

World Without Limits

The Strategic Plan for Saint Mary's University
2024-2029



Saint Mary's
University

We acknowledge that Saint Mary's University is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. We are all treaty people, with roles and obligations that include responsible stewardship of the land, a commitment to relationships with Indigenous peoples based on trust and respect and to partnering with them for our mutual wellbeing. Living the intent of reconciliation is a fundamental part of our Saint Mary's community.

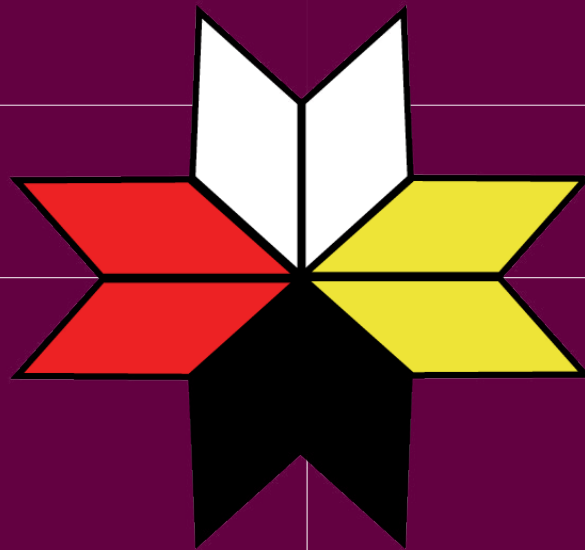


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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to present *World Without Limits: The Strategic Plan for Saint Mary's University 2024-2029*. This is an important occasion for me, as it provides an opportunity to reflect on our journey thus far as an institution and to share the considerable opportunities that exist for the future of Saint Mary's University.

We exist in a time of financial challenge, and our strategic plan is careful to balance our collective vision for the future with the practical realities of our current environment. The strategic plan draws particular attention to the urgent necessity of 'Securing Our Future.' The five priority areas have been arrived at through significant consultation with faculty, professional librarians, students, staff and members of the broader university community, and the objectives within each priority weigh the importance of sustainability against opportunity.

Our vision for Saint Mary's is built upon our strong tradition of scholarly excellence, accessibility and community engagement. We must support our people to grow and achieve their best by prioritizing their health and wellbeing, investing in their academic and professional development, and supporting an inclusive environment in which excellence and opportunity thrive.

Our values underscore our commitment to our distinctive contribution to society and are expressed through everything we do in our pursuit of excellence in research, teaching and learning.

They are courageous; very few universities are prepared to state their values so explicitly and with such care and consideration. To paraphrase our Latin motto, they ensure we are able to answer the fundamental question of why we are doing what we do. Why should a student prefer to attend Saint Mary's? Why should a faculty member choose Saint Mary's as the very best place to teach and conduct research? Why should a staff member believe that Saint Mary's is the ideal workplace for them? Why should our alumni, government, donors and friends support us? Why should the community seek us out as a trusted partner and collaborator?

Our vision, mission and values inform every aspect of this strategic plan, which is designed so that in five years' time we will be well along a path towards financial sustainability. We will be an institution that is academically exciting and that delivers world-class research which informs our teaching excellence, which engages with community, and which has the courage to take the world's largest problems and put them in front of all of us to seek collective resolution and shared understanding.



I hope you will read this document as a distillation of the many ideas of our community, and I hope also that you will see your own path within this strategic plan for the future of Saint Mary's University.

Wela'lioq.

*Robert Summerby-Murray
President and Vice-Chancellor*

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



On behalf of the Saint Mary's University Board of Governors, I am pleased to enthusiastically endorse the new University Strategic Plan, which I am confident will guide Saint Mary's as we strengthen our distinctive position during the challenging times ahead.

Saint Mary's has been a renowned place of learning and scholarship since 1802 and will continue to be so for a long time to come. We are among the top primarily undergraduate universities in Canada and are determined to build on our exemplary record of achievements to enhance our teaching and research and strengthen our relationships with the communities in which we live, work and serve. We will continue to encourage discovery and innovation in a wide range of disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, sciences and business and will seek to make our campus an inspiring setting for scholarly activity.

As we strive to become an even more successful, globally influential university, we must navigate external pressures and respond to expectations from our students, faculty and staff, our community, external partners and government, and do so with the courage and conviction of our shared community values.

I want to acknowledge and thank everyone who has been involved in these many discussions and reports, including our students, faculty, staff, senior leadership, alumni and donor community, Senate and my fellow members of the Board of Governors. Together we have laid out a plan to venture forward with vision and purpose, to create and communicate knowledge, and to act in the world. In sum, to do what we do.

*Alan R. Abraham Jr., BComm'80
Chair, Board of Governors*

MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR



I have long been a believer in Saint Mary's University and in what I know it can achieve—its relentless pursuit of the best people, an absolute focus on excellence in teaching and research, the authentic and meaningful pursuit of community partnership, an unwillingness to settle for the status quo, and a determination to overcome whatever obstacles present themselves.

This Strategic Plan is rooted in those same beliefs. It is also based on a conviction that Saint Mary's can do better, must do better, to ensure that future generations of students have greater opportunities to achieve their true potential and that we are helping to build the fortunes of this region.

