

**Faculty Senate Joint Resolution (main academic campus and Health Science Center) on
COVID-19 Guidelines for Fall 2021**

Whereas the Faculty Senate of the University of Texas at Tyler is dedicated to the shared, critical goal of keeping our institution open during the pandemic to best serve the needs of our community and citizens;

Whereas the Faculty Senate of University of Texas at Tyler is firmly committed to student success, outstanding research and instruction, and community service;

Whereas experts estimate the new Delta variant's transmissibility may be at least two-fold higher with much greater hospitalization and severe illness than the original COVID-19 virus¹ and appropriate, scientifically-justified action is essential to keeping our institutions open;

Whereas the county data provided by the CDC places Smith County in the highest risk category for transmission of COVID-19 and 53% of the population 12 and older have not been fully vaccinated²;

Whereas forecasters at the University of Texas at Austin COVID-19 Modeling Consortium concluded recently that most regions of the state are headed back to the capacity-busting hospitalization rates of January 2021 if abating measures, such as masking and social distancing, are not widely implemented;

Whereas many classrooms and other facilities used for academic purposes such as advising do not permit proper social distancing for faculty, staff, students, and visitors;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control is recommending that areas of high transmission of COVID-19 resume mask-wearing indoors;

Whereas the University is being constrained in its protective and preventive measures by current state-level policies; now, therefore, be it

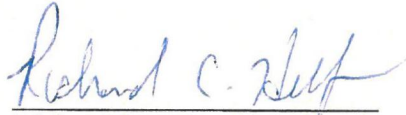
Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of the University of Texas at Tyler:

1. believes individual UT-System institutions should be given wide discretion in implementing pandemic policies based on their best professional, scientific judgment of the needs of their students, faculty, and staff based on local health conditions, public health standards, and sound scientific advice and evidence.

¹ Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>; accessed 8/9/2021;

² Source: https://tabexternal.dshs.texas.gov/t/THD/views/COVID-19VaccineinTexasDashboard/Summary?:origin=card_share_link&:embed=y&:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y; accessed 8/9/2021

2. urges that UT-System institutions actively engage in shared governance with all their stakeholders in developing and adopting appropriate and effective scientifically-supported policies to combat COVID-19 and share “best practices” across member institutions in coordination with UT-System leadership.



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