

# Evidence that university and college vaccine mandates reduce community COVID-19 cases

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A new study co-authored by Michigan State University economics professor Scott Imberman, Ph.D., and doctoral student Wenjia Cao,

found that university vaccine mandates were effective in reducing new COVID-19 cases in communities. Their research, "The Effect of Vaccine Mandates on Disease Spread: Evidence from College COVID-19 Mandates," will be published by the *National Bureau of Economic Research*, and is the first of its kind to provide direct evidence of the positive impact university and college vaccine mandates have had on community health outcomes.

"While there is evidence that vaccines improve health outcomes for individuals, our analysis showed that college- and university-imposed COVID-19 vaccine mandates also benefited the community beyond the campus," Dr. Imberman said.

In fall 2021, 668 two-year and four-year institutions required their students to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, and many required faculty and staff to also be vaccinated. For their study, the [research](#) team brought together data from colleges' vaccination policies, semester start dates and county-level public [health outcomes](#).

The study, which has not yet been peer reviewed, found that over the first 13 weeks of the fall 2021 semester, [college](#) vaccine mandates reduced new COVID-19 cases by 339 per 100,000 county residents and new deaths by 5.4 per 100,000, which implies a 5% reduction in total US COVID-19 deaths during that time.

**More information:** Riley Acton et al, The Effect of Vaccine Mandates on Disease Spread: Evidence from College COVID-19 Mandates, (2022). [DOI: 10.3386/w30303](https://doi.org/10.3386/w30303)

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