It is a demonstration of our commitment to creating an environment and community that are unique to Saint Mary's, with spaces for possibility, innovation and inclusion that are integral to the distinctive and differentiating Saint Mary's experience—for our students, our faculty, our librarians and our staff. It is equally important that this same Saint Mary's experience resonates with our alumni, with our benefactors, with members of the business community and the three levels of government, who are all key supporters of the mission of our organization.

I give a lot of credit for my success in life to my time as a student at Saint Mary's—a place and its people, who took an interest in me, gave of their time and energy to me, and mentored me. I am so proud to serve as Chancellor because I recognize what an extraordinary place this is, with caring and supportive faculty and staff—just as it was when I was a student. I also recognize the tremendous potential and possibility that lie before us. The next few years will be transformative, both for Saint Mary's and the impact we will have on our community and the world.

*Dr. Michael Durland, BComm'87, DComm'10
Chancellor*

A group of people are gathered around a table in a modern office or meeting room. In the foreground, a person in a maroon shirt is partially visible, looking towards the others. A woman with long dark hair, wearing glasses and a black sweater with a white geometric pattern, is smiling and looking at a man in a white shirt. They are surrounded by laptops and open documents on the table. The background shows a blurred office environment with plants and lights.

OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES



Our Vision

Saint Mary's, building on our strong tradition of scholarly excellence, accessibility and community engagement, will be the university of choice for aspiring citizens of the world.

We will achieve this by:

- creating a space for possibility through inspiration, innovation, inclusion, investment and action;
- nurturing a culture of care and community.



Our Mission

Saint Mary's University pursues excellence in research, teaching and learning, while fostering an inclusive and diverse community dedicated to local and global engagement, collaboration and service.



Our Values

Our university values guide our daily commitment to our distinctive contribution to society, locally and globally. These values are expressed through everything we do, as we pursue:

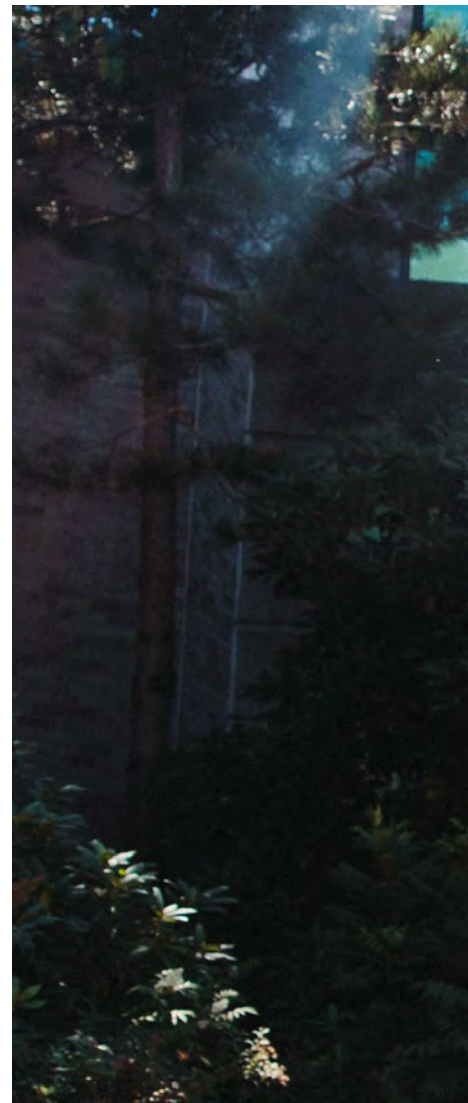
- **Intellectual Transformation,**
- **Individual and Collective Resilience,**
- **Intercultural Engagement,**
- **Alumni and Community Connection,** and
- **Ethical Wisdom.**

INTELLECTUAL TRANSFORMATION

We are unwavering in our commitment to academic success, research excellence, innovation and discovery—and the many ways in which these foster intellectual growth for all members of the university community.

We recognize that individuals learn in different ways; we support diversity and accessibility in approaches to teaching, learning and inquiry, with the goal of graduating students with creative and entrepreneurial mindsets.

By fostering collaboration, supporting academic achievement and transforming learning, we change minds and change lives.





INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE RESILIENCE

We are an organization dedicated to understanding, adaptability and purposeful action, and we will nurture individual and collective resilience through:

- Belief in the power of the Saint Mary's community to realize our shared vision for the future;
- Engaging in the strength of our common purpose, developing curiosity, imagination, creativity, empathy and courage;
- Acting not only for today but for the sustainable future of communities, future generations of learners and the ecosystems on which we all depend;
- Adapting to constant change through the recognition that challenges are dynamic and evolving and we must learn from them;
- Being courageous as individuals and as a community in confronting challenging issues and taking responsibility for our shared future;
- Nurturing the health, safety and well-being of each other and the broader Saint Mary's community.



INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

Saint Mary's has a well-established commitment to cultural diversity and is recognized as one of Canada's leading international universities as expressed through the diversity of our student body, our curriculum and in our teaching, research and staff communities.

