NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release:
Tuesday, August 24, 2021

ANTIGONISH - The St. Francis Xavier University Association of University Teachers (StFXAUT) is calling on the Administration at the University to institute a mandatory COVID-19 vaccine mandate. Students, faculty, and staff who can get the vaccine should be required to do so. Those who cannot should undergo regular testing.

Members present overwhelmingly supported a resolution at a virtual special meeting of the Association held Monday evening. The Association represents over 400 members in eight different employee groups engaged in teaching and research at StFX.

"People are concerned with the fourth wave sweeping the country, the increasing case numbers, especially of the Delta variant, and the low vaccination rate among young adults," said Martin van Bommel, President of the StFXAUT and a Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

StFX has informed the campus community mandatory masking will continue in classrooms and laboratories until at least September 30; however, measures to ensure physical distancing have been relaxed.

"Members are worried about having classrooms at full capacity with poor ventilation, especially in some of the older buildings," said van Bommel. "Some Members and their close contacts are immunocompromised or unable to receive the vaccine for medical reasons, and many Members have young children for whom the vaccine is not approved."

The StFXAUT is committed to working with all concerned parties and helping guide the implementation of a reasonable and fair mandatory vaccine policy on campus that ensures privacy protections are paramount and provides appropriate accommodations.

-30-

Contact:
Dr. Martin van Bommel
StFXAUT President
mvanbomm@stfx.ca