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Resolution on the University of Mississippi Covid-19 Vaccination Policy

WHEREAS, Covid-19 is currently a world-wide pandemic, spreading illness and death across the Great State of Mississippi, these United States of America, and the world; and

WHEREAS, currently, there is no university-wide Covid-19 vaccination mandate; and

WHEREAS, students at the University of Mississippi are already required to be vaccinated and/or provide proof of immunity against other communicable diseases, such as measles, mumps and rubella; and

WHEREAS, the reason for such a requirement, as per the University Health Services department, is to prevent outbreaks of such communicable diseases; and

WHEREAS, the numbers of Covid-19 infections and hospitalizations in the state of Mississippi have resulted in shortages of ICU beds and medical personnel; and

WHEREAS, vaccines are the most effective measure to protect against Covid-19 infections, hospitalizations, and deaths; and

WHEREAS, a Covid-19 vaccine has been approved for use by the FDA; and

WHEREAS, the state of Mississippi has one of the lowest Covid-19 vaccination rates in the country; and

WHEREAS, the University of Mississippi has returned to face-to-face instruction in the fall of 2021; and

WHEREAS, the conjunction of these factors is likely to result in student and faculty absenteeism in face-to-face courses because of Covid-19 infections, quarantines, and caregiving responsibilities and in Covid-19-related hospitalizations and deaths among students, faculty, staff, their households, including children under 12 not eligible for vaccines, and other community members; and

WHEREAS, the University of Mississippi has an obligation to protect the life, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, over 1,000 U.S. colleges, universities, and university systems require Covid-19 vaccinations; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the University of Mississippi Faculty Senate calls on the administration of the University of Mississippi to:

Initiate a Covid-19 vaccination mandate for all students, faculty, and staff, with exemptions allowed by law and policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the University of Mississippi Faculty Senate calls on other representative bodies at the university, such as the Staff Council and the Associated Student Body, to support this Resolution.