



SAINT JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

February 3, 2017

Dear Saint Joseph's College students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni and friends:

Earlier today, the Saint Joseph's College Board of Trustees voted to suspend all academic activities located on our Rensselaer campus. This will be effective following May 2017 graduation. The College will retain the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing program in Lafayette, and potentially other programs as long as they are delivered at a location other than the Rensselaer campus. The halls and classrooms of our College will not be filled with students in August of this year, ending a tradition that began more than 125 years ago. I am greatly saddened that the mission of our founding fathers, the Society of the Precious Blood, who built the school and its charism, will not continue uninterrupted.

It pains me to have to share this sad news with you. Many of you will cry, as I have and continue to do. Others will be angry, and others will have yet another reaction. I hope and pray that we all can move forward with our lives knowing that, like so many other parts of this changing world, Saint Joseph's College is being affected by the transitions around us. Nevertheless, it gives me great solace and pride to know that thousands of Saint Joseph's College graduates matriculated to careers that contribute to our society daily and in most every walk of life.

Many good people, especially members of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, other religious orders and thousands of lay people, gave freely of their talents – many committing every moment of their adult and professional lives – to Saint Joseph's. Despite their efforts and those of the Board, today's decision had to be made. The harsh economic realities of operating a small independent college is the primary factor influencing our decision.

Our attention now turns to ensuring that our students are seamlessly transitioned to other colleges or universities. I assure you, graduation will be held for seniors as planned on May 6, 2017. We are doing all we can to provide next year's sophomores, juniors and seniors with multiple choices of other colleges or universities to attend. In addition, we will do all we can to facilitate career transitions for faculty and staff.

Many ideas have been proposed, and many tried with all the blood, sweat and tears any human could muster. In the past 10 days, I have heard from many of you as you've poured out your love for our College. The ideas have come in abundance and have not been ignored. The reality is that the vast majority of these suggestions have been seriously evaluated. Most have been tried (some more than once).

You may have noticed in my remarks above that operations are being suspended. This means that we have an opportunity for a new beginning. Over the the next several months, the administration will continue exploring how to recreate Saint Joseph's to meet the needs of the 21st Century student.

Following is a list of accommodations for our students. We know these steps will help ease the disruption for the people who are our number one priority.

In closing, I would like to thank you for all your support over the years. My wife Susan (a fellow Puma) and I are now and shall forever remain proud Saint Joseph's College graduates.

Gratefully,

Benedict Sponseller '74, Chairman

Saint Joseph's College

Board of Trustees

Additional Details

Community Support Meetings

We understand that this news is particularly difficult for many of our students, faculty, staff and alumni. Tonight, Friday, a Community Support meeting is scheduled for students at 7:00 p.m. Saturday at 10:00 a.m., a meeting for employees is scheduled. These meetings are being facilitated by Campus Ministry and Counseling Services and are being held in the Chapel.

During this time, participants will have the opportunity to share some of their feelings or memories that are part of this experience. We will provide information about resources available on campus, stressing the importance of relying on the Community for support. Each of us will experience this transition in unique ways, but we can gather to support one another through the process. This Support Meeting is meant to acknowledge the process and provide some guidance spiritually and emotionally going forward. Community Support Meetings will continue to be held over the coming weeks.

Teach-Out

The focus of the Teach-Out is to enable a smooth transition for students who will be continuing their college education. Transfer counselors from the other institutions will be available on our campus to facilitate a smooth transition in the coming weeks. In addition, other institutions involved in the teach-out agreements have committed to provide an affordable and convenient experience for the students who are

interested in attending their institution. Saint Joseph's College has submitted the Teach-Out plan for approval by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Upon approval by the HLC, Saint Joseph's College can then inform students of the institutions that have entered into a Teach-Out agreement

Discussion and Contact Information

On Monday, Feb. 6, we will hold a faculty/staff forum at 3 p.m. and a student forum at 9 p.m. in the Shen Auditorium to respond to your questions. If, in the future, you have other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us:

- For Current and prospective students: Brian Studebaker – bstudeba@saintjoe.edu
 - For Parents: Beth Terrell – bterrell@saintjoe.edu
 - For Alumni, donors: Greg Roberts – groberts@saintjoe.edu
 - For Faculty: Chad Pulver – pulver@saintjoe.edu
 - For Staff: Nancy Studer or Eileen Doherty – nancys@saintjoe.edu or edoherty@saintjoe.edu
 - For the Strategic Planning Committee: Spencer Conroy – sconroy@saintjoe.edu
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To the Saint Joseph's College family,

On behalf of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, I want to say thank you to all who have done so much for Saint Joseph's College. From the beginning, the Board of Trustees, the faculty, staff, students and their families have been an integral part of our mission and ministry at the college. You have walked with the college every step of the way and without you, the college could never have achieved it many accomplishments.

One of the few constants in our lives is change. Just as we grow, develop and face changing circumstances in our personal lives, so too the college must face its changing circumstances. Our faith informs these changes. We believe that our God works in and through all circumstances. Every change is an invitation to uncover and discover what we are being invited to by our God. In faith, we believe that by embracing the changes, God will help us face the future in positive and constructive ways.

