

Intermediate Committee NCAA



SJMUNC XXXVIII

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Letter from the Chairs:

Dear Delegates,

We are thrilled to welcome you to the National Collegiate Athletic Association(NCAA) committee at this year's SJMUNC XXXVIII. We hope this committee provides all of you with an enlightening experience about the world of collegiate athletics and an opportunity to meet students all around the New England region.

A bit of background details about us. My name is Rishik Paluri, and I am this committee's chair. I am a senior at Saint John's High School, and this is my fourth year doing Model UN. I have attended multiple national conferences, so don't be afraid to ask me questions about the process behind this committee. Outside the classroom, I like participating in volleyball, Boy Scouts, and photography. I love talking to people and making new friends, which I hope to do this session.

Hi! My name is Trevor Higgins, and I am the co-chair for this committee. I am a junior at Saint John's High School. This is my third year doing Model UN here at Saint John's. I have attended a national conference in Chicago and Saint John's annual Model UN conference. When I am not in the classroom, I participate in a Mock Trial for Saint John's and play lacrosse for a club team and Saint John's. My hobbies include watching sports, playing video games, and spending time with family and friends. I look forward to seeing you all on the committee.

We picked this topic to offer a unique perspective for Model UN: integrating it with the sports world. As this is a specialized committee, our first committee session will be formatted like a General Assembly. However, once the second committee session starts, we will shift to a

more crisis-based format, offering experience for both worlds of Model UN. We understand that as an intermediate-level committee, the delegates will have a wide variety of experience.

Our most significant piece of advice for old and new Model UNers: Be respectful and kind. Model UN is about interacting with other people in the room and cooperating with them to offer a solution to a problem. Especially in the committee room, kindness can bring you a long way to teaming up with delegates and making new friends. It allows you to add value to a session and ensures all voices are heard. Our committee promises valuable learning experiences and an enjoyable and enriching journey.

We hope this letter provides you with a high-level overview of our committee, our expectations, and our hopes for all of you in your Model UN journey. SJMUNC has been a life-changing experience for us, and we desire the same for you. If you have any questions before the conference, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We look forward to meeting all of you!

Regards,

Rishik Paluri and Trevor Higgins

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Statement of the Problem:

The introduction of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) rights in college sports has changed college athletics in the United States. The NCAA's July 2021 policy allowed student-athletes to profit from their personal image and brand. This marked a turning point in a long-

standing debate over fairness and athlete pay. While this new era provides athletes with important opportunities to earn money from their fame and hard work, it also presents several complex challenges that threaten the foundations of college athletics.

One major issue is the lack of rules for NIL deals. Every state, university, and athletic conference is creating its own policies, which leads to confusion and unfair advantages. Athletes in some states or programs may have easier access to deals. This creates inequalities throughout conferences. Additionally, universities are dealing with unclear compliance standards and often don't know how to support their athletes without breaking the law or doing something unethical.

Another big problem is the growing gap between well-known and lesser-known athletes and programs. Some athletes competing in popular sports like football and basketball are landing big endorsement deals, while others have few opportunities and make less money. This commercial focus could shift attention away from education and team growth and bonding to individual benefits for athletes, undermining the college principles. There are also concerns about outside involvement and practices that may take advantage of athletes. For instance, agents might use NIL deals as recruiting tools, raising questions about college athlete protection and accountability.

In summary, while NIL rights demonstrate improvements and growth for student-athletes' importance, they have also created new challenges that must be resolved. Fairness, regulation, recruitment, and academic resp are all issues. Without proper focus and support systems, the long-term effects of NIL could increase inequalities and change the role of athletics in higher education.

History of the problem

For decades, the NCAA maintained strict rules against athletes receiving compensation for using their name, image, and likeness (NIL). The NCAA argued that such restrictions preserved the amateur nature of college sports. While schools, conferences, and the NCAA generated billions of dollars from television contracts, merchandise sales, and sponsorships, student-athletes were limited to scholarships¹. This long-standing system created growing controversy, as the athletes who produced the revenue were denied the ability to profit from their personal brands.

