



*Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM  
President*

*OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT*

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May 28, 2020

Dear College of Saint Mary Staff:

Thank you for your continued good work throughout the last nine weeks. Most of you were able to adapt to working at home, and a significant number took on the additional role of educating your own children while at the same time keeping up with your work. The maintenance, custodial, and security staff are to be especially commended for their consistent presence on campus, keeping everything working, sanitizing areas daily, and ensuring our safety. And, kudos to the Institutional Technology staff for assisting all with what was needed to allow most staff to work from home.

Due to your cooperation, we were able to keep our campus open, ensuring student access to our residence halls for those who needed it, and to the use of the internet in the Hixson-Lied Commons. Since mid-May we have asked all those who are on campus to wear masks to protect those around them. We have not had any reported illness within the staff and faculty, for which we are very grateful.

We are now preparing to welcome students back to campus in August. **We will begin a week earlier than our planned calendar** indicated, and we will forego the fall break scheduled for October 22 and 23. This will allow for any work between faculty and students following Thanksgiving to be done remotely, which will limit the comings and goings from the campus which could bring in harmful pathogens.

The majority of new residential students will move in on August 15 (there will be athletes and some others who move in on Sunday, August 9), and classes will begin August 19. Occupational Therapy students will begin classes on August 17. 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, likely in most cases, the wearing of masks, will be mandated.

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 that 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 many of you being parents, and 14% of our undergraduate students being moms.

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. Simply said, you as staff are those who work year-round to keep the operation going and you do it well. You are most valuable. 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.

Information about our scheduled staff development day on July 10<sup>th</sup> will be forthcoming within the next two weeks. The agenda that day will include reviewing the protocols that are being planned for all to return safely to campus and answer any questions you may have. If you have a question now, please feel free to pose it on this [link](#), and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will respond to you.

Finally, **I would ask that you return to working on campus the week of August 3.** Of course, you are welcome to return earlier if you so choose. Just be sure to wear your mask and practice the social distancing called for by the health directives. If you have extenuating circumstances that would prevent your return that week, please discuss this with your supervisor.

Again, thank you for all your good work. College of Saint Mary 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</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