



# Industrial Hemp

## INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date: 26 February 2009

To: Julie Staggers

From: Larrv. Moe. Curlv. Shemp

The purpose of this memo is to present Team Hemp's background, research methods, obstacles, and schedule for the ENG 407B Sustainability Project.

### Introduction

Team Hemp will explore the economic, social, and environmental viability of hemp as a paper material for the Environmental Studies department at the University of Nevada – Las Vegas. Paper consumption and deforestation are serious concerns for our local and global communities; to address this issue, we have identified and will discuss the use of Cannabis Sativa L. as a replacement for trees.

### Background

The main question addressed in this study will be whether it is viable for the Environmental Studies department at the college of Urban Affairs to change to the use of hemp paper. One reason to not use traditional paper is the slow growth rate of trees compared to high consumption of paper. UNLV as a community uses paper for everything from exams in every traditional class to essays and books, which every student has to write and use extensively, and the Environment studies department is no exception. An alternative to cutting down trees is to use a different source for the paper, hemp. Since hemp grows much more quickly than the average tree, using it as a medium will not deplete the resources of the earth at an alarming rate as we are doing now. However, there are drawbacks to using hemp as a medium including the fact that it is more expensive to produce than traditional paper and there is an unknown level of awareness of the properties of hemp farming. These are the secondary questions, which we will also address in the paper through research of political processes and a public opinion survey.

The leader and chief editor of this is project is Jenna Darcey. She also wrote the introduction for this paper. Other members include Jock Harvey, who wrote the methods and survey, Greg Hylander who researched potential obstacles and problems associated with the project and finally myself who wrote the background introducing the primary and secondary questions.

**Comment [J1]:** Remember, this memo is really a proposal. Your purpose is to get me to approve your plan for doing research. Also, assume that I – your manager am either a dingbat or very, very busy and need some reminding about what this project is, why I asked for this info, and have no idea what your project is or why you are proposing this client/project. You have good content forecasting here – putting that info in a bulleted list will make it easier to skim.

**Comment [J2]:** See the textbook for details on info that should be in the introduction of a proposal: <http://ebooks.bfwpub.com/supp3.php?box&16&3&bookId=techcomm8e>

**Comment [J3]:** This is feeling pretty broad and vague and will be hard to do well given your resources and timeline. As I understood your discussions, you were going to localize by investigating ways that the Environmental Studies department could justify the use of more expensive hemp paper?

**Comment [J4]:** No 1<sup>st</sup>-line paragraph indents ever! (Feel free to read this line with the same delivery as [Joan Crawford in Mommy Dearest.](#))

**Comment [J5]:** Several ideas in here – need to be several paragraphs. 1 idea per paragraph. General background info on hemp/paper is okay, but needs to be one concise paragraph.

Need at least a paragraph or two of background on the client/site (Enviro Studies). As I understand your project, you're either recommending a pilot program or investigating how ES could implement a change. Why did you choose Enviro Studies for this project? What's their story? Provide an overview of the department/situation and include a rationale for selecting this dept.

Right now your primary research question is: "Is it viable for Enviro Studies to switch to hemp paper?" (and the presumed answer is "no" because hemp is way more expensive and there's a budget crisis and all. Make sure you are all on board with your primary question. The table in attached handout on "framing a problem as a research question" might help you fine-tune.

Secondary questions are missing/off-target. Easiest way to integrate them is to say something like "in order to answer our primary question we must investigate the following questions" then do a bulleted list of the specific questions you need to answer in order investigate the problem. That list of secondary questions becomes your master-list for...

**Comment [J6]:** What roles are people filling? Who has strengths in which area? Who is going to be responsible for what, going forward? This is your opportunity to establish ethos and convince your manager that you have the manpower/talent to pull this thing off. This page in the textbook might help you: <http://ebooks.bfwpub.com/supp3.php?box&16&2&bookId=techcomm8e>

## Method

To gain insight on the economic, social, and environmental viability of hemp, our group will conduct research online and at the UNLV Lied Library. We will also view government websites of other countries that use hemp more frequently than US (Canada and Australia) to gain insight on the use of hemp in countries with higher acceptance of hemp as a material.

To obtain information about the current opinions surrounding hemp, we will conduct a student survey (figure 1.1). The goal of our student survey is to get an idea of the general public's attitude towards Hemp as a material itself while expanding on our idea of hemp as a replacement for trees as a paper material. I will ask five questions, three of which pertain to attitudes towards hemp. Most people view hemp negatively due to its relationship with Marijuana. The awareness level of hemp as a non drug is very low thus the knowledge of industrial hemp and its many usages ceases to exist. The two other questions will be simply used as an awareness tool.

