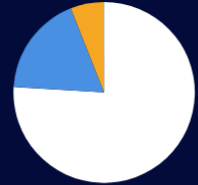


VACCINES AND RESTRICTIONS?

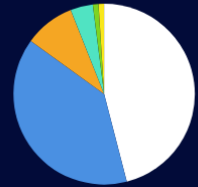
When it becomes available for our age group, do you plan to take a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, as soon as it becomes available (76%) | Yes, after a period of time (18%) | No (6%)



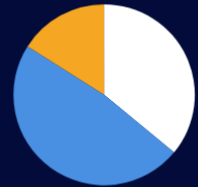
If available vaccines were approved and available for our age group, which COVID-19 vaccine would you most likely take?

Pfizer (46%) | No Preference (39%) | Moderna (9%) | Janssen (J&J) (4%) | AstraZeneca (1%) | Other (1%)



When do you expect that UCC will resume its normal routines (e.g everyone at school)?

September 2021 (36%) | March 2022 (48%) | September 2022 (16%)



Do you believe that unvaccinated students should face additional restrictions at school?

67% Yes

No 33%

Do you expect that students will sometimes voluntarily choose to wear masks even after the pandemic (e.g. during the peak of the Flu Season)?

71% Yes

No 29%

Do you expect that virtual meetings will continue to be used often at UCC for the convenience that they provide, even after the pandemic?

79% Yes

No 21%

HOW UCC STUDENTS SEE VACCINATION

Vaccination is all over the news these days, and is definitely on everyone's minds. On April 19-30, 2021, *Convergence* conducted a survey to gauge student opinions regarding vaccination and various other key issues related to our transition towards post-pandemic life. Almost 200 students participated in this survey, and the results clearly indicated most of our students' positions on these important issues. Many students also left thoughtful comments, which we decided to publish in their entirety after this editorial.

Regarding vaccination, 76% of students said they plan on taking a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it becomes available for our age group, and another 18% said they would take the vaccine after a period of time. Only 6% are against vaccination. It is also interesting to see that 46% of students indicated that they were most likely to take the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, while 39% had no preference. We at *Convergence* are very encouraged by the positive attitudes towards vaccination in our community. Given the high endorsement of vaccination, as one student pointed out, it is likely that our community will reach some degree of herd immunity even without 100% vaccination.

It is worthwhile to note that 67% of students believe that unvaccinated students should face additional restrictions at school. We understand the rationale of this stance - in the U.S., more than 100 colleges and universities are requiring vaccination for any students who wish to return to campus. That being said, some UCC students expressed reservations regarding any potential restrictions for unvaccinated students. As one student pointed out, "It just wouldn't feel right to make the unvaccinated have extra restrictions while the vaccinated get to walk around without any issue; it feels like we are ostracizing them because of their inability to get the vaccine at that time due to whatever reasons". We also understand that some students wish to be prudent with the safety of the vaccines - this is likely why 18% of students want to wait a while before taking the vaccine. We understand both of these considerations and suggest that the school should carefully consider these perspectives.

Regarding the transition towards post-pandemic life, 64% of students do not foresee resumption of normal routines (such as having all students on campus) at the beginning of next school year. This might look pessimistic, but it is important to note that the survey was conducted at the start of a new lockdown and during a large resurgence of COVID-19 cases. Since then, the curve has been flattened by some degree, and Ontario has announced an accelerated plan for the distribution of vaccines.

Lastly, even after we return to some level of normalcy, 71% of students see a more prominent role for the use of face masks, during periods such as the peak of the flu season. Also, consistent with the results of our 2020 Year-In-Review survey, almost 80% of students expect that virtual meetings will continue to be used at UCC for the convenience that they provide.

We thank everyone for participating in this important survey, and we hope that it will provide the school with important student perspectives to consider.

Kevin Liu, Editor-in-Chief.

The below comments are written by students of the Upper School and do not represent the view of Convergence.

"Restrictions for unvaccinated students seem unfair, as students come from different sectors of the city and the world. Given that, there can be some time barriers for vaccine distribution. A clear example is Scarborough having all of their vaccine appointments cancelled and North York still having some to administer. Mount Pleasant and others originally planned to have more vaccination spots compared to some other spots.

I think that a lot of students will decide to wear masks during other periods of concern, however not to a large extent. I re-

member being in the Prep School when the pandemic was first landing in Canada/Toronto, there were a few students who decided to wear masks. I think that post-COVID school will be similar to that during the flu season and etc."

"Will UCC opt to have a vaccination clinic at the school when it becomes available to our age group as we did with the testing if it doesn't interfere with the school year?"

"UCC should return to the normal schedule as soon as possible. Students are burnt-out and its impossible to sustainably continue in this manner."

"It is a shame that Canadians have not been vaccinated at the rate that Americans have."

"I like the idea of using virtual class room two to three times a week for school as it is nice not to have to go all the way to school (especially in the cold) a few days a week."