Our goal is to support all students in their relationships and interactions with persons and groups of other cultures and to cultivate global citizenship through practice and example. We also engage in extensive outreach and collaboration with peer institutions and organizations across Canada and around the world. We will enhance this leadership position by:

- Being authentic, accountable and ethically uncompromising in our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, within a spirit of collegiality, civility, generosity, trust and respect;
- Offering a welcoming, caring and equitable community where students, faculty, professional librarians and staff with varying backgrounds, perspectives, abilities and experiences can learn, innovate and work together in an environment of inclusivity, understanding and support;
- Engaging with First Nations, Innu and Metis peoples, African Nova Scotians and global populations to foster a community based on diversity and inclusivity.



ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY CONNECTION

We are committed to our strong relationships with our 57,000-plus alumni (2024) and our many community partners and supporters to inspire philanthropy, partnership and service to the university.

We engage them to enhance student support, recruitment, employment opportunities and leadership in business, science, the arts and society, and to elevate the position and reputation of Saint Mary's University in the broader community.



57,000 +
Alumni



“

DO WHAT

YOU DO ”



ETHICAL WISDOM

Our Latin motto, *Age quod agis*, calls on us to “do what you do”—to act in the world, to shoulder responsibility, to persevere.

Our commitment to ethical wisdom means doing the right thing, every day, everywhere in our community. It requires us to care about each other, seek fairness, set positive examples and be accountable for our decisions, and to be courageous as individuals and as a community in confronting challenging issues and taking responsibility for our shared future.

A young woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a maroon shirt and a black backpack, stands on a wide set of stone steps leading up to a large, ornate stone building. She is looking up towards the entrance. The building features a large wooden double door with Gothic-style windows above it. The number '923' is visible on the stone wall to the right of the door. Two black lantern-style light fixtures are mounted on the stone walls on either side of the door. A white line with a small circle at the end hangs from the top of the page down to the top of the text box.

OUR CONTINUING COMMITMENT

Building upon our Mission, Vision and Values, Saint Mary's views education as essential to improving and transforming social and economic opportunities for individuals and communities. This view influences our actions—how we teach our students, conduct our research and serve our communities—and reflects our commitment to helping create a global future that is more equitable and more just.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Saint Mary's is committed to:

- **Creating and fostering** an equitable, diverse, inclusive, accessible and just community of faculty, professional librarians, students and staff where all feel welcomed, included, supported, empowered and have equal access to supports, services and opportunities that ensure learning and success;
- **Critically examining** the interactions, processes and colonial systems that all too often have characterized our teaching, research, community service and engagement with a goal of creating a Saint Mary's that is inclusive and equity-oriented;
- **Integrating into our decision-making** First Voice lived experiences of members of equity-deserving groups;
- **Ensuring we recognize and support** the needs of our students, faculty and staff who have disabilities, work proactively to remove and pre-empt barriers to participation and provide appropriate accommodation;
- **Engaging with local**, national and global communities to contribute to the development of self-aware, inclusive and culturally competent students and alumni;
- **Conducting research** that collaborates with and strengthens communities and builds effective and meaningful partnerships in ways that remove institutional, informational and educational barriers to success;
- **Ensuring our community** represents all aspects of diversity and that we create systems and model practices that enable every member of our community to grow, succeed and thrive.



TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Saint Mary's is committed to:

- Ensuring the highest standards of scholarship and that students are educated in the broadest sense of the term, with the ability to think clearly, judge objectively and contribute constructively to their chosen profession, their community and society;
- Providing a breadth and depth in undergraduate programs relevant to existing and emerging career paths;
- Attracting students whose abilities and aspirations match our program strengths;
- Ensuring that faculty draw on their research to inform and enrich their teaching.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Saint Mary's is committed to:

- Breaking down barriers to higher education by increasing our ability to provide adequate financial and other support for students, particularly those from equity-deserving populations such as Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities;
- Providing the best possible facilities, libraries and teaching supports and technologies;
- Providing programs and services to support students' physical and mental health, safety and well-being;
- Helping students identify, refine and realize their educational goals and career development;
- Enriching the experience of students by collaborating with and assisting them in the realization of their co-curricular, extracurricular and cultural activities and goals;
- Supporting accessibility to education through recognition of students' unique needs and thoughtful accommodation related to circumstances that impact their course of learning.



RESEARCH

Saint Mary's is committed to:

- Providing an environment conducive to high-quality research, discovery and innovation;
- Responding to new or newly relevant areas of research as they emerge;
- Collaborating with peer universities and institutions, industry and business partners, professional associations, and governments, where appropriate, to achieve research objectives;
- Ensuring students, beginning in the first year of their undergraduate degree, have opportunities to directly participate in research.



GRADUATE EDUCATION

Saint Mary's is committed to:

- Delivering the highest-quality graduate teaching and research experience, understanding that, as in any university, the quality of graduate education and the quality of research are closely linked;
- Increasing our ability to provide adequate financial support for graduate students.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Saint Mary's is committed to:

- Encouraging learning as a valuable and enriching lifelong activity;
- Delivering courses, programs and certifications that strengthen professional development and advance career growth;
- Providing our alumni with opportunities to continue on their educational path through Saint Mary's;
- Valuing our graduates as lifelong members of the Saint Mary's community who make significant contributions to the university's strengths and reputation;
- Providing members of the broader community opportunities to study and to use our facilities;
- Helping other institutions, professional organizations, community partners and learned societies through the provision of facilities and expertise.



