

‘TEAM USA’ needs DEI

Proposed bill would limit international student athlete participation

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With the introduction of name, image and likeness (NIL) into the college sports sphere in July 2021, the NCAA entered an entirely new frontier. Athletes are eligible to earn revenue through sponsorship deals, causing regulatory confusion both in-house and through larger channels.

A big portion of that regulatory struggle comes due to the inclusionary nature of college athletics. In the NCAA’s quest to “deliver excellent and inclusive championships,” international student athletes make up a significant portion. Of the 554,298 competing in collegiate athletics in Division I, Division II and Division III, nearly 25,000 are considered to be international student athletes.

For the NCAA, international students competing is not a new concept. International athletes have been competing at U.S. colleges since the early 1900s. Although the NCAA itself has a complicated history with its institutional regulation of international student athletes, regulation from the U.S. government regarding the issue has been limited to the Higher Education Act of 1965.

The “Training and Education for American Members in University Sports and Athletics Act,” or “TEAM USA Act,” presented by Sen. Jon Husted (R-Ohio) and House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman Rep. Tim Walberg (R-Mich.), aims to amend that. The bicameral bill was presented Sept. 14, and aims to limit the participation of international student athletes, limiting participation to 20% of any individual team’s roster. If the team has fewer than 10 rostered players, that number decreases to one international student athlete.

According to the bill, “Increasing recruitment of international student athletes has reduced roster and scholarship opportunities for American student athletes at institutions receiving Federal financial assistance.” Later, it states, “This reduction has limited opportunities for American students to obtain athletic financial aid and the educational benefits associated with intercollegiate athletics.”

Other factors behind the decision to propose this bill, according to Hustead and Walberg, include maintaining the pipeline of U.S. national team athletes through the NCAA.

The bill, if it received traction to be passed as a formal amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965, would not go into effect until July 1, 2029.

Looking at Quinnipiac Athletics, the necessary change in the current recruiting landscape is significant. If these rules were to be implemented to current rosters, nine out of the 22 varsity teams on campus would not be eligible — this includes men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s ice hockey, men’s and women’s tennis, as well as field hockey, volleyball and women’s basketball. Quinnipiac golf is situated exactly at 20% international students.

Particularly for smaller conferences like the Metro conference and Northeastern conference,

international players are a key component in finding talent that larger conferences miss out on. Establishing a strong recruiting presence internationally, particularly within a specific country, may be the key to bringing more athletes from the country in the future. Quinnipiac volleyball’s head coach, Kyle Robinson, has managed to achieve this with multiple Turkish players anchoring past Bobcat squads. Head coach of the men’s soccer team, Eric Da Costa, has recruited 10 Norwegian players during his tenure.

The 2026 field hockey roster boasts six players from the Netherlands.

Even for some of the biggest sports, international student athletes are the backbone of growing college sports and the NCAA as a consumable product for fans. There is no better case than ice hockey. Quinnipiac boasts nationally-ranked squads in both the men’s and women’s game — a feat that would not be possible without international players.

The current ECAC Champion women’s ice hockey team is built on these international students. The highlights include senior forward Kahlen Lamarche of Sudbury, Ontario, who broke the Bobcats’ single-season goal record in the 2025-2026 season, and junior goaltender Felicia Frank of

Falköping, Sweden, who broke the single-season save record in that same season. Rounding out the 2026-27 roster are 13 international athletes, including Lamarche and Frank. On the men’s side, there are 14 international student athletes ahead of the upcoming season, including the two goaltenders expected to vie for the starting role.

Beyond Quinnipiac, other NCAA ice hockey coaches have already expressed their displeasure regarding the bill. University of Connecticut men’s ice hockey head coach Mike Cavanaugh expressed his displeasure by drawing comparison to how professional leagues like MLB and the NHL do not have specific international player caps.

“I don’t think you’d do it at the professional level,” Cavanaugh said in a press conference Sept. 15. “I don’t know why we’d do it in college.”

If the amendment is passed as is, fans have speculated that a multitude of sports quality could be affected. International student athlete limitations may halt the NCAA as a legitimate development league for sports like women’s and men’s ice hockey. Other sports, like tennis, may need a complete overhaul in the recruiting process. Across NCAA Division I in 2023, 64% of men’s tennis players are international students, as are 61% of women’s, per the NCAA’s findings.

