



Vice Chancellor's Office

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Date: Aug. 9, 2021
To: NMSU system faculty
From: Ruth A. Johnston, Vice Chancellor and Carol Parker, Provost
Subject: Mask-wearing exception for socially distanced instruction

As you know, due to the significant community spread of COVID-19 in many New Mexico counties, the NMSU system is now requiring *everyone*, vaccinated or not, to wear a mask indoors on all NMSU system campuses and offices around the state. This includes our Las Cruces, Doña Ana Community College, Alamogordo, Grants, and Carlsbad campuses, as well as New Mexico Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service offices and Agricultural Science Centers. This indoor mask requirement applies to all faculty, staff, students, vendors, and visitors to NMSU, regardless of vaccination status.

We are allowing two exceptions to this requirement for those who are fully vaccinated:

- 1.) Faculty and staff may remove their masks when in their own offices, alone, with the door closed.
- 2.) Faculty who are able to maintain at least six feet from all students may remove their masks or face shields while teaching. Please keep your mask on while entering or leaving your classroom and while working more closely with students in classrooms or labs.

Students will be expected to wear a mask at all times while indoors, regardless of vaccination status. Students will also be required to agree to the updated Crimson Commitment at the start of the semester, so this expectation should be clear to all students. A downloadable faculty guide to handling issues with mask-wearing in the classroom is available at now.nmsu.edu/resources/signage-toolkits/COVID_Signage_FacultyGuide.pdf

Updated printable signs reflecting the new mask requirement can be found at now.nmsu.edu/resources/signage.html under "Signage for use inside university buildings" and should be printed by building monitors and displayed in multiple locations.

Questions about the mask requirement can be sent to covid19@nmsu.edu.