

# Colleges Conditioning Students for a Surveillance Bureaucracy

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✓ Fact Checked

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Universities across the U.S. are mandating vaccination for attendance and enforcing indoor mask mandates, social distancing and no-socializing policies, but reserve the right to host events of any size, including bankable athletic events
- › College students who in previous decades had developed critical thinking skills and questioned authority through the encouragement of faculty and staff, are now learning to quickly comply with rules and regulations
- › University of Iowa students staged a "die-in," demanding greater restrictions on activities, while at other campuses students are being encouraged to keep each other accountable by reporting student behavior
- › College administrators appear to be invested in the surveillance infrastructure they built while ignoring the real numbers of students and staff affected by the virus

Despite successful treatment protocols,<sup>1,2</sup> hundreds of thousands of reports of vaccine injury<sup>3</sup> and excess death numbers that have never reached the millions of people predicted from COVID-19,<sup>4</sup> government officials continue to call for mandatory masking,<sup>5</sup> vaccinations, social distancing and exorbitant fines<sup>6</sup> for people who refuse to bow down to unreasonable demands.

In addition to businesses, primary schools and high schools, colleges have also taken up the banner against COVID-19. They are enforcing draconian rules for a population of

people with the lowest rate of infection, long-haul symptoms and death.<sup>7</sup> In fact, the rules in place at many college campuses are even crazier than those you might see at any big box store, restaurant or small business.<sup>8</sup>

As the number of “cases” of COVID-19 being reported in the mainstream media has faded to the background, college campuses are implementing strict protocols after asymptomatic students test positive. For example, with a total enrollment<sup>9</sup> of 6,632 full-time undergraduate students and 2,501 full-time graduate students, Brown University put the lock down on the campus after 82 asymptomatic students (0.89%) tested positive.

The percentage of positive cases on the university campus does not warrant the measures being taken to keep students from socializing. While the actions on college campuses appear to mimic what's happening in some areas, the long-term effects of teaching impressionable and vulnerable students to conform to surveillance and reporting measures will be felt as they graduate from college and take their place as police officers, doctors, lawyers and business owners.

## **Capricious and Comical COVID Restrictions on College Campuses**

Brown University has made it clear to their student population that until the “cases” on their university campus have reduced in number, they are forbidden to get together in groups of more than five, whether they are inside or outdoors. Addressing the challenges of an infection that is now endemic, Brown University released a statement September 13, 2021:<sup>10</sup>

*“To reverse this trend and ensure that Brown can continue the positive gains we have made in re-establishing in-person campus activities, the University is implementing a set of new short-term COVID-19 restrictions.”*

These are measures that have never been put into place for flu or colds but appear to be completely reasonable to the university administration to put into place for a virus that

has a less than a significant effect on the student population. The statement assures the students that these are short-term requirements and restrictions.

However, on a school campus where students are required to be vaccinated in order to attend,<sup>11</sup> it appears that the restrictions and requirements are more about control and surveillance than they are about maintaining safety for the students.

For example, undergraduate students will be tested for COVID every four days, and all students and staff are required to wear masks indoors. The dining service has closed for in-person dining and the university goes so far as to mandate students not to make new friends:<sup>12</sup>

*“Students are expected to consistently engage with the same small social group, rather than attending or “hopping” among multiple small-group gatherings over the course of a day or short period of time. They should not go to indoor bars or restaurants.”*

Yet, the university reserves the right to host events of any size as long as it adheres to the mask protocols. Essentially, this addresses any athletic event for this Division 1 school<sup>13</sup> for which students, faculty and the community are charged admission.

It seems logical that college campuses would be the ideal place to test a relaxation of ineffective mask protocols since the vaccination rate is higher than most other places and the population is at the lowest risk. Instead, it seems as if university administrators are moving in the opposite direction. And Brown University is not alone.

## **More College Campuses Join in Absurd Restrictions**

Harvard is asking students to keep their “close contacts to a minimum,” despite publicizing their positivity rate had dropped to 0.16%.<sup>14</sup> According to Harvard,<sup>15</sup> 96% of the employees and 95% of the students were fully vaccinated by September 22, 2021. And yet, they continue to require masks indoors at all times.

Yale University<sup>16</sup> is telling students to wear a mask in their rooms if other students are visiting, to wear a mask if it makes them feel more comfortable and to wear a mask outdoors if they've received instructions from the contact tracing team.

The University of Southern California<sup>17</sup> is recommending that masks are worn indoors at all times and is specific about the mask covering the nose and mouth. Additionally, students must not eat or drink inside the building. If they need to hydrate, they must leave the building. Only instructors can “briefly hydrate while teaching but must re-mask immediately.”

September 17, 2021, Columbia University announced “temporary” restrictions on campus.<sup>18</sup> Student key cards were recoded so they could only get into their assigned residence halls. Students are not allowed guests and social gatherings are limited to 10 students. Although they assure the students these are temporary restrictions, they reserve the right to “reevaluate and determine if they can be lifted or must continue” after two weeks.

## **Radical Student College Life Is No Longer Radical**

In a video interview, Dr. Bryan Ardis describes what he calls “natural human behavior.”<sup>19</sup> In his example he describes a parent trying to get their children to clean their room. For many, this means that the parent asks the child to clean the room. If that doesn't work, they move on to bribing the child and if that doesn't work, the child is forced.

In much the same path the government first engineered fear in the population and then said “we have a fix.” When enough people were not getting vaccinated, bribes were offered that ranged from a donut a day to game consoles to a free haircut to myriad gift cards and giveaways, such as one in West Virginia offering free custom hunting rifles.<sup>20</sup> California offered \$116.5 million in prizes and in June 2021, President Biden announced Anheuser-Busch would give away beer.

