

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND
ADMISSION AND FINANCIAL AID
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 4, 2022**

**OPEN SESSION
AGENDA**

- I. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Retention Overview
- II. ACTION ITEMS**
 - A. None
- III. INFORMATION ITEMS**
 - A. None

The Committee does not expect to close a portion of this meeting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE
REPORT SUMMARY

Date of Meeting: February 4, 2022

Date of Next Meeting: May 13, 2022

Committee Chair: Ray Wernecke

Committee Members: Carlos Alcazar, Board Chair Susan Dyer, Judith Fillius '79, Melanie Hilley '92, Sven Holmes, President Tuajuanda Jordan, and Jesse Price '92.

Staff Member: David L. Hautanen, Jr. Vice President for Enrollment Management

Dashboard Metrics: *(Enter NA if this does not apply)*

Dashboard Metrics:

Executive Summary:

The Office of Enrollment Management is pleased to submit its January 2022 report to the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid of the Board of Trustees. This report includes information about our Fall 2021 recruitment efforts, enrollment, admitted student Fall 2022 yield initiatives, Fall 2023 recruitment, emergency grants for students, student success services, and staffing.

A. Fall 2022 Recruitment Efforts

The Fall 2021 recruitment season represented a new normal for our on and off campus recruitment activities. The Office of Admission continued offering an expanded number of in-person daily tours and information sessions and tours Monday – Friday in order to reduce the number of people on each tour. The schedule also includes two Saturdays per month during the Fall semester. Between July through December, 604 prospective students and their families attended an information session and tour. This compares with 511 students who visited between July and December 2019, the most recent comparable on-campus recruitment season.

The on-campus Open House programs resumed this fall on Saturday, September 18, Saturday, October 16, and Saturday, November 13, 2021. To reduce the density of Open House attendees gathering in an area at any given time, the program was redesigned from a traditional format with a plenary opening session with a following sequence of activities, to a program in which guests were able to choose from a set of activities that were all available from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. The Open House program included meeting with faculty and staff at an Academic and Student Services Fair, learning about the admission and financial assistance process, taking a campus tour, and enjoying a complimentary brunch in the Great Room. The center of activity was the campus quadrangle between Montgomery Hall and the Michael P. O'Brien Athletic and Recreation Center. All guests were required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination or negative test results taken within 72 hours per the College's Guest Policy at a single point check-in.

Including all three programs, the campus hosted 620 prospective students and their families. This compares to 609 prospective students and their families who attended the most recent fall on-campus Open Houses in 2019. With 32.4% responding, evaluation feedback from our guests was very positive. The program was rated as “excellent” by 85.6% of our prospective student attendees. Our Open Houses increased the interest of 84.4% of attendees and 81.2% are likely to apply. The Spring Open House is scheduled for Saturday, April 23, 2022.

For our on-campus signature events, the Open Houses and Admitted Seahawk days, there is always a difference between the number who register and the number who attend. Typically about 66% of Open House registrants attend the program. However, for our Fall 2021 Open House programs, the registered to attended conversion was 51.3%. This change in behavior was not limited to St. Mary’s College. Institutions across the country had a similar experience with the decrease in the percent of registrants to those who attended. The Office of Admission surveyed these students to better understand this change in behavior especially with implementation of the COVID-19 guest policy. Of those that responded, 70% indicated that they had a schedule conflict or that their plans had changed for the day. 15% were concerned about the COVID -19 guest policy and 15% had another reason. 92.3% remained interested in the College.

Admission staff conducted recruitment travel at 258 high schools, community colleges, and community-based organizations primarily in Maryland and then in targeted out-of-state markets in Delaware, Virginia and Washington D.C.. In the scheduling process, there were a number of challenges, including schools still not offering visit options due to the challenges associated with returning to in-person learning and having to rearrange the recruitment schedule due to an emergency surgery and recovery of one of the admission staff. Recruitment in Washington D.C. was expanded through our new partnership with the DC College Access Program. The Office of Student Financial Assistance is continuing to promote the College by participating in virtual and in-person, off-campus financial aid awareness programs. The alumni referral program for prospective students entitled “Launch-a-Leader” continues for this application cycle and, as of January 24, 2022, 38 applicants have been referred by 33 St. Mary’s College alums.

The College is working closely with our brand and marketing partners to increase awareness of the College and our recruitment programs. In addition to the print, email, and digital communications generated by the Office of Admission, our partners implemented a significant digital, social media, and outdoor advertising campaign. The Fall 2021 campaign ran between early September and the middle of October with a digital campaign relaunch in February 2022 to build awareness among Fall 2023 prospective students and to support our Fall 2022 yield strategy.

B. New Student Enrollment

Spring 2022:

Current Spring 2022 new student enrollment includes 26 students (four first-year students, 20 transfer students, and two students who were readmitted into the College) with 66% of transfer students enrolling from a community college. This is on a goal of 28 new students. By comparison, in Spring 2021 the College enrolled 35 new students (five first-year students, 29 transfer students and one student who was readmitted into the college) with 75% of transfer students enrolling from a community college. The difference in the number of transfer students

enrolled for Spring 2022 is not due to any change in admission process, rather, it is due to fewer transfer applications from community colleges compared to Spring 2021. The census date for Spring enrollment is on February 14, 2022. At that time, we will communicate the College's actual Spring 2022 and blended annual enrollment totals as well as updated financial aid expenditure figures.

