

Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association
Representative Council Special Meeting - Masking Mandate for Spring Semester, 2022

Minutes

March 15, 2022

11:30am - 1:00pm via Zoom

Present: Allende, Alvarez-Galván, Anders, Benoe, Birca, Blacksher, Burman, Cannon, Christ, Coreas, Crichlow, Daland, DePaola, EcheverriaNewberry, Ellwood, Engisch, Espy, Esslinger, Ezzell, Foisia, Greco, Greenberg, Grimstad, Heredia, Hernandez, Horton, Howell, Komrosky, Kunkler, Lackey, Lancaster, Landeros, Lawton, Leader, Lopez (Alixandria), Lopez (Audra), Martinez, McLaughlin, Meyer, Miho, Nakamatsu, Nakamura, Ngo, Nixon, Padilla, Pascoe, Pellitteri, Pulido, Quinn, Richardson, Rivera, Rogus, Roueintan, Solodjagin, Springfield, Staylor, Straw, Thay, Uranga, Uyeki, Wasson, Wolf, Wood, Woolery

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:39am.

II. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda (Wolf), seconded (Alvarez-Galván). The agenda was approved: 54 in favor, 1 opposed.

III. New Business - Discussion Item

A. Masking Requirement for Faculty and Students in Spring 2022

The meeting was called for the single item of reconsidering the mask mandate. Emily explained that the faculty and the FA Executive Board are split on the issue of continuing the mask mandate. Emily provided a ground rule of using chat to alternate pro and con arguments.

A motion was made by Alvarez-Galván: Masking for faculty and students in the classroom and support centers, including counseling, labs, and library, is optional as determined by the instructor. The motion was seconded by Howell. Wolf (Physics) requested that a two-thirds vote be required to pass the motion and that the two-thirds be calculated based on the number of representatives casting votes. Horton moved that, in debate, each comment be limited to 2 minutes, and Alvarez-Galván seconded the motion. The motion passed: 51 in favor; 6 opposed; 3 abstained.

Debate ensued about whether to consider a motion to modify the side letter.

A motion was made that masking for faculty and students in the classroom and support centers, including counseling, labs, and library, is optional as determined by the instructor (Alvarez-Galván), and seconded (Howell).

Debate began per established ground rule of alternating pros and cons.

Alvarez-Galván (executive board) provided a pro argument that each faculty member has the right to make decisions for their own classrooms and other areas. Anders made a motion to

amend the motion by striking in its entirety and substituting it with the following: *The side letter that was signed with the district in Fall 2021 mandating faculty and students to wear masks through Spring 2022 will be honored.* Greco (executive board) seconded the motion.

Debate ensued on substituting the amended motion for the original motion and followed the established ground rule of alternating pro and con arguments. Departments that made arguments against the motion were Theater Arts, Math & Computer Science, and History. The arguments from these departments included masks having a negative impact on the quality of instruction and on the curriculum in some areas of Arts including Performing Arts, that the cases in Los Angeles County and surrounding regions are decreasing, and Los Angeles County is no longer requiring masking indoors. Departments that made arguments in support of the amended motion were Geography & Political Science, Learning Assistance, and Physics. Arguments provided by these departments included faculty may be made decisions about teaching on campus in the spring semester based on the side letter agreement mask mandate, students registered for spring classes with the information that masks are required and may not be comfortable continuing taking their on campus classes without the requirement, and statistical information from prior variant transmission studies support mandatory masking.

Horton called for the vote. Alvarez-Galván seconded. The motion to substitute the original motion with the amended motion passed: 41 in favor, 17 opposed, 1 abstained.

Debate ensued on the substituted motion and followed the established ground rule. Departments that made arguments against the motion included Radiologic Technology and Dance. Arguments included that dance is difficult when wearing masks, the county has relaxed masking requirements, and other employee groups are no longer being required to wear masks indoors on campus. Departments that made arguments in support were Fine Arts and Library. Esslinger (executive board) spoke in support of passing the motion because the district has only been willing to implement health and safety mandates that are in accordance with State or County mandates rather than based on best practices and recommendations put forth by public health and occupational health and safety agencies. Additionally, Esslinger pointed out that faculty with family members who have health vulnerabilities cannot ask for accommodations because the law does not protect that situation.

The motion passed: 35 in favor, 28 opposed, 1 abstained. The side letter agreement remains in place.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:57pm.