

Re: Open letter to UW officials: Repeal COVID-19 vaccination and testing mandates - A request for a panel discussion to be broadcast on the Daily Bulletin

Edward Vrscaj <ervrscaj@uwaterloo.ca>

Wed 9/15/2021 11:18 AM

To: President University of Waterloo <president@uwaterloo.ca>; Cindy Forbes <cindy.forbes@uwaterloo.ca>; UW President <uw.president@uwaterloo.ca>; ProvostV <ProvostV@uwaterloo.ca>; Dennis Huber <dhuber@uwaterloo.ca>; VPRI Executive Director <or-vpred@uwaterloo.ca>; Sandra Banks <sandra.banks@uwaterloo.ca>; Marilyn Thompson <marilyn.thompson@uwaterloo.ca>; Chris Read <chris.read@uwaterloo.ca>; Vice Pres Academic Provost <provost@uwaterloo.ca>; Vice-President Research and International <vpri@uwaterloo.ca>
Cc: Karen Jack <kjjack@uwaterloo.ca>; Sheila Ager <sager@uwaterloo.ca>; Dean Engineering <dean.engineering@uwaterloo.ca>; Jean Andrey <jandrey@uwaterloo.ca>; Dean of Math <deanmath@uwaterloo.ca>; Bob Lemieux <rplemieux@uwaterloo.ca>; Siv Sivaloganathan <ssivaloganathan@uwaterloo.ca>; Bill Power <bill.power@uwaterloo.ca>; Raouf Boutaba <rboutaba@uwaterloo.ca>; Benjamin Easton <benjamin.easton@uwaterloo.ca>; vpsl <vpsl@wusa.ca>; vped@wusa.ca <vped@wusa.ca>; GSA-UW President <gsa-president@uwaterloo.ca>; GSA Council Chair <gsacounc@uwaterloo.ca>; Faculty Association President <fauwpres@uwaterloo.ca>; UWSA President <uwsa.president@uwaterloo.ca>; Dave McDougall <dave.mcdougall@uwaterloo.ca>; Cupe Local793 <cupe793@uwaterloo.ca>; Jean Becker <j2becker@uwaterloo.ca>; David DeVidi <david.devidi@uwaterloo.ca>; Jeff Casello <jcasello@uwaterloo.ca>; Catherine Newell Kelly <cnkelly@uwaterloo.ca>; bruce.campell@uwaterloo.ca <bruce.campell@uwaterloo.ca>; Glen Wepler <glen.wepler@uwaterloo.ca>; Kate Windsor <kwindsor@uwaterloo.ca>; Kathy Winter <kwinter@uwaterloo.ca>; Laura McDonald <laura.mcdonald@uwaterloo.ca>; Gail Spencer <gspencer@uwaterloo.ca>; Catherine Bolger <lbolger@uwaterloo.ca>; Clark Baldwin <clark.baldwin@uwaterloo.ca>; Nickola Voegelin <nickola.voegelin@uwaterloo.ca>; Nick Manning <nick.manning@uwaterloo.ca>; Daily Bulletin <bulletin@uwaterloo.ca>; Lili Liu <lili.liu@uwaterloo.ca>; Zahid Butt <zahid.butt@uwaterloo.ca>; Kelly Grindrod <kelly.grindrod@uwaterloo.ca>; Roderick Slavcev <roderick.slavcev@uwaterloo.ca>; Emmett Macfarlane <emacfarlane@uwaterloo.ca>; Michael Palmer <mpalmer@uwaterloo.ca>; Richard Mann <mannr@uwaterloo.ca>; Dan Smilek <dsmilek@uwaterloo.ca>
Bcc: UW@MAIL.D4CE.ORG <UW@MAIL.D4CE.ORG>

Dear President Goel and Vice President, Academic and Provost Rush:

Thank you for your letter of September 2, 2021, written in response to our open letter requesting a repeal of the mandatory vaccination policy imposed at UW. We – that is, Prof. Palmer, Prof. Mann and I – agree wholeheartedly that there will always be “legitimate points of scholarly debate that are best addressed in academic fora with peers”. We – specifically Prof. Palmer, the medical expert in our group - have, in fact, engaged in some discussion and debate with members of the UW community who wrote to us in response to our open letter. Unfortunately, we have not had an opportunity to “engage with academic colleagues in the scholarly community who have been examining the overwhelming evidence regarding the safety and effectiveness of the COVID vaccines” as you have urged in your letter. This is, in fact, why I am writing to you. UW may well have created an opportunity for some serious analysis and debate.

On Friday, September 10, the headline story of the UW Daily Bulletin was “The facts about vaccines and COVID-19”. In this story, several “leading Waterloo experts” were asked to “help sort through some common misinformation and myths on the pandemic and give us the latest facts”. This was a very important and necessary undertaking by the Daily Bulletin since members of the UW community need to be informed. It is fortunate, indeed, that we have experts who can help us.

We did wonder, however, why Prof. Palmer, an acknowledged expert in the areas of biochemistry and medical microbiology, was not invited to participate in this headline story. Perhaps it was because some of his views differ from those of the other experts, as clearly indicated in our open letter to the university. Given that there is a substantial amount of evidence supporting his views, we think that it

would be in the best interests of the UW community that Prof. Palmer be invited to engage in a panel discussion with some – or even all – of the medical experts consulted in the September 10 Bulletin feature. There are a number of points which Prof. Palmer would like to see addressed, e.g., the role of ivermectin (rather unprofessionally dismissed in the interview with Dr. Butt, we think), as well as the efficacy and the adverse effects of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. Perhaps the person who interviewed Dr. Butt could be asked to moderate this discussion. As you will note, I am copying this letter to Brandon Sweet, Editor of the Daily Bulletin.

We think that this would be an extraordinary opportunity for UW to demonstrate its commitment to the search for truth, in concert with its motto, “Concordia cum Veritate”, thereby showing the world (as well as its own community of faculty, staff and students) that it is true to its mission. To the best of our knowledge, no other academic institution has been willing to engage in an honest and open debate about the COVID-19 vaccines. Frankly, the communication from “upstairs” in most academic institutions appears to be quite one-sided – much like the information provided in the September 10 edition of the Daily Bulletin.

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely yours

Edward R. Vrscaj
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Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1

<https://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~ervrscaj>

From: President University of Waterloo <president@uwaterloo.ca>

Sent: Thursday, September 2, 2021 4:20 PM

To: Edward Vrscaj <ervrscaj@uwaterloo.ca>; Cindy Forbes <cindy.forbes@uwaterloo.ca>; UW President <uw.president@uwaterloo.ca>; ProvostV <ProvostV@uwaterloo.ca>; Dennis Huber <dhuber@uwaterloo.ca>; VPRI Executive Director <or-vpred@uwaterloo.ca>; Sandra Banks <sandra.banks@uwaterloo.ca>; Marilyn Thompson <marilyn.thompson@uwaterloo.ca>; Chris Read <chris.read@uwaterloo.ca>; Vice Pres Academic Provost <provost@uwaterloo.ca>; Vice-President Research and International <vpri@uwaterloo.ca>

Cc: Karen Jack <kjjack@uwaterloo.ca>; Sheila Ager <sager@uwaterloo.ca>; Dean Engineering <dean.engineering@uwaterloo.ca>; Jean Andrey <jandrey@uwaterloo.ca>; Dean of Math <deanmath@uwaterloo.ca>; Bob Lemieux <rplemieux@uwaterloo.ca>; Siv Sivaloganathan <ssivaloganathan@uwaterloo.ca>; Bill Power <bill.power@uwaterloo.ca>; Raouf Boutaba <rboutaba@uwaterloo.ca>; Benjamin Easton <benjamin.easton@uwaterloo.ca>; vpsl <vpsl@wusa.ca>; vped@wusa.ca <vped@wusa.ca>; GSA-UW President <gsa-president@uwaterloo.ca>; GSA Council Chair <gsacounc@uwaterloo.ca>; Faculty Association President <fauwpres@uwaterloo.ca>; UWSA President <uwsa.president@uwaterloo.ca>; Dave McDougall <dave.mcdougall@uwaterloo.ca>; Cupe Local793 <cupe793@uwaterloo.ca>; Jean Becker <j2becker@uwaterloo.ca>; David DeVidi <david.devidi@uwaterloo.ca>; Jeff Casello <jcasello@uwaterloo.ca>; Catherine Newell Kelly <cnkelly@uwaterloo.ca>; bruce.campell@uwaterloo.ca <bruce.campell@uwaterloo.ca>; Glen Weppler <glen.weppler@uwaterloo.ca>; Kate Windsor <kwindsor@uwaterloo.ca>; Kathy Winter <kwinter@uwaterloo.ca>; Laura McDonald <laura.mcdonald@uwaterloo.ca>; Gail Spencer <gspencer@uwaterloo.ca>; Catherine Bolger <lbolger@uwaterloo.ca>; Clark Baldwin <clark.baldwin@uwaterloo.ca>; Nickola Voegelin <nickola.voegelin@uwaterloo.ca>; Nick Manning <nick.manning@uwaterloo.ca>; Daily Bulletin <bulletin@uwaterloo.ca>; Lili Liu <lili.liu@uwaterloo.ca>

Subject: RE: Open letter to UW officials: Repeal COVID-19 vaccination and testing mandates

Please find attached a letter from President Vivek Goel and Vice-President, Academic & Provost, James W.E. Rush, in response to your e-mail letter dated August 26, 2021.

Thank you.

Office of the President

University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West
Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1
519-888-4400



From: Edward Vrscaj <ervrscaj@uwaterloo.ca>

Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2021 2:49 PM

To: Cindy Forbes <cindy.forbes@uwaterloo.ca>; UW President <uw.president@uwaterloo.ca>; ProvostV <ProvostV@uwaterloo.ca>; Dennis Huber <dhuber@uwaterloo.ca>; VPRI Executive Director <or-vpred@uwaterloo.ca>; Sandra Banks <sandra.banks@uwaterloo.ca>; Marilyn Thompson <marilyn.thompson@uwaterloo.ca>; Chris Read <chris.read@uwaterloo.ca>; President University of Waterloo <president@uwaterloo.ca>; Vice Pres Academic Provost <provost@uwaterloo.ca>; Vice-President Research and International <vpri@uwaterloo.ca>

Cc: Karen Jack <kjjack@uwaterloo.ca>; Sheila Ager <sager@uwaterloo.ca>; Dean Engineering <dean.engineering@uwaterloo.ca>; Jean Andrey <jandrey@uwaterloo.ca>; Dean of Math <deanmath@uwaterloo.ca>; Bob Lemieux <rplemieux@uwaterloo.ca>; Siv Sivaloganathan <ssivaloganathan@uwaterloo.ca>; Bill Power <bill.power@uwaterloo.ca>; Raouf Boutaba <rboutaba@uwaterloo.ca>; Benjamin Easton <benjamin.easton@uwaterloo.ca>; vpsl <vpsl@wusa.ca>; vped@wusa.ca; GSA-UW President <gsa-president@uwaterloo.ca>; GSA Council Chair <gsacounc@uwaterloo.ca>; Faculty Association President <fauwpres@uwaterloo.ca>; UWSA President <uwsa.president@uwaterloo.ca>; Dave McDougall <dave.mcdougall@uwaterloo.ca>; Cupe Local 793 <cupe793@uwaterloo.ca>; Jean Becker <j2becker@uwaterloo.ca>; David DeVidi <david.devidi@uwaterloo.ca>; Jeff Casello <jcasello@uwaterloo.ca>; Catherine Newell Kelly <cnkelly@uwaterloo.ca>; Bruce Campell <bruce.campell@uwaterloo.ca>; Glen Weppeler <glen.weppeler@uwaterloo.ca>; Kate Windsor <kwindsor@uwaterloo.ca>; Kathy Winter <kwinter@uwaterloo.ca>; Laura McDonald <laura.mcdonald@uwaterloo.ca>; Gail Spencer <gspencer@uwaterloo.ca>; Catherine Bolger <lbolger@uwaterloo.ca>; Clark Baldwin <clark.baldwin@uwaterloo.ca>; Nickola Voegelin <nickola.voegelin@uwaterloo.ca>; Nick Manning <nick.manning@uwaterloo.ca>; Daily Bulletin <bulletin@uwaterloo.ca>; Lili Liu <lili.liu@uwaterloo.ca>

Subject: Open letter to UW officials: Repeal COVID-19 vaccination and testing mandates

To: Cindy Forbes, chair of the Board of Governors
Vivek Goel, president and vice-chancellor
James Rush, vice-president, academic & provost
Dennis Huber, vice-president, administration & finance
Charmaine Dean, vice-president, research & international
Sandra Banks, vice-president, university relations
Marilyn Thompson, associate provost, human resources
Chris Read, associate provost, students

CC: See below

From: The undersigned concerned faculty, staff, students, and parents

Date: Thursday, August 26, 2021

Subject: Open letter to repeal COVID-19 vaccination and testing mandates

Note: This letter is for information and action

In response to the decision by the University of Waterloo Administration to impose mandatory vaccination on campus (e-mail entitled, “Mandatory vaccination and attestation,” dated August 16, 2021; e-mail entitled, “Proof of vaccination now required for campus access,” dated August 24, 2021), please find attached an open letter signed by concerned faculty, staff, students and parents of students requesting the Administration to repeal these mandates. Note that the list of concerned campus members grows daily, and the letter will be updated regularly to reflect this.

The above paragraph was written on behalf of the signatories of the open letter. I would now like to take the liberty of concluding this memo with some personal comments, writing to you as a faculty member of 35+ years on this campus. Of course, I assume full responsibility for the comments that follow.

Dear members of the UW community, **my first challenge to you:** I sincerely beg all of you to look for other solutions to the “COVID-19 problem”, i.e., to reject the top-down, bureaucratic method of “vaccine mandates” being employed by virtually all other institutions (and which has not worked to date) and to come up, through **open discussion and reasoned academic debate within the entire UW community**, with a unique, innovative and person-centered approach, as opposed to an institution-centered one, which is more characteristic of the “Spirit of Waterloo”. I am certain that the very action of seeking “bottom-up” solutions in an open and transparent manner would contribute to the mental, as well as physical, wellbeing of our community - students in particular. This is an opportunity for UW to become a leader instead of a follower. (It will also be an opportunity for UW to avoid the lawsuits that may be coming its way should it persist with its vaccine mandate.)

During the time that I was involved with others in preparing this open letter, I became aware of not only a few, but many, people – faculty, staff and students - on our campus who are extremely distressed as a result of the vaccine mandate policy. Many of these people – perhaps most – are too scared to express their opinions. Do you not think that their mental health suffers? Indeed, if this institution is so concerned about diversity, equity and inclusivity, then why would it not be interested in hearing from this supposed “minority group” (although it might not be as “minor” as you think or wish) – a group of outcasts, the so-called “unvaccinated”, which owes its very existence to the new UW vaccine policy?

Here is my second challenge to you: Please read the other letter which I have attached to this e-mail – a letter written by a member of the “unvaccinated” – and then tell me that you are not willing to listen to the stories of others in this group of outcasts. If you are still hesitant, then please read the following text from the writer after she sent me her letter:

“You know, I was thinking today when -- honestly, I was feeling sad. I was thinking, in all my life

being a visible minority, I have never felt judged or discriminated against in Canada. I have always felt loved and welcomed as a Muslim female of South Asian background. I came to (department name withheld) when it was unpopular for girls, and definitely Pakistani girls. I was one of the only non-Caucasian girls in my residence - Notre Dame by St. Jerome's. (This is where I met all my friends.) I was loved and welcomed as a Muslim girl in an all-Catholic residence and it was amazing. The friends I made are my life-long friends.