The first major legal challenge came in 2009 with *O'Bannon v. NCAA*, when former UCLA basketball star Ed O'Bannon argued that athletes should be compensated when their likenesses were used in commercial products such as video games. In 2014, a federal court ruled that the NCAA's ban on NIL compensation violated antitrust laws, allowing schools to provide scholarships up to the full cost of attendance². The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals later affirmed parts of the decision, while still limiting broader payments, reflecting the tension between preserving amateurism and addressing athlete rights.

Momentum shifted again in 2019, when California passed the Fair Pay to Play Act, granting athletes the ability to profit from their NIL. This law set a precedent, and other states began drafting legislation. Around the same time, the NAIA (National Association of

¹ Daugherty, Greg. "NIL and the NCAA: What Are the Rules?" *Investopedia*, 8 Mar. 2025, www.investopedia.com/nil-and-the-ncaa-8599762/. Accessed 7 Sept. 2025.

² Dalimonte, Anthony. "NIL Timeline: The Events That Transformed College Sports." *Foster Swift*, 21 Apr. 2023, www.fosterswift.com/newsroom/publications/timeline-NIL-cases-transform-college-sports?. Accessed 7 Sept. 2025.

Intercollegiate Athletics) became the first governing body to adopt NIL reforms in 2020, allowing its athletes to be compensated. These moves created immense pressure on the NCAA to modernize its rules.

The turning point came in *NCAA v. Alston* (2021), when the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that the NCAA could not bar education-related benefits, further undercutting its control over athlete compensation. On July 1, 2021, the NCAA adopted an interim NIL policy, officially allowing athletes to profit from endorsements, sponsorships, and licensing deals for the first time³. However, because no uniform federal standard existed, each state and school developed its own rules, creating a patchwork of policies and unequal opportunities across the country.

In the years since, athletes have rapidly embraced NIL opportunities, signing endorsement deals that range from local sponsorships to multimillion-dollar contracts with major corporations. At the same time, NIL collectives—organizations of donors and boosters pooling money to fund athlete deals—have emerged, raising concerns about competitive balance and recruiting advantages⁴. The lack of consistent regulations has intensified the debate, with states, schools, and the NCAA attempting to impose order differently.

Legal challenges continue to shape the landscape. In *Tennessee v. NCAA* (2024), a federal judge blocked the NCAA from enforcing restrictions on NIL recruiting, further eroding the organization's authority⁵. At the same time, the NCAA is preparing a \$2.8 billion antitrust

³ Ibid. 1

⁴ Gregory, Sean. "As College Athletes Finally Start Cashing In, Entrepreneurs Big and Small Also Look to Score." *Time*, 10 Sept. 2021, time.com/6094842/college-sports-nil-operndorse/? Accessed 7 Sept. 2025.

⁵ Pells, Eddie. "When 2025 arrives, so will the end of the amateur athlete in college sports." *AP News*, 22 Dec. 2024, Gregory, Sean. "As College Athletes Finally Start Cashing In, Entrepreneurs Big and Small Also

settlement that would, for the first time, allow direct payments from schools to athletes under a capped system, representing the most dramatic shift yet in the definition of amateurism.

Conclusion

The history of NIL demonstrates a long struggle between preserving amateur ideals and recognizing athletes' rights in a billion-dollar industry. From early court battles to landmark legislation and Supreme Court rulings, NIL has become one of the most pressing issues in college sports. While athletes now have more freedom to profit from their success, the absence of a standardized national framework creates challenges. Future reforms must balance fairness, competitive equity, and the economic realities of modern athletics.

Possible Solutions

A possible solution to fix the challenges caused by NIL is to create a policy that outlines the rules for NIL deals throughout the USA. This would help fix potential confusion, prevent unfair advantages for programs, and create equality for athletes regardless of where they attend college. A group under the NCAA or a company not involved with the NCAA could focus on NIL to create fairness and compliance with the standards. This could also establish guidelines for third-party involvement, such as agents and sponsors, to help protect student-athletes from being taken advantage of and ensure that NIL opportunities are used responsibly and legally.

