

# A COVID CHARTER OF DEMANDS FOR STUDENTS

Where do we turn when there are no good options??!!

## Remote learning

prevents student organizing and doesn't provide an adequate learning experience.



## In-person classes

without proper safety precautions put students and staff in danger.

**We don't have to choose — both remote and reopen scenarios, as they've been carried out so far, have stalled education, compromised our safety, and weakened the student movement.**

A premature and rushed return to campus is a safety risk, but keeping teachers and students away from the physical campus prevents our organization and collective action. **If it's safe enough to go to class, campuses should be fully open!**

We refuse to put our lives on hold because the state and schools won't formulate the plans and spend the money to keep us safe. During surges we need short, temporary closures, but as the waves die down we need safety measures in place so we can return to campus.

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## **We demand FREE and EQUAL access to a SAFE and QUALITY education:**

- 1. Suspend all tuition NOW** - and for the remainder of the pandemic.
- 2. Safely and FULLY reopen campus** - give students full access to the entire campus and school resources. Implement vaccine and mask requirements as necessary.
- 3. Offer a remote option in all courses** - for students who cannot risk in-person learning. In case of another surge, be prepared to go fully remote if needed.
- 4. Provide free, high-grade PPE** - in sufficient quantities for students, teachers, and staff.
- 5. Rehire all teachers and staff laid off during the pandemic** - and no more job cuts! Guaranteed protections for faculty and staff unable to work in-person.

We note that we cannot win these demands by signing a petition or just hosting a rally with the hope that the administration throws us a bone. To gain all this we must bring the politics of the socialist revolution to the student body, uniting with all who support our demands, in solidarity with people everywhere fighting for democracy and progress. **Only a socialist student movement and coordinated political action will bring forth the needed change in the university system.**

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## URGENT!!! WE NEED A STUDENT MOVEMENT

Student and faculty action has been on the rise through different university systems in 2021: these are eclectic movements dominated by a liberal party machine, what is missing is politics of a real socialist movement. What can we learn from other struggles, past and present?

As student workers demand better compensation and the necessary protective gear amid the pandemic, we are faced with a looming cloud of doubt amongst the voices who side with the administration who believe concessions will achieve any meaningful changes. **We have seen worker and student uprisings demanding this ever since tuition was first implemented in CUNY back in 1976.** The binary two party system is filled with hypocrisy with the lives of people used as talking points to further the bourgeoisie agenda. We must first distinguish what the current model serves/upholds and the new system that we need in its place.

### What does the current university system do?

- It aims to restrict the distribution of knowledge to the youth of the bourgeoisie.
- The university also performs an ideological function, transmitting an idealist and metaphysical worldview that reflects the interests of the bourgeoisie.

### What is a People's University?

1. Access to **free** and **public** higher education.
2. **A university that is democratically controlled by the people**, serving the interests of the people, not by administrations who now use the university for their own agenda.
3. **The cancellation of student debt**, debt which ensures we will work for minimal wages after college in order to survive in the bourgeois economy.
4. **Full democratic rights for students**: freedom of speech, freedom to organize, unrestricted access to school facilities — without discrimination based on race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and immigration status.

The pandemic did not create the current crisis conditions; it has only revealed what has been brewing for decades. As COVID surges continue, the most vulnerable of our population will continue to endure the worst the pandemic has to offer. The scarcity of PPE and the CDC's new guidelines that hinder public health to force people back to work have only made the situation more drastic. The state has the resources to provide a safe and accessible CUNY but chooses to willfully ignore the pleas of students and campus workers. The school administration and state actors will SAY they stand with us, all the while advancing their own ambitions. We cannot rely on them – we must organize ourselves around these demands, in defense of our lives!

COVID is the symptom, capitalism is the crisis.

**Socialism is the solution.**

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