The New Student Experience Team, including staff from Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs, developed and hosted an in-person Winter Orientation Program. The three-day program included a range of sessions designed for students to get to know each other, learn about our community standards, values, and expectations, sign the President's Book, and prepare for their first day of classes.

Fall 2022:

As of January 25, 2022, the College has received 2672 first-year and 28 transfer applications for Fall 2022 admission. This compares to 2602 first year and 30 transfer applications on the same date for Fall 2021.

C. Admitted Student Yield Initiatives

Early Decision and Early Action applicants were notified of their admission decision and merit scholarship and financial aid awards in November and December, respectively. Following the online notification, hard-copy admitted student packets were mailed to those offered admission. In a new initiative for this year, all admitted students were sent a financial assistance packet that includes information on St. Mary's College direct costs, the options available to pay for these costs, a glossary of terms associated with the financial aid process, and a hard copy financial aid award for those who submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The mailing of the admitted student packets initiates a comprehensive multi-channel communications campaign along with faculty, staff, and student outreach to our admitted students and their families. An area of growth for our comprehensive yield initiatives is social media. Regular Decision candidates will receive their admission decision no later than April 1, 2022.

Our yield programs will include a combination of in-person and virtual programs. With a revised program to de-densify attendance, we will host two on-campus Admitted Seahawk Days on Saturday, February 29 and Saturday, April 9. Students will also be able to take our daily on-campus tours and participate in the Shadow a Seahawk program during which they attend a class and enjoy lunch in the Great Room. The Office of Admission will be again hosting the Future Seahawk Series of virtual yield programs that was launched last year. This year's series will include eight programs with topics ranging from financial assistance, to alumni and career services, our academic programs, and student life. All prospective students may use our self-guided campus tour app.

D. Fall 2023 Recruitment

The recruitment cycle for an entering class begins more than two and a half years before the start of the entry term. Recruitment for the Fall 2023 entering class was launched in December 2020 when the College started recruiting students who had taken the PSAT test in the Fall of their sophomore year in high school. Recruitment for Fall 2023 continues and recruitment for the Fall 2024 entering class has begun with the launch of the sophomore and junior search strategy as soon

as PSAT data were available in early December. We are continuing to work with Waybetter Marketing in the execution of the search strategy. Initial results are strong. In addition, we work with a number of other sources to secure new student leads. The Office of Admission is hosting our on-campus Spring Open House on Saturday, April 23 for prospective students.

E. Emergency Financial Grants for Students

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) manages the process for the selection and awarding of the federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) Grants and the SMCM Hardship Grant programs. The College has received three rounds of HEERF funding. A requirement of the funding is that 50% is used for direct student support. HEERF-I funding was received and administered in late spring 2020. HEERF-II was administered during the 2020-2021 academic year. OSFA is now managing the HEERF-III funding received at the end of fiscal year 2021. The SMCM Hardship Grant is designed to provide financial support, usually one-time, to students with extenuating circumstances.

The College received \$3,045,822 in HEERF-III funding with 50%, \$1,522,911, allocated for direct student support. This funding has been used to cover the past due balances of recent graduates, provide grants to Master of Arts of Teaching students, and reduce the percent of financial need not met by regular financial aid resources for those with financial need. The first round of grant funding was distributed in August 2021 and the second round of grants were distributed in January 2022. The SMCM Hardship Grant committee has awarded grants to 65 students, to date, during the 2021-2022 academic year.

G. Student Success Services

The rebranded and refocused Office of Student Success Services (OS3) has expanded the number of programs and services designed to support student academic success this year.

OS3 manages the College's early alert system, Beacon. OS3 processed 897 Beacon alerts and 729 Beacon Updates (total 1626) this fall. This 47% increase in notifications most likely stems from Joanne Goldwater's outreach efforts by attending every academic department meeting, a Student Affairs divisional meeting, new faculty training, and COREP101 instructor training in the fall as well as working with the Office of Human Resources to get periodic lists of new employees in order to train them on the use of Beacon.

There is a significant demand for OS3 staff time. During the fall semester there were a total of 673 recorded visits to OS3. Visitors are asked to respond to an iPad survey at the office entrance to record the reason for the visit. During the fall semester, 302 visits were to address academic concerns. 179 visits were regarding accessibility accommodations, and 175 students came in for testing.

The Seahawk Academic Improvement and Learning Strategies (SAILS) course is a credit bearing interdisciplinary course that was piloted during the fall semester. Class survey assessment indicate that students found the course was very worthwhile and would recommend it to others. One shared that having a regularly scheduled class was helpful to her routine and others enjoyed learning skills from their peers. Students learned about resources they hadn't realized were available and appreciated that the class structure enabled visits from campus specialists. They enjoyed working on study skills with peers rather than alone and felt more supported and less isolated. There were

15 students in the inaugural SAILS course. Two students (13%) failed the course and one student (6.66%) received a grade of D because of failure to submit all assignments and/or missed too many classes. In December, the SAILS course was formally approved by the Academic Programs Committee. For the Spring 2022 semester there are 34 students enrolled in the course. This expansion is in part due to strong encouragement that students on academic probation take this course, work with a Peer Academic Success Strategy (PASS) specialist, take advantage of academic tutoring or meet with an OS3 staff member for coaching.

