

From: Gross, Louis J <lgross@tennessee.edu>
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 10:36 PM
To: dplowman <dplowman@utk.edu>
Cc: Scoggins, Matthew <scoggins@utk.edu>; Spurgeon, Shawn Lamont <sspurgeo@utk.edu>; Skolits, Gary J <gskolits@utk.edu>; Schussler, Elisabeth Ellen <eschussl@utk.edu>; Gross, Louis J <lgross@tennessee.edu>
Subject: Our discussion last week regarding Fall Planning

Chancellor Plowman,

Thank you and Chief of Staff Scoggins for taking the time to meet with the Senate leadership last week. At one point during this discussion, you raised the question of what our “asks” were. We are concerned that faculty are currently starting to plan for the fall without clarity on important issues that may impact their course policies or lab practices. Therefore, here is a list of things we suggest be messaged to the campus community to assist faculty and students in making Fall preparations.

1. In alignment with our Vols help Vols messaging and that of the CDC for campuses not requiring vaccination, we would like to see messaging about the impact of personal vaccination choices on campus community members who may be immunocompromised or caregivers of those who are immunocompromised or unable to be vaccinated. This includes strong messaging about the importance of unvaccinated members of the community continuing to wear masks.
2. We also suggest that a message of UT organizing around a philosophy of everyone being fully vaccinated may be received negatively by many faculty. Faculty will want to know what incentives will be put in place to encourage vaccination, as well as what policies will be pursued should an increase in cases occur this fall.
3. We also suggest specific clarity and communication to faculty regarding:
 - a. what data will be collected on vaccination among employees and students, when it will be available, and any constraints on the collection of additional data by faculty to enhance classroom safety.
 - b. whether faculty have authority and support for requiring masks

and social distancing in their classes. This may be because of classroom configuration, health of instructor or extended family, vaccination percent in class, or concerns of students in the class community.

c. faculty authority to decide all pedagogical aspects of the courses that they teach and that technology-enhanced approaches are encouraged as appropriate to the class.

Finally, we did not have time to discuss issues regarding firearms on campus, but we suggest messaging to the campus on the legal impact on current campus practices for firearm concealed carry (e.g. registration with UTPD is necessary) of any changes necessary due to recent State legislative action.

We'd be happy to discuss any of these with you or members of the Cabinet if you would like.

Stay well,
Lou

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Louis J. Gross (he, him, his)
Chancellor's Professor and Alvin and Sally Beaman Distinguished
Professor
of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Mathematics
Director Emeritus, National Institute for Mathematical and Biological
Synthesis (NIMBioS.org)
Director, The Institute for Environmental Modeling
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From: dplowman <dplowman@utk.edu>

Date: Thursday, June 24, 2021 at 5:30 AM

To: "Gross, Louis J" <lgross@tennessee.edu>

Cc: "Scoggins, Matthew" <scoggins@utk.edu>, "Spurgeon,

Shawn Lamont" <sspurgeo@utk.edu>, "Skolits, Gary J"
<gskolits@utk.edu>, "Schussler, Elisabeth Ellen"
<eschussl@utk.edu>

Subject: RE: Our discussion last week regarding Fall Planning

Lou,

Thanks for your suggestions. We will consider these as we prepare communications with faculty in preparation for return to campus.

Donde



Donde Ashmos Plowman, PhD

Chancellor

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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