August 5, 2021

President Robbins and Provost Folks:

The undersigned faculty of the University of Arizona implore our leaders to take whatever actions are required to protect the health and safety of our students, staff and faculty in the face of the rapidly exploding danger posed by COVID-19, in particular the spread of the delta variant through our community.

We urge you to issue a mandate requiring mask-wearing in classes and public spaces at the UA. In the absence of a vaccination mandate (which we would also favor), a mask mandate is our best hope to limit the spread of COVID, while still allowing us to move forward with in-person instruction in the upcoming Fall semester.

Universities serve our state by creating and transmitting knowledge, including the scientific knowledge demanded by the COVID crisis. Our best public health experts agree that masks are a critical tool in defusing the spread of COVID, all the more so in the absence of universal vaccination.

We urge you to assert the right of the University to impose conditions on in-person instruction that stand the best chance of mitigating the spread of COVID. Much as many K-12 school boards have done, you should act to ensure the safety of the university community.

We ask that you act now, before the Fall semester starts, so that faculty and staff can safely do what they are employed to do, namely, to create knowledge and to educate our students.

Respectfully,

The Faculty of the University of Arizona | PLEASE FOLLOW LINK TO SIGNATURES: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BvPfK4y-r8Mz8dNl-MG3ZrChJndh6T2jahIXMEuOqKI/edit