

## Mask wearing made optional at SVC

Sean Callahan, News Editor



Masked students and staff attend the December 2021 commencement. (SOURCE: SVC FLICKR)

In the midst of spring break, Dr. Jeff Mallory, Executive Vice President of Saint Vincent College, sent an email to the SVC community on Mar. 3 informing them of a new mask-optional policy. This new policy applied to all indoor spaces and classroom settings, regardless of vaccination status. In his email, Mallory cited guidance from the CDC as well as continued positive trends as justification for the policy's implementation.

"Currently, our college, surrounding local communities and our nation are seeing rapidly declining numbers of COVID-19 cases," Mallory said. "We strongly believe that your commitment and diligence as a member of the College community to following the established protocols has allowed us to move forward."

According to the email, masking within

the wellness center or while getting tested for COVID-19 is still required. Anyone in the SVC community, including students and staff, may also request masking during individual meetings with one another. Mallory encouraged masking during large events and vaccination, and also said that the college would continue to offer symptomatic testing.

As of Mar. 13, following the policy's implementation, the majority of SVC students and employees have entered the cafeteria or classrooms maskless. Classrooms with 20 to 30 students have contained anywhere from one to four people continuing to wear masks.

Reasons students have cited for prolonged masking have consisted of continued discomfort with the pandemic or  
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## First Annual Women's Week at Saint Vincent

Delaney Fox, Staff Writer

Saint Vincent College has had a tradition of celebrating International Women's Day with events such as making a bouquet. This year, however, the celebration has been expanded to include all of National Women's History Month, with a special focus on the week of Mar. 6.

Jessica Parsons, Jody Marsh and Bridget DiVittis took the lead in organizing the events. In coming years, they hope to expand the series of events, speakers and themes, keeping the general celebration and the Luminary Night specifically as an annual tradition.

The first series of events was the Women in Faith Talk Series, which began on Mar. 6 and continued on Mar. 7 and Mar. 9. Fr. Maximilian Maxwell, O.S.B. (who stepped in for Fr. Brian Boosel, O.S.B. due to unforeseen circumstances), Dr. Christopher McMahon and Fr. Boniface Hicks, O.S.B. delivered the talks at 7 p.m. in the Student Chapel. These discussions covered important women in faith and women who influenced the speakers' lives.

Intentions at the Student Chapel's  
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# NEWS



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## Students share different views on new policy

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because these students or someone they know or live with are immunocompromised.

However, the majority of students seem to agree with the implementation of the new policy for vastly different reasons.

Ronald Bell, junior philosophy and politics major, acknowledged that the mid-semester policy change was “interesting to say the least,” and saw how it could be interpreted as a controver-

Laura Wargo, sophomore public history major, who has continuously masked in all indoor spaces prior to the new policy, is hopeful about the current situation due to the CDC’s data on Westmoreland County and SVC’s caseload.

“It’s not the school implementing the policy for the fun of it. It’s following CDC guidelines, and I like to think the CDC is trustworthy,” Wargo said. “I also noticed on their website our coun-

**“If you have your vaccine, and you don’t want to wear a mask, I don’t think you should have to. If you want to wear a mask, you can wear a mask. This policy keeps whoever wants to be protected protected.”**

**- Savone Williamson**

sial decision to some students. However, while he has no strong feelings about masks, he reported that he believes they are unnecessary as long as there are no COVID-19 case spikes on campus. He also feels that, regardless of mitigation, sickness will continue to be prevalent in some capacity.

“People have to remember that the standard flu hasn’t stopped either in times of COVID,” Bell said. “There may be an increase of flu cases, but I think it is more due to the changes in the weather rather than the removal of masks.”

ty is green, so I feel pretty optimistic.”

Savone Williamson, sophomore communications major, also agreed with the optional masking policy out of a desire for students to have a choice, and because he believes the vaccine has made a choice more possible.

“If you have your vaccine, and you don’t want to wear a mask, I don’t think you should have to. If you want to wear a mask, you can wear a mask. This policy keeps whoever wants to be protected protected,” Williamson said.

Despite student perceptions of the  
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# Masks made optional at SVC

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ongoing pandemic, Mallory's citation of positive trends among both CDC data and the SVC community do appear to be true.

As of its last update on Mar. 11, the COVID-19 Tracker for the spring 2022 semester displayed 208 positive student cases, as well as 59 positive faculty and staff cases. Although this quantity of cases has accumulated since Jan. 10, the start of the semester, only 2 of the 208 student positive cases had not recovered from COVID-19 at the time. All 59 faculty and staff members have recovered from COVID-19 as of Mar. 11. This update comes after the first full week of classes with the mask-optional policy implemented.

According to CDC.gov, as of Mar. 13, Westmoreland County has reportedly experienced a 52.6% drop in positive COVID-19 cases between Mar. 3 and 10. In this time interval, all other counties surrounding Westmoreland—including Allegheny, Somerset, Indiana, Cambria and Butler—have reported a drop in positive cases ranging from at least 20% to as much as 70%. The only exception is Butler county, with only an 8.62% drop in positive cases.

