



Sent by electronic mail

17 August 2021

**Dr. Suzanne Fortier**

Principal  
McGill University

**Dr. Christopher Manfredi**

Provost  
McGill University

Dear Principal Fortier & Provost Manfredi

We are writing to you, as a group of concerned faculty and instructors, about McGill's plan to prevent COVID-19 transmission on campus this fall. As you are aware, Canada is now in the middle of a 4<sup>th</sup> wave, and COVID-19 cases due to the delta variant are increasing. The delta variant is highly transmissible, capable of causing severe disease even among younger individuals, and can easily spread, even in settings with reasonably high vaccination coverage. We are seeing just how quickly the epidemiological situation can change with the increase in cases in the United States and in multiple provinces across Canada at present.

In this context, we noted recent announcements by several Canadian universities, including University of Ottawa, University of Toronto, Western University, University of Guelph, Carleton University, Queen's University, Brock University, and York University, that they will be requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination from students, staff, and faculty, as part of their efforts to protect the campus community. In addition, the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT Council) has called upon McGill University to implement a vaccine mandate.

In parallel, the Quebec government has announced a vaccination passport that would allow people who are fully vaccinated to travel abroad and access non-essential local services (e.g., gyms, bars, restaurants), a part of provincial initiatives aimed at reducing the risk of transmission in spaces with frequent and close contact. The federal government has announced vaccination requirements for federal employees and for travel via planes, trains, and ships.

**Given these developments, we urge McGill University to also implement a mandatory vaccination policy for all students, staff, and faculty who wish to participate in any on-campus activity.**

COVID-19 vaccination is the most effective tool of public health prevention currently available to protect individuals and communities from outbreaks of COVID-19 and to prevent against severe outcomes including hospitalization, death, and long-COVID. Ensuring that vaccination coverage is as high as possible before tens of thousands of members of the McGill University community gather on campus this fall is a critical component of a comprehensive Return-to-Campus plan.

Legal and biomedical experts agree that McGill not only has the legal authority to require proof of vaccination but a moral and potentially legal obligation to do so. Privacy experts agree that requiring



disclosure of vaccine status to the University is appropriate and reasonable in light of the global COVID19 pandemic, with accommodations to ensure that individuals who cannot (or choose not to) be vaccinated can access campus by providing multiple weekly SARS-CoV-2 tests.

McGill's current Return-to-Campus plan for Fall 2021 does not include a vaccination requirement, does not include routine testing, does not include improved ventilation and air filtration in those classrooms, offices and conference rooms without HVAC, does not include physical distancing in class, and does not include density reductions. Thus, McGill's plan relies almost entirely on masking to prevent transmission. While we recognize and appreciate McGill's efforts to ensure that mask requirements will remain in place this semester, we also note that strong evidence has demonstrated that layered approaches relying on multiple public health tools are necessary to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks.

The greater transmissibility of the delta variant, the relatively high proportion of 18-29 year olds who remain unvaccinated with the semester starting in 2 weeks, and the recent uptick in cases province-wide all indicate that multiple public health measures are urgently needed to prevent outbreaks on campus, as well. To ensure that all students can pursue their education in a safe environment and that all faculty, instructors, and staff can carry out their work in a safe environment, it is imperative to add vaccination, the most effective layer of public health prevention, to the Return-to-Campus plan, while continuing to maintain mask mandates.

McGill has a clear opportunity to be a community-wide leader in implementing an equitable, thoughtful vaccination requirement, and the University administration's declaration of a vaccination mandate is critical to enhancing efforts to increase vaccination coverage, especially among young adults both among our campus community and as an education leader for the entire province. The time for leadership is now with the 4<sup>th</sup> wave already underway and plans for the resumption of nearly all in-person activities in just a few short weeks.

In addition to McGill's responsibility to the University community to provide a safe working and learning environment, we also have a responsibility to the wider community to ensure that our campuses are not contributing to community spread. As requiring proof of vaccination is becoming the established standard in higher education, a failure to follow suit opens McGill to legal liability and a possible public relations disaster, in addition to placing individuals at risk of a disease that has already caused so much suffering among our communities.

