August 18, 1980

MEMO TO: All Faculty

FROM: Gail Fullerton
President

Roy Young
Chair, SJSU Academic Senate

SUBJECT: Two Important University Goals in Advising Students for the 1980-81 Academic Year

The purpose of this note is to request faculty advisors, as students consult them about courses to take in the coming academic year, to encourage students to consider taking courses in history, philosophy, sociology, foreign languages, anthropology or geography. Such advice, we hope, will serve two important University goals: first, it will contribute to a well rounded education for our students; and, second, by helping to build enrollment in the departments indicated, it will help us to avoid the layoff of worthy colleagues.

As almost everyone will readily admit, courses in the areas mentioned above have a vital contribution to make to the general education of our students. We rightly stress the importance of general education, in the University's statement on curricular priorities, but we often fail to give substantial advice to students on the significance of subjects which will ensure the broad competence expected of University graduates. This failure reveals itself most clearly in the steady decline of enrollment in the Humanities and in the Social Sciences over the last several years. It is, of course, easy to attribute such a decline to the increasing emphasis which students are placing upon professional career objectives. Most of us will agree however, that a sound combination of professional courses and liberal arts courses will best serve the professional and career objectives of our students.

This is not to say that strong efforts have not been made to overcome narrow specialization. The School of Business, for example, now requires a non-Business minor; and the University has just adopted a new and stronger general education program. If these steps are to have a substantial impact, however, they must be called to the attention of our students. To do this, we need your help.

In addition to the fundamental goal of improving the education which we offer to
students, the advice which we are asking you to convey to your students will serve the practical objective of helping to avoid the layoff of regular faculty members. Each of the departments named above, as a result of the "tilt" of students away from Humanities and Social Sciences, is threatened with the possibility that regular faculty members may have to be laid off. We shall take a great step forward in avoiding that unpleasant event by doing what we can to ensure a healthy balance between general and professional education at San Jose State University.

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cc: Academic Vice President
    Executive Vice President
    Chair, Enrollment Patterns Committee