

Below are responses from President Schlissel and Provost Collins to questions from Q/A at the Faculty Senate Meeting on October 4, 2021

1. Kentaro Toyama to President Schlissel: The way that you use the language of “working together with the units” suggests collaboration and close consultation with the faculty. You’ve heard today, however, that many faculty feel you are not taking in our input. What does “working together with the units” mean to you?

Working together and collaborating means engaging with SACUA, other advisory groups, and faculty in general on issues of concern. We've certainly been doing that throughout the pandemic. I've met with SACUA officers, the full SACUA, the COVID-19 Faculty Council, all 19 school and college faculties and numerous other persons and groups during the past year. Working together doesn't mean invariably doing exactly what individual faculty or advisory votes or petitions ask that we do. As for the set of resolutions, they each focused on issues where there has been lots of faculty input and discussion, and as you know the Provost and I provided detailed responses to each in the form of an email. We've done many things recommended by faculty (vaccine mandate; increased asymptomatic testing capacity, etc.), there are others still under consideration, and some where we did not agree. This is to be expected. I look forward to continuing to engage, get faculty input, share my own thoughts and continue to work together on behalf of the University.

2. Anonymous to Provost Collins: Where is the information available about the ventilation in specific classrooms? The “with very few exceptions” statement is worrying.

Information about ventilation in classrooms is posted on the Maize & Blueprint site, here: https://campusblueprint.umich.edu/uploads/classroom_hvac_information_08_30_21.pdf

'Very few exceptions' meant three out of the more than 500 classrooms on the Ann Arbor campus. These three are in the Burton Memorial Tower, and countermeasures have been taken to address ventilation for those spaces. All other classrooms meet Michigan Building Code standards and have a MERV 13 or higher air filter in place.

3. Anonymous to President Schlissel and Provost Collins: For both (answer from each, please). Yes or no: do you acknowledge that there are members of the Faculty (perhaps small in number) whose risk of adverse outcomes from COVID-19 infection is objectively and substantively severe?

President: I have not personally reviewed any requests for special accommodation, but it would not surprise me if there were faculty at elevated risk of bad outcomes if infected with COVID-19.

Provost: It is my understanding that some faculty members have received teaching accommodations based on a review of their medical documentation by medical experts. This is consistent with their having an elevated risk of adverse outcomes from infection with COVID 19.

4. Anonymous to President Schlissel and Provost Collins: Please clarify if the teaching modality of a faculty member at risk (e.g. above 65) and/or have a you chord not able to receive vaccination, to be decided at the department level?

Joint response: In the context of the President and Provost's decision to return to a primarily residential experience for our students this fall, deans of the schools and colleges were charged with implementing how we returned to work and where that work would be done, particularly teaching. This reflects our long-standing practice that deans have responsibility for the integrity and quality of the academic programs under their purview. The deans implemented teaching plans, working with department chairs, informed by medical information provided to Work Connections and analyzed by medical personnel.