

# PRACTICES EXCHANGE

## NEWSLETTER

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<https://www.yeswemustcoalition.org>

Issue 10

### Institutional Resources/Practices

#### Tuition Reduction

In fall 2017, the **College of Saint Mary** (NE) made a bold change to their pricing strategy, “resetting” or reducing undergraduate tuition by 33%, or \$10,000. The goal of the tuition reduction was to more fully live out its mission to provide women with access to an affordable, high quality education, while taking a stand against the national trend of rising tuition. The University sought to increase the affordability in both perception and reality. By lowering the stated tuition rate from \$29,954 to \$19,950, it improved the perception that a College of Saint Mary education was within a student’s financial reach. At the same time, institutional financial aid policies were redesigned to ensure that students were saving money in reality, lowering their net cost paid either with cash out-of-pocket or through loans.

The tuition reduction has been successful on a number of fronts. As a result of the reset, the average borrowings for undergraduate students and their parents decreased by 24% from the prior year. The savings were most pronounced for new students with high financial need who borrowed on average \$5,184 in 2017–18 as compared to \$10,221 in 2016–17, a \$5,037 decrease or 49% improvement. The tuition reduction appears to have been compelling to prospective new students, with an increase from 221 new in fall 2016 to 251 new in fall 2017 (30 additional students, or 14% higher). The majority of this increase was in newly enrolled students with high financial need, increasing from 85 in fall 2016 to 107 in fall 2017, a 26% increase.

The College of Saint Mary continually strives to provide access and affordability to students by minimizing financial barriers. In 2013 the College eliminated fees and has a long-standing sliding scale for providing financial need based grants to undergraduates. Building on positive results, the College is now expanding financial literacy programming and collaborating with faculty to reduce student textbook costs. For more information, contact Dr. Sarah Kottich, Executive Vice President for Operations and Planning: [SKottich@CSM.edu](mailto:SKottich@CSM.edu).

#### Developmental Education

Despite the ongoing controversy regarding whether or not developmental education is effective, a large number of students continue to arrive on campus under-prepared for a college level program of study. To address this situation, **Thomas University** (GA) has recently added several one-credit, co-requisite math support classes for students whose ACT or SAT scores are a few points below the college ready benchmarks. One class runs a co-requisite to College Algebra, and the other to Mathematical Modeling. The support courses provide an opportunity for students to ask questions and practice solving problems as well as to develop the

skills, literacies, and dispositions important for success in mathematics. The professor of the lab courses communicates regularly and intentionally with the main course professor in order to ensure that the extra practice and skill development are not extra work for the student, but rather directly connected to their main course. Preliminary reports from professors and students suggest that the courses have helped prevent students from feeling “lost” and have facilitated their overall success with college-level math courses. For more information about these support courses for mathematics, please contact Assistant Professor Remigio Padilla-Hernandez at [rpadilla-hernandez@thomasu.edu](mailto:rpadilla-hernandez@thomasu.edu).

## **Yes We Must Coalition National Conference October 24–26, 2018, Austin, Texas**

The Yes We Must Coalition is holding its second national conference, **Educating the New Student Majority: Collaboration and Innovation for Persistence and Completion**, from October 24–26, 2018, in Austin, Texas. YWM members are encouraged to submit proposals describing the programs and strategies they have found to be effective in promoting the success of their low-income students. For further information and the Call for Proposals, go to <https://yeswemustcoalition.org/meetings>.

## **Submissions for Future Issues**

YWM members are encouraged to submit examples of practices and/or resources to share with your YWM colleagues. We are particularly interested in examples of teaching and learning strategies you have found to be effective in promoting student success. Send brief descriptions and any accompanying materials to Nia Chester, YWM Program Manager. [niachester@gmail.com](mailto:niachester@gmail.com).