"I'm already vaccinated (since like four weeks ago) but the school hasn't made any accommodations for the fact that I'm immunized, which means that I still need to quarantine."

"Will there be such thing as 'Back to normal'? Or will there be a new normal?"

"I've actually been quite lucky to be one of the few vaccinated students at the College, having had my first shot and a second shot scheduled in the very near future. Aside from my personal opinions on the federal and provincial (mis)management of vaccine ordering and distribution in Canada, I had limited side effects (a sore arm, that's it) and would recommend any safe vaccine to all. I'm hoping that whether in Canada, or abroad like myself, students and their families choose to get vaccines as soon as a safe one is available. I think that even when restrictions are lifted, nearly the entire population will be 'germaphobes', and as a result we'll see similar mask wearing routines to East Asia pre-pandemic. I'm praying that by next school year, regulations will be back to normal, but that's up to our leaders to decide."

"I would choose the Sputnik 6 vaccine :)"

"PLEASE KEEP ASSESSMENT DAYS."

"From what I've read in the Star and the Globe, vaccines don't guarantee permanent immunity; so while I hope and pray that we can return back to normal operations by sometime next year, it seems unlikely that this will be the case. Experts are suggesting that mask-wearing will need to continue far into the future, and if these variants remain such a threat, I doubt the ability to return 'back to normal' in a safe manner."

"No preference for the vaccines, but the J&J and the AZ have rare cases of blood clots, so I'd not want to get those vaccines but I'd still get them."

"I really like how school has been streamlined to be both virtual and in person. I hope this is a thing that stays after the pandemic, and maybe we could make school optional to reduce number of students in the school."

"I believe that once vaccines are generally available, they should be mandatory for students. Furthermore, UCC should have everyone on campus by September 2021, full stop. It was possible this year as it was done at other private schools (Crescent) and there is no reason for all students not to be on campus next year full time."

"I believe that it is extremely important for people to get vaccinated as soon as possible. It will help protect not only yourself but the community. I believe there should be minor restrictions on those who do choose not to get vaccinated (ie. wearing a mask or no sports etc). That being said, it is not right to force people to get vaccinated as it is their choice. The more people we get vaccinated, the sooner everything gets back to normal."

"These questions are private and should not be asked to students." (**Convergence:** we agree - this is why we made this sur-

vey totally voluntary and anonymous).

"Yeah I do have some comments. Even though it might not seem like, you are pushing vaccines on students. And that's just how this school works, it's full of a bunch of liberals who put so many things into your head, some good and some bad, without the kid having their own opinion because the kid has no one else to receive information from. Stop plugging and pressuring kids into getting the vaccine. And focus on yourselves." (**Convergence:** this survey was initiated by us, not by the school, with the hope that students can express their own opinions and get their voices heard by the school.)

"It's rare but there is still a possibility of blood-clotting so I think it's best to refrain from taking it until there is no risk. Putting a substance in your body, you should be 100% sure that it will affect you positively and not negatively. The Covid vaccine could have unknown underlying effects on the body that affect you in the long run."

"As much as these lockdowns suck at the moment, there are other people who are struggling much more. For an example, although our graduating students complain about not having a graduation or having batt ball canceled two years in a row, college graduates are facing a decimated job field."

"I think that there shouldn't be any restrictions on students being vaccinated or not. Things like the flu and other diseases variate over time and not everyone is vaccinated. Before continuing, just want to clarify I am not an anti-vaxxer or anything. I think that highschool students have already been missing out on precious moments of their lives. Telling them 'you can't do this, you can't do that' just because they feel uncomfortable with a quickly-developed vaccine is pretty unfair in my opinion."

Again, this isn't saying vaccines are bad, or people shouldn't get them. Just please don't have restrictions for students that choose to opt out because they are still hesitant."

"Just to put my opinion about the potential that unvaccinated students might face additional restrictions at school: I feel as though that even if they don't get the vaccine, they shouldn't have to face different treatment than those who have gotten the vaccine. Even though the unvaccinated have a much higher chance of spreading the disease around, in the bigger picture, a big majority of the student body would have likely already gotten the vaccine (when it becomes available) and herd immunity would protect lots of people. Plus, we would be one of the last in line to get the vaccine, so almost everyone else would have been protected already. It just wouldn't feel right to make the unvaccinated have extra restrictions while the vaccinated get to walk around without any issue; it feels like we are ostracizing them because of their inability to get the vaccine at that time due to whatever reasons. I think the best way to do is either everyone or no one has restrictions. Then no one will feel bad about their circumstances or choices."

"I think COVID-19 vaccines should be encouraged, but not enforced. Although multiple studies have shown the efficacy of the vaccines against COVID-19, the recent blood clots may have reduced trust in the vaccines, especially adenovirus vaccines such as the AstraZeneca. Hopefully, more research on the matter may clear suspicion and facilitate a faster return to some semblance of normalcy."