

ACADEMIC LIFE

Saint Mary's College offers students an outstanding curricular program. Undergraduate students are able to pursue several degrees and majors as well as minors and certificates. These programs of study are supported by the offices and services in the Divisions of Academic Affairs. This division also implements the academic policies and procedures of the College. This section of the Bulletin describes these two aspects of academic life at Saint Mary's College.

Division of Academic Affairs

The staff of the Division of Academic Affairs support student learning that is achieved in the academic departments and interdisciplinary programs of the College. Headed by the Provost and Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs, this division includes the Provost, the Dean of Faculty, One Associate Dean and Senior Advising staff, the Division of Student Academic Services, the Department of Information Technology, the Center for Academic Innovation, the Cushwa-Leighton Library, the Office of Special Events, and 29 academic departments and interdisciplinary programs.

Additional offices in this division provide direct support for students seeking advising, ranging from registration for courses each semester and advice on success strategies to information on many opportunities for global education and women's leadership. The Office of Academic Advising and Registrar, the Office of Retention and First Year Experience, the Office of Student Success, Pre-Professional Advising, the Career Crossings Office, and the Center for Women's Intercultural Leadership (for information about international programs and study abroad) are the offices which provide this direct advising support to the student.

Academic Offices, Programs and Services

The Office of Academic Advising and Registrar

The Office of Academic Advising and Registrar is the central advising office at Saint Mary's College. The advising records of all undergraduate students are maintained in this office. In addition to administering academic policies, advisors in the office work closely with faculty advisors and professors to promote the academic life of all students. First Year Students are assigned a First-Year Faculty Advisor during their first summer. The faculty advisor helps First Year Students plan their schedules during the first year. When students decide on a major they will be assigned a departmental advisor in their major.

Accessibility Resource Office

The mission of the Accessibility Resource Office is in harmony with the overall mission of the College and the nation's legal framework in its anti-discriminatory principles in promoting equal access and opportunity to all. The Accessibility Resource Office works to ensure that reasonable accommodations are made to provide programmatic and physical access. Saint Mary's College recognizes its obligations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.

- **Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973** states that "No otherwise qualified disabled individual...shall, solely by reason of...disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."
- **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** of 1990 provides for access to employment, public services, public accommodations,

transportation and telecommunications for people with disabilities. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as "a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment."

The Director and Associate Director of the Accessibility Resource Office coordinate services and accommodations for students with disabilities who provide appropriate documentation. The office is located in Room 103 of the Academic Resource Center in Madeleva Hall.

Office of Retention and First Year Experience

The Office of Retention and First Year Experience works to provide students with academic and social resources needed to successfully transition and integrate into the College. This office aims to empower students to make the most of their experience as part of the Saint Mary's College community. Through the development and coordination of academic and social programming the office promotes personal, professional and spiritual growth during student's first year and beyond. The Office of Retention and First Year Experience works closely with Student Affairs and Academic Services to develop programs and opportunities for students to increase their sense of belonging, improve academic success, engage with faculty and staff, and create connections within the college community that extend well beyond the classroom.

Office for Student Success

Saint Mary's offers select students admission to the College through the Student Success Program. A major goal of this Program is to guide and support students as they attempt to make a successful transition to the demands of a college career. The official programming takes place throughout students' first year and includes taking EDUC 100 Strategies for Academic Success, (a 2-credit hour class that provides extensive comprehensive college-level study skills and strategies) as well as having regularly scheduled meetings with the program director. Success students also learn to monitor their academic progress throughout the semester and are required to participate in Study Tables (a minimum of four hours weekly).

The Office for Student Success, from which the Student Success Program originates, offers all Saint Mary's students Academic Skills and Strategies Workshops throughout the fall and spring semesters in addition to the opportunity to participate in Study Tables. Students who are experiencing difficulty with time management or are struggling in any of their classes may also consult with the program director whenever necessary. Weekly emails are also sent to all students with reminders and strategies to help them navigate each semester.

Pre-Professional Advising

Pre-Health Advising

See the Pre-Med/Pre-Health Professions (<https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/pre-med-pre-health-professions/>) section for advising information.

Pre-Law Advising

Pre-law advising is provided to students through the Career Crossings Office. The pre-law advisor provides information to students about the application process, the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and membership in the Notre Dame/Saint Mary's Pre-Law Society.

Advising for Four Years and Beyond

Academic, Mission, and Student Affairs divisions collaborate to provide a more robust approach to advising. As a college committed to the legacy of the Sisters of the Holy Cross the advising system focuses student's attention on several key questions. In the first year, programs such as First-Year Faculty Advising Program, Peer-Mentoring, and Common Experiences, allow all first year students to explore answers to the question, "Why am I here?" In the sophomore and junior years, students explore the answers to the questions "What are my gifts and passions?" and "What do my community and the world need from me?" through programs sponsored by Campus Ministry, the Office of Civic and Social Engagement, the Center for Spirituality and the Career Crossings Office. These programs include retreats, experiential learning opportunities, Sophomore Pathways, Real Life Calling seminars, StrengthsQuest workshops, and internships. In their senior year, students will prepare to leave us with some provisional answers to the question, "How can I make a difference in the world?"

All first-year students are enrolled in the following one-credit in the fall semester:

SPLL 101 First-Year Common Course This one-credit course offers a basic introduction to many facets of the academic experience at Saint Mary's College. In it, a variety of topics are discussed: practical tips such as course selection, registration, time management and learning strategies; techniques for finding a major; information about unique opportunities and important resources on campus; and, of course, deeper questions about the core values that characterize the Saint Mary's community, as well as the value of the liberal arts, integrative learning, and higher education.

This class generally meets three times a week during the first half of the semester in groups of 20 students and is taught by a faculty member who serves as the students' academic advisor. An upper-class student who serves as a peer mentor to this group of students also participates. This common course is designed to introduce first-year students to the many facets of their academic experience at the College and encompasses the following learning outcomes:

- Reflect on the nature and value of a liberal arts education;
- Draw connections between her educational goals and larger issues raised by the Common Experiences and common texts;
- Develop attitudes and strategies for lifelong learning – in college and beyond;
- Apply their knowledge of elements of the Sophia Program to the crafting of their own educational program and goals;
- Continually build on their knowledge, transferring their learning between a variety of experiences and courses.
- Understands the distinctive core values and mission of Saint Mary's College, as well as the legacy and continuing influence of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in relation to those values and that mission.

Career Crossings Office

The Career Crossings Office (CCO) offers career services. For all students throughout their four years and beyond. Information on career resources and programs are available online through the my.saintmarys.edu (<http://my.saintmarys.edu>) CCO portal community, by contacting the office in 114 Spes Unica by calling (574) 284-4775, or emailing cco@saintmarys.edu. Appointments with the CCO can be made by logging into Handshake.

Choosing a Major/Exploring Career Options

Instrumental to the foundation of career development and growth of students, the CCO provides support and guidance in choosing a major and exploring career options associated with fields of interest. The CCO can provide counseling and access to:

- Career assessments including the PathwayU, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and CliftonStrengths
- Job shadowing and informational interviewing
- "What Can I Do With a Major in...?" and alumnae career path resources

Internship Searching

The CCO assists in internship search to explore goals, searching techniques, and the necessary resources to uncover a world of internship possibilities. The office also hosts internship preparation workshops throughout the year as well as individual appointments.

Job Searching

The CCO helps students explore career goals and strategies to meet their individual needs and maximize job search results. Information and resources are available to develop networking, researching, and résumé and cover letter writing skills.

Résumé and Cover Letter Writing

Résumés and cover letters are an opportunity to provide a great first impression with potential employers. The CCO assists with developing and fine tuning job search correspondence to make a positive impact on employers. Resources are available through the my.saintmarys.edu (<http://my.saintmarys.edu>) CCO portal community as well.

Networking and Interviewing Skills

Perhaps the most difficult to develop and master, networking and interviewing skills are critical to the success of internships and job searches. The CCO provides LinkedIn coaching, mock interviews, and alumnae networking resources. Throughout the year, the CCO hosts programs that allow students to utilize and develop both networking and interviewing skills.

Graduate and Professional School Preparation

The CCO provides the resources and information needed to explore graduate and professional schools, uncover financial aid options, create effective personal statements, prepare for entrance exams, and much more. The office also serves as the primary law school advising office.

PostGraduate Service

Students from Saint Mary's not only enter into jobs after they graduate, but may pursue volunteering and service opportunities. The CCO can assist with the exploration of how short-term plans can compliment long-term career and life goals. The office works closely with the Division for Mission to provide information on various volunteer and service opportunities at the local, regional, national, and international level.

On-Campus Recruiting Program

Employers from various industries visit the Saint Mary's campus each year to recruit for jobs and internships. Employers conduct campus and virtual sessions interviews, information sessions, and information tables in which students are encouraged to participate and explore options offered by the employers. The office also hosts an annual career and internship fair in the fall and recruiting events throughout the year.

Handshake

All students can create an account on Handshake to access job and internship opportunities. Students can connect with employers, apply

for positions, post résumés, make appointments with the CCO, and more. Access the site at <https://saintmarys.joinhandshake.com>

Alumnae Resource Network

The ARN is a database of 8,000+ alumnae who have opted in to be available for students and alumnae to reach out to them for the purposes of networking, mentoring, and hosting for internships and interviews. Access the ARN at <http://connect.saintmarys.edu>.

The Center for Academic Innovation

The Center for Academic Innovation was founded in 1993 to support the academic excellence of Saint Mary's College. The CFAI administers research and teaching grants for faculty, collaborative research grants for faculty teams (COSTAR), and the Student Independent Study and Research (SISTAR) program, in which student and faculty partners work together on scholarly or creative projects. The CFAI also supports student travel grants that enable students to travel to academic conferences and environments in which they can either share or engage in their own scholarship or research.

The Center for Women's Intercultural Leadership

The Center for Women's Intercultural Leadership (CWIL) was established at Saint Mary's College in December 2000 with the support of a grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. CWIL is an innovative collaboration between Saint Mary's College faculty, staff, students and local community leaders and national and global partners. CWIL advances Saint Mary's College's mission of "preparing students to make a difference in the world" by empowering women to realize their call to leadership and to develop the intercultural knowledge and competence critical in today's increasingly interdependent world. In the spirit of the College's sponsors, the Sisters of the Holy Cross, CWIL promotes human transformation and systemic change, from the local to the global context, by providing challenging justice-based educational opportunities.

The Center is organized around two core components. Intercultural Leadership empowers women to use diversity, gender, and culture as a strength in their leadership, and offers students a portfolio program in intercultural leadership. Global Education promotes engagement with other cultures through study abroad experiences, a student club, international student services, faculty development resources, and the internationalization of the College's curriculum.