

At its meeting of February 4, 1991, the Academic Senate approved the following Policy Recommendation presented by Sandra Kajiwara for the Executive Committee.

CAMPUS CLIMATE: TOWARD APPRECIATING DIVERSITY

Be it resolved that San José State University adopt the following "statement of policy" from "Campus Climate: Toward Appreciating Diversity" as interim policy until the Board of Trustees of the California State University acts to adopt this statement or other related policy.

The California State University reflects California's rich cultural diversity. The varied backgrounds of students, faculty, and staff enrich the university's intellectual life and create its unique community.

While the university views diversity as a great source of its strength, some people on campus, as elsewhere in society, feel threatened by those who are different and act in disregard of the personal dignity and rights of others. Discrimination and harassment have no place in a university community. They damage the educational aspirations of students, interfere with the performance of faculty and staff, and destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual regard that must prevail for a university to fulfill its mission.

The university is therefore committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment. To fulfill this commitment, the university will work to prevent discrimination from occurring and will ensure that federal and state laws as well as university regulations prohibiting discrimination are fully enforced.

Demeaning and gratuitously offensive conduct sometimes takes expressive forms that, although repugnant, cannot be prohibited or punished. Both the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 2 of the California Constitution limit the university's power to punish free speech. To do so, even in the case of speech that is offensive and demeaning, would undermine basic principles of free discourse fundamental to any university.

As an educational institution, the university will use its intellectual and persuasive powers to discourage offensive and harassing speech from occurring and to encourage civil exchange. The university will attempt to teach its students and employees to listen as well as to speak and to do both with an open mind. This is consistent with the university's mission to foster dialogue that educates students and prepares them for citizenship. That mission requires respect for differing viewpoints, but not license for demeaning language and harassing behavior that stifle free exchange of ideas and compromise the university's educational goals.

Respect throughout the university for the dignity and rights of others, including the right to be free from discrimination and harassment and the right to speak freely, is essential to creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning.

**ACTION BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT: Approved by President Gail Fullerton on
March 16, 1991.**

**Campus Climate: Toward
Appreciating Diversity**
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