Saint Joseph's College is at such a point in its journey. It is our duty to work with the leadership of the college to make decisions that are informed by our faith, with compassionate concern for the many different constituencies of the college. Chairman Sponseller and President Pastoor spent approximately three hours with myself and the members of the Provincial Council of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood who serve as the Members Board of Saint Joseph's College.

Our position is that Saint Joseph's College is rooted in the Catholic tradition of education and faith and its mission is derived from a spirituality of the Precious Blood. A major focus of that spirituality is that we walk with those on the fringes of society with little power or authority, imitating the walk of our savior, Jesus Christ, on his way to Calvary. As such, we believe our first obligation is one of justice and fairness to those who have given so freely and completely of themselves to the college and have little voice in the decisions that have been made. Naturally then, a priority as we move forward must be to treat our students, faculty and staff as fairly as we possibly can given our current circumstances and resources. This principle should guide our decisions as we move forward.

Our Provincial Council discussed Saint Joseph's situation at length and stand with the Board of Trustees its decision to discontinue operations on the Rensselaer Campus after graduation in May 2017. We fully support the Board as it continues to research and pursue the option of collaboration with some other Catholic Institution of higher learning.

We view our situation in the light of faith. While the Saint Joseph's College we have all known is passing away, we pray that a new Saint Joseph's will emerge that we hope will continue to educate and help form future leaders. We are at a moment of re-founding the institution and re-articulating its mission in light of present day circumstances.

This morning, while the Board of Trustees was meeting, many in the college family gathered to celebrate Mass in the Saint Joseph chapel, where so many sacred celebrations have taken place over the years. They, along with faithful Catholics around the world, sang the psalm response, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; of whom should I be afraid?" This was the stance of the founders of Saint Joseph's College. This has been the stance of the college for all of its years. It is still our stance today.

With prayers and appreciation for the college family and with faith in our next steps, I remain

United in prayer,

V. Rev. Larry J. Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S., Provincial Director
and the Provincial Council of the Cincinnati Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the decision reached by the Saint Joseph's College Board of Trustees? Why?

After much consideration, the decision was made to suspend all activities on the Rensselaer Campus for the 2017-18 academic year, while the College evaluates how to reposition itself in a highly challenging Higher Education marketplace.

After significant introspection and countless hours of discussion among key administrators, the College has come to the solemn realization that its prior plans to grow out of the current financial challenges cannot be realized. The financial challenges are too steep in light of the current and potential resources available.

As a result, the Board has concluded that the College cannot continue in its current form and needs to change the very fabric of the institution. This change must occur immediately to preserve our remaining resources to prepare for a launch of a future, reengineered Saint Joseph's College.

What other options were considered?

The Board of Trustees also considered several options for significant operational restructuring and completely closing the College. Restructuring options would have required a significant capital infusion and closure would have meant no future for Saint Joseph's College. The suspension of the Rensselaer campus operations allows us to prepare to launch a new, reengineered future for the College.

What is the timeframe for the suspension of operations? How will it work?

The College must suspend all academic activities on the Rensselaer campus at the end of the spring 2017 semester and athletic activities at the end of their respective seasons. The goal of this action is to make Saint Joseph's College as strong as possible either to begin anew or to become an attractive partner for another educational institution.

I am a Nursing student with Saint Elizabeth's School of Nursing. What will be the impact on me?

While we are still in the process of working out the details, the College will still be delivering the educational programs necessary for the Nursing students to graduate with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. The only anticipated change in the student experience is that all courses will be taught in Lafayette rather than at the Rensselaer campus.

What factors contributed to the necessity to suspend operations?

Despite our best efforts, we were not able to escape the financial challenges that many tuition-dependent smaller universities have faced over the past several years. These challenges include fierce competition for students, the rapid rate of technological development, increased and evolving federal regulations, among others.

How can students stay on track to complete their degree in the original timeframe if operations are suspended in Rensselaer for the next school year?

We are in the process of lining up academic institutions that will help our students' progress toward completing their degrees.

Who are the Teach-Out partners?

Once confirmed, information on Teach-Out partners will be available and communicated directly with students, so they can begin to make plans for the 2017-18 school year.

What if I don't want to transfer to one of the Teach-Out Partners?

We are committed to providing personalized transfer support to all students who need assistance in identifying an institution that works for them.

What options do students have if they choose not to stay at Saint Joseph's College for the remainder of the current semester?

It is important that our students know that it is not in their best interest to withdraw in the middle of the semester due to the lost progress toward their degree. We anticipate retaining most of our students as we address their immediate needs. We will discuss logistics in more detail with any student needing guidance.

Will seniors be able to graduate on time?

All eligible seniors will graduate as planned on May 6, 2017. On-line summer classes would be provided to facilitate convenient access for our students. We will communicate directly with seniors to finalize their arrangements, including accelerated classes, to enable all eligible seniors to graduate.

How many students are impacted by the suspension of operations/closure?

Currently, 904 students are enrolled at Saint Joseph's College.

How many employees will be impacted?

There are approximately 200 employees at Saint Joseph's College and we are committed to doing all we can to facilitate a smooth transition for our employees.

What are the plans for the physical property of Saint Joseph's College's Rensselaer campus?

After the spring semester, there will be only minimal administrative and necessary maintenance operations at the Rensselaer campus.

Saint Joseph's College

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