Franklin College Senate Resolution [Executive Committee 1 September 2021]

1) WHEREAS, the Georgia State Constitution describes “protection to person and property” as “the paramount duty of government” (Article I, Section I, Paragraph II) [link];

2) And WHEREAS, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine has been approved by the FDA as of 23 August 2021 [link];

3) And WHEREAS, vaccines have long been required for first-year student residence on the campuses of the University System of Georgia, including the MMR (Mumps, Measles and Rubella), chickenpox, whooping cough, and hepatitis vaccines [link and link];

4) And WHEREAS, there is precedent for a mandatory emergency vaccination campaign at the University of Georgia following an outbreak of measles in 1990 [link];

5) And WHEREAS, the legality of university COVID-19 vaccine mandates have been upheld by the United States Supreme Court on 17 August 2021 [link];

6) And WHEREAS, CDC guidance recommends that universities with partially vaccinated populations require masks indoors and physical distancing of 6 feet in congregate settings [link];

7) And WHEREAS, current USG policy needlessly puts staff, students, faculty members, their family members, and community members at risk, as well as overburdening our already stressed hospitals and front-line medical workers;

8) And WHEREAS, vaccine and mask mandates are widespread among our peer and aspirational institutions, neighboring universities, and other public universities such as the University of Michigan system, the University of California system, and the University of North Carolina system [link];

9) It is therefore RESOLVED that the faculty senate urge the USG and UGA leadership to reopen public COVID-19 testing facilities similar to the previous facility at Legion Field, given current shortages of test kits and appointments in Athens, GA.

10) It is therefore RESOLVED that we, the faculty of Franklin College, strongly condemn the University System of Georgia's failure to mandate COVID-19 vaccinations and public masking. We call on President Morehead and Dean Dorsey to protect Franklin College students, faculty, and staff by immediately mandating vaccinations, and masks in public campus buildings.

11) It is therefore RESOLVED that if our administrators fail to act, we, the faculty of the Franklin College, assert that faculty would be acting ethically, responsibly, and in accordance with CDC guidelines by changing the modality of their delivery of instruction to protect the campus and wider communities.