

A Guide to Campaigning at your University

Once you have familiarised yourself with the types and scale of military involvement at your university, you can begin to plan what you will do with your information and knowledge. A good place to start is the 'Recommendations' section of the Study War No More report, which outlines pragmatic campaign actions and goals, based around three principles; transparency, accountability and democracy. See below for the following guides:

- a) Short and Long-Term Goals**
- b) Building Support - Organising and Acting**
- c) Raising Awareness - Meetings, Publicity and Media**
- d) Engaging with your University**
- e) Lobbying your MP**

a) Short and Long-Term Goals

Before embarking on a campaign concerning military involvement at your university, it is important to have a clear sense of your goals, both short and long-term, as this will help you to plan a campaign that is clear and effective. Depending upon the circumstances at your university, long-term goals may be based around general principles such as transparency, accountability and democracy. On a policy level, this may entail such things as reducing the amount of military projects conducted at your university and the establishment of an ethics committee overseeing which organisations the university accepts funding from. Whilst you may perceive these to be distant targets, they are important to keep in mind so that your campaign maintains its direction and integrity.

Your short-term goals and immediate actions should therefore be informed by your long-term goals. Given that each university varies in both the degree of military involvement on campus and the existing levels of political consciousness and activism it is important to be realistic about what you can expect to achieve given your time and resources.

For example, you may decide that focusing on raising awareness and starting a debate about the role the military plays on campus is the best option. Alternatively, you may be more ambitious and consider institutional change e.g. in policy, a viable campaign target. Whatever strategy you decide upon, choices need to be made about which areas of work you focus your energies on and when, so as to develop support for and momentum in your campaign. The following ideas therefore provide a loose framework suggesting possible strategies and actions that will help you develop a campaign effectively at your university.

b) Building Support - Organising and Acting

Organising

Your campaign will greatly benefit from building popular support on campus so that your group includes a network of students, staff, academics (and each of these group's representatives) and alumni. In order to do this you can;

- a) Target individuals e.g. by getting their contact details at a meeting, campaign stall or by attracting their attention to your campaign through the media.
- b) Link up with other groups on campus e.g. with the idea of forming alliances and sharing resources in order to campaign. For example, university groups which have historically campaigned on issues related to Study War No More include: Amnesty International, CND, Greens, Liberal Democrats, People and Planet, Respect, Socialist Students Stop the War, and Student Peace Groups. However, don't just limit yourself to these groups as you should try and build bridges with a variety of people by persuading them that your campaign is both just and worth supporting.

Taking Action

Once you have begun to get organised and build your network, you should begin to plan your first action, so that you use your knowledge, arguments and resources to make an impact on the status quo. In order to begin raising awareness of military involvement at your university, it is often useful to organise a public meeting such as a talk or event such as a die-in at an arms company careers fair. This will focus your energies and allow you to begin actively working towards your goals. Through the process of organising, you will also learn much about the strengths and weaknesses of your campaign. A meeting is also a great way to recruit new people and groups to your cause and to tell them all about your campaign ideas and plans. Remember to bring along sign-up sheets to the meeting so you can collect people's details and keep in contact with them.

c) Raising Awareness - Meetings and Events, Publicity and Media

Once you have decided on your action plan for the Study War No More campaign, start raising awareness in your local area and/ or community. This will allow you to find people who are also interested in supporting the campaign, and in forming a Study War No More campaign group.

Below are guides on specific actions you can take to raise awareness:

- Holding a Public Meeting
- Public Speaking
- Campaign Stalls
- Publicity
- Media

Holding a Public Meeting

With careful planning and preparation, you could have a highly successful event and raise a lot of awareness about your campaign by holding a public meeting about your campaign. Important elements of a good public meeting are:

- A central, clearly signposted venue
- An eye-catching subject or question for debate
- Knowledgeable/ well-known speakers
- Lots and lots of publicity
- Having more information on your campaign readily available

The Study War No More campaign hopes to visit all universities covered in the report during 2008 and 2009; but we need your help to do this. We are always willing to provide a speaker and can also help with publicity - for instance by letting our local supporters know about the event. When you have established your line-up, as well as students and staff, it is worth inviting university officials, local MPs and members of the students union - who you may be approaching in the future for support and advice on the campaign. It is also worth letting other groups at your university know about the event so they can help publicise the meeting. Also, don't forget to let the local press know that the meeting will be taking place.

