

Vaccine Mandate Survey Report – Fall 2021

A total of 757 individuals completed the Vaccine Mandate Survey. Of those, 559 (73.84%) said they supported a vaccine mandate and 198 (26.16%) opposed a mandate.

In addition, 282 comments were collected. The report below is an attempt to report those comments grouped into categories along a number of dimensions. Those categories include (1) elaboration on support for a mandate (108 comments); (2) elaboration on opposition to a mandate (72 comments); (3) comments on exceptions (38 comments); (4) comments on testing (15 comments); (5) comments about EKU's response to COVID-19 (59 comments), and direct questions (4 comments).

As not all individuals left comments and some left more than one, the presentation and analysis of these comments should serve just as illustrative, not a complete picture of the thoughts of faculty as a whole. Moreover, many comments included multiple items and are reported more than once in the analysis below.

Elaboration on Support for a Vaccine Mandate

108 of the 282 comments were given to elaborate on support for the vaccine mandate. These comments were grouped into categories which can be found in Chart A and Table A below. The most common reason given for support was concern for the health and safety of the entire EKU community, that vaccines are a matter of public health, not politics (32.4%). A similarly high percentage used the comment space to say, "just do it," or "hurry up" (28.7%). Other comments included the need to trust the science (10.2%), other colleges' policies (6.5%), the fact that other vaccines are mandated in schools (5.6%), that some programs require students to work in the community (3.7%), and concern for faculty children who are unable to be vaccinated or are immunocompromised (2.8%). Some supported vaccines in order to get classes at EKU back to a more manageable place (2.8%) and to be able to stop using masks (1.9%). Others qualified their support by suggesting that just faculty and staff should be required to be vaccinated (0.9%) or that student opinion should be garnered before issuing a mandate (2.8%). One suggested that booster shots should be made available for faculty and staff on campus.

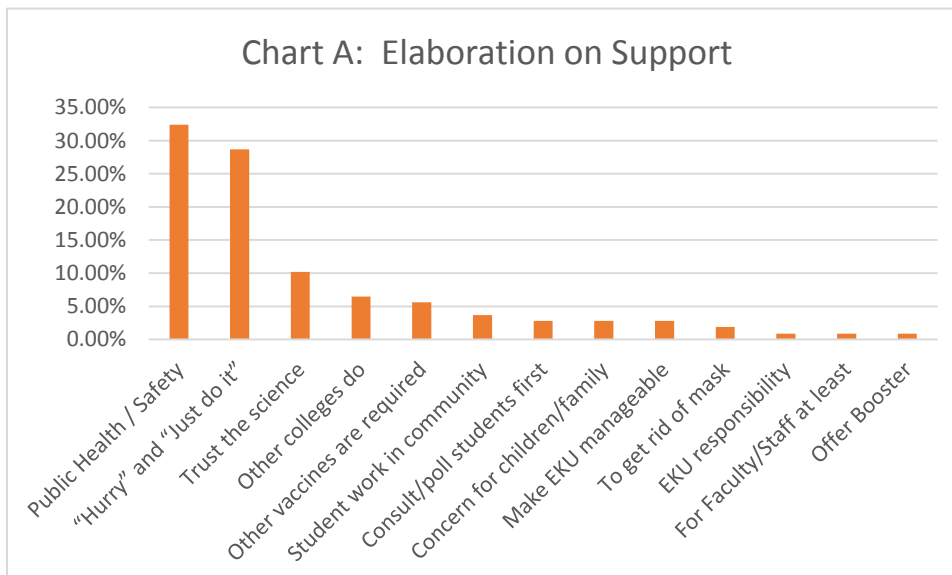


Chart A is based on the 108 comments categorized as "elaboration on support for a vaccine mandate."

