

Statement on the Start of the Spring Semester 2022
Executive Board of the University Senate

Given the current trajectory of the pandemic, it is not surprising that members of the campus community have been contacting the University Senate with their concerns about health and safety. We share these concerns, and have been in communication with the administration about policies being put in place. We recommended moving the first two weeks of the semester to an online modality (wherever possible), as has been done in other institutions following the recommendations of public health experts. We also echoed a similar recommendation for a staggered return for staff to campus.

The update provided on Tuesday by the administration was helpful in terms of understanding the rationale for the decision to emphasize in-person instruction. However, we recognize that many people will still have questions. For that reason, we want to call attention to an event that the Office for Faculty Advancement is hosting this Friday, from 11:00 AM to Noon - "University Leaders On Campus and Student Preparations." President Koppell, Provost Hollister and other members of the administration will be on hand to provide updates. In addition, Dean Coleman-Carter, Chair of the Campus Health Advisory Team (CHAT), will be there. CHAT provides recommendations to the President around health and safety topics, including teaching modalities, testing, vaccinations and booster shots.

Here is the link to register for the event: <https://montclair-faculty-advancement.libcal.com/event/8725534>

Questions for the presenters can be submitted in advance to Emily Isaacs, at isaacse@montclair.edu.

As we move forward, we encourage people to continue to contact the administration, their unions and the University Senate with their concerns, questions and ideas. We may not always agree on everything, but we can only move forward if we are willing to do the work we ask of our students - identify the difficult questions, engage in sincere discussion and learn from each other.

Stay safe.

Erik Jacobson
President, University Senate
On Behalf of the Executive Board of the University Senate