See below for more information on *Public Speaking*

Public Speaking

The first objective of the Study War No More campaign is for public debate on the effects of military funding of research and development within universities. During the campaign, public speaking will be important for effectively conveying your message to other students, university officials, and potential supporters of the campaign. Public speaking and debating, if done well, are effective ways of reaching mass audiences. With practice and some strategies for preparing and delivering a good talk, anyone can become a confident and persuasive speaker. Here are some tips to get you started.

1. Know your audience and purpose

Before you start working on preparing for the talk/ debate, it is vital to establish who your audience is, what your message is, and what you want them to do as a result of your talk. Will you be speaking to potential allies, enemies, or a mix of both? What are the interests, assumptions and values represented within the audience? How might you create a connection with them? Are you educating, persuading, or both? How can you inspire the audience to take note of your views?

2. Structure your talk

A good talk should have a logical framework which flows. A good debate will have clear points, which relate and build upon one another. In a talk, make sure there is a clear beginning, middle and end. Don't be afraid to use a few key facts to back up your arguments. Keep your message simple and focused; and try to stick to three main points. End with a challenge, a question or a call to action.

3. Maintain eye contact

Making eye contact helps you to build a rapport with the audience, making them more attentive. It also enables you to gauge the audience's reaction to your message. Try to scan the whole room so that no one feels excluded.

4. Be yourself and speak from the heart

Genuine passion and conviction are contagious. Be natural and let your unique speaking style and personality show. Inject a personal note if you have time - tell the audience why this issue is personal to you.

5. Remember to pause

Well-timed, dramatic pauses can have a huge impact. They allow your words to sink in, as well as giving you a moment's respite. Silence is far more effective than 'ums' and 'ers'. Use pauses after shocking statistics or stories. If you know you speed up when you are nervous, try writing reminders to 'pause' in your talk notes.

6. Use your voice and body

Studies show that people pay far less attention to what is said than how it is said. Practice varying the volume, pace, and pitch of your voice. Think about the rhythm of your speech: emphasise key words, use short sentences for dramatic effect, repeat important lines. Dress comfortably and appropriately and think about your posture, facial expression and hand gestures. And remember to smile!

7. Keep it human

Use examples, case studies, and facts to bring your points to life and keep the audience engaged. Hard statistics are important, but, if used on their own, can leave people feeling cold and unmotivated.

8. Practice

Try out your speech in front of a mirror or practice in front of others and ask them to give you feedback. They may notice nervous habits you haven't spotted.

9. Don't panic

Nerves and adrenaline are absolutely normal, and can even improve your performance and give you the energy to communicate enthusiastically, convincingly, and passionately. The key is to prepare thoroughly so your nerves don't overcome you on the day. If anything does go wrong or if you are asked a difficult question, pause and take a deep breath. Buy yourself some time by taking a sip of water or reflecting back the question. And smile - it will send positive chemicals through your body and help both you and your audience to relax!

Campaign Stalls

Campaign stalls are an important way of reaching out to the public, especially to people who don't know of others sharing their concerns. All you need are some basic materials such as leaflets, petitions and posters, together with a fold up table.

If you are nervous about answering any questions people may have, the best way to prepare is by idea-storming difficult questions which could come up and preparing your answers. For example, we would encourage you to read the executive summary of the Study War No More report, and the data sheet on your university.

Things to bear in mind when running a stall include:

- Find somewhere with a regular flow of people, but not so crowded that passers-by can't or don't want to stop; it may be worth booking stalls at university events, such as career fairs and fresher week stalls as these can attract a lot of people.
- You only have a few seconds to grab someone's attention so try using simple 'openers' to get them to stop. Once you have their attention you can tell them more about the campaign and ask them to take further action.
- Have at least two people to staff the stall; try to involve as many people as possible. Possibly pair those who are not confident talking to the public with more experienced people. Draw up a rota to safeguard against anyone overworking and make sure all volunteers have been briefed beforehand.
- Always have a 'sign up for more info' sheet, or a column on a petition (if you have one) to allow people to do this.
- Smile and try to keep your body language open. But don't rely on people coming to you - give people in your group clipboards so they can draw people to the stall by approaching those passing by at a distance.

Choose the right time to have your stall, and try and think of any relevant days or events, which could serve as a hook for local media.

It's worth taking a camera so you can take photos of yourselves in action, especially if you hope to get media coverage of your activities, and if you use an attention grabbing display. Be selective in your display - stick to materials that relate to the campaign along with any materials you have about your local group. Try to think of an eye-catching idea to add to the impact of your stall, such as props, costumes, display boards or a competition to convey the campaign creatively.