During the fall semester the PASS specialist program was launched. There were five PASS specialists who offered one-on-one and group tutoring to improve generic academic skills such as time management, note taking, and study skills. Walk-in sessions were offered every Tuesday from 4:00-6:00 PM and Wednesdays from 5:00-7:00 PM. In-person and virtual scheduled appointments were also offered. Only 12 students responded to a quality assurance survey to rate the PASS specialist meetings. Using a scale of 1 meaning most satisfied to a 5 meaning most dissatisfied the overall rating for the PASS specialists was a 1.5.

OS3 has significantly expanded the College's peer tutoring program. Peer tutors are upper-level students who had previously taken the course and received grades of A- or better. There are 32 tutors who provide tutoring in a wide range of 100- through 300-level courses. This compares to 13 tutors last year. Students may schedule virtual or in-person appointments with peer tutors during set office hours or on an as-needed basis. Tutors primarily address study skills and test preparation. For this semester, scheduled office hours have been aligned with the days that courses are offered to allow for better just-in-time support. Last semester, a total of 13 students responded to the tutoring survey using the same aforementioned scale with a 1.8 overall rating for tutoring.

Other new initiatives for Fall 2021 included:

- Two programs for parents: "Supporting Your Student's Academic Success", "Supporting Your Student During Finals"
- Four programs for students: "Crushing Test Anxiety", "Academic Reboot", "Registration Prep", "Recovering from Academic Boo Boos"
- Outreach for all athletic teams
- Tutoring Program- 31 tutors for various courses
- Five Peer Academic Success Strategies (PASS) Specialists
- Partnering with the Career Center to embed requirements into the COREP101: Majors/Minors Fair, Registering for Classes, Advisement Preparation

H. Staffing

Following a national search, the College welcomed Ryan Myzak as our new Director of Admission on January 10. Sara Ramirez, who had been serving in an interim basis and shepherded the Office of Admission through the challenges of the last two years, is returning home to spend more time with her family. Ryan comes to St. Mary's College from Truman State University, another COPLAC institution.

The Division has four vacancies. There are two vacant Assistant Director of Admission positions with one being covered on a contractual basis. Initial searches failed and will be relaunched in the spring. Enrollment Operations is in the process of filling a vacant Office Associate II position due

to the promotion of Liam Ross to the position vacated by Stacey Goddard who retired at the end of September. There is also a vacant part time receptionist position that is currently being filled by student workers.

Action Item(s) related to specific strategic plan goals as appropriate:

None

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ADMISSION AND FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE MEETING

OPEN SESSION
MINUTES**

Date of Meeting: October 15, 2021

Status of Minutes: Approved

Admission and Financial Aid Committee Members Present: Committee Chair Ray Wernecke, Board Chair Susan Dyer, President Tuajuanda Jordan, Judith Fillius '79, Sven Holmes, Melanie Hilley '92, Jesse Price '92

Committee Members Absent: Carlos Alcazar

Staff Member: David L. Hautanen, Jr.

Others Present: Nicolas Abrams '99, Anirban Basu, John Bell '95, Alice Bonner '03, Peter Bruns, Donny Bryan '73, Paula Collins, Michael Dougherty, Peg Duchesne '77, Elizabeth Graves '95, Gail Harmon, Glen Ives, Larry Leak '76, Doug Mayer '04, William Seale, Danielle Troyan '92, John Wobensmith '93, Joshua Ajanaku '22, Betsy Barreto, Allison Boyle, Anne Marie Brady, Kelsey Bush '94, Jeff Byrd, Carolyn Curry, Katie Gantz, Jerri Howland, Helen Lawless, Rob Maddox '07, Paul Pusecker, Beverly Read, Jenny Sivak, Janna Thompson, Anna Yates, Derek Young '02.

Executive Summary

Committee Chair Wernecke called the meeting to order at 10:54 a.m. Attendees participated both in-person and via videoconference.

Action Items

II.A. Tuition Waiver & Tuition Remission Policy Proposal

The Committee reviewed the recommended proposal to include to include tuition waiver benefits for dependents of retirees who have retired from SMCM having completed at least ten (10) years of full-time service at SMCM. Eligibility guidelines will be consistent with those for other eligible dependents. The proposal also included tuition remission benefit eligibility for dependents of USM retirees who have completed at least ten (10) years of full-time service at a USM institution.

Committee Chair Wernecke asked for a motion to recommend approval to the Board. The motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Committee Chair Wernecke asked for a motion to close the open session in accordance with General Provisions Article, Section 3-305(b), to discuss the matters set forth on the closing statement, specifically, the College's proprietary financial aid modeling strategy, which is not

subject to public disclosure under Maryland Public Information Act, section 4-335 and thereby permitted to be discussed in closed session.

The open session meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.