SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA

CAMPUS LIFE
Quality of Life Rating 80
Fire Safety Rating 83
Green Rating 77
Type of school Private
Affiliation Roman Catholic
Environment Village

STUDENTS
Total undergrad enrollment 3,055
% male/female 41/59
% from out of state 9
% from public high school 58
% international <1
% Native American 2
% Asian 11
% Hispanic 25
% Caucasian 46
% African American 4
% 55
% frosh from public high school 58
% frosh live on campus 99
% % students returning for sophomore year 89
% students graduating within 4 years 50
% students graduating within 6 years 60
Calendar 4/1/4
Professor/faculty ratio 12:1
Profs interesting rating 84
Profs accessible rating 84
Most classes have 20–29 students.

SURVEY SAYS . . .
Students are friendly
Everyone loves the Gaels
Frat and sororities are unpopular or nonexistent
Lab facilities are great
Lots of beer drinking
Hard liquor is popular
Frat and sororities are unpopular or nonexistent

ACADEMICS
Academic Rating 86
% students returning for sophomore year 89
% students graduating within 4 years 50
% students graduating within 6 years 60
Calendar 4/1/4
Student/faculty ratio 12:1
Profs interesting rating 84
Profs accessible rating 84
Most classes have 20–29 students.

MOST POPULAR MAJORS
business administration; psychology; communications and media studies

STUDENTS SAY “. . .”

Academics
Intimacy rules the day at Saint Mary’s, a Catholic college where “small class sizes” and professors who you “get to know personally” are the rule rather than the exception. “They make time for me outside of class,” one student boasts, “I even have some of their phone numbers.” This intimacy offers “unlimited opportunities for students and very direct interaction with staff and faculty,” and makes it feel as if “the professors are learning at the same time from the students.” These teachers are “are very optimistic and love what they teach, so it’s great to be taught by them because they’re so passionate about their subject. It helps make learning about the subject fun and interesting.” Indeed, as one student points out, “It’s usually very difficult for a math or physics professor to inject their personality into their classes, but the faculty that Saint Mary’s employs somehow manage to do it.” Some do complain that “when they teach they go really fast and it makes it hard to keep up with them,” but that may be a result of the attitude that “lectures are overrated.” Instead, “professors help students learn by engaging one another in meaningful dialogue and debate.” The idea is to help you to “learn how to talk more in public settings and (give) you life skills that you can rely on and use the rest of your life.”

Life
Don’t expect non-stop parties at Saint Mary’s. This is a “distinguished, calm campus” with students focused on their studies. When it comes time to wind down, sports, clubs, and mellow socializing are far more prevalent than rowdy keggers. Saint Mary’s “is what you make it, it takes time to adjust,” but “there are vast opportunities provided by the school to get involved with others inside and outside of the community.” There is “a grove that is a secluded area where everyone goes to just leave the urban world for a bit and just relax,” while others “go on great hiking and outdoor adventure trips the rec sports provides the students with.” The school is six miles off the freeway, so access to other communities isn’t as easy as at other schools, but nearby Orinda has beautiful theaters and restaurants, and all that San Francisco has to offer is accessible to students willing to make the journey. The biggest draw is sports and athletic recreation. Students here are “very active. Everyone wears some sort of active clothes because everyone is basically a regularly active individual. Sports are a big focus at my school, whether it be intercollegiate or just for fun.”

Student Body
The “smart, humble, dedicated, and compassionate” students of Saint Mary’s make up a group with a “wide range of students from a large spectrum of life and socioeconomic status. Students mix easily and the college climate promotes equality and understanding.” At this “very welcoming” school you’ll find “few cliques among students,” only “normal people who are looking to go on and succeed at life.” The “hard-working” students of Saint Mary’s have a reputation for being friendly. “You walk through the halls and say hi to almost everyone even if you have never seen them before.” Indeed, “students always smile and say have a good day. Students fit in by taking the time to meet others. A simple smile can make a day for a lot of people.” Typical students are “involved in sports or some type of club on campus. They are a big part of the community, and are avid NCAA college basketball fans.” That, or they are engaged in their studies. Saint Mary’s is filled with people serious about their educations—but not at the expense of social interaction. “Students can engage in complex discussion and easily switch to witty banter at any given moment.”
SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA

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THE PRINCETON REVIEW SAYS

Admissions

Very important factors considered include: GPA, rigor of secondary school record. Important factors considered include: Standardized test scores, application essay, first generation, racial/ethnic status, recommendation(s). Other factors considered include: Extracurricular activities, geographical residence, interview, talent/ability, volunteer work, work experience, alumni/ae relations, character/personal qualities, level of applicant’s interest, religious affiliation. SAT or ACT required; ACT with or without Writing component accepted. TOEFL required of all international applicants. Academic units required: 4 English; 3 mathematics; 2 science; (1 science lab); 1 social studies; 2 foreign language; 1 history; 2 academic electives. Academic units recommended: 4 English; 4 mathematics; 3 science; (1 science lab); 1 social studies; 3 foreign language; 1 history; 2 academic electives.

Financial Aid


The Inside Word

Saint Mary’s has a deep commitment to serving underprivileged students and offering opportunities for low-income students with strong academic potential, which is why the school sets aside 25 percent of its undergraduate population for low economic status students. That core philosophy of the school won’t be changing anytime soon, so students with economic difficulties should not hesitate to apply if their academics are strong.

THE SCHOOL SAYS “. . .”

From the Admissions Office

“For today, Saint Mary’s College continues to offer a value-oriented education by providing a classical liberal arts background second to none. The emphasis is on teaching an individual how to think independently and responsibly, how to analyze information in all situations, and how to make choices based on logical thinking and rational examination. Such a program develops students’ ability to ask the right questions and to formulate meaningful answers, not only within their professional careers but also for the rest of their lives. Saint Mary’s College is committed to preparing young men and women for the challenge of an ever-changing world, while remaining faithful to an enduring academic and spiritual heritage. We believe the purpose of a college experience is to prepare men and women for an unlimited number of opportunities, and that this is best accomplished by educating the whole person, both intellectually and ethically. We strive to recruit, admit, enroll, and graduate students who are generous, faith-filled, and human, and we believe this is reaffirmed in our community of brothers, in our faculty, and in our personal concern for each student.

“For freshman applicants, we will accept the SAT, and the ACT is also accepted. The ACT writing assessment is optional. The highest critical reading and the highest math scores attained on the SAT will be used. SAT Subject Tests are not required.”

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