Finally, and most importantly, make sure to follow up with people soon after the event - contact volunteers to thank them for their help, highlight your successes and ask if they have any ideas for improvement. Follow up with those who have left contact details asking for further information, and invite them to your next meeting. Also, don't forget to send a few pictures to your local newspaper along with a short story about your stall and why you did it.

Publicity

If your campaign is going to derive support on and off campus, it needs to have clear messages and use arguments that people can easily understand. This will make what you say and do much more effective. The following tools can be employed in order to publicise your meetings and campaign generally:

- Produce a leaflet to hand out on campus e.g. at meetings which explains in simple terms why military involvement in your university is unacceptable. As well as the Study War No More website, you could use the websites of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (<http://www.for.org.uk/>) and Campaign Against Arms Trade (<http://www.caat.org.uk/>) for facts and data.
- Ask if you can put up a display about the campaign in your students union.
- Put up posters and leaflets about the campaign around the campus.
- Speak about the campaign to friends, family and colleagues - one-to-one conversations are the best form of communication.
- Set up a blog, website or facebook group. Examples of existing online student campaigns include:
 - UCL Blog <http://disarmucl.blogspot.com/>
 - Ethical Investment Wiki http://ei.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page
 - St Andrews Website <http://www.moneywithmorals.com/>
 - Called to be Peacemakers Facebook Group <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2244254396>
 - Universities Against the Arms Trade Facebook Group <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6238879876>

NB Always remember to include contact details about your campaign e.g. your website, email, phone number etc.

Media

Make sure to contact the university, local and even national media about your involvement in the Study War No More campaign. This will not only raise the profile of the campaign, but it will also have the potential to attract more supporters and apply pressure upon your targets.

Media doesn't just happen; it has to be researched, written or recorded, edited or packaged, and fitted to a schedule for printing or broadcast. Media is manufactured, just like any other product we make. If you think creatively how you can fit into this process then you're more likely to be successful. Above all however, preparation is the key.

It is important to think about the following when you are thinking of using the media in the Study War No More campaign:

- Who are your target audience?
- What is your message? And how can you express this in a way your audience will identify with?
- How are you attracting people to the campaign?
- What are you calling for?
- How can people get involved?

Below are some tips of how to use different media outlets to your advantage.

University and Local Media

It is a misconception that only national media counts; local and regional media are important. Arguably local media is more important and more noted, as what happens in people's backyard directly affects their lives. An important fact about local and university based media is that it cuts across social groups, and tends to be read, watched or listened to with more attention more than national media.

Research your university and local media, what kind of articles do they carry? Which are the most popular? How regularly are they published? Don't forget university and local websites either! There are lots of ways of getting in university and local media. Think about who you are trying to reach, and what the best way of getting your message across. Possible options include:

- **Letter/ email writing** - Keep it short and on one subject; check the spelling and grammar; make references to their newspaper/ form of media; include all your contact details; and, if you are part of a campaign group then write on behalf of the organisation if possible.
- **Radio phone-ins** - Radio phone-ins are an excellent way to get your viewpoint aired. If possible listen to a previous edition of the programme to get an idea of the format, the presenters approach, etc. Before making your call, jot down the main points of your message to jog your memory, but do not read from a statement or script, as this will sound unappealing.
- **Interviews** – Press releases and articles may inspire requests for interviews. Interviews tend to be very short, so be brief and incisive with your answers. Ask if you can have the questions before the interview. Appear relaxed, confident and friendly. Decide what your main points are before you do the interview. Speak clearly and avoid complicated language that would be difficult for the audience to understand. Do not use jargon. You are campaigning because you feel passionately about the issues. Make sure the audience understands this. Don't be afraid to ask for the question to be repeated – especially if you stumble during the interview. Remember, anything you say can end up on the air.

Press Releases

Let the media know of campaign actions and developments through press releases. There are four stages to using a press release:

1. Write the release

Make up a template press release onto which details can be written. Put the name of your group and contact details at the top. Use the words "Press Release" in large writing. Use headed paper if possible. Put the page number on each page of your release, in bold and in the form Page N of X. Press releases should be one side of A4, two sides maximum.

2. Send it out

Send your press release by both fax and e-mail if possible, and even by post when appropriate. The more ways you send it, the more chance there is that someone appropriate will read it! One further and handy addition to this is to also send out the release to your local MP and councillor(s). This will enable them to keep you in mind and will alert them to the issue as well.