Many McGill experts and representatives in the University community are eager to work with the University to design and implement a thoughtful, equitable, and socially-responsible vaccination requirement for those wishing to physically access campus this fall. By pairing a vaccination mandate with efforts to make vaccination more accessible to all, including by hosting vaccine Q&A town halls so unvaccinated individuals can ask questions and by supporting tailored and innovative pop-up vaccination clinics that can reduce barriers and enable our diverse student population to getting vaccinated on-site, we can achieve these aims together.

Vaccination remains our best tool to protect ourselves and our communities. There is still time for leaders in education to take these steps to ensure that the University has done everything in its power to keep us safe and to ensure that this semester can progress without the disruption that would result from needed to move courses on-line mid-semester. As noted above, our campuses are not closed communities,



outbreaks on campus can spill over and lead to cases at our homes, among our children and families, and in the broader community, so ensuring that vaccination coverage is as high as possible among the university community helps to protect us all.

We are connected to one another, which is why we cannot rely on individual decision-making when faced with the community-wide threat that this pandemic presents. Many of us have young children who are ineligible for vaccination and many of us are caregivers for family members including older family members at home, while others have health conditions that can predispose to more severe outcomes and even those without health conditions are at risk of long-COVID. All of us want to contribute to reducing the risk of COVID-19 among our communities and none of us want to see our communities, our students, our colleagues, or our families suffer at a time when vaccines are widely available and the evidence for their safety and effectiveness is overwhelming.

Fortunately, support for COVID-19 vaccination is high among the McGill University community and in Montreal and in Quebec, overall. Mandating vaccines, with appropriate policies that allow exempt individuals to test regularly and paired with efforts to increase vaccine access, will be an effective approach to ensuring that vaccination coverage is as high as possible as we return to campus. Requiring vaccination will also be a significant motivator for those who remain unvaccinated to reconsider this opportunity to protect themselves and, in doing so, protect us all.

We thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Please see the list of signatories who endorse this letter in the table that follows.

<b>Signatory</b>	<b>McGill Affiliation</b>
Professor Alanna Thain	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Alicia Hinarejos	Faculty of Law
Professor Alissa Koski	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health and Institute for Health and Social Policy, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Allison Christians	Faculty of Law
Professor Ananya Banerjee	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Arash Abizadeh	Department of Political Science
Professor Caroline Wagner	Department of Bioengineering, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Changhong Cao	Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Christina Wolfson	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor David Wolfson	Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Faculty of Science

Professor Derek Nystrom	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Eric Lewis	Department of Philosophy
Professor Fiona Ritchie	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Gabriella Coleman	Department of Art History and Communication Studies
Professor Gilles Paradis	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Jay S Kaufman	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Jill Baumgartner	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Joanne Liu	School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Jonas-Sébastien Beaudry	Faculty of Law and IHSP
Professor Jonathan Sterne	Department of Art History and Communication Studies, Faculty of Arts
Professor Jovan Nedić	Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Kristian Filion	Departments of Medicine and of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Madhukar Pai	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Marie Manikis	Faculty of Law
Professor Mark Goldberg	Department of Medicine, Dept of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, Department of Oncology, Bieler School of Environment
Professor Mélanie Tétreault-Friend	Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Michael Blome-Tillmann	Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
Professor Michael Hendricks	Department of Biology, Faculty of Science
Professor Nancy Mayo	Epidemiologist, Department of Medicine, School of Physical and Occupational Therapy
Professor Nicole Basta	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Nitika Pant Pai	Department of Medicine, Divisions of Clinical Epidemiology and Infectious Diseases, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Richard Gold	Faculty of Law
Professor Samuel Huberman	Department of Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Sandra Teresa Hyde	Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts
Professor Sarah Moser	Department of Geography, Faculty of Science
Professor Scott Weichenthal	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

