

Dear UFV Administration,

On January 14th, 2022, the Student Union Society (SUS) conducted a social media poll and email survey to students regarding the return to in-person learning planned for January 24th. Based on the responses we received, SUS is advocating for a further two-week delay of in-person learning.

The two questions we sent out to students via email and Instagram included:

- 1) Do you support the return to in-person learning on January 24th;
- and
- 2) Would you prefer a further delay to in-person learning this semester?

In addition, we asked if students had any other comments regarding the return to in-person learning. The results demonstrate widespread discomfort and anxiety regarding UFV's current plan to return to in-person learning on January 24th. Of the 2634 respondents, 59% confirmed they did not want to return to in-person on January 24th. While 62% of respondents said they wanted to see a further delay to in-person learning.

Over 800 Students also provided comments further detailing their thoughts and feelings about returning to in-person learning. The unifying concern UFV students vocalized is the lack of reassurance regarding enhanced protocols and preventative measures regarding COVID-19 from UFV. This is leaving students feeling unsafe, anxious, and torn with the prospect of returning to in-person learning with little-to-no clarity on enhanced safety measures implemented. We believe that the lack of communication on UFV's action to protect students and provide a robust plan for those who may be unable to attend in-person classes due to sickness and isolation requirements, is harming student sentiments regarding a return to in-person learning.

However, we do also note that there also remains a strong consensus to return to in-person learning if UFV can provide enhanced safety measures. Many of the survey respondents commented on the importance of in-person learning and the necessity of social connection on campus for maintaining and supporting their mental health.

As a result of our student consultations, SUS advocates for a further delay to in-person learning. We are confident a two-week extension past the current January 24th deadline and reassessment on February 7th will ease many of the concerns raised by students in their responses. By monitoring public health announcements and COVID-19 numbers provided by the province, UFV may be able to make a more welcome decision by the new deadline. Comprehensive and transparent communication with regards to bolstered COVID measures in classrooms would result in support from SUS for a return to in-person learning on February 7th, 2022.

January 19th, 2022

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

On behalf of the SUS Executives,

Nikiel Lal, SUS President