3. Follow up

Ring all your contacts to make sure they have received the release, and to ask if there is anything else they wish to know. Ringing up the media in this way may make you feel like a salesperson, but there is no alternative and persistence will pay off. Media organisations are chaotic, and things get lost. If they haven't seen it, send it again. Your contact details are on the release so they can call back if they wish to know more.

4. Record media contacts

Record all the media contacts you've made, and keep their contact details up to date. Record for each media contact: dates of contact, media outlet name and contact details, who you've spoken to, what they said, etc. Given the importance of individual personal contacts, creating a list of media contacts and a media log are essential tools for future media work.

Tips on Press Releases:

- If you are holding an event and you want to keep it quiet, embargo your story for a suitable time to make the afternoon/ early evening news. An embargo is a date and/ or time put on the top of your press release that clearly indicates when you want the release to be used. Without an embargo date, the media will tend to want publish as soon as possible to beat other competing media and ensure that what they publish is 'new'.
- Create photo opportunities - Colour and imaginative demonstrations with costumes and props will also help to bring your event to life, and will more likely get media coverage.
- Make sure you can be contacted, particularly if your name appears on a press release. If possible, give them a home and work number, and/ or a pager/ mobile number. If you get a media message on your answer phone return it in good time. There is nothing more frustrating for a journalist than to be unable to contact key sources before a deadline.

Tips on Using Media Effectively

- Increase your credibility by mentioning anything that makes you especially qualified to write/speak on a topic. For instance, "As a student of X university, I am affected by military funding of research and development at as ..."
- Keep your audience on side: don't voice personal grudges and name-calling; speak affirmatively, don't give lip service to arms investment arguments; avoid self-righteous language and exaggeration; and use inclusive language to help your audience identify with you.
- Don't assume your audience knows the issues. Keep it simple and concise, so that the audience is in a better position to identify with your cause.
- Criticise the policy, not the newspaper/ university/ department/ academic.
- Use human interest - make the story relevant to its audience.
- Record all media contacts you make, and keep their contact details updated. Establish working relationships with people working in the media – keep them updated on your campaign and inform them about future events coming up, but also don't contact them unnecessarily or harass them.
- Make sure to meet their deadlines. Don't waste an opportunity by not giving the media enough forewarning.

On-line resources

There are a number of useful guides for the media, two of which we recommend:

- www.mediatrust.org.uk - The Media Trust, which owns the Community Channel and publishes a number of short on-line guides to various aspects of media work.
- www.seedsforchange.org.uk - Briefings and resources for campaigners including a media guide and training courses.

d) Engaging with your university

There are several different ways in which to engage with your university, depending upon what stage your campaign is at. For example, at the start of your campaign you may find it useful to contact the relevant student, staff and academic representatives at your university, in order to inform them of your objectives and try to gain their support for your work. Eventually, if your campaign is well-run and has a good base of support on campus, you may begin to seriously engage with university management about implementing policy changes. The following list outlines university bodies and the officials who represent them. If conducted correctly, you can use your influence to lobby them in order to achieve campaign objectives.

Student Unions

Student unions are often good places for raising political issues as they depend upon your involvement as democratic institutions representing the student body. Furthermore, you can approach any student representative to support your campaign - for example the Ethics, Environment or Women's officers. You, or someone in your group, could also stand for election as a student representative, as this would give your campaign official support and resources.

Ask student representatives:

- How to create public debate on the issue within your university.
- Advice on submitting a motion to the students' union council.
- How to take the issue to the National Students Union (NUS).

Ask them to follow up the issue with:

- The students union Executive Committee (the only direct link between the union and university).
- The University Senate.
- The University Council.

University Departments

Whether or not your department has links with military organisations, you can look to raise awareness of your institution's general involvement within it. Contact your department's student representative and/or department committee.

Ask departmental representatives:

- For their support in asking the university for a public debate on the issue
- Whether it will be possible to attend a department meeting to discuss the issue with staff
- For a faculty/ school discussion and analysis of the issue e.g. a teach-in.

Ask them to follow up the issue with:

- Department staff
- The head of the department's faculty/ school
- The chair of the department

- Student union representatives

University Committees/ Senate/ Council

To begin with, you will need to find out the university's official position regarding military involvement in your university. You will then know where your campaign stands and how far you are away from achieving your goals. You can then take steps to open a dialogue with the university in order to begin debating the issue and exploring what you differ and agree on. Once you have established a working relationship with the university e.g. through meeting and corresponding with officials, you will find it easier to move ahead towards institutional change as your campaign grows in support, hones its arguments and learns what strategies are effective.