**THE PATH TOWARD A
*WORLD WITHOUT LIMITS***

The world is undergoing unprecedented and at times unpredictable socio-economic and geopolitical shifts. The challenges we face are myriad and complex and their solutions require rigorous attention. Everywhere, the ways people think, learn, live and do business are transforming at a breathtaking pace, as automation, artificial intelligence and machine learning revolutionize entire industries, and the marketplace becomes increasingly global, interconnected and volatile. The impact and associated challenges of the global pandemic have added even greater complexity and placed increased demands on this societal and economic evolution.

Throughout this time of immense disruption, Saint Mary's University has adapted, and continues to chart a course for success for our graduates and our community. We are committed to a vision of interdisciplinary innovation, intercultural fluency and inclusivity, and knowledge creation and discovery that places the focus on people, impact and purpose.

World Without Limits: The Strategic Plan for Saint Mary's University 2024-2029 captures our highest ambitions and provides a robust framework for inclusive excellence across all of our faculties, departments and programs. It speaks directly to the immense contributions we can make to improving health, sustainability, equity and prosperity in our society through our creativity, exploration, innovation and support for the next generation of students.

World Without Limits is a collective expression of who we want to be: a globally influential, strongly connected and socially accountable university that produces teaching and research of the highest quality, and consistently engages with the issues that face our society and humanity. We aspire to transform lives through knowledge, collaboration and discovery; connect communities around shared ideals and understanding; and nurture the environment and the world.

This strategic plan defines what we will do from now until 2029 as we continue to work toward becoming a nationally and internationally leading university that delivers outstanding research-informed teaching, enables transformative student experiences and engages in meaningful service to society with a dedication to excellence, innovation and positive impact on our communities and the world.

Our journey towards a *World Without Limits* is guided by the strength of our character and boldness of our ambitions. It demands vision, planning, courage and conviction.

Saint Mary's must become a stronger version of ourselves to navigate the challenges that lie ahead. We must lean into our strengths in teaching, research and community engagement in order to discover and overcome the limits of our world. We must embrace change and the opportunities it brings so we can ensure relevant impact on the wider society. And we must face these challenges with courage, compassion and careful consideration.

Saint Mary's must be prepared to evolve to meet expectations from our students, faculty, professional librarians, staff, alumni and other key stakeholders that we be a contemporary and financially sustainable institution. We need to evolve both to meet these expectations and to secure our future as a university delivering high-quality teaching and research and creating positive impact for society. To do so, we must maximize our strengths and resources and minimize our vulnerabilities, while prioritizing our commitment to sustainable resource allocation.

The purpose of the strategic plan is to define the focus of our activity out to 2029 and identify the associated indicators of progress that reflect a strengthening in our capability, capacity and culture.

We recognise this is a bold ambition that requires effort, resourcing and change. But by achieving success against this strategic plan, we will be moving intentionally towards the aspirations expressed in *World Without Limits* and truly build on our motto, *Age quod agis*—"Do what you do"—by fundamentally extending the very idea of what our university can—and should—become.

SECURING OUR FUTURE

Saint Mary's University recognizes that our current financial model must adapt and change to enable us to respond to challenging circumstances, pursue strategic priorities and deliver on our core mission of research, teaching and service to the community. Over the past decade, costs have increased much more rapidly than government funding, tuition and income from other sources.

The fulfillment of our mission requires us to make a sustained effort to use our resources effectively and efficiently, increase our level of funding from public and private sources, and maintain a long-term view even when facing immediate challenges. Successful universities are financially disciplined, managing costs and securing alternative forms of revenue, which provides the flexibility to respond to challenging circumstances, pursue strategic priorities and deliver on the core mission of research, teaching and service. A financially sustainable operating model is essential for us to reinvest in our mission to create the highest-quality student experiences and produce impactful research.

Many of the challenges Saint Mary's faces in securing our future are shared with other universities, while we also recognize that they present some unique complexities. In a likely future environment of constrained public funding, financial security will only be attained by raising revenue from non-public sources, by streamlining systems and operations, by embracing digital technologies, and by ensuring that investments in facilities and infrastructure are adaptable to future changes in work and learning. Enhancing capability will, on occasion, require hard decisions, and so we will continually evaluate activities, processes and structures for efficiency, effectiveness and relevance, and respond accordingly.



A young woman with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored sweater, is smiling and looking towards the right. She is sitting at a desk with a laptop and a tablet. In the background, other students are working at desks with laptops. The background wall is blue with a pattern of small white dots. A red and purple decorative element is at the top of the page.

OUR PRIORITIES



Discovery and Learning with Purpose

To foster a vibrant culture of research, teaching and learning that reflects our core values of academic integrity, the pursuit of knowledge, responsiveness to community needs and concerns for a just society, promoting inclusive excellence that embraces diverse learner needs and creating strong and sustainable communities.



Healthy and Successful Community

To create a Saint Mary's community that is accessible and inspiring, providing support for learners and their diverse needs and building pathways to academic success that enable every individual to achieve their potential within an environment of belonging.

A: Student Experience and Academic Success

B: Strengthen Faculty and Staff Experience



Sustainability

A: Financial: To ensure long-term fiscal sustainability through careful and strategic management of institutional resources, including the development of new revenue streams and funding opportunities.

