

Dear Jordan Hass,

I'm writing to express support for continuing/extending/renewing the COVID-19 vaccination mandate for students at all NSHE institutions. With the coming wave of Omicron variant infections, now is no time to let up on pandemic safety measures. NSHE faculty, staff, and students are counting on returning to fully vaccinated campuses after the winter break. Any lapse in student (or employee) vaccination requirements that are already being implemented will cause widespread confusion and chaos and would make our campuses less safe.

If the vaccination mandate lapses, some students will decide to disenroll from in-person classes, and faculty will feel less comfortable returning to 100% in-person instruction. This could lead to class schedule disruptions and impede student progress.

NSHE has relied on medical experts and regulatory bodies like the Board of Health to determine responses to the pandemic. The State Board of Health is charged by statute to make decisions based on medical and scientific evidence. We should continue to leave decisions about vaccinations to the medical experts appointed to the Board of Health.

Although there is a vocal minority against COVID-19 vaccinations and even other simple precautions like face coverings, the overwhelming majority of the NSHE community is in favor of using all valid means, including mandatory vaccinations to protect our safety on campus. Prior to the Board of Health emergency regulation in August 2021, over 1270 faculty members, staff, students, and family members signed a [petition](#) in favor of mandatory student vaccinations and other appropriate measures. The Nevada Faculty Alliance is [on record](#) in support of both student and faculty vaccination.

As of December 16, 2021, as reported by "The Chronicle of Higher Education," 1123 colleges and universities nationwide have mandated vaccination against Covid for students, employees, or both. Among those with student vaccination mandates are the University of Utah, Utah State University, University of Oregon, Oregon State University, University of California, and California State University.

Our understanding is that the role of the Legislative Commission in reviewing regulations under NRS 233B.0618 and 233B.067 is to determine whether the regulations fall within the authority and legislative intent of the statutes for the agency, namely the State Board of Health. NRS 439.150, 439.200 and

441A.120 give very broad authority to the Board of Health on public health measures. Political considerations should not come into play at the expense of the health and safety of our students.

Sincerely,

James Woodbridge