

SMU Faculty Senate Resolution on Requiring Face Coverings

June 24, 2020

Whereas we are in the midst of a pandemic that has killed over 100,000 Americans, and over 400,000 people worldwide; and

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and the majority consensus of epidemiologists have determined that “COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through [airborne] respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks,” and that the regular and conscientious use of face coverings around others is a highly effective way to reduce or prevent such transmission; and

Whereas every member of the SMU community therefore has both ethical and epidemiological obligations to do so; and

Whereas for reasons of both health and education, our classrooms must be made as safe as reasonably possible, including universal use of face coverings; and

Whereas many other universities in Texas (including the [University of Texas](#), [Texas A&M](#), [Rice University](#), and TCU) and across the country are therefore requiring the use of facial coverings in class and elsewhere on campus; and

Whereas President Turner’s June 16 announcement articulated a “common-sense expectation” that “each member of the campus population will act responsibly to help protect everyone’s health and welfare by practicing social distancing, wearing face coverings, remaining vigilant to changes in individual health, and responding to temporary measures related to the pandemic – all with a spirit of cooperation;” and

Whereas expectation is nonetheless not quite requirement; and

Whereas, in a vote of nearly 400 SMU faculty members on June 17, 98% voted that face coverings should be required in class; be it therefore

RESOLVED by the SMU Faculty Senate that for the safety and wellbeing of the entire SMU community for as long as the CDC and/or Dallas County health officials recommend, facial coverings shall be required in all public spaces within university buildings, and also in outdoor spaces when six feet or more of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain.

Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/06/18/face-mask-covid-coronavirus/>

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/06/200612172200.htm>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-face-masks-what-you-need-to-know>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-mask/art-20485449>

<https://www.webmd.com/lung/coronavirus-face-masks#1>