



San José State
UNIVERSITY

A campus of The California State University

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SS-F04-2

At its meeting of October 25, 2004, the Academic Senate passed the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Senator Lessow-Hurley for the Executive Committee.

SENSE OF THE SENATE RESOLUTION
ENDORISING ACTIVITIES TO BUILD A CULTURE OF READING AT SJSU

- Whereas, Reading is one of the key foundations for becoming an educated person.
- Whereas, Having a group of individuals read a book together (a common reading project) can help build a sense of community and can introduce students to the nature of a university learning experience.
- Whereas, Professors often find that many students do not read periodicals, novels and materials beyond class assignments.
- Whereas, A July 2004 report from the National Endowment for the Arts found “an overall decline of 10 percentage points in literary readers from 1982 to 2002, representing a loss of 20 million potential readers. The rate of decline is increasing and, according to the survey, has nearly tripled in the last decade.”¹
- Whereas, San José State’s Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)² created a Reading Day initiative in fall 2004 to help build a culture of reading on campus with the following goals:
1. Enhance student development by creating opportunities for becoming life long learners.
 2. Promote EOP’s legacy of access, student services and retention.
 3. Make positive connections with incoming and continuing EOP students.
 4. Acknowledge key departments on campus with a “historical legacy of support.”
 5. Engage the greater San José community to learn, participate and benefit from this exciting and innovative, educational endeavor.
 6. Broaden EOP partnerships.
 7. Bring awareness to literacy issues impacting the SJSU and San José broader communities.
 8. Shed some positive light on recent negative news regarding EOP budget cuts and pending threats. EOP is viable and important to the state, the city and to SJSU.
 9. Invite middle and high school youth to participate.
 10. Institutionalize this program and expand it to include other literary activities.

¹ NEA, July 9, 2004 press release on the report, *Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America*; available at <http://www.nea.gov/news/news04/ReadingAtRisk.html>.

² EOP is an admissions assistance and retention program for students who meet income and other requirements and are historically underrepresented in higher education.

Whereas, The Reading Day initiative aims to get EOP and other students to commit to read beyond their course assigned reading by setting aside at least one half hour every Thursday during the fall 2004 term to read. The EOP Office has designated several locations on campus as “EOP Reading Day” lounges. The EOP Office plans to continue and expand this effort in future semesters.

Whereas, The following departments will have books and other materials in their discipline on reserve for visitors to the Reading Day lounges.
African American Studies, WSQ 219
Asian American Studies, Asian American Resource Center, King Library, 5th Floor
Mexican American Studies, YUH 31
MOSAIC, Student Union
Africana Center, King Library, 5th Floor
Peer Mentor Center, Royce Hall

Whereas, In Fall 2002, at the start of the MUSE program, a reading project was created for students, but needs funding and wider campus buy-in to help our new students to see that SJSU promotes a culture of reading to help students to become university scholars and lifelong learners; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Academic Senate applaud and encourage the EOP Office’s efforts to help build a culture of reading among SJSU students.

Resolved, That where possible, Senators identify Reading Day areas in their colleges and units and inform the EOP Office of their locations and hours.

Resolved, That the Academic Senate encourage the Orientation and MUSE programs to expose new students to our culture of reading through some type of summer reading program, as many universities conduct today.³

Resolved, That the Academic Senate encourage all members of the campus community to find appropriate ways to model and promote a culture of reading that will enable that culture to grow and endure. In addition to Reading Day lounges and summer reading programs, such activities might include campus lectures by authors, working with local schools to promote reading, and common reading projects in colleges and across campus.

Vote: 13-0-0

Present: Donoho, Nellen, Van Selst, Ashton, Thames, Maldonado-Colon, Lee, Heisch, Greathouse, Veregge, Lessow-Hurley, Bros, Kassing

Absent: Goodman, Rascoe

Financial Impact: Minimal, but summer reading programs and greater publicity for Reading Day would require funds.

³ For a list of some of the books used in such summer reading programs, see <http://www.sc.edu/fye/resources/fyr/reading/read.html>. For examples of summer reading programs at other CSU campuses, see the Summer Reading Program at SDSU at <http://dus.sdsu.edu/srp/studentregister.htm> and PREFACE: The Cal Poly Shared Reading Program at <http://www.preface.calpoly.edu/>.