President Biden has now moved on to forcing the American public to take a vaccine that infringes on your right to choose. The administration is using multiple pathways<sup>21,22</sup> to force business owners to mandate a vaccine to keep your job. Colleges began with

forcing their students to get the vaccine or they were not allowed to return to campus. But now they've taken it another step further.

Guidance from administrators sounds more like parental edicts than communication to young adults. Boston University<sup>23</sup> emphasizes the need for students to be obedient to the testing requirements and warns that being overdue for testing or their “daily self-symptom attestation” can ultimately result in suspension and being barred from the university campus.

If the student is not compliant within 48 hours of being suspended, that suspension will remain in place for the rest of the semester. The University of Michigan<sup>24</sup> requires all their students to have a vaccine passport on their phones that must be presented whenever required.

Contrary to the Civil Rights activism, anti-war protests and most recent Black Lives Matter movement on college campuses around the country,<sup>25</sup> many young people seem to embrace the added surveillance, mandatory masking, vaccinations and social distancing being enforced.

College students, who in previous decades developed critical thinking skills and questioned authority through the encouragement of faculty who believed that colleges were a place where future generations would learn to advance society, are now quickly learning to comply with rules and regulations.

Students are voluntarily reporting on each other for not wearing a mask.<sup>26</sup> Accurate accounting of COVID-19 illnesses and deaths appears to have eluded University of Iowa students who held a “die-in” September 2021 to protest what they believe are “lax” rules.<sup>27</sup> They issued demands that masks should be worn inside all campus buildings, vaccinations should be required, and all nonessential in-person events should be paused.

On other campuses, college administrators are encouraging students to “hold each other accountable,” and yet, as Michael Tracy<sup>28</sup> points out, “with the added irony that these invocations of “accountability” serve to deflect scrutiny from those who wield the

real decision-making power.” Tracey writes that the motivation behind the mandates, rules, restrictions and overuse of power, is in fact about power:<sup>29</sup>

*“These administrators have so much invested in the infrastructure of “case” detection they’ve constructed over the past year and a half – not to mention the wider ideological project of “stopping the spread” at all costs – that it’s impossible to imagine conditions under which they’d voluntarily move to dismantle the surveillance systems over which they preside.”*

## **Americans Unaware of True COVID Numbers**

In the best-case scenario, we can hope accurate information about the illness and death resulting from COVID-19 has not reached college administration and the actions they are taking are not nefarious. According to surveys, most of the American public are unaware of what the true illness and death rates are.

Six months after the start of the pandemic, investment management organization Franklin Templeton Investments<sup>30</sup> collaborated with Gallup and released a report about Americans' understanding of the COVID-19 infection. They found many misconceptions in the general population about the risks. After separating those beliefs and comparing them to the actual data they found this, from the report:<sup>31</sup>

- On average, Americans believe that people aged 55 and older account for just over half of total COVID-19 deaths; the actual figure is 92%.
- Americans believe that people aged 44 and younger account for about 30% of total deaths; the actual figure is 2.7%.
- Americans overestimate the risk of death from COVID-19 for people aged 24 and younger by a factor of 50; and they think the risk for people aged 65 and older is half of what it actually is (40% versus 80%).

When the data were broken down by age groups, the researchers found that most people under age 65 really had no concept of the actual number of deaths for their age group.<sup>32</sup>

| <b>Age</b> | <b>Percent worried about serious effects</b> | <b>Percent of actual total deaths</b> |
|------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 18-24      | 59.1%  | 0.1%                                  |
| 25-34      | 67.1%  | 0.7%                                  |
| 35-44      | 69.3%  | 1.9%                                  |
| 45-54      | 67.9%  | 5.0%                                  |
| 55-64      | 69.8%  | 12.2%                                 |
| 65+        | 77.6%  | 80.0%                                 |

Seven months later, in February 2021, CNN<sup>33</sup> reported similar results to those taken in July 2020, from the data in the Templeton-Gallup study represented in the table above. Based on the percentage of individuals who are vaccinated in the U.S., there continues to be a large portion of Americans who are operating under the misconception that the infection has a broad effect on every age group.

The CNN poll revealed<sup>34</sup> that 76% of the people who had been vaccinated continue to see COVID-19 as a high risk. According to Mayo Clinic's COVID-19 tracker<sup>35</sup> approximately 52.7% of adults in the U.S. were fully vaccinated on August 31, 2021.

The Washington Post<sup>36</sup> reported August 2, 2021, that 70% of adults had received at least one shot. Extrapolating this information, if 76% of those who are vaccinated believe that COVID is a broad risk for the population, this means from 40% to 53.2% of the country continues to hold this belief.

Senior editor at Reason, Robby Soave, wrote about this cultural trend on college and university campuses. His views are that these actions by administrators and students "is madness." In his piece in Reason, Soave writes:<sup>37</sup>

*“Progressive young people who view basic free speech principles with antipathy or even disdain are in the process of fundamentally changing the workplace. ‘We should look to the campus activist culture of the present to discover what our broader culture might resemble a few years from now,’ I wrote in a recent article for the Deseret News.*

*If recent history is any guide, we should be terrified that the current crop of college students might leave campus possessed of the notion that the most insane version of pandemic oppression is perfectly normal and desirable.”*

## Sources and References

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- <sup>4</sup> [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Weekly Updates](#)
- <sup>5</sup> [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, September 16, 2021](#)
- <sup>6, 22</sup> [Forbes, September 28, 2021](#)
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- <sup>33</sup> [CNN, February 10, 2021](#)



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- <sup>35</sup> Mayo Clinic, U.S. COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker
- <sup>36</sup> Washington Post, August 2, 2021