



*Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM  
President*

*OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT*

*Telephone: (402) 399-2435  
Fax: (402) 399-2342*

May 28, 2020

Dear College of Saint Mary Faculty:

Thank you for your amazing work to bring the 2020 spring semester to a close. I am confident that, because of you, our students maximized the opportunity to learn remotely despite the limited time to prepare for the experience. I am also conscious that many of you adapted your teaching strategies while at the same time taking on the additional role of educating your own children at home.

We are now preparing to welcome students back to campus in August. **We will begin regular classes on August 19, a week earlier than our planned calendar** indicated, and we will forego the fall break scheduled for October 22 and 23. Following Thanksgiving, faculty will be asked to transition to remote learning for the last 7 class days of the semester. The fall semester will be complete on December 8, 2020. These adjustments will not change the total number of class days in the semester. What they will do is reduce the number of days and people on campus in December, when the traditional flu season typically peaks. We recognize that some programs may need to manage exceptions due to specialized accreditation standards. I plan to share the changes to the fall calendar with undergraduate students tomorrow. Graduate students will receive information from their Program Directors.

In the message from Provost, Dr. Sarah Kottich, last week, she shared that we have faculty and staff working on the protocols for safety as we return to campus. We expect social distancing measures to necessitate such things as more time between classes to keep groups of students from waiting together in hallways to potentially needing to split classes into smaller groups.

Information about all plans will be discussed with you individually to address the impact on your classes, and **details of all plans will be provided to all by July 7**. On August 14, during our State of the College session, we will have an extensive discussion of health and safety protocols so that we can all move forward together.

Staff who have been working from home have been asked to return to campus the week of August 3. Athletes will be among the first group of students to move in on Sunday, August 9. The majority of new residential students will move in on August 15, and classes will begin August 19. As students return, we will conduct orientations to welcome them back in the COVID-19 era. Extensive protocols for screening, quarantining as necessary, physical distancing and, in most cases, the wearing of masks, will be instituted.

You might ask why we are doing all this? Why not just stay online until a vaccine is discovered and there is widespread opportunity to receive the medicine to prevent the spread of the virus. While we will first strive to protect our CSM community, our mission calls us to an education of the whole person and we believe that residential life and personal interactions with faculty and with peers are critical to the growth we pledge that students will experience here. At the same time, we know a surge in virus cases

could bring a stop to our plans. To this end we are actively working to ensure the resources and training are in place to create a great online experience should a sudden transition become necessary.

We understand that flexibility in our planning is necessary, as there are still many external factors that are unknown. For example, area school districts are still determining how they will teach children in the fall. We understand that this could impact our CSM community as well, with 14% of our undergraduate students being moms, in addition to many of our faculty and staff.

The disruption created by this pandemic has touched every area of our lives. Things we've long assumed and taken for granted are suddenly changed, and entire industries have been upended. Higher education has experienced the impact first-hand. Several United States colleges are closing and many schools are announcing major cuts or furloughs for personnel.

It is quite understandable to see such things and wonder what lies ahead for us. At this time, College of Saint Mary has no plans to eliminate any current positions or to furlough staff members. However, when you review the information sent this morning by Chief Financial Officer, Bridgette Renbarger, you will know that the Board of Directors has cautioned us to wait on enrollment figures to determine whether we can provide the usual staff and faculty raises in August. This decision will be made by August 1 and communicated at that time. We maintained the cuts we made to operational budgets in '19 – '20 and we will prohibit CSM funded travel for at least the fall semester. The latter decision was made not only for budget reasons but also for health and safety reasons.

If you have any questions, please use this [link](#) and a member of the Senior Leadership Team or your Associate Dean will respond to you. We will also publish a list of frequently asked questions by July 7. Again, thank you for all your good work. College of Saint Mary's commitment to call forth potential and foster leadership in our students is in your good hands as we anticipate our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023-2024.

Sincerely,



Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM

	Original Dates	Revised Dates
<b>State of the College &amp; Faculty In-service</b>	8/14/20 (Friday) – No change	
<b>First day of classes</b>	8/26/20 (Wednesday)	8/19/20 (Wednesday)
<b>Labor Day – no classes</b>	9/3/20 (Monday) – No change	
<b>Midterms week</b>	10/15 to 10/21/20	10/8 to 10/14/2020
<b>Fall Break</b>	10/22 to 10/23/20	No fall break
<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	11/25-11/27/20 – No change	
<b>Finals week</b>	12/14 to 12/17/20	12/3 to 12/8/2020
<b>Last day of fall semester</b>	12/17/2020	12/8/2020
<b>Winter graduation ceremonies</b>	12/19/2020	12/12/2020