

Fall Courses — Flexible to Accommodate Our Students

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July 7, 2020

To: St. Mary's University Community

From: Tom Mengler, President

Subject: Fall Courses — Flexible to Accommodate Our Students

St. Mary's University faculty have been preparing for the fall semester by adapting and changing instructional delivery of the majority of our courses for students to take remotely while continuing to provide the St. Mary's experience of academic rigor, personalization, active and engaged learning, and community.

To meet the needs of every student throughout the semester, faculty have prepared themselves and their courses to be delivered virtually from the classroom in real time. Professors have become certified in online teaching and participated in professional development and training programs — so that every class on the course schedule can be taken remotely. The University has also installed some new classroom technology to help ensure a seamless fall semester.

As a result of our preparations, we are offering courses in three options. The University also has adapted the class attendance policy to accommodate the flexibility needed to navigate the fall semester.

- **Online (OL):** Online courses are not taught in real time, but will follow course syllabi and deadlines provided by professors. These remote courses may include pre-recorded lectures, video uploads, class chats and individual meetings with professors. For example, a professor may load a week's worth of content that a student will study and respond to within appropriate deadlines. The number of OL courses will be very limited.

- **Virtual (V):** Students participate in virtual courses remotely and in real time on the scheduled class day and time. These classes neither meet in person nor on campus. Professors will teach in real time or live from the classroom, lab or an alternative location. Virtual courses may also include video recordings, class chats and one-on-one meetings with professors. For example, if a course is normally taught at 9:10 a.m. in person, students in a virtual course will log on at 9:10 a.m. to view a live video lecture.
- **In-Person Virtual (IPV):** These courses are designed to be flexible (in person or virtual). Students registering for in-person courses may choose to be on campus in the classroom for instruction. At the same time, the professor may be teaching other students participating in the class virtually. In-person classes will be much smaller than usual in order to practice social distancing. Students may be limited to attending in-person classes on a rotating basis, for example, every Thursday for a Tuesday-Thursday course. Students participating in person may flex to the virtual (V) format as needed to accommodate changes in their situation. More information about how often a student may attend an in-person class will be available on a student's course schedule soon.

The University is prepared to accommodate everyone — students and faculty — as needed for those impacted by the pandemic. We are in the process of contacting international students to assist them in meeting compliance with the newly issued federal requirement by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement so they may continue their studies at St. Mary's.

The revised fall semester course schedule will be available by Monday, July 20. The schedule will identify the format of the course — Online (OL), Virtual (V) or In-Person Virtual (IPV). Students who have already registered will continue as currently scheduled. Students can add and drop courses via Gateway or by contacting their academic adviser. If you are signed up for an In-Person Virtual (IPV) course, you will be notified before classes begin about when to be on campus for in-person classes.

The Offices of the Registrar and Academic Advising are here to assist you.

[Email the Registrar](#)

Opportunities to help you discover, affirm and cultivate your unique talents and gifts are still at the heart of the St. Mary's experience. Whether in person or remote, faculty and staff are available in the Rattler Success Center, Community Engagement, STRIVE Career Services, Student Counseling Center, Student Life and University Ministry. Together, these offices and faculty and staff across campus will be providing opportunities important to building community.

Our commitment remains the same — that our students receive an educational experience grounded in faith and the Marianist charism, which will prepare each for successful careers of leadership on behalf of the common good.

We invite you to read more about how faculty members across the University are implementing the lessons they've learned from transitioning online in the spring to ensure a quality learning experience for all students.

[Online Learning Stories](#)

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