B: Environmental: To ensure that the buildings and shared spaces of our campus are designed and maintained with an eye toward sustainability and provide a long-term positive impact on the environment and community.



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility*

To promote a safe and welcoming place of learning, working and belonging that is equitable, inclusive and accessible for Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and other equity-deserving groups.



Community Relationships and Philanthropy

- To enhance relationships with alumni, donors, government and other community partners by establishing opportunities that inspire individuals and organizations to contribute to experiential learning, critical research and sustainable institutional growth.
- To listen, invite engagement and seek opportunities to provide service to our communities in all that we do.

**We are a people-first institution that integrates EDIA into all we do, including all aspects of our teaching, research, operations and services. There is still much work to be done, which is why we include EDIA as one of our five priorities.*

“The university’s

emphasis on fostering a culture of research, teaching and learning aligns with my own journey. I’ve found that classes delve into pressing current societal issues, urging us to contemplate their implications. Engaging with research and readings that address these contemporary challenges instills in us a sense of responsibility to effect positive change in our communities. Saint Mary’s has equipped me with not only knowledge but also the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate complex issues and contribute meaningfully to society. By challenging me to dig deeper, my courses have empowered me to articulate and address the pressing concerns of our time. In essence, prioritizing teaching and research is vital for both the university and its students. It ensures that we are not only equipped with academic prowess but also the ethical compass to navigate the complexities of the world we inhabit.”



– Holly Kanyamunyu BA’24,
Class Valedictorian

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As the landscape of education and knowledge evolves, we need to be able to get ahead of it and adapt to this change, be it in our curriculum, the tools we use to learn, or the way we comprehend and process information. Saint Mary’s is a leading institution in innovation and research and I have felt and seen the university adapt and find innovative ways to implement change into our curriculum.

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– Nyah Sahyoun BComm’24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 1:

Discovery and Learning with Purpose

Our students value our transformative Saint Mary's experience. Through our leading scholarship, innovative academic programming, commitment to athletics and recreation, and our cutting-edge facilities that invite collaboration and understanding and create space for engaging with community and businesses, we produce graduates distinguished not only by their academic achievements, but also by their open-mindedness, maturity, adaptability and enduring fellowship. The academic, co-curricular, cultural and social aspects of the Saint Mary's experience challenge, inspire and support our diverse student cohort to achieve the educational and social outcomes of our vision for a *World Without Limits*.

Our first priority, then, is to foster a vibrant culture of research, teaching and learning that reflects our core values of academic integrity, the pursuit of knowledge, responsiveness to community needs and concerns for a just society, promoting inclusive excellence that embraces diverse learner needs and creating strong and sustainable communities.

Strategic Direction:

Our students, faculty, professional librarians and staff will be courageous in tackling some of the most difficult challenges facing the world and seek to create strong and sustainable communities both locally and globally.

Objectives:

Engage in innovative, interdisciplinary research and teaching inspired by intellectual curiosity and creativity that respond to real-world challenges, and that connects and impacts our communities;

Strengthen and expand community engagement and partnerships, building the relationships required to tackle existing and emerging social, economic and intercultural challenges;

Attract talented, thoughtful and diverse students, faculty, professional librarians and staff seeking to join us in embracing new approaches to strengthening our communities;

Integrate equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility into teaching, research and administrative service across all areas;

Identify and celebrate excellence in research, teaching and administrative service.

My experience

at Saint Mary's University has prepared me to seize every opportunity, strive for excellence, as well as make significant contributions towards sustainability and future societal challenges. The university's emphasis on innovation, research and education has given me the ability to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors during my time here. With the invaluable assistance of the Arthur L. Irving Entrepreneurship Centre, I had the privilege of leading a dedicated startup team focused on developing technology to combat gender-based violence. The abundant resources, mentorship opportunities and unwavering support from faculty members have been instrumental in the success of our venture and my personal growth.



– Alexia Bourgeois BComm'24,
Class Valedictorian

Throughout my time at Saint Mary's,

I've been fortunate to experience a genuine sense of support from my professors. Whether I was facing illness or grappling with mental health challenges, their understanding and willingness to accommodate were unwavering. Rather than solely focusing on grades, they prioritized my comprehension and provided invaluable resources to aid my learning journey. The student-professor relationship here is truly special. It's not just about passing courses; it's about fostering an environment where students feel heard and supported. For future students, knowing that SMU professors genuinely care about their well-being is something to eagerly anticipate. This level of support isn't just a testament to Priority 2's focus on student support; it's a cornerstone of the university experience.

– Holly Kanyamunyu BA'24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 2:

Healthy and Successful Community

Priority 2A:

Student Experience and Academic Success

To create a Saint Mary's community that is accessible and inspiring, providing support for learners and their diverse needs and building pathways to academic success that enable every individual to achieve their potential within an environment of belonging.

Strategic Direction:

We are committed to building pathways to success that empower our students to be confident global citizens, and to creating opportunities to acquire the intercultural competencies critical for societal well-being.

Objectives:

Enhance educational access and support for all learners, including those from Mi'kmaw and African Nova Scotian communities, those who are first-generation university students or who represent economically or historically disadvantaged communities;

Improve online access and content delivery in targeted program areas to provide greater flexibility and accessibility for all learners;

Explore new pathways to degree completion and certificates by increasing transfer agreements with peer educational institutions;

Provide learning supports for academic success, including a range of accessibility and wellness programs and activities, and research and information literacy services;

Strengthen our leadership in intercultural engagement through our student programming, initiatives and activities;

Strengthen academic programming related to sport, business and health;

Provide students with more leadership, entrepreneurship and experiential learning opportunities.

“ Investing

in faculty and staff well-being will only serve to benefit the student population. The faculty and staff at Saint Mary's continually go above and beyond to give me and my fellow students anything we needed for our education and professional development. The supportive and caring culture that the staff and faculty provide is what sets Saint Mary's apart from other university communities and is one of its best assets. ”



– Madison Vanderlinden BA'24,
Class Valedictorian

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Faculty and staff are the backbone

of the entire university experience and are key to student success. Studies reinforce the intuitive notion that happy employees perform better. Likewise, faculty and staff who are supported to enjoy work/life balance, continued career development and inclusivity are more likely to teach with vigor, engage with students, and continue to build upon the amazing community at Saint Mary's. Thus, I believe that by prioritizing these people, Saint Mary's is by extension also prioritizing the community, as well. ”



– Jonathan Mansvelt BSc'24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 2: Healthy and Successful Community

Priority 2B: Strengthen Faculty, Professional Librarian and Staff Experience

To become a stronger version of ourselves, we must support our faculty, professional librarians and staff to grow and achieve their best by prioritizing their health and well-being, investing in their professional and career development and supporting an inclusive environment in which excellence and opportunity thrive.

Strategic Direction:

We believe in providing our people with opportunities for professional and career development and cultivating an environment that supports their well-being.

Objectives:

Ensure a workplace that is safe, diverse, equitable, accessible and inclusive;

Foster a “people first” culture that makes Saint Mary’s a desirable place to work and build a career;

Invest in orientation, training and career development opportunities that contribute to a people-focused culture of collaboration, care, respect and inclusion;

Support leadership development opportunities and succession planning for all employees.

“The university’s

commitment to long-term financial sustainability is reassuring. Given the diverse nature of our community, including international students who enrich the Saint Mary’s environment, financial strategies must consider their needs to ensure our collective sustainability. Amidst challenges like COVID, inflation and shifting government funding, addressing financial concerns head-on is a bold move reflected in the Strategic Plan. This step signifies the university’s proactive stance in navigating uncertainties and the resources necessary for our continued growth and success. ”

– Holly Kanyamunyu BA’24,
Class Valedictorian

“I believe that transparency about finances

is extremely important, and it is refreshing to see Saint Mary’s informing the community about the ongoing challenges. Ultimately, students, faculty and staff alike all want to see Saint Mary’s continue to provide an amazing learning experience. Being able to appreciate the reality of the situation is key to collectively addressing it in a constructive way. ”

– Jonathan Mansvelt BSc’24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 3: SUSTAINABILITY

Priority 3A: Financial Sustainability

To ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of Saint Mary's through careful and strategic management of institutional resources, including the development of new revenue streams and funding opportunities.

Objectives:

- Evaluate administrative systems and processes for efficiencies and improved user experience;
- Align financial resources and our academic mission to protect our ability to support innovation, effectiveness and efficiency;
- Engage a Strategic Enrolment Management Plan in support of student registration to sustain academic programs and student services;
- Embrace digital transformation and digital learning to support the academic mission, innovation in teaching and learning, and sustainable business operations;

Strategic Direction:

We are committed to operational excellence, embracing transformational ideas and seeking out ways to steward meaningful relationships with local, national and international businesses, governments and communities. We also recognize that our financial situation must change to enable us to respond to challenging circumstances, pursue strategic priorities and deliver on our core mission of teaching, research and service to the community.

The fulfillment of our mission requires us to make a sustained effort to control our costs and to increase the level of funding from public and private sources, with the goal of achieving and maintaining a balanced budget year-over-year. Successful universities are financially disciplined, managing costs and growing alternative forms of revenue. A financially sustainable operating model is essential for us to reinvest in our mission to create the highest-quality student experiences and produce impactful research.

- Pursue strategic external partnerships that support our mission, align with our values and enhance sustainability, and expand reciprocal opportunities for partnering with other post-secondary institutions, businesses and community organizations.

“

It's been remarkable

to witness the university's dedication to supporting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set forth by the United Nations. I firmly believe that this commitment will empower us as students to become better global citizens, inspiring us to act with mindfulness and in ways that promote the well-being of both people and the planet.

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– Alexia Bourgeois BComm'24,
Class Valedictorian

“

Reflecting on my time here,

it's refreshing to see Saint Mary's University's commitment to environmental sustainability in action. Witnessing initiatives like the stunning three-storey living wall in the atrium/common room reinforces the university's dedication beyond mere 'green talk.' As a young person, knowing that the institution is actively striving for environmental responsibility is incredibly encouraging. This emphasis on sustainability and accessibility isn't just commendable; it's essential. It reflects a broader recognition of our responsibility to both future generations and the planet we inhabit.

”

– Holly Kanyamunyu BA'24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 3: SUSTAINABILITY

Priority 3B: Environmental Sustainability

To ensure that the buildings and shared spaces of our campus are designed and maintained with an eye toward sustainability and provide a long-term positive impact on the environment and community.

Strategic Direction:

We are committed to ensuring access to campus grounds, buildings and facilities, and that any new construction or renovations to existing spaces are undertaken through the lens of environmental sustainability and lessening negative environmental impacts.

Objectives:

Commit to energy sustainability and take steps to achieve carbon neutrality (“net zero”) by 2050 through technology innovation, financial stewardship and embedding sustainability into all institutional practices;

Establish a single point of contact and coordinated approach to sustainability;

Achieve greater engagement and participation within our university community (students, faculty, staff and governors);

Ensure our built environment and technology embrace and support our sustainable objectives.

“Every university reads the same books and covers the same topics; what makes one university stand out from the others is its people, the connections you make and the things you learn from others along the way. Diversity lies at the core of Saint Mary's University, evident on our campus where no two faces look alike, groups are communicating in different languages, students feel comfortable expressing their individuality through clothing, food, sport and clubs. Saint Mary's makes room for uniqueness and I believe the biggest lesson we are taught is that everyone is so different, works and learns in different ways, and it's a lesson that you need to understand in order to collaborate and excel.”

– Nyah Sahyoun BComm'24,
Class Valedictorian

“My experience at Saint Mary's University has instilled in me a profound appreciation for the richness of diversity. I take great pride in knowing that Saint Mary's University hosts one of the most diverse student populations. Intercultural Engagement, a core value of Saint Mary's, is at the heart of our university, evident in the many international student organizations and events held on campus. I've seen firsthand how this creates special moments and mutual understanding across different cultures. Saint Mary's University is a place that encourages a global perspective and fosters understanding among students from all backgrounds. I'm confident that Saint Mary's is ideal for international students looking to build a home away from home. Furthermore, SMU offers Canadian students the chance to take part in various cultural experiences and form lasting friendships.”

– Alexia Bourgeois BComm'24,
Class Valedictorian

“Reflecting on my journey at Saint Mary's, I find it imperative to acknowledge the support extended to groups like the African Student Society and the Black Student Society. Seeing the school's collaboration with these communities has been instrumental in enriching my university experience. The backing we received from the university for events like African Night in 2023 underscored the significance of institutional support in fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment among marginalized groups, particularly the African/African Nova Scotian community. For students like myself, this commitment is pivotal. It ensures that our educational environment is not only diverse but also accessible and equitable. I've felt the impact of these efforts in the sense of belonging I've cultivated and the opportunities for meaningful engagement with diverse perspectives. Moving forward, I believe that upholding EDIA principles will not only benefit current students but also set a precedent for future generations, fostering a truly inclusive and equitable academic community.”

– Holly Kanyamunyu BA'24
Class Valedictorian

“The reason I decided to pursue post-secondary education at Saint Mary's was due to the diverse student body and faculty. I wanted to study in an environment where I could immerse myself in new experiences, languages and cultures, and was drawn to the new Intercultural Studies program. During my degree I was also able to gain valuable career and professional development. I am not finishing my time here with just an undergraduate degree, but I am also applying for jobs in my field with several years of job experience due to the opportunities I was given at Saint Mary's.”

– Madison Vanderlinden BA'24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 4:

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

To promote a safe and welcoming place of learning, working and belonging that is equitable, inclusive and accessible for everyone, including Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and other equity-deserving groups.

Strategic Direction:

Diversity excellence and inclusion infuse the heart of our work and strategic directions and are at the core of our values. We strive to be a leader in diversity and accessibility, promoting inclusion, equity and respect, and are working towards eliminating disparities and bias on our campus and in our communities.

Objectives:

Adopt and implement the recommendations contained within the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, Nova Scotia Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy, and the SMU Accessibility Plan, integrating First Voice perspectives and tracking progress;

Support best practices and opportunities to eliminate systemic barriers to full participation of Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and other equity-deserving groups in all areas of the university;

Decolonize curricula and support Indigenization of the academy, responding to the Universities Canada Principles on Indigenous Education and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

Implement the action plan established in our response to the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education;

Implement our Indigenous Success Strategy;

Foster a learning and working environment that is equitable, inclusive and accessible for students and employees from equity-deserving groups;

Pursue equitable, inclusive and accessible recruitment, selection, retention, promotion and matriculation of members of equity-deserving groups;

Apply a Rick Hansen Foundation lens and approach to all improvements at the university, ranging from our online presence to our physical spaces.

“The support

of our community through volunteerism, philanthropy and collaborative partnerships makes achieving ambitious goals possible. Support from government and community partners enhances our visibility and also provides access to additional resources and opportunities for collaboration. By working together, we are able to draw on one another's strengths, address common issues and generate beneficial effects that reach beyond the confines of our institution.”

– Nyah Sahyoun BComm'24,
Class Valedictorian

“I always look at my experience in the African Student

Society as one that truly showed me the depth of the relationships we as students have with the university and the community surrounding us. For instance, the support provided by Keisha Turner, an esteemed alumna, through initiatives like the bursary for African Canadian and Indigenous women, underscores the community's readiness to support us. This connection to our community, alumni, donors and supporters is pivotal. It ensures that students like me have access to vital resources and opportunities. It's not about seeking approval but recognizing the symbiotic relationship between us and those who support our academic endeavors.”

– Holly Kanyamunyu BA'24,
Class Valedictorian

PRIORITY 5: **Community Relationships and Philanthropy**

To enhance relationships with alumni, donors, government and other community partners by establishing opportunities that inspire individuals and organizations to contribute to experiential learning, critical research and sustainable institutional growth.

To listen, invite engagement and seek opportunities to provide service to our communities in all that we do.

Objectives:

Cultivate a culture of philanthropy at Saint Mary's University that engages all members of our community to play an active role in supporting, sharing and celebrating university success;

Maintain strong relationships, deliver unique experiences and seek out collaborations with our loyal and engaged alumni, volunteers and donors and across our local and regional community;

Ensure that Advancement & External Affairs is structured and resourced to support campaign success and data-informed operations, and aligned with the strategic priorities of the university that support our academic mission;

Strategic Direction:

Saint Mary's University has a strong tradition of engagement with our alumni, donors, government and community partners who provide powerful financial and volunteer support.

To catalyse support for our priorities, Saint Mary's is undertaking the most ambitious fundraising campaign in our history: *World Without Limits: The Campaign for Saint Mary's University*, a \$100-million initiative to galvanize our greatest strengths and propel Saint Mary's towards becoming one of the most innovative and exciting universities in Canada.

Our vision includes significant new investments in sustainable infrastructure, new research initiatives and programming, new intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership and unprecedented levels of student support—all built on a firm and resilient foundation of academic excellence and our rich history and traditions.

Inspire transformational philanthropic support and alumni participation in *World Without Limits: The Campaign for Saint Mary's University*;

In addition to our community-engaged research commitments, expand the breadth and strength of our community partnerships, fostered by authentic listening and consultation.



DO WHAT YOU DO:

**STRIVING TO CREATE A
WORLD WITHOUT LIMITS**



Great universities are distinguished by the calibre, accomplishments and contributions to society of their students, faculty, staff, alumni and supporters. Saint Mary's is one such university.

As a catalyst for discovery, innovation and progress, we have made it our mission to generate new knowledge and understanding, and to nurture new generations of scholars, innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs who will address some of the most pressing and complex challenges of our time.

Saint Mary's University is dedicated to fostering a passionate and thriving academic community in which the learning and scholarship of every member may flourish, and with a resolute commitment to the principles of accessibility, inclusion, equity and justice.

We educate citizens of the world who embrace our tradition and commitment to community engagement. Our students, faculty and staff, alumni, partners and supporters find community here that is welcoming, inclusive, sustainable, diverse and resilient. We connect locally, regionally and globally and we graduate students who have discovered their potential to serve their own communities with impact and purpose.

We create space for possibility through inspiration, ideation and action, and our culture is nurtured by a spirit that fosters a love of teaching and learning, and a desire for knowledge and discovery. Our scientists and scholars seek insights into fundamental questions of our being and aim to apply these to improve everyday lives. They engage with research partners in business, industry, government and other organizations to inspire new generations to view the world around them, their place in it, and the opportunities it presents.

Saint Mary's
University has
been a beacon
of optimism
and positive
change for our
community for
**more than
220 years.**

More than a campus or a university experience, Saint Mary's represents a way of being in the world that is worth striving for.



We are a modern, secular and metropolitan university and the second largest in Nova Scotia.

We are ranked third (as of 2023) in Canada among primarily undergraduate institutions and second for research among universities in Nova Scotia. We are also a leader in graduate education, offering 29 PhD and master's degree programs, and are nationally recognized for our business, entrepreneurship and research excellence, as well as for our innovative and interdisciplinary programs in arts, science and business. Saint Mary's promotes the development of a global and entrepreneurial mindset across all faculties and programs so that our students are prepared for the real world—the one waiting for them just outside their door and the one they will face in the years ahead.

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PhD and master's degree programs

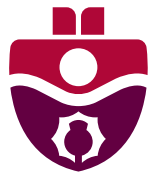


As we look toward the future, Saint Mary's sees advanced education as an interdisciplinary pursuit, one in which every student has an opportunity to participate in research and learns to push boundaries by working collaboratively across programs and disciplines. Our students hone their skills and expertise through rigorous academic training and experiential learning—in labs, in businesses and industry, and in service to their community.

Just as we need the solutions science and technology may offer, we also need the social sciences and humanities to solve complex problems, to build strong communities and fuel a sustainable and inclusive global economy. Now, more than ever, the social sciences and humanities are essential to collaborating and innovating in a world facing massive change and increasing competition for resources.

More than a campus or a university experience, Saint Mary's represents a way of being in the world that is worth striving for. Our diverse and inclusive community is one that nurtures the unique talents and potential of each individual, builds their essential capacities as passionate, compassionate and curious lifelong learners, and connects them to real problems, real professional networks and real enterprises, locally, regionally and internationally.

There has never been a greater need for what Saint Mary's can offer, and we have never been more prepared to deliver on the promise of a better, brighter future—one which calls on leadership and innovation to overcome challenges of sustainability and climate change, poverty and inequality, migration and health care. The promise of realizing our potential and expanding the possibility of what we can achieve together. The promise of a *World Without Limits*.



**Saint Mary's
University**