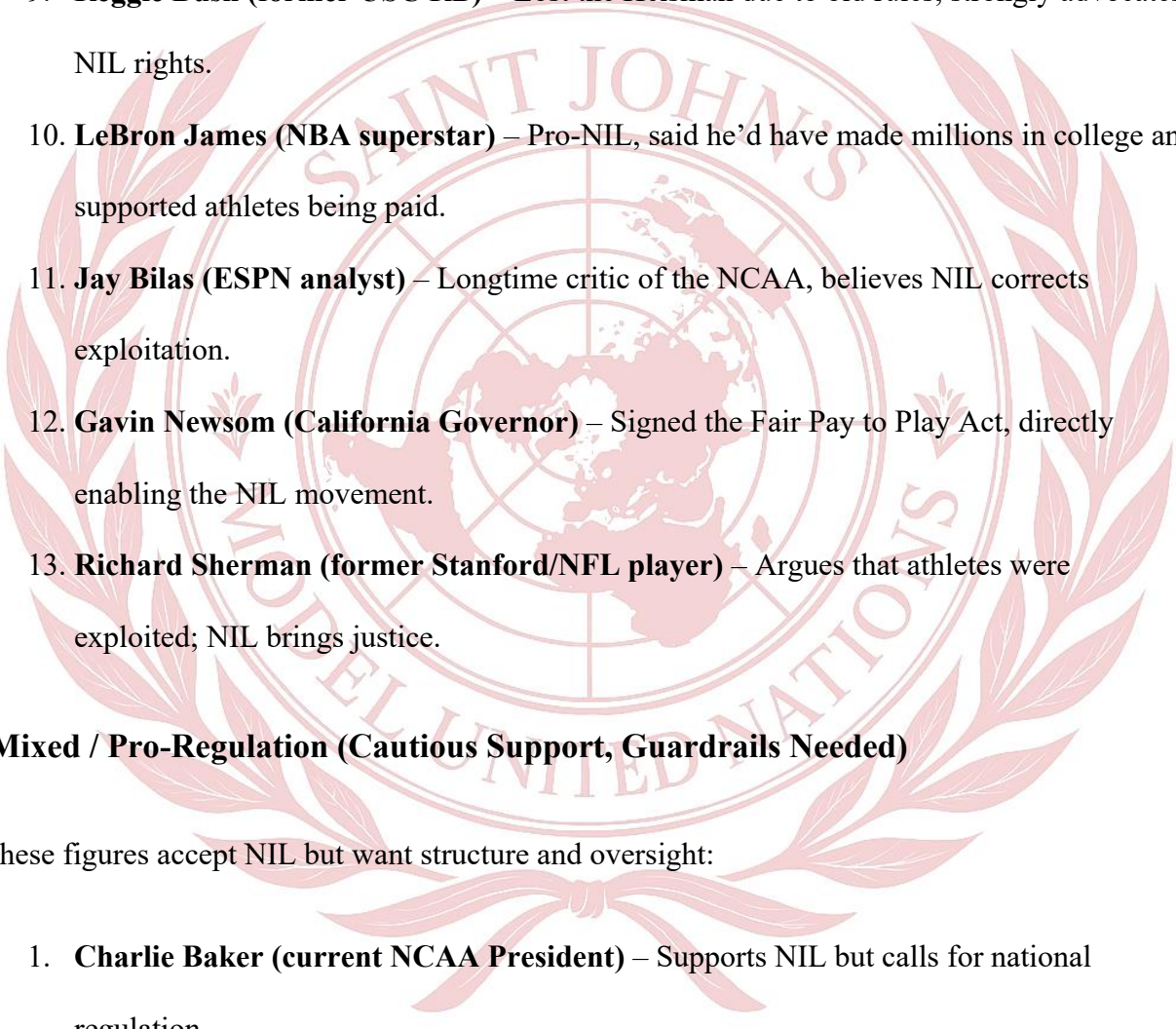
Look to Score." Time, 10 Sept. 2021, time.com/6094842/college-sports-nil-operndorse/? Accessed 7 Sept. 2025. Accessed 7 Sept. 2025.

