



Faculty Senate

Resolution on COVID-19 Guidelines for Tarleton State University for Fall 2021 August 30, 2021

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that the new Delta variant is more transmissible than the original COVID-19 virus and recommends that areas with high transmission of COVID-19 resume mask-wearing indoors regardless of vaccination status;

Whereas data provided by the CDC places Erath, Tarrant, McLennan, Ellis, and Brazos counties in high risk categories for transmission of COVID-19;

Whereas data from the Texas Department of State Health Services reveals that the fully-vaccinated rate for Erath, Tarrant, McLennan, Ellis, and Brazos counties is currently far below the national average;

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 people do not resume masking and social distancing;

Whereas Tarleton State University is prohibited from requiring masks or vaccinations for faculty, staff, and students who are in face-to-face classes and meetings on campus;

Whereas Tarleton State University is being constrained in its protective and preventative measures by forces outside of its control;

Whereas Tarleton State University campus sites in Stephenville, Fort Worth, Waco, Bryan, and Midlothian concentrate individuals from diverse locations with different health statuses and vaccination rates, creating high risk of exposure to viruses;

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

Whereas as of August 13, 2021, more than 730 institutions of higher education across the United States require that students and/or employees be vaccinated against COVID-19 and that the aforementioned vaccination requirement has been upheld by federal courts, ruling that Universities have discretion to act reasonably in protecting the public's health; and

Whereas as of August 23, 2021, the FDA fully approved a COVID-19 vaccine that is deemed safe and effective for individuals 16 and up; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Faculty Senate of Tarleton State University:

1. Strongly urges that administrators, faculty, staff, and students at Tarleton State

University be allowed to exercise the long-standing principle of shared governance, and work together to determine the appropriate COVID-19 policies for its campus sites, based on sound scientific evidence, and thus better ensure the public health; and

2. Believes all decisions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic should be left to the individual institutions based on sound scientific evidence, local health conditions, and public health standards.

Record of Votes

Yea: 23

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0