

## Fall 2020 Faculty Course Preference Follow-up

provost@slu.edu

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Dear Saint Louis University faculty and instructors,

As a follow-up to [my message](#) last week, I want to thank each of you for providing input regarding your preference for online teaching in the fall semester. The data you provided helped immensely in our classroom scheduling efforts, which will continue through the coming week. ***These efforts are fundamentally driven by our concern for the health and well-being of our faculty, students, and staff.***

I want to address the concerns some faculty members raised regarding the Faculty Teaching Preference Survey, and how the information was used.

- First and foremost: Per our pledge, we did not share any personal or health information you provided. The only information we shared were the first and last names of those with a preference to teach exclusively online; we explicitly did not share the rationales or any other context for those preferences. And we only shared the faculty names with the appropriate dean or chair, so they could make the needed changes to schedule courses accordingly. It makes sense that some would be concerned about our use of the survey data – but please know we acted with fidelity to our pledge.
- The opportunity to voluntarily provide information about whether you self-identify as being in a high risk category, as defined by the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), was intended to help us prioritize requests. No protected health information was requested.
- Self-disclosure as a person over 65 or having a family member who has an underlying health condition does not place an employee in an ADA-protected category. Nevertheless, we have made every effort to honor these requests.
- Faculty requests to teach online due to a) a health condition (either their own, or that a loved one) or b) their age were prioritized and granted without the need for any additional follow-up.
- Faculty requests to teach in an online or hybrid manner without self-identifying a health- or age-related concern were referred to the appropriate dean or chair for follow-up and consideration on a case-by-case basis.

For those with childcare concerns, we are still awaiting information from local school districts about their plans for the fall, and we will attempt to adjust schedules accordingly for those instructors who may be impacted.

### Changing your preference for teaching online in Fall 2020

If you filled out the survey and wish to change your preference for teaching online (or you did not fill out the survey), **please work directly with your dean or department chair to update your teaching preference.** As was the case with the survey, a Human Resources Consultant will contact you directly and will work with you to navigate the ADA accommodation process if needed. **Please submit these**

**requests by Friday, July 10.**

Although our intent is to offer as much on-ground, face-to-face, instruction this fall as health conditions reasonably allow, we are also attempting to honor every faculty teaching modality request. But there may be situations where it is simply not possible.

As you know, we are implementing [many safeguards](#) across campus as part of the [Back to SLU: Fall 2020 Plans](#). We feel confident that these safeguards will address the concerns we have heard from you, and we will continue to monitor and respond to the COVID-19 situation locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Our students have overwhelmingly indicated the preference for a residential, face-to-face educational experience. The survey we sent to students asking for their instructional preference shows, at this time, more than 80% of them plan to take in-person courses this fall. We are making every effort to ensure we balance the student preference for on-campus instruction with the need to keep our campus safe for the entire community.

Please know that the health and safety of our entire campus is our foremost concern, and we will take the necessary steps to ensure that everyone is safe in the midst of this pandemic.

Thank you and God bless,

Michael Lewis, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost