



San José State
UNIVERSITY

A campus of The California State University

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SS-S02-4

At its meeting of March 18, 2002 the SJSU Academic Senate passed the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Annette Nellen for the Executive Committee.

**SENSE OF THE SENATE
ENDORING THE KNIGHT COMMISSION REPORT
AND CALLING FOR ACTIONS RELATED TO SJSU ATHLETICS**

Whereas, in June 2001, the Knight Commission's Foundation on Intercollegiate Athletics has issued a report entitled *A Call to Action: Reconnecting Sports and Higher Education*¹ regarding the state of intercollegiate athletics in America, and

Whereas, the authors of this report are respected academics and administrators who conducted an extensive study, and

Whereas, the Knight Commission's finds that regarding football and basketball, "[t]he core of the problem is a prevailing money madness. These sports programs have created a universe parallel to – but outside the effective control of – the institutions that house them. They answer not to the traditional standards of higher education but to the whims and pressures of the marketplace. There is no question about who is winning this open, ever-escalating war between the academic and athletic cultures. In too many places, the tail already wags the dog." and

Whereas, the Knight Commission provides evidence of several specific problems at many universities, such as low graduation rates for student athletes, violations of NCAA rules, and excessive commercialization of collegiate athletics, and

Whereas, the Knight Commission proposes a 3-part model for reform: "a Coalition of Presidents, directed toward an agenda of academic reform, de-escalation of the athletics arms race, and de-emphasis of the commercialization of intercollegiate athletics. The Coalition of Presidents' goal must be nothing less than the restoration of athletics as a healthy and integral part of the academic enterprise." and

Whereas, athletics at San Jose State does not display many of the worst features of the intercollegiate athletics system deplored by the Knight Commission (for example, it has made a vigorous and successful effort to comply with Title IX gender equity requirements, and the athletic department has taken steps to make its budget more transparent to the campus community), and

- Whereas athletics at San Jose State nevertheless exhibits some of the behaviors deplored by the Knight Commission, such as “react[ing] to intense financial pressure to control costs by dropping so-called minor sports” and placing a high priority on obtaining corporate sponsorships, and
- Whereas, when President Caret announced his decision that SJSU would join the Western Athletic Conference (WAC), he said that the decision would be evaluated after several years, and
- Whereas, in 1993, the SJSU Academic Senate adopted a report (SS-S93-12) from its own Special Committee on Athletics that recommended “reducing the general fund support [for athletics] to a level not to exceed one percent (1%) of the total university budget by 1995-96”, and yet the athletics budget consistently exceeds this amount; and
- Whereas, the Knight Commission concludes that “higher education must draw together all of its strengths and assets to reassert the primacy of the educational mission of the academy”; be it therefore
- Resolved, that the SJSU Academic Senate endorses the recommendations of the Knight Commission, and urges President Caret to participate in the “Coalition of Presidents”, be it further
- Resolved, that the SJSU Academic Senate commends the athletics department for the steps it has taken to ensure gender equity, and to increase the transparency of its budget, and that the Senate encourages the athletics department to continue and expand upon those efforts; be it further
- Resolved, that the SJSU Academic Senate requests that, within two months of receiving the final report of the NCAA self-study, President Caret issue a formal, written evaluation of the state of athletics at SJSU; This should include information, such as: Number of people, and responsibilities, in each sport or unit;
Salaries (names not sought);
Sources of money for salaries;
Scholarships, by sport, sources;
Graduation rate, by sport;
How many academic tutors, advisers, sources of funding;
How many classes are missed by athletic participation; baseball has how many games; conflict of games and classes;
Tutors on sports trips, if any;
Special adviser(s), with information about classes, professors, etc.;
Physical injuries, from sports: cost of such injuries;
Number of hours athletes required to practice, daily, weekly, semester, etc.;
Allocations of money and resources to each sports unit;
How athletes are told that their first priority is to be a good student; be it further
- Resolved, that the Senate calls upon the Executive Committee to issue a follow-up report to SS-S93-1 following the completion of the current NCAA self-study, and that said report should be presented to the Academic Senate no later than October 2003.

¹ Report available at
http://www.ncaa.org/databases/knight_commission/2001_report/2001_knight_report.html.