

From: [Susan Byrne](#)
To: [Joseph P. Filippi](#)
Subject: Vaccination requirement for university students
Date: Thursday, August 19, 2021 7:24:27 AM

Dear Members of the Nevada State Board of Health,

I am a faculty member at UNLV, and I urge you in the strongest possible way to require vaccinations for students.

Teaching remotely over the past two years has shown me just how valuable the in-person classroom is: I watched students melt into the screen and fail to realize their potential for serious work. Despite my efforts, and despite their actual wish to excel, most students are disadvantaged by the remote teaching version. It is just too easy to slip away into the virtual landscape.

Nonetheless, for this fall semester, without any vaccine mandate for students, and knowing that at best, half of the 20+ person group in my course would be vaccinated (per current rates of vaccination in age groups), fear for my life and health won out over that sure knowledge that remote teaching is a poor substitute for the real thing. Out of fear that being in a poorly-ventilated classroom designed for 22 students, packed full with that half-vaccinated group of 21, I found myself reverting to a request to teach remotely. NSHE reneged on its responsibility to protect me, so I had to protect myself.

My students will once again be disadvantaged, because I want to stay alive to teach again in subsequent semesters, to do more research, to write more books, to love my husband for as long as feasible. That trade-off was horribly unnecessary. With mandated vaccines, the numbers once again move in the direction of safety. Without that mandate, the system is risking all of our lives.

Please take action to mandate vaccines for all members of our academic community.

Thank you,
Susan Byrne
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