

Joint Statement of the WKU Chapter of the AAUP and WKU Senate Executive Committee in response to Big Red Restart

WKU is facing a public health crisis the seriousness of which hasn't been seen in the United States in 102 years.

Therefore, the WKU Chapter of the AAUP and WKU Senate Executive Committee demand the following:

1. Faculty must have final choice with regard to course modality.

- Online teaching should not be treated as an accommodation. It is viable and does not create a hardship for the university. Concern for the risk of COVID-19 is not a disability; the pandemic is a real and present danger to the campus community. Faculty should not be strong-armed into putting themselves and their students at unnecessary risk.
- Eliminate “target” ratios of online to in-person instruction. Faculty are best suited to determine the optimal modalities of their own courses based upon the particular requirements of a given course. WKU should trust the pedagogical expertise of its faculty.
- WKU should not require faculty to disclose personal or familial medical information as a requirement to choose an online teaching modality.

2. Universal and frequent free COVID-19 testing will be performed on campus for all faculty, staff, and students who plan to be on campus at any point in the fall semester.

- Only through high rates of testing and contact tracing can we hope to have any semblance of control over potential spread.
- Share with campus as quickly as possible the results of those tests. Provide a clear reporting system and have anonymized reports of confirmed cases on campus available to the public and campus community in real-time. We all need to be informed about the health and safety of our community.

3. Faculty and academic support staff will not experience job losses.

- This is an “all hands on deck” moment for our institution and we require our entire complement of employees to complete the tasks at hand to continue to fully support and engage our students.

4. Course loads and overall faculty workloads will not exceed appointment letter levels.

- Adding more work to faculty who have voluntarily agreed to temporary pay cuts to address budgetary shortfalls that could be erased through non-academic reductions is disrespectful to faculty.
- A course load increase forces faculty to bear a disproportionate burden for the university. Faculty are already working long hours while off-contract during the summer to adapt to teaching in new modalities during a pandemic.