Professor Sébastien Jodoin	Faculty of Law and Chair of the McGill Joint Senate/Board subcommittee on persons with disabilities
Professor Susan Bartlett	Faculty of Medicine, Department of Medicine, Division of Clinical Epidemiology
Professor Terry Hébert	Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Victor M. Muñiz-Fraticelli	Department of Political Science and Faculty of Law
Professor Alexandra M. Schmidt	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Amélie Quesnel-Vallée	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Seungmi Yang	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Eduardo Franco	Department of Oncology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Olga Basso	Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Sandra Hyde	Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts
Professor Alana Klein	Faculty of Law
Professor Donald C. Vinh	Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor James Hanley	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Shirin Golchi	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Mathieu Maheu-Giroux	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Nicholas Dew	Department of History and Classical Studies, Faculty of Arts
Professor Alison Laywine	Department of Philosophy
Professor Narendra Subramanian	Department of Political Science
Professor Marie Manikis	Faculty of Law
Professor Jessica Ruglis	Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education
Professor Judith Szapor	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Stephen Menn	Department of Philosophy
Professor Malek Abisaab	Department of History and Classical Studies & Institute of Islamic Studies

Professor Arijit Nandi	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Erin Strumpf	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Sam Harper	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Richard Janda	Faculty of Law
Professor Natalie Stoljar	Department of Philosophy
Professor Tassos Anastassiadis	Department of History and Classical Studies Department
Professor Jesse Papenburg	Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Makeda Semret	Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Nadine Kronfli	Department of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases
Professor Kenneth Borris	Department of English
Professor Trevor Ponech	Department of English
Professor Marina Klein	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Maggie Kilgour	Department of English
Professor Katherine Zien	Department of English
Professor Megan Bradley	Department of Political Science
Professor Dorothy Bray	Department of English
Professor Allison J. Gonsalves	Department of Integrated Studies in Education, Faculty of Education
Professor Peter Gibian	Department of English
Professor Brian Trehearne	Department of English
Professor Nathalie Cooke	Department of English
Professor Robert Lecker	Department of English
Instructor Catherine Bradle	Department of English
Professor Peter Schuber	Department of Music Research, Schulich School of Music
Professor Markus Poschke	Department of Economics
Professor Ian Gold	Departments of Philosophy and Psychiatry
Professor Subho Basu	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Edward Dunsworth	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Faith Wallis	Department of History & Classical Studies & Department of Social Studies of Medicine
Professor Lynn Kozak	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Matthew Hunter	Department of Art History and Communication Studies
Professor Emily Carson	Department of Philosophy
Elsbeth Heaman	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Gwyn Campbell	Department of History and Classical Studies and Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID)

Professor Robert Rutledge	Department of Physics
Professor Griet Vankeerberghen	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Alia Al-Saji	Department of Philosophy
Michael Libman M.D.	McGill University Health Centre
Professor Cédric Yansouni	Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medical Microbiology
Professor Erin Hurley	Department of English
Professor Jean-Pierre Routy	Division of Experimental Medicine, Clinical Director of the Chronic Viral Illness Service Division of Hematology and Chronic Viral Illness Service Louis Lowenstein Chair in Hematology & Oncology Professor of Medicine, McGill University
Professor Rohan Dutta	Department of Economics
Professor Eran Shor	Department of Sociology
Administrative Coordinator Michèle Paquette	Arts-Ferrier Administrative Service Centre (ASC), Human Resources & Operations, Faculty of Arts
Professor Michael Van Dussen	Department of English
Professor Jon Wild	Department of Music Research (Schulich School of Music)
Professor Nicole Biamonte	Schulich School of Music / École de musique Schulich
Professor Allan Hepburn	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Post-doctoral Fellow Oran Magal	Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
Professor Edward Klorman	Department of Music Research, Schulich School of Music
Professor Ara Osterweil	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Francisco Alvarez-Cuadrado	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Kristy Ironside	Department of History and Classical Studies
Professor Franque Grimard	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Francesco Amodio	Department of Economics and ISID, Faculty of Arts
Professor Brian Lewis	Department of History, Faculty of Arts
Professor Alexander Manshel	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Ned Schantz	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Eli MacLaren	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Marianne A. Stenbaek	Cultural Studies, Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Roe-Min Kok	Schulich School of Music
Professor Russell Davidson	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Angelica Galante	Faculty of Education
Professor Blane Harvey	Department of Integrated Studies in Education, Faculty of Education
Professor Jan Doering	Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts
Professor John Galbraith	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Shaheen Shariff	Department of Integrated Studies, Faculty of Education
Professor Susan Ballinger	Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Professor Leslie Breitner	Desautels Faculty of Management
Professor Richard King	Sound Recording, Department of Music Research