Reason Given	Number of comments	% of those who elaborated on support
Public Health / Safety	35	32.4%
“Hurry” and “Just do it”	31	28.7%
Trust the science	11	10.2%
Other colleges do	7	6.5%
Other vaccines are required	6	5.6%
Student work in community	4	3.7%
Consult/poll students first	3	2.8%
Concern for children/family	3	2.8%
Make ECU manageable	3	2.8%
To get rid of mask	2	1.9%
ECU responsibility	1	0.9%
For Faculty/Staff at least	1	0.9%
Offer Booster	1	0.9%
TOTAL	108	

Elaboration on Opposition to a Vaccine Mandate

72 of the 282 comments were given to explain the respondent’s opposition to a vaccine mandate. These comments are groups by category in Chart B and Table B below. The largest category of comments elaborating opposition was of those who felt that a mandate was an infringement on individual rights (33.3%). Several included the statement, “My body, my choice.” Others simply reiterated their opposition in the comments (16.7%). 13.9% of these comments drew on scientific claims regarding vaccine efficacy, breakthrough cases, and mutations of the virus. The constitutionality, legality, and/or morality of a mandate vaccine was mentioned in 11.1% of these comments. Some focused on the possible loss of faculty and/or students should a mandate be imposed on campus. Other responses included fears of a slippery slope, the need to teach students independent thought, natural immunity, a possible divide amongst faculty, and finally that ECU should not be in the business of

offering health advice to its employees.

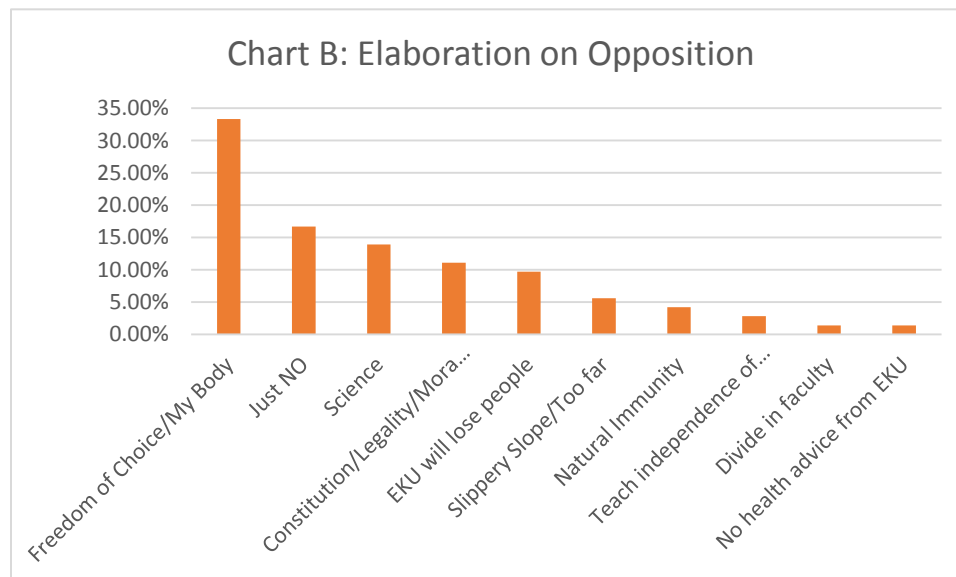


Chart B is based on the 72 comments which were categorized as “elaboration on opposition to a vaccine mandate.”

Table B: Elaboration on Opposition to Vaccine Mandate		
Reason Given	Number of comments	% of those who elaborated on opposition
Freedom of Choice/My Body	24	33.3%
Just NO	12	16.7%
Science	10	13.9%
Constitution/Legality/Morality	8	11.1%
EKU will lose people	7	9.7%
Slippery Slope/Too far	4	5.6%
Natural Immunity	3	4.2%
Teach independence of thought	2	2.8%
Divide in faculty	1	1.4%
No health advice from EKU	1	1.4%
Total	72	

Exceptions

Of the 38 comments which mentioned exceptions to vaccines, 27 (71%) specifically were opposed to religious exemptions and only one specifically supported them. 9 (24%) specifically supported medical exceptions, and 1 was specifically opposed. Several comments were in favor of exemptions, but only if “high standards” were used in granting them. Two comments (5%) urged exceptions for online education. Several added that those who were exempt should be required to test regularly, and one argued that an exemption should be allowed for those with “natural immunity.”