Another important solution is to increase university support systems for student-athletes with NIL deals. Colleges should focus on making programs that teach athletes about finance, contract negotiations, personal branding, and responsibility. Schools can also provide access to advisors who can help athletes make decisions. To keep the balance between athletics and academics, colleges should ensure that NIL opportunities do not interfere with academic responsibilities or team events. By offering resources, universities can help athletes benefit from NIL while keeping the core values of college education and fair competition intact.

Bloc Positions:

Pro-NIL (Support & Expansion): These figures see NIL as a matter of fairness and opportunity for athletes:

1. **Olivia “Livvy” Dunne (LSU gymnast, social media star)** – Huge NIL earner; uses NIL to show athletes can build personal brands beyond traditional sports.
2. **Bronny James (USC basketball, son of LeBron James)** – Benefited from NIL before playing; symbolizes the power of athlete celebrity.
3. **Arch Manning (Texas football QB)** – Signed major NIL deals; shows NIL’s impact on elite recruits.
4. **Caitlin Clark (Iowa basketball → WNBA)** – NIL boosted women’s sports visibility and expanded her reach beyond the court.
5. **Paige Bueckers (UConn basketball)** – NIL star, promotes equal opportunities for women and non-revenue sports.
6. **Haley Cavinder (Miami basketball)** and her twin Hanna leveraged NIL into social media fame and business deals.

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7. **Suni Lee (Auburn gymnast, Olympic gold medalist)** – NIL allowed her to balance elite gymnastics with financial independence.
 8. **Bryce Young (Alabama QB → NFL)** – Signed big NIL deals before NFL, vocal about athlete empowerment.
 9. **Reggie Bush (former USC RB)** – Lost the Heisman due to old rules, strongly advocates NIL rights.
 10. **LeBron James (NBA superstar)** – Pro-NIL, said he'd have made millions in college and supported athletes being paid.
 11. **Jay Bilas (ESPN analyst)** – Longtime critic of the NCAA, believes NIL corrects exploitation.
 12. **Gavin Newsom (California Governor)** – Signed the Fair Pay to Play Act, directly enabling the NIL movement.
 13. **Richard Sherman (former Stanford/NFL player)** – Argues that athletes were exploited; NIL brings justice.

Mixed / Pro-Regulation (Cautious Support, Guardrails Needed)

These figures accept NIL but want structure and oversight:

1. **Charlie Baker (current NCAA President)** – Supports NIL but calls for national regulation.
2. **Greg Sankey (SEC Commissioner)** – Wants federal standards; says state patchwork is chaotic.
3. **Naomi Osaka (Tennis star, advocate)** – Not directly in the NCAA, but supports NIL for empowering athletes' mental and financial health.

4. **Kevin Warren (former Big Ten Commissioner)** – Supported NIL but stressed athlete protection.
5. **JJ Watt (NFL, Wisconsin alum)** – Pro-NIL but worries about exploitation and imbalance.
6. **Trevor Lawrence (Clemson QB → NFL)** – Supported NIL but emphasized athlete focus on academics.
7. **Megan Rapinoe (Soccer legend)** – Neutral; supports athlete empowerment but warns of commercialization overshadowing education.
8. **Marco Rubio (U.S. Senator, Florida)** – Introduced cautious NIL legislation with limits.
9. **Richard Blumenthal (U.S. Senator, Connecticut)** – Pushes for a federal framework to protect athletes.
10. **Kirk Herbstreit (ESPN analyst)** – Sees fairness but fears NIL will erode team culture.
11. **Flau'jae Johnson (LSU basketball)** – Balances NIL as both an athlete and rapper; embraces it but acknowledges challenges.
12. **Carson Beck (Miami Football)**- One quarterback for the Georgia Bulldogs, Beck transferred to the University of Miami in January 2025. Miami paid Carson Beck 4 million dollars to transfer to Coral Gables (Where the University of Miami is located). Carson Beck's financial success can also be attributed to NIL.
13. **Juju Watkins (USC Basketball)** – University of Southern California Star, Watkins is an elite guard with significant NIL deals totalling over 739k in deals. Watkins is a big part of women's basketball's growing financial power.

