



Board of Regents

Executive Committee
Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.
Conducted Via Remote Participation
Meeting Minutes

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS	PARTICIPATING
JoAnn Ryan, Chair	Yes
Richard Balducci	No
Ira Bloom	Yes
Holly Howery	Yes
Elease E. Wright	No

CSCU STAFF PRESENT:

Terrence Cheng, CSCU President
Dr. Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer
Ernestine Weaver, General Counsel
Pam Heleen, Assistant Secretary of the Board (recorder)

1. CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Ryan called for a motion to adopt the Meeting Agenda; on a motion by Regent Howery, seconded by Regent Bloom, the Agenda was unanimously adopted.

3. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS - CHAIR JOANN RYAN

Chair Ryan noted that the action before the Committee is in response to the lifting of public health state of emergency by the General Assembly and the phasing out of the remaining executive orders impacting the CSCU during the Spring 2022.

Clarification of the Board’s policy and its recommended guidelines are required before the beginning of the Fall semester.

On a motion by Regent Howery which was seconded by Regent Bloom, the motion was put before the Committee for consideration.

Chair Ryan requested that President Cheng, Dr. Pritchard, and General Counsel Ernestine Weaver present the Staff Report and resulting resolution.

4. COMMENTS - PRESIDENT CHENG

President Cheng recognized and thanked Dr. Alice Pritchard who has served as CSCU's primary COVID coordinator for nearly three years. She knows every step that the system and its institutions and campuses have taken. He also thanked the institutional presidents and campus leaders and their teams, as well as the faculty and staff for all the hard work, time, effort, perseverating, planning, and true care they have invested since March 2020 to manage the pandemic.

He noted that the adjustment to the proposed policy continues the practice that has been exercised during the summer on all campuses. It is shaped by institutional leaders and their teams and reflects confidence and experience in keeping our campuses safe. The policy change also keeps CSCU in alignment with other state agencies and the State at large.

President Cheng stated that he will continue to work with institutional presidents and all leaders across CSCU to maintain safe and healthy learning environments for all students, faculty, and staff.

5. COMMUNITY MESSAGE - DR. ALICE PRITCHARD

Dr. Pritchard noted that the following mitigation actions are effective immediately:

- Vaccine distribution: CSCU will work with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to make vaccines, including updated booster shots, available on all campuses throughout the semester.
- Vaccine education: The vaccines currently approved for use by the FDA remain the safest, most effective means of protecting yourself from serious illness and hospitalization. While vaccine requirements have been suspended for students and employees, CSCU is strongly advising everyone to be vaccinated and boosted and will continue to provide up to date information to the community.
- Supplies available: Antigen tests and masks are available on campus for employees and students who don't have ready access to these supplies.
- Monitoring symptoms: Employees and students should continue to monitor their health and stay home whenever they have COVID-like symptoms.
- Quarantine and isolation: Employees and students are required to follow current CDC guidance on quarantine and isolation.
- Track and adjust to local conditions: CSCU will follow guidelines set forth for state facilities by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), which are developed utilizing CDC's guidance on community risk levels. COVID-19 Community Levels are a new tool to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. When conditions meet the "high" level, campus leaders will strongly encourage masking in indoor public places.

Dr. Pritchard also provided the following Fall 2022 updates:

- Masks optional: CSCU has shifted to a "mask-optional" protocol. Mask wearing remains an effective prevention strategy against the spread of the virus and other respiratory diseases, and CSCU leadership fully supports and expects all employees and students to respect those who choose to continue wearing masks.
- Physical distancing restrictions have been removed.
- In-person events are now welcome on campus for both internal and external audiences. A full schedule of in-person courses, meetings, and convenings is planned for this fall.

She closed by thanking all the COVID coordinators for their hard work to keep the campuses safe.

6. **PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO POLICY - REGENT IRA BLOOM**

Regent Bloom proposed friendly amendment to the resolution that clarifies that the vaccination mandate instituted in June 2021 is suspended and reinforces the authority and responsibility charged to President Cheng to enact mitigation strategies required to keep students, faculty, and staff safe on all campuses. Assistant Secretary to the Board read the revised resolution into the record:

RESOLUTION
Concerning
Policy Regarding
SUSPENSION OF COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS
August 10, 2022

WHEREAS, all of the Governor's Executive Orders related to the Public Health Emergency declaration beginning March 10, 2020, were lifted by the Connecticut General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut General Assembly, enacted Special Act 22-1 to address the orderly removal of COVID-19 safety protocols such as masking, social distancing, mandatory vaccination of State employees and other COVID-19 related measures by no later than June 30, 2022, for all purposes; and

WHEREAS, as public institutions, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities have abided by the state's enactment in lessening its COVID-19 related restrictions; and

WHEREAS, the above referenced student vaccination policy amendment does not lessen the authorization of the CSCU President to create and promulgate COVID-19 mitigation requirements, for employees, vendors, visitors, and others to ensure the health and safety of everyone who frequents a BOR controlled property; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the Policy dated June 24, 2021, regarding COVID-19 Immunization Requirements for Students is hereby suspended until further notice.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the BOR restates its charge to the CSCU President to continue exercising this authority, with the input of institutional and campus leaders across CSCU institutions and other state agencies, partners, and resources, to adapt to and evolve with local, regional, and state-wide conditions as related to the virus, in ways that will allow CSCU to enact mitigation strategies with both broad approaches and targeted tactics, to address the needs and circumstances of our students, faculty, and staff on all our campuses.

Regent Howey thanked Regent Bloom for the friendly amendment as she believes it clarifies the policy. She also thanked the teams for their monumental efforts and that they are very much appreciated by the Board.

7. **VOTE ON AMENDED RESOLUTION - CHAIR RYAN**

Chair Ryan noted that she has been very impressed with the leadership of the CSCU who works diligently for the welfare of everyone in the System.

As no further questions remained, Chair Ryan called for the vote. The resolution passed unanimously.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Regent Howery, seconded by Regent Bloom, Chair Ryan declared the meeting adjourned at 1:17 p.m.