

1 **Faculty Senate Resolution on COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement for Morehead**  
2 **State University**

3 **Whereas other Kentucky academic institutions have moved to require**  
4 **vaccinations on campus for all students and employees,**

5 **Whereas the Faculty Senate at Morehead State University (MSU) recognizes**  
6 **vaccination as the leading prevention strategy to protect individuals from**  
7 **SARS-CoV-2, commonly known as COVID-19,**

8 **Whereas in a recent Faculty Senate poll (194 respondents), 77.8% were in**  
9 **favor of mandatory vaccination of students, staff, and faculty,**

10 **Let it be RESOLVED that the faculty proposes that MSU initiates a**  
11 **requirement of full vaccination of all students, faculty, and staff by the**  
12 **earliest practical date.** The Senate proposes that exemptions be made available  
13 for faculty, staff, and students of MSU who do not work or study on-campus, or  
14 who have documented medical conditions or bona fide religious beliefs that  
15 would justify an exemption.

16 MSU is in the eighteenth month of COVID impacts on our operations. The Delta  
17 variant of SARS-CoV-2 has proven to be much more contagious than previous  
18 variants, which has resulted in significant increases in cases in the region,<sup>1</sup> state,<sup>2</sup>  
19 and country.<sup>3</sup> While various mitigation strategies have proven effective at  
20 decreasing the spread of infection, the CDC “Guidance for Institutions of Higher  
21 Education (IHEs)”<sup>4</sup> dated July 23, 2021 states the following:

- 22 1. “IHE administrators can help protect students, faculty, and staff and slow  
23 the spread of COVID-19 by encouraging vaccinations...”  
24 2. “IHEs where all students, faculty, and staff are **fully** vaccinated...can  
25 return to full capacity in-person learning without requiring or  
26 recommending masking or physical distancing for people who are fully  
27 vaccinated.”  
28 3. In cases where the IHE community is not fully vaccinated the IHE  
29 “requires decision making to protect” those who are unvaccinated.

30 In short, according to the CDC guidance “**vaccination is the leading prevention**  
31 **strategy to protect individuals**

32 **from COVID-19 disease and end the COVID-19 pandemic.”** Furthermore,  
33 “current COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States are safe and  
34 effective, widely accessible in the U.S., and available at no cost to all people  
35 living in the U.S.” The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine has now been fully  
36 approved by the FDA.<sup>5</sup>

37 As a model for the community, MSU should be leading the way in dealing with  
38 the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, vaccine requirements have been shown to  
39 increase rates even over voluntary incentives.<sup>6</sup> As expected, other colleges and  
40 universities are responding by adding vaccine requirements for faculty, staff,  
41 and/or students with the number now reaching 896, according to the *Chronicle of*  
42 *Higher Education*. This includes 437 public institutions with 226 requiring all  
43 students and employees to be vaccinated.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the *Association of*  
44 *American Medical Colleges*<sup>8</sup> along with almost 60 other organizations, including  
45 the *American College Physicians*,<sup>9</sup> support required COVID-19 vaccines. The  
46 Supreme Court denied a request without comment by students at Indiana  
47 University challenging the university's vaccine requirement on constitutional  
48 grounds and allowed the requirement to continue.<sup>10</sup> In Kentucky, Berea,  
49 Bellarmine, and Transylvania require all students and employees to be  
50 vaccinated.<sup>7</sup>

51 Finally, we at MSU know that in-person, on-campus engagement between  
52 students, faculty, and staff is critical to student success. Additionally, the COVID  
53 pandemic has resulted in significant financial impacts for MSU, which will only  
54 worsen with another suspension of on-campus operations. A vaccine requirement  
55 is an important tool to continue in-person, on-campus student engagement.

56 References (all accessed on September 10, 2021)

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