

NEWS RELEASE

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New University of Saint Mary Initiative Aims to Guarantee Student Academic Success

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—With the start of the Fall 2010 semester fast approaching, the University of Saint Mary is rolling out a new program designed to ensure that all incoming students achieve the highest possible level of academic success.

The University of Saint Mary initiative was developed after a lengthy study of current best practices in education and is designed to help all students reach their full God-given potential. As part of the initiative, the university has created the Student Success Office—where students will map out their own path to success—and created a set of First Year Experience courses, designed to help students manage the challenges of higher education.

The Student Success Office is under the guidance of Brandon Johnson, the university's director of enrollment management.

"This program shows that the University of Saint Mary is committed to doing everything possible to help our students succeed," Johnson said. "We don't want students to come here and struggle academically. We want them to succeed, achieve academic excellence, and in turn help them grow into our leaders of tomorrow."

The office is managed by Mandy Moore, USM's new academic success coach. Aiding Moore are Sister Kathleen Wood, recently retired chair of the USM theology department, and Justin Seever, assistant men's and women's soccer coach. They'll work with students to create personalized academic success plans, and be ready to lend assistance.

"I'm here to get students where they need to be," Moore said. "I'm a resource for them."

Besides working with the success coaches, students will continue to meet with their individual advisors—who starting this fall will also be the First Year Experience course instructors. The First Year Experience courses will provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to be more successful in the classroom.

"We know from our experience at USM and from national reports that students are most likely to fail in their pursuit of a college degree in their first year," said Dr. Bryan Le Beau, USM's academic vice president and dean. "We also know that their troubles usually have less to do with their intelligence or even content knowledge than it does with their being successful in adapting to college life—a very different lifestyle from what they experienced in high school.

"I am confident that our First Year Experience, with the support of the Student Success Office, will not only result in fewer failures but also in higher level of success for those who enroll at USM."

Call Brandon Johnson at (913) 682-5151 to learn more about USM's Office of Academic Success.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic co-educational applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations in Overland Park and Kansas City, Kan. Visit www.stmary.edu for more information.

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