Dear Jeff, Dave, and Tim,

The College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Council met on Wednesday, September 15th, and many concerns were raised by CAS Faculty about Covid Testing, Contract Tracing, and Seating Chart Attendance.

As CASFC Chair, I have been charged with forwarding these questions to you all, with the request that you answer them at the upcoming University Faculty Council meeting on Wednesday, September 22nd.

Testing for Faculty and Staff:

1. How often do you envision that Faculty and Staff can be tested on campus “at will”?

Is the testing through Mary Washington Health Care only for those who know they have been exposed?

Notification of a Positive Case/Contract Tracing:

1. Faculty often learn that a student has tested positive directly from the student, without any notification from the Covid team. Is that situation because the student has not notified the Covid team? Is it then the faculty member’s responsibility to notify the Covid team? Should the faculty member notify the affected class that one of their classmates tested positive and recommend the class be tested?
2. What is the basis of the undue panic from contact tracing reported in the Provost’s email? What about the panic/anxiety of not knowing?

Prevention Measures:

1. What steps are being taken to improve ventilation (fans, HEPA filters) in outdated buildings?
2. Are there plans to supply faculty and staff with improved masks like N-95 and KF-94 masks for the more contagious Delta variant?
3. What actions does the administration take when someone is reported for a mask violation?

Seating Chart Attendance:

1. What standard is used for the Canvas Seating Chart for a close contact? 6 feet? 3 feet? Because classrooms vary in size, what is the best way for the instructor to reflect how close the seats are on the Seating Chart?
2. Some courses are team-taught or use students as PASS Leaders or Peer Mentors who are listed in Canvas as TAs. Since the Canvas Seating Chart does not indicate the location of the instructors and TAs, what is the best way to handle that situation?
3. Instructors are concerned that reliance on the Canvas Seating Chart and Attendance List will make it less likely that the instructor will learn of a positive case. Will the instructor always be notified of a positive case in a class?
4. What can be done about faculty who teach in two different rooms (like lab and classroom) for the Canvas Seating Chart?

We appreciate your willingness to answer these questions.

Thank you for your ongoing work to keep us safe during these trying times!

Suzanne Sumner, CASFC Chair