

***Resolution of the University of Florida Faculty Senate,
representing the faculty of the University of Florida, opposing statewide restrictions
that limit COVID-19 public health mitigation measures***

Be it here declared that the University of Florida Faculty Senate joins the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates in opposing statewide restrictions on COVID-19 public health mitigation measures:

ACFS Opposes statewide restriction or legislation that limits public health mitigation measures in the State University System during a global pandemic

Whereas, the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS) is charged with advising the Chancellor of the State University System (SUS), the Board of Governors, the State Board of Education, the Legislature, the Governor and other officials and organizations involved in the establishment of policies, administration, or funding of public higher education in Florida, and

Whereas, as of March 9, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis declared a Public Health Emergency in the State of Florida that lasted until May 3, 2021, and current infection and hospitalization levels are in excess of those observed during that time period; and

Whereas, all counties in the State of Florida have high community transmission rates of Covid-19 as of August 10th, 2021; and

Whereas, Florida is currently the national epicenter of the Delta variant, a much more infectious and easily transmissible version of the virus that can infect and be spread by even fully vaccinated individuals, and therefore poses a special threat to faculty with underlying health conditions and unvaccinated children; and

Whereas, as of July 27, 2021, the CDC added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear masks in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission and public health experts overwhelmingly agree that there are several mitigation strategies that would be effective in controlling the spread of COVID-19 that are currently restricted by executive orders of the Florida Governor (i.e., EO 21-102) or state legislation (SB 2006); and

Whereas, the Florida SUS institutions are returning to in-person classroom settings in the fall semester 2021 using classroom configurations that will not permit social distancing; and

Whereas, multiple peer-reviewed studies support the use of masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and found no adverse effects on those wearing masks for extended amounts of time (CDC Corona Virus Masking Science)

Whereas, public health decisions are best made locally through the action of the individual Boards of Trustees and University administrators based on public health metrics during a pandemic that is not restricted by statewide legislation that ties the hands of leaders, and

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48 **Whereas**, the Florida SUS institutions have an obligation to protect the health and well-being of
49 their faculty, students, staff, and surrounding communities; and
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51 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates petition
52 Governor Ron DeSantis to end Executive Order 21-102 with its limitations on local mitigation
53 actions to allow individual Universities to decide how to protect students, staff, faculty and
54 administration in the upcoming fall semester. and members of the Florida Legislature to
55 prioritize the health and safety of the State Universities in Florida and repeal or amend SB 2006.