The bill found some support on social media.

“Sounds like a great bill. American tax dollars should not be funding international students,” Paul Moore said on X.

Others denounced the move, questioning its relevancy. Others still suggested keeping politics out of sports entirely.

Regardless of public opinion, the NCAA will await Congress’s decision on the proposal.



K-pop: Music genre vs. multimedia sensation

By **JUSTIN LENDA**
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It’s as if, seemingly out of nowhere, K-pop showed up and became one of the world’s most prominent and almost pervasive genres of music recently. It emerged from its relative niche. It was never unpopular, but fans of K-pop were once more likely to be looked down upon for listening to it. Now, it has become one of the most mainstream obsessions I have seen, and there seems to be little explanation why.

K-pop is a loose genre, almost as loose as our own pop genre, since it is simply Korean popular music. The name originated in J-pop, which is Japanese pop music. K-pop is characterized not only by its language but by its synth-pop backing tracks and emphasis on group artists.

Modern K-pop draws inspiration from Western music and culture. The music has also recently been designed to appeal to that audience. K-pop is reminiscent of the pop/hip-hop genre of the late 1990s, similar to the boy bands and girl groups of the time.

K-pop has existed for a long time, but modern K-pop would never have existed without Western influence. Following the Korean War, some U.S. troops stayed in the country, bringing many of their musical traditions over. The Korean people took influence from the music they heard and ended up incorporating that more American sound into their own music. By the 1990s, K-pop had absorbed all of the modernism of American hip-hop, EDM and rock, and made it all their own.

Music is the main type of media that does not require a linguistic component to be universally enjoyed or understood. Anyone of any background, race or gender can enjoy the way a song sounds and find their own meaning in it. The words to a song are irrelevant to the music.

Despite this, with the advent of social media, K-pop took off. Now, these idols could communicate with their audience around the globe in whatever language the individual desired. That added bit of communication substantially helped K-pop take off as a genre. Not to mention, with the arrival of TikTok, people realized K-pop songs had a lot of potential to dance to — they were the same as American music in principle, after all.

The COVID-19 pandemic also pushed people further online, giving audiences opportunities to discover broader subjects with all the free time people had, and they were sharing more of their interests via social media, since there was no other way to communicate physically with people.

The K-pop shows are spectacles in and of themselves. For the idols, there is a big emphasis on their presentation and character. Idols can receive binding contracts at a young age, where they learn how to sing, dance and perform, as well as learn other languages and market themselves. The shows feature heavy audiovisual effects and are big on audience interaction. Their music videos have a high budget and are usually very overdone, becoming usable for many situations on

the internet, as a meme, reaction video, whatever you need it for.

Now, K-pop is a multimedia franchise. Its music has become mainstream and is integrated into everyone’s normal life.

K-pop is all-encompassing now. There is rock, rap, ballad, metal, you name it. The genre has moved beyond its Western influence and embraced a wide range of sounds for every person’s taste.

K-pop artists have deviated massively as well. Of course, there are the popular artists, like BTS, Katseye and BLACKPINK, to name a few, but many of the individual people in these groups are not even Korean at all. K-pop has become a genre that anyone can listen to as well as perform in. And it is more than just its music, too. The children’s movie “K-Pop Demon Hunters” rose to critical acclaim. The music from the movie went on to be played on radio stations and other music streaming services worldwide, which allowed it to be enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds. Per artist, there are albums, photo cards, trading cards, reality TV shows, you name it.

What does this mean? Rock music was popular for a very long time, but it never developed as much of an independent framework as K-pop did. K-pop is its own independent entity because, even as a music genre, it does not mean anything.

K-pop is any style of music, any genre, with any intention and written about any topic. People project their own personalities onto the culture of the music they are hearing, and they make it about themselves. K-pop became its own entity because it was able to be adopted and interpreted by any individual, made into whatever the populace wanted of it. It is not unlikely this happens again with another music genre that becomes just as broad as K-pop became.

For now, K-pop remains unique in this sense. K-pop was able to become a multicultural sensation due to its universal appeal, all-encompassing topic, and spread of advertisement across all forms of media.



ILLUSTRATION BY RYLEY LEE