Professor Marcelo Wanderley	Schulich School of Music
Professor Jennifer Fishman	Biomedical Ethics
Professor Justin Mariner	Schulich School of Music
Professor David C. Hensley	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Peter McMahan	Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts
Professor Michael Hallett	Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
Professor Melissa Hui	Schulich School of Music
Professor Daniel Guitton	Graduate Program in Biological and Biomedical Engineering
Professor Alberto Cambrosio	Department of Social Studies of Medicine
Professor Natasha Rajah	Department of Psychiatry
Professor Elaine Weiner	Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts
Professor Juliet Johnson	Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts
Professor Sonia Laszlo	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Peter Hoffmann	Department of History and Classical Studies, Faculty of Arts
Professor William E. Caplin	Department of Music Research, Schulich School of Music
Professor Andrea Tone	Departments of Social Studies of Medicine & History & Classical Studies
Professor Berkeley Kaite	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Lara Braitstein	School of Religious Studies
Professor Jennifer Elrick	Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts
Professor Laura Lasio	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Sara Laimon	Schulich School of Music
Professor Brian Cherney	Schulich School of Music
Professor Don Sheppard	Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Instructor Joanna Merckx	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Mikael Bauer	School of Religious Studies
Professor Dimitra Panagiotoglou	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Rebecca Fuhrer	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Program Officer Eileen Lavery	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Sahir Rai Bhatnagar	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Joseph Cox	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences



Professor Stephen Martin	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Nicholas King	Biomedical Ethics Unit Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Andrea Pinkney	School of Religious Studies
Professor Jason T. Carmichael	Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts
Professor Wes Folkert	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Catherine Desbarats	Department of History and Classical Studies, Faculty of Arts
Professor Claudia Mitchell	Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Professor David Davies	Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
Professor Daniel W. Pratt	Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
Professor Boyd White	Department of Integrated Studies in Education (DISE), Faculty of Education
Professor Wieslaw Woszczyk	Department of Music Research, Schulich School of Music
Instructor Emily Sprowls	Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Professor Christoph Neidhöfer	Department of Music Research, Schulich School of Music
Professor Ratna Ghosh	Department of Education
Professor Axel van den Berg	Department of Sociology Faculty of Arts
Professor Luca Maria Pesando	Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts
Professor (Retired) Victoria Zinde-Walsh	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Steven Huebner	Schulich School of Music
Professor Julie Cumming	Department of Music Research, Schulich School of Music
Finance Area Manager Amitsu Huang	Department of English, Faculty of Arts
Professor Catherine A Hankins	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Administrative Coordinator Dolores Coleto	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Maida Sewitch	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Robert Platt	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Daniel Weinstock	Katharine A. Pearson Chair in Civil Society and Public Policy, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Arts
Professor Elizabeth Elbourne	Department of History and Classical Studies, Faculty of Arts

Professor David Buckeridge	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Jonathan Chevrier	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Robert Cairns	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Matthieu Chemin	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Jonathan Sterne	Department of Art History and Communication Studies, Faculty of Arts
Professor Dirk Schlimm	Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
Professor Fernando Saltiel	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Hassan Benchekroun	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Thérèse Bouchez	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Ian Arnold	Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Occupational Health, School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Elizabeth Patitsas	Integrated Studies in Education & School of Computer Science
Professor Brian Cowan	Department of History & Classical Studies, Faculty of Arts
Professor Fabian Lange	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Rui Castro	Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts
Professor Alayne Adams	Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Professor Timothy Evans	School of Population and Global Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences