1. Find your MLA by postal code: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/learn-about-us/members>

2. Fill in the highlighted sections below with the date; your MLA’s name; your own name, title, DDP.

3. Cut and paste the letter into an email and send to your MLA + CC: Adrian Dix, Minister of Health; Ministry of Health; Dr. Bonnie Henry, Deputy Provincial Health Officer; Ms. Anne Kange, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training—copy and paste these addresses into the cc. field:

**HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca**, **adrian.dix.MLA@leg.bc.ca**, hlth.health@gov.bc.ca, Bonnie.Henry@gov.bc.ca, Anne.Kang.MLA@leg.bc.ca

TEMPLATE

Your address here

The Honourable NAME OF MLA

MLA address

X January 2022

Dear MLA X:

I am writing to you as a concerned faculty member at Douglas College.

On January 7th, Douglas College faculty members received guidance from our respective deans about the return to in-person classes on January 10th. The first paragraph states:

Consistent with all colleges and institutes in the sector and following directives from the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, Douglas College will return to in-person classes as planned starting on Monday, January 10.

To my knowledge, across the sector colleges will either begin their semester on January 10th or return to in-person instruction on that date. However, many universities (including FPSE member locals Capilano, UFV, Kwantlen, and Emily Carr***) remain online*** until a planned return to in-person instruction on January 24th. It is a legitimate question to ask what the basis is for a difference dividing colleges and universities across the sector, when some share local conditions regardless of their institutional categorization (e.g., some colleges and universities are covered by the same health authority, and it is unclear what differs in their local conditions).

The second paragraph states:

We understand that this decision may create heightened anxiety for some; however, the PHO has reassured us that post-secondary campuses are generally low-risk settings, and virus transmission is extremely low in classroom and lab environments with the safety measures currently in place.

It is a legitimate concern to ask how past practice applies to a COVID-19 variant which has ***higher rates of transmission than other variants***. It must also be acknowledged that the decision to return to campus does not address the heightened anxiety many faculty members, staff, and students face due to the new variant’s transmissibility, particularly as there has been ***no*** epidemiological rationale offered to indicate why it was ***not*** safe to teach in person last Friday, and now suddenly it is. (And why it is still ***not*** safe for faculty members, staff, and students at Kwantlen Polytechnic, UBC, SFU, UNBC, Emily Carr, and Capilano University to return to the classroom.)

1. I am asking you to **account for the inconsistency of application of PHO directives to universities in contrast with colleges, many of which share identical local conditions and course requirements** (such as practicums, experiential learning, labs, and so on).
2. If Douglas College, as with other colleges and institutes in BC (and unlike universities, including teaching universities such as Emily Carr, Kwantlen Polytechnic, and Capilano University) must return to in-person teaching, I call on the BC government to administer **appropriate and free PPE for all faculty members, staff, and students to ensure their safety** under these new and virulent conditions precipitated by the Omicron variant. During the Omicron phase of the pandemic, health authorities have communicated that reducing risk and transmission involve utilizing PPE, which in this case includes utilizing N95 or KN95 masks.
3. The PHO has directed business and schools to formulate back-up plans in anticipation of huge numbers of staff shortages as people fall sick and are required to isolate. On January 7th, the province outlined measures for the K–12 sector. I call on the BC government **to formulate and communicate province-wide sector guidance and to distribute this guidance so that faculty members are apprised of it.**

Sincerely,

Faculty Name + Title

DDP, College