

Seton Hall Sports Poll

Opinion shifts on whether Paterno should have been fired

But 3 to 1 say his legacy has been damaged by the scandal

S. Orange, NJ, January 26, 2012 – When respondents were asked in November whether Penn State did the right thing in dismissing Joe Paterno, 55% said yes, with only 31% feeling he should have been allowed to retire.

A new Seton Hall Sports Poll conducted this week shows a huge shift in those feelings, with only 42% now feeling that the University did the right thing, and 40% saying he should have been allowed to retire.

But while feelings about Penn State's handling of Joe Paterno's exit may have shifted in the wake of his passing, the poll shows that by more than a 3-1 margin, Americans believe that his legacy has been damaged. 65% felt it had, while only 18% feel his legacy has not been damaged.

The poll was conducted among 1,108 randomly selected people across the country. The poll has a margin of error of 3%.

"While opinion has shifted on the manner of his departure, people are clear about his legacy being damaged," noted Rick Gentile, director of the poll, which is conducted by the Sharkey Institute.

SUPER BOWL TRAILS ECONOMY AND GOP RACE FOR NATIONAL ATTENTION

The poll also asked Americans what they were paying the most attention to, and in that case, the economy led with 40%, followed by the Republican presidential race at 32%, with the Super Bowl coming in at 17%. The Middle East attracted 6%.

When asked last year in the days leading up to the game, unrest in Egypt led with 38%, while the Super Bowl drew 23% and the economy 22%.

"That's a big jump for the economy being more on people's minds than the game," said Gentile. "Perhaps the ongoing discourse by the GOP candidates has heightened the attention on the subject."

About Seton Hall University

For more than 150 years, Seton Hall University has been a catalyst for leadership, developing the whole student, mind, heart and spirit. Seton Hall combines the resources of a large university with the personal attention of a small liberal arts college. Its attractive suburban campus is only 14 miles from New York City, with the wealth of

employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities the city offers. Seton Hall is a Catholic university that embraces students of all races and religions, challenging each to better the world through integrity, compassion and a commitment to serving others. For more information, visit www.shu.edu.

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The poll results:

1. Which of these news stories are you paying the most attention to: the upcoming Super Bowl, the Republican presidential race, the problems in the Middle East, or the condition of the U.S. economy?

1. Super Bowl	17
2. Republican race	32
3. Middle East	6
4. Economy	40

2. Do you think former Penn State football coach Joe Paterno's legacy has been damaged by how he dealt with the child sex abuse allegations against his former assistant coach?

1. Yes	65
2. No	18
3. Somewhat	5
4. Don't know/	12

3. Do you think Penn State University was right in firing Coach Paterno or should he have been allowed to retire at the end of the season?

1. Right in firing	42
2. Should have let him retire	40
3. Don't know/	18