14. Cooper Flagg (Duke Basketball) - Former Duke Basketball phenom. The first pick in the NBA draft. Has made 4.8 million dollars off of NIL with deals from brands like Gatorade and New Balance,

15. Shedur Sanders (Colorado Football)(Cleveland Browns) - Former Colorado QB, Cleveland Browns QB, and son of NFL legend Deion Sanders. Shedur Sanders has endorsements with brands such as Gatorade and Beats.

16. NiJaree Canady (Texas Tech Softball) –An Elite pitcher for Texas Tech Softball. Candy signed a historic 1.2 million dollar deal, the largest ever in college softball.

Anti-NIL (Critical / Against Current System)

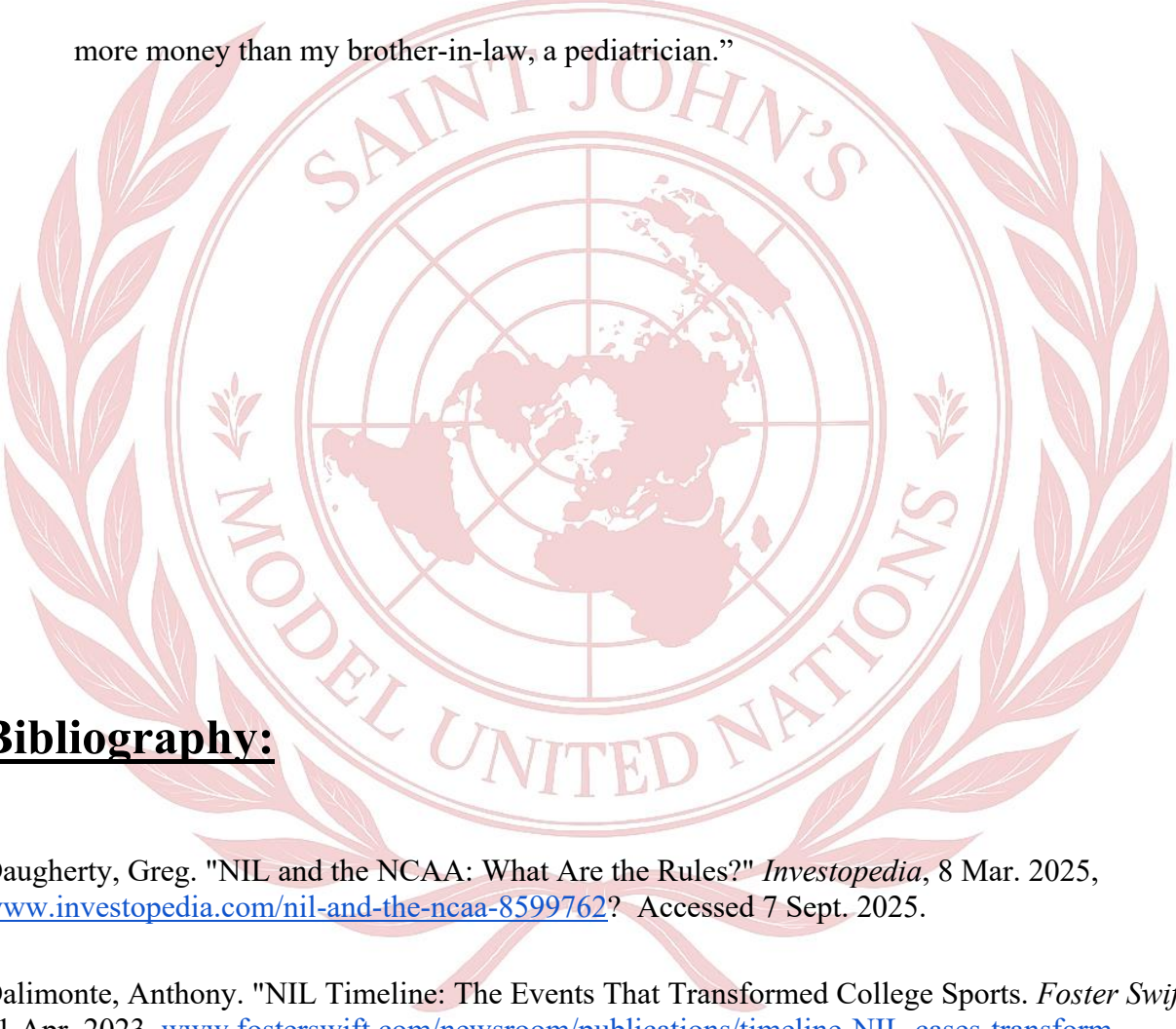
These figures warn that NIL threatens college sports, education, and fairness:

1. **Tim Tebow (former Florida quarterback and ESPN analyst)** – Against NIL; believes college sports should be about team and faith, not money.
2. **Nick Saban (retired Alabama coach)** – Concerned NIL harms recruiting balance and creates “free agency.”
3. **Dabo Swinney (Clemson coach)** – Strong critic; believes NIL undermines amateurism.
4. **Charles Barkley (NBA legend)** – Calls NIL and transfer portal “ruining college sports.”
5. **Tommy Tuberville (U.S. Senator, Alabama)** – Former coach, says NIL disrupts academics and recruiting integrity.
6. **Lou Holtz (former Notre Dame coach)** – Old-school critic; says NIL erodes tradition.
7. **Mark Emmert (former NCAA President)** – Resisted NIL reform and warned about breaking amateur tradition.

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8. **Colin Cowherd (Fox Sports analyst)** – Occasionally critical, argues NIL may create extreme inequality.
 9. **Dave Portnoy (Barstool Sports)** – Started “Barstool Athletes,” but critics say it was unregulated and exploitative.
 10. **Kirk Ferentz (Iowa football coach)** – Concerned NIL distracts athletes from team commitment.
 11. **Jay Wright (Former Villanova Basketball Coach)** - A former Villanova head basketball coach. Jay Wright is widely considered one of the greatest basketball coaches ever. However, Jay Wright retired from coaching in 2022 due to the rise of NIL and the newly created transfer portal.
 12. **Tim Ritter (An editorial writer)**.- Ritter argues that NIL will focus on individual aspects of college sports and abandon the foundational values of humility and loyalty to teams and universities.
 13. **The Drake Group (Organization)**- An organization that criticized gender equity in NIL deals. Focusing on compliance with Title IX, showing that most NIL funding goes to males.
 14. **Jim Larranaga (Former Miami Basketball Coach)** -former Miami basketball coach, Larranaga cited NIL and the transfer portal as leading to constant roster upheaval and a shift from development to “players trying out for their next job.”
 15. **Phil Hackney (Professor)** - Professor at the University of Pittsburgh. Criticised NIL, stating it could lead to Institutions no longer qualifying for Tax-exempt status.

16. Scott Barnes (Athletic Director)- Oregon Athletic Director. Barnes referred to NIL as a runaway train that failed to enforce regulations, causing it to turn into a landscape where cheating thrives.

17. Eliah Drinkwitz (Missouri Football Coach) - Missouri football coach. Drinkwitz criticized NIL by pointing out its absurdity: "College players, through NIL, are making more money than my brother-in-law, a pediatrician."



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