



Statement from the University Committee
September 13, 2021

We, as members of the University Committee (UC), are writing to describe shared governance input into [UW-Madison's fall 2021 COVID-19 response](#). The Chancellor and/or Provost attended every one of our meetings during the summer (a total of 9 meetings) to discuss COVID-19 issues. At these meetings, we regularly shared concerns we have been hearing (masking, testing and indoor ventilation systems). The UC advocated for safety measures such as a mask mandate and testing of unvaccinated students and employees; we were pleased to see that the campus made decisions to take action in a number of respects, including both of these areas. Furthermore, Eric Sandgren, as the UC chair, participated in additional meetings to evaluate the changing situation and develop a timely campus response.

At its heart, pandemic safety is essentially population health. Public Health Service officials make recommendations designed to protect the greatest number of people, and those recommendations should be followed. In the case of campus policy, faculty and staff experts are a large part of the team that decides (on an ongoing basis) what steps we should employ to keep our campus community safe.

The high rate of vaccination among faculty, staff, students, and the surrounding Dane County population puts us in a favorable public health position. Yet, a critical part of the safety process is recognizing that not everyone will be protected adequately by these general guidelines. We believe the campus must identify who that is and develop additional approaches to ensure that they, their families and the broader community can be kept safe. Appropriate policy must include both public health recommendations for everyone, coupled with a safety net that protects and supports those who face additional challenges. Finding the balance requires good information. We appreciate the personal stories and concerns we have received so far. Please continue to communicate to the [Administration](#) and the [University Committee](#) your concerns so that we can be certain they are included in the ongoing conversations.

Members of the University Committee
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