Ask your universities' governing bodies:

- Initially, for an official statement on the level of military involvement at your university.
- For their support in having a public debate on the issue at the university- which they are invited to participate in.
- To consider a proposal for an ethics committee (e.g. comprising students, staff, academics and industry) to be established to review the university's external funding policy.

Trade Unions

The union bodies representing staff and academics are worth approaching in order to gain their support and resources.

Ask trade union representatives:

- For an official statement on the level of military involvement at your university.
- For support for your campaign - whether through time, resources or people e.g. speakers at an event.

e) **Lobbying your MP**

As well as lobbying and campaigning for change on campus, the Study War No More campaign hopes to generate parliamentary discussion and questions about military funding of research and development. To do this, the issue must be a subject of concern for government officials. By encouraging campaigners to raise the issue with their MP, we hope to influence government decision-making and get the issue on the national agenda.

There are many ways of raising the issue with government, including:

Letter writing

Politicians have a duty to respond to letters from their constituents so if they receive enough correspondence on the same/ similar issue, they will have to take the subject seriously. It is estimated that every letter received by a politician represents about 80 people who care but haven't got around to writing. That is why politicians take notice of letters - it represents at least 80 votes!

We believe that the best way to have influence through letter writing is to write to your own MP asking her or him to raise the issue with the relevant Minister. That way both become aware of the issue and, by convention, a letter forwarded by an MP to a Minister must receive a reply.

If you don't know who your MP is, visit www.locata.co.uk/commons. It is worth knowing a bit about their background before contacting them. Three web sites have useful information on local MPs: www.politics.guardian.co.uk, <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/> and www.epolitix.com.

Some tips for writing to your MP are:

- Be polite and concise - try to keep to one side of paper.
- Write in your own words. Don't just copy the text from somewhere else - make it personal.
- Tackle just one subject in a letter.
- Ask for a reply and send a copy to the Study War No More campaign.

You could try emailing your MP, but it seems that some respond less frequently to emails than to letters that arrive in an envelope! The usual, but not universal, formula for MPs' email addresses is <surname><First name initial>@parliament.uk, e.g. browng@parliament.uk.

Meeting your MP

A step further than writing to your MP is arranging for a small group to go and visit him or her to talk about military funding involvement in UK universities. For this it is important to be prepared and it is worth contacting Study War No More so we can let you know if your MP has shown an interest in the issue before. Pressure from within the constituency is frequently a key factor in influencing an MP's views. Lobbying an MP who is sympathetic may encourage him or her to take action. An MP who is strongly supportive of the military sector and its involvement in higher education may reconsider the issue if a well reasoned case is calmly presented by constituents. This is especially true if the MP encounters colleagues who have also been lobbied.

Some people will have MPs with front-bench responsibilities for higher and further education, or he or she may sit on one of the relevant Select Committees. If you are one of these people, visiting

your MP could have a very important impact. However, meeting with other MP's is equally important. If sufficient MPs have the issue raised with them, then this will filter through to those with power. It is also important to realise that this is not an issue on which MPs will necessarily follow the "party line".

Tips for visiting your MP include:

- Don't just turn up - make a proper appointment;
- A group of about 2 - 4 people is probably a good size - you will be able to have a good discussion without being too intimidating;
- Know your subject - contact Study War No More before you go and be well-briefed;
- Follow up the meeting with a letter of thanks and asking them to raise the issue with the relevant Minister; And,
- Let the Study War No More campaign know how the meeting went.

Thank MPs for their Support

Should you be lucky enough to win the support of your local MP for the campaign, return the favour. Offer them the opportunity to be seen to be addressing and working on local issues, by creating a photo and media opportunity for them where they meet local constituents. MP's are elected by local constituents, so they will be keen to meet and be seen with the people they represent, especially if other community members will find out. Make sure to send them a briefing paper on the campaign and prepared answers to questions they may get asked before the event. This will also help ensure they represent the message you want to get across.

Other Resources

- Contact your Councillors, MP, MEPs, MSPs, or Northern Ireland, Welsh and London AMs for free: <http://www.writetothem.com/>
- Liberty Guide: Your Right to Peaceful Protest <http://www.yourrights.org.uk/your-rights/chapters/the-right-of-peaceful-protest/index.shtml>.