



## Call for a More Rational and Compassionate University Covid-19 Policy

Given the University's latest report to the EPC (on Monday, September 19) that this semester between 80-90 students and 20-25 faculty and staff have reported positive Covid-19 test results,

And given that Middlesex county is [reporting a 9% positivity](#) rate,

And given that between [400-500 people](#) are dying of Covid-19 each day in the United States,

And given that students with Covid-19 and their roommates are reportedly being told to come to class,

And given that there is no longer mandatory testing on campus,

To combat the spread of infection to our most vulnerable community members and to minimize classroom disruption so that we may best fulfill our pedagogical mission,

The Wesleyan University Chapter of the AAUP insists that the University undertake the following measures:

- Mandated student self-reporting; and
- Reinstatement of the defunct Covid-19 dashboard with weekly updates about self-reported Covid-19 case numbers, including data on staff, faculty, and student cases; and
- Provision of the new bivalent boosters on campus for all students; and
- Requirement that students testing positive for Covid-19 follow CDC guidelines, which state that those testing positive should isolate themselves for 5 days and then wear masks and social distance until day 10.

Additionally, at the start of each new semester, while Covid-19 remains a pandemic (as per the [WHO and CDC](#)), we ask that the University:

- Mandate student self-testing prior to arrival on campus; and
- Require masking for at least the first two weeks of class until we have a clear picture of the number of cases on campus and community spread.

We acknowledge that learning and teaching in masks presents challenges. But it also permits an uninterrupted classroom experience while protecting the most vulnerable in our community. The AAUP's policy recommendations for shared governance invest the faculty with primary responsibility in all educational matters, including "methods of instruction," and this principle is codified in Wesleyan's by-laws (Chapter IV, section 3). Consequently, we strongly encourage this approach at the start of any semester for the duration of the time that Covid-19 remains a pandemic.

The Wesleyan AAUP chapter emphasizes that these are common sense measures, unexceptional and in line with practices by local peer institutions (including Smith College, Amherst College, Williams College, Wellesley College, and Trinity College). They rest upon values shared by the entire Wesleyan community: to protect the most vulnerable among us, and to facilitate the least disruption to in-person instruction on our campus.