecting and unifying students if it is in an area that students can easily and conveniently access, and one that is aesthetically appealing. The location and design of the Co-op is a vital component of the overall vision.

As the Co-op would be both a lounge and a coffee shop, it would need adequate space and facilities to do this. Upon construction of new facilities, the Co-op would like to work with SEED and environmental studies students to use environmental design strategies that will incorporate energy efficient and recycled components into the space. As Lewis and Clark is the most environmentally minded campus in the country, being the first school to comply with the Kyoto protocol, it is fitting and proper to do so.

### **Physical Materials**

The Co-op would like this to be a typical art-café environment, and would like to acquire furniture from the Bins of the Goodwill and decorate the space in an artistic manner. The aesthetic considerations of the space can be student directed, and many other features can showcase student involvement. For instance, Ceramics students can create the dishware in the coffee shop, and T-Lab or sculpture students could build the shelves and display areas. However, in order for it to be run as a proper coffee shop, proper facilities are also needed.

#### **Coffee Shop**

- multiple sinks
- espresso machine
- coffee machine
- counter
- cash register



- cabinets
- dishwasher
- flatware, dishes, cups, mugs or the materials to create them
- paper products (plates, hot cups, etc)
- kitchen maintenance/cleaning products
- microwave
- refrigerator
- toaster
- electrical issues

#### Office

- computer
- tables\*
- chairs\*
- file area\*
- high quality safe

#### Art/Music/Events

- stage\*
- chairs/couches\*
- tables\*
- sound equipment
- art supplies
- decorations\*
- lighting
- stereo
- speakers
- bulletin area\*
- silkscreen machine, supplies

#### Security

- cardswipe system

#### Products

- original investment in all products and foodstuffs

\*- student created, built or from a Goodwill store

### **b. Short term proposal**

For a short term creation of the Co-op, until the renovation of Templeton is complete, we are envisioning a place where people can trade books, music, stories, opinions and songs, as well as participate in and display artistic endeavors. Although the existing Thayer location is inherently flawed as a space conducive to student life, the Co-

op's immediate goals of creating a space where students on campus will want to come to hang out, do homework, and have fun could be fulfilled if the proper changes are made.

The Co-op would like to revamp the entire Thayer space. One half of the space could serve as the lounge, and would always be open and accessible to students and groups. We would like to paint and decorate the space to make it a more aesthetically pleasing area.

The other half of the Thayer space could serve as the temporary location for the coffee shop. By being sectioned off, this area can be locked and valuables can be kept in it safely when the Co-op is not open. This will safeguard against theft and vandalism.

As the existing Thayer space does not have a sink or kitchen facilities, the short term Co-op can primarily exercise its purpose as a store, selling Fair Trade and student made goods. The other components of the Co-op vision, for instance the Swap systems, exhibiting student artwork, and using the space for performances and events can also go into place.

### **Physical Materials**

(these will transfer into the long term proposal)

- Tables, couches, chairs, shelves from the Goodwill
- Construct a stage, bulletin board, shelves and display area
- Computer
- Cash register
- Safe
- Speakers
- Construct fabric covered frames to hang over florescent lights.
- Buy fabric and paint to revamp Goodwill furniture, paint walls, etc. Utilize art and costume department sewing machines to assist.
- As a temporary system, the Co-op could sell Fair Trade coffee and tea, but not espresso, using hot water containers and a coffee maker.
- outdoor chairs and lights to open up courtyard area as an extension of the Co-op space in Thayer.
- cardswipe system