So, I felt sad because, really truly in all my life, this is the first time I have ever felt marginalized, treated as part of a minority group, having my basic privileges taken away. And for no fault of my own - just a personal choice for freedom, i.e., to remain unvaccinated."

Please note, respected colleagues, that I am **not** asking you to disregard the opinions and concerns about those who have been vaccinated. I am simply asking you to **listen to the "other group" – the group that has, up to now, been marginalized by government, mainstream media and institutions, including UW.**

If I am not involved directly in health-related matters, and hear so many stories, then what about Dr. Byram Bridle, internationally recognized viral immunologist and vaccinologist from the University of Guelph? As he shares in the video interview referenced below, he has interacted with hundreds, if not thousands, of students from around the world. Among his conclusions: students are demoralized – they feel isolated and depressed. All that they have to look forward to is to be dictated how to behave, including the pressure to be vaccinated. In fact, people at all levels are demoralized. And so on and so on. I am so incredibly impressed with Dr. Bridle. He obviously cares for students – he is passionate about them, not only his students but **all** students. He respects the decisions of those who choose to be vaccinated as well as those who choose to remain unvaccinated. He is also a remarkably honest individual, admitting that he "got it wrong" at the beginning, shunning other non-vaccine methods of treating COVID-19 patients (which have been shown to be effective) as well as his later "bombshell" revelations about the dangers of spike-proteins in the vaccines.

Here is my third challenge to you: Please listen to the interview of Dr. Bridle and then tell me that "UW has it right". (That being said, I don't think that his own university is listening to him.)

<https://rumble.com/vlh6gn-dr-byram-bridle-voices-his-concerns-over-vaccine-mandates-at-universities-.html>



[Dr. Byram Bridle Voices His Concerns Over Vaccine Mandates at Universities And Colleges](https://rumble.com/vlh6gn-dr-byram-bridle-voices-his-concerns-over-vaccine-mandates-at-universities-.html)

Dr. Byram Bridle voices his concerns about the new vaccine mandates at colleges and

universities for the upcoming school year. He
also gives students great advice on how to

rumble.com

My question to you: Do we have any “Dr. Bridles” on this campus? If so, then find them and listen to them! Dear colleagues, please consult the entire UW community – openly not secretly – with the goal of devising a dramatically different COVID-19 strategy that will be the envy of all other institutions – a strategy that will moralize people instead of demoralizing them and a strategy that will attract new students instead of repelling them.

Sincerely yours,

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CC:

Karen Jack, university secretary
Sheila Ager, dean of Arts
Mary Wells, dean of Engineering
Jean Andrey, dean of Environment
Lili Liu, dean of Health
Mark Giesbrecht, Mathematics, dean of Mathematics
Bob Lemieux, Science, dean of Science
Sivabal Sivaloganathan, chair, Department of Applied Mathematics
William Power, chair, Department of Chemistry
Raouf Boutaba, chair, David Cheriton School of Computer Science

Benjamin Easton, WUSA president
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GSA Council chair

Lori Curtis, FAUW president
Kathy Becker, UWSA president
Dave McDougall, UWSA president-elect
Greg Macedo, CUPE president

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Bruce Campbell, chief information officer
Glen Weppler, director of campus housing
Kate Windsor, director of the Safety Office
Kathy Winter, assistant university secretary and privacy officer
Laura McDonald, FAUW communications officer
Gail Spencer, UWSA executive manager
Cathy Bolger, UWSA communications and administrative coordinator
Dr. Clark Baldwin, Campus Wellness medical director
Nickola Voegelin, senior legal counsel
Nick Manning, associate vice-president, communications
Brandon Sweet, Daily Bulletin editor