

August 13, 2021

Board of Regents, State of Iowa:

With knowledge of communications being prepared from faculty to be forwarded to the board's office, and expressions of concern sent directly to us from the Iowa State University community, the Iowa State University Faculty Senate Executive Board adds its support to calls from faculty 1) to require all members of Iowa's Regent universities - faculty, staff, and students - to be vaccinated against COVID-19 2) for additional mitigation strategies of face-coverings to be required for in-person, on-campus activity, and 3) for the reinstatement of procedures for faculty to request alternative work arrangements.

The national and local situation regarding the positivity rates and spread of COVID-19 is very different from that observed in May, and the recommendations and attitude towards the use of face-coverings and other transmission mitigation strategies continue to change in response to new information about the disease. Rapidly increasing cases of the more infectious Delta variant continue to pose a significant health risk, particularly for those who are unvaccinated and those who are vaccinated but immunocompromised.

Iowa State University is an institution with a central mission in advancing science and technology. It is the expectation of the faculty that the Board of Regents will act on scientifically-based health information when it establishes policies and procedures that affect the health and wellbeing of all who are part of the Regents system. The Faculty Senate asks that the Board of Regents uphold its moral obligation to ensure the health and safety of the entire campus community and allow well-considered, scientifically supported, and immediate mitigation strategies in this time of an ongoing global pandemic. Not doing so increases the health risks for all at the university, reduces our abilities to perform our responsibilities in teaching and research, and negatively impacts our standing as a global leader in science and technology.

Andrea S, Wheeler, President
Iowa State University Faculty Senate