

# ST MARY'S COLLEGE *of* MARYLAND

---

*The National Public Honors College*

**ST. MARY'S COLLEGE  
OF MARYLAND**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**OPEN SESSION**

**St. Mary's College of Maryland  
Virtual Meeting  
St. Mary's City, MD**

**July 15, 2020**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**APPROVAL TO SUSPEND FALL 2020 VARSITY ATHLETICS AND CLUB SPORTS**

**ACTION ITEM 2021-001**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the health and safety concerns it presents, the St. Mary's College of Maryland president seeks the approval of the board of trustees to suspend fall 2020 varsity athletics and club sports.

**RATIONALE**

The safety of the St. Mary's College of Maryland campus community is our priority. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the College has developed and implemented policies and procedures covering virtually every aspect of campus life that are both designed to mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus during the pandemic and compliant with federal, state, and/or local guidelines. During this public health emergency, the NCAA has provided athletics conferences and institutes of higher education (IHEs) tremendous latitude in deciding what guidelines to implement to keep student-athletes and athletics staff safe during competitions. Unsurprisingly, there are a myriad of approaches being taken to mitigate the spread of the virus. Their successes vary and their implementations are uneven across conferences. In addition to the desire to safeguard the health and welfare of athletes and personnel, resource availability and the budget impact of athletics are noteworthy considerations in determining what to do, how, and when for many conferences and IHEs.

St. Mary's College of Maryland's fall athletics programs compete within four NCAA conferences/associations: Capital Athletic Conference (men's and women's cross country, women's volleyball, men's and women's soccer); Atlantic East Conference (field hockey); Mid-Atlantic Rowing Conference (men's and women's rowing); and, Mid-Atlantic Intercollegiate Sailing Association (men's and women's sailing). Nationally, there are few, if any, conferences that have developed conference-wide plans that adequately address the COVID-19 public health concerns. Importantly for the College, none of conferences/associations in which SMCM is a member has sufficient plans and none appears forthcoming in the near term.

With varsity and intramural sports, we must consider how to safeguard our students while on campus as well as when they are traveling, playing competitive matches, and spending time in hotels and restaurants. Team sports necessitate close contact with others and the physical exertion required during athletics precludes wearing paper or cloth face coverings. Additionally, the camaraderie between athletes on and off the field does not lend itself to the public health guidelines around hygiene and other matters. Even if the SMCM student-athletes comply with all of these rules and guidelines we have little ability to protect them during intermural competitions away from campus.

Given the importance of fall sports in campus life, it is important to retain and engage students who would be significantly impacted by the suspension of fall athletics. These objectives are especially important for students who would be playing in their final year at the College (approximately 20 seniors across all sports). Recently, the NCAA indicated athletes would not lose a year of eligibility if their conference or IHE suspended athletic competition this fall because of the pandemic. The College is committed to doing more for our student-athletes. As means to that end, the athletics director and the coaches are working to develop robust conditioning and intramural programs to sharpen the athletics skills and conditioning in a public health-appropriate manner as well as enhance the leadership and citizenship skills of our student-athletes. Additionally, the athletics staff is implementing public health-guided enhancements to the intramural sports program that can help fill the role varsity and club sports play in the lives of all of the SMCM students.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND  
OPEN SESSION**

**AGENDA**

July 15, 2020  
2:00 p.m.

*Calvert Hall/Video Conference  
St. Mary's College of Maryland*

Conference Call Participant Information

Dial In: 1-301-715-8592  
Meeting ID: 965 9116 7642  
Password: 565965

- I.** Call to Order **Lex Birney**
  
- II.** Action Items
  - A.** Office of the President **President Jordan**
    - Action Item 2021-001: Approval to Suspend Fall 2020 Varsity Athletics and Club Sports
  
- III.** Motion to Adjourn Meeting **Lex Birney**