

# Report on COVID-19 Survey\*

## August 2022

Faculty Senate Ad Hoc COVID-19 Committee

### Introduction

The 2022 COVID-19 survey was administered to LSU faculty electronically using Qualtrics between August 10 and August 17, 2022. Following some background information, the following prompt and mitigation options were given:

With the understanding that the Administration has rescinded the COVID-19 vaccine mandate for faculty and students, removed remote accommodations for faculty with enhanced health vulnerabilities to COVID-19 personally or within their families, plans to continue use of in-classroom HEPA filters, and is scheduling classes at 100% of classroom capacity, which of the following options would you like to see LSU implement for the upcoming semester? (You may select multiple options)

1. A campus indoor mask mandate when the positivity rate in East Baton Rouge Parish exceeds 10%.
2. Instructor authority to require masking in individual classes when the positivity rate in East Baton Rouge Parish exceeds 10%.
3. Instructor authority to require masking in individual classes regardless of the current positivity rate.
4. Meaningful COVID-19 surveillance testing for students in addition to the current wastewater testing program, which only covers students in on-campus housing (roughly 8300 students).
5. Instructor choice of teaching modality (remote, hybrid, or in-person) when community transmission levels or East Baton Rouge Parish positivity rates exceed a specified level.
6. A public schedule of escalating mitigation measures tied to community transmission rates to be determined by the Health & Medical Advisory Committee (HMAC)—such as triggers for mandatory indoor masking, cancellation of non-educational in-person campus activities, etc.—in coordination with faculty representatives.

A seventh option was given, allowing for open-ended written comments.

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\*Thanks to Edward Shihadeh for assistance interpreting the response rate and quantitative results.

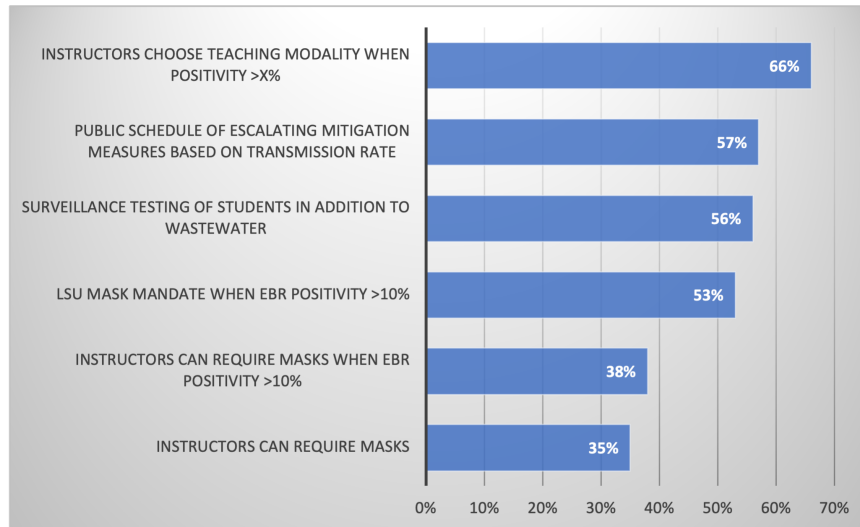
## Response Rate

There were 466 respondents validated as LSU faculty, giving a response rate of 27%. This is a high rate of response given that the survey was administered in the busy time just prior to the commencement of fall classes, and because the survey had to be distributed via Senators rather than delivered directly to faculty members.

## Results

### Quantitative

Quantitative results are compiled in this chart.



53% of respondents expressed support for Mitigation 1, 38% for Mitigation 2, and so on.

Several valuable insights into faculty attitudes toward COVID-19 mitigation on campus can be inferred from these results.

1. 2/3 of faculty favor having the autonomy to choose the mode of instruction for courses (Mitigation 5). The strong support for this mitigation measure is perhaps unsurprising, given that just this approach was taken to teaching in the pandemic in 2020-2021 and that this autonomy is arguably already a right of faculty codified in PS-29.
2. Faculty are split on Mitigations 1, 4, and 6, with slight majorities expressing support for these measures.
3. Faculty support is weakest for allowing individual instructors to require masking in courses (Mitigations 2 and 3). Perhaps this reflects faculty reluctance to create conflict between themselves and individual students by “forcing” masking in class.
4. Representativeness in self-selected samples is always a concern. Faculty *in favor* of COVID mitigations may be more likely to respond. However, faculty *not in favor* of COVID mitigation may also be motivated to respond. If either were solely the case, we might observe a monotonic distribution in which survey responses were all skewed negatively or positively. But here we observe considerable variability in the result, where the respondents seem to exercise nuance in strongly supporting some measures while rejecting others.

## **Qualitative**

Written comments were submitted by 19% of the 466 respondents validated as LSU faculty. Of those comments, 60% were in favor of additional mitigation measures on campus, 24% were opposed to additional mitigation measures on campus, and 16% were neutral on the question of additional mitigation measures on campus.