Testing

15 respondents commented that testing should be required (for those unvaccinated) – some as an alternative to a mandate and others for those with exceptions.

EKU Policies

Approximately 20% of all the comments received were regarding EKU’s current policies and practices in response to COVID-19 (59 comments). These are grouped into categories in Chart C and Table C below. The largest category of responses to EKU’s response to COVID-19 were those saying that EKU was not doing enough (28.8%). Some in this category mentioned a lack of mask wearing or social distancing at campus events (concerts, athletic events) or in specific locations (rec center, some buildings). Others noted a lack of enforcement, an absence of contact tracing, or the lack of clarity in EKU’s response. The second largest category were more specifically complaints about communication issues (23.7%). More than half of these (14.4%) were comments specifically indicating problems with the dashboard. Others said that compared with last semester, communication was lagging and there was a lack of guidance from the administration. Some indicated confusing messages on seating charts for instance. A third category of responses (15.3%) referred to the difficulties with teaching with large numbers of students absent due to quarantine or isolation. Approximately 10% of comments indicated a desire that EKU provide more flexibility in instruction. Several respondents felt that EKU was incorrectly favoring economics over the safety of the EKU community (5%). Positive responses to EKU’s handling of COVID-

19 were given by 8.4% of this group, while an additional 5% desired more incentives for voluntary vaccination. Finally, 2 comments (3.4%), were complaints about the vaccination card requests.

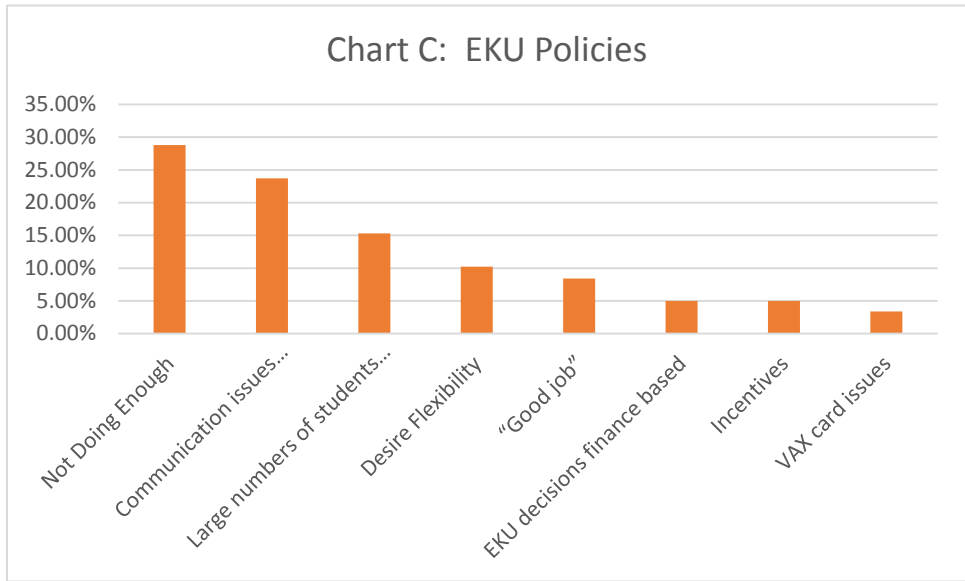


Chart C is based on the 59 comments which discussed EKU's current response to COVID-19.

Comment type	Number of comments	% of comments on EKU response
Not Doing Enough	17	28.8%
Communication issues (including Dashboard – 14.4%)	14	23.7%
Large numbers of students sick	9	15.3%
Desire Flexibility	6	10.2
"Good job"	5	8.4%
EKU decisions finance based	3	5%
Incentives	3	5%
VAX card issues	2	3.4%
Total	59	

Questions and Statements

Finally, several comments collected were in the form of questions about EKU's current and future policies regarding COVID-19. These included questions about current overall policies, contact tracing, and attendance (indicating both a lack of clarity and problems with communication). Additionally, several comments were statements of individual-level responses, such as "I have moved my classes online."