## Potential Obstacles

From a political standpoint, as of March 1, 2009, in the United States there are major obstacles prohibiting the manufacture of the of paper from Cannabis Sativa L. First and foremost, it is illegal to grow hemp on a recreational, social, or economic basis. The present law outlawing hemp is the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937, which criminalizes Cannabis and states that the importation, manufacture, production of compounds, sale, dealing in, dispensing, prescribing, administering, and or giving away of Cannabis. This places the hemp plant in a precarious situation. Because the hemp plant is necessary for the manufacture and production of marijuana, the hemp plant is illegal to grow or possess. The products that could be beneficial to the economy and the environment, such as, rope, paper, clothing, shoes, canvas, carpeting, bags, luggage, home furnishing, construction materials, biodegradable plastics, are illegal to manufacture because the hemp plant is illegal to grow with the United States.

In addition to the political objections to hemp, the general view of hemp's relationship to marijuana also impedes hemp's usage and legalization. There was a correlation drawn between the growth of Cannabis Sativa L., the smoking of marijuana, and deviant behavior. Along with associating hemp with poverty and crime, there have also been a series of videos published to portray hemp in a negative manner.

Along with political and social dilemmas revolving around the growth, manufacture, and distribution of the hemp plant there are far reaching economic implications as well. The growth of hemp plants poses a serious threat to the forest and railroad industries. Hemp is not in the best interest of these companies' bottom lines because it hurts their businesses. With the wealth and political power of these institutions they can lobby politicians to make hemp illegal.

In the scope of our research, it will be difficult to locate credible resources online and in print. Online, searches for the word "hemp" yields many websites owned by those who recreationally grow marijuana; it is hard to dig through the mass of sources to find credible websites owned by government agencies or companies that process industrial hemp.

**Comment [J7]:** This is a lovely, well-written sentence that is possibly trying to blow wind up my skirt! You're not trying to gain general insight, you're investigating a local problem.

Method has to connect **directly** to your secondary questions. In this paragraph, you're outlining (very broadly and with no specifics) some secondary research that will get you background info on the issue of hemp/paper (which you do need). You n, but it's not all you need). You need to tie your secondary research to specific questions and to specific sources. Try a table – list your research question in the left-hand column and the source you plan on using in the right-hand column. (See sample on the attached research questions handout.)

Right now, your method isn't generating anything about the local situation that you can use. You need to understand the current situation in Enviro Studies in order to make a proposal to them, so you'll need some interviews and data. You can't propose a local solution without doing primary local research.

To fine-tune your research methods, see printed page 110, Chapter 6 in the textbook.

**Comment [J8]:** This is not a bad idea, but it's too broad and unfocused. How do Environmental Studies students/faculty feel about using hemp paper? How will that information help you develop a proposal you can pitch to the Enviro Studies department?

**Comment [J9]:** This is good info you can hang onto for your final report. For now, you need to focus on the obstacles to your doing this project. Things like collecting the kinds of data/info you need in order to be able to make a recommendation to the Enviro Studies dept.

**Comment [J10]:** Might want to think more about the problems you'll have doing primary research, because this project requires significant primary research. Think in terms of things like: We don't really know how to write/do valid surveys, we don't have a lot of experience doing interviews, etc.

These are only an infinitesimal fraction of the obstacles blocking the growing and manufacturing of hemp products facing the supporters of such views.

### Schedule

See figure 1.2, hemschedule.xls.

### Conclusion

To conduct our research, we will explore many different areas. We will use online and physical library resources to gain insight on the history of Hemp, legal/social information, and scientific data. As the use of hemp is also largely a social issue, we will conduct a survey on the UNLV campus to gain information about current information in regards to hemp. Since there are many different obstacles that might impede our recommendation, we will thoroughly discuss those factors as well. When we have collected a satisfactory amount of data, as well as sufficient arguments to counteract our obstacles, we will form a recommendation based on our research.

**Comment [J11]:** Overall, you've been in the neighborhood of really vague and unfocused. By the time you turn in this document, you should know exactly what kind of research you're going to do, how you're going to do it, and who is responsible for what. In addition, remember that you're not telling me what you're going to do, you're asking me to approve your proposal and give you feedback on how to make the project better.

Figure 1.1 – Survey

## Environmentally Sound; Heading in the Direction of Hemp

1. What do you think of when you hear the word “Hemp?”
2. Do you believe Hemp has a negative Connotation?
3. If so, why?
4. What do you think about the idea of hemp as paper material?
5. If it were cheaper to produce hemp would you use that instead of tree product?