As of the latest update on Mar. 12, Westmoreland County's population percentage of those fully vaccinated (without a booster) is 57.2%.

Mallory ended the email by assuring the SVC community that, if the CDC determined that the rate of transmission in Westmoreland County surpassed low levels, mitigation efforts such as masking may be implemented again.

# Celebrating Women's History at SVC

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'Women of History Who Inspire Me' boards were created and will be displayed around campus throughout the month of March. (SOURCE: FOX)

9 p.m. Mass on Mar. 6 were focused on women, and a blessing for the week was offered.

On Mar. 7, students were given the opportunity to create thank you cards for important women in their lives from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Carey Lounge.

On Mar. 8, International Women's Day, a variety of events and activities were available from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Carey Lounge. These included: a Bouquet Bar, a Baby Shower Supplies Drive (Beverly's Birthdays), Rosie the Riveter Custom Totes, a Fair Trade sale, a T-Shirt sale with proceeds going to the Blackburn Center, music and snacks.

There were also informational tables such as ones sponsored by Sr. Sara of Nuns and Nones (Advocacy for Women), #BreaktheBias and an It's on Us PA pledge.

Kim Woodley, Director at the Ca-

reer and Professional Development Center, was involved in the later stages of planning the events.

"The biggest day was Tuesday, which was International Women's Day. I have not seen that many students in the Carey Lounge in a long time. It was so wonderful," Woodley said.

On Mar. 9, there were several more events in the Carey Lounge, including Wellness Wednesday (information about women's health), PAWS and Relax with therapy dogs, a showcase for women's athletics and a yoga class.

Also on Mar. 9 were Weights for Women, a lesson concerning exercise at 12:30 p.m. in the fitness center, and a movie night at 8:30 p.m. in the Carey Lounge where students could watch Hidden Figures.

On Mar. 10, the Career and Professional Development Center hosted

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# First Annual Women's Week at Saint Vincent

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Vision Board Making and a Professional Clothing Drive in the Carey Lounge from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The clothes collected in the drive will be donated to the SVC Career Closet and the YWCA Thrift Shop in Greensburg.

At 6:30 p.m., there was a luminary event, Lighting Our Way Forward. All female Saint Vincent students were invited to gather in Melvin Platz to celebrate and attend a series of speak-

RSVP event for the women of Saint Vincent's staff and faculty. The Women of SVC Meet Up in Fred Rogers featured drinks and light hors d'oeuvres.

Through Mar. 19, members of the Saint Vincent community can nominate outstanding women on campus—students, faculty members, administrators and staff members—to be included in a collage of photographs that will be displayed starting Mar. 21

**"I thought it was very empowering because it was nice to see new faces and see the women on campus gather together. It was very uplifting, and it was nice to know that people are rooting for us. It made me excited for the future because this was only their first time doing this."**

**- Rachel Andreola**

ers including Dr. Jeff Mallory and Dr. Doreen Blandino. The Saint Vincent choir also performed at this event.

Rachel Andreola, sophomore mathematics major, attended the event as a member of the Saint Vincent choir.

"I thought it was very empowering because it was nice to see new faces and see the women on campus gather together. It was very uplifting, and it was nice to know that people are rooting for us," Andreola said. "It made me excited for the future because this was only their first time doing this."

On Mar. 11, there was a special

both online and in the Carey Lounge.


The planning for next year's Women's Week will begin soon, but until then, Woodley encourages students to get involved and attend the events around campus.

"We appreciate everyone who comes out for our events! A lot of hours go into planning these events, and we plan them with you, our students, in mind," Woodley said. "Events are part of the whole experience here at SVC. We would always love to see more people!"


**Check out our website for stories not printed in our paper!**

## Sports


*Bearcat sports and those relating to SVC*




**Basketball and Swimming Teams Prepare for Early Return**  
By Luke Mich: With health concerns a priority, Vincent basketball and swimming teams will...




**Spikeball Club Hosts An Tournament**  
By Luke Mich: On Oct. 25, Spikeball Club held full tournament on the intramural field behind...




**European soccer sparks interest at SVC**  
By Luke Mich: Soccer is known as not just "the game," but also for being the most popular sp...



**Frisbee Still Occurring C Limitations**  
By Luke Mich: Most recently, attention to SVC been given towards football practicing in the a...



**PAC Releases Spring Schedules**  
By Luke Mich: On Sept. 17, at roughly 3 p.m., Presidents' Athletic Conference announced the...



**Football practice resumes new guidelines**  
By Luke Mich: You may have noticed recently...

# SPORTS

## Team Standings

### Baseball

Team	W	L	Streak
Chatham	5	1	W1
Franciscan	4	1	W1
Grove City	8	3	W5
Saint Vincent	4	2	W1
W&J	4	2	W2
Thiel	3	4	L3
Bethany	4	5	W2
Waynesburg	2	6	L2
Geneva	2	7	L7
Westminster	0	1	L1

**Schedule:** PSU-Altoona 3/16 1 and 4 PM, @W&J 3/26 1 and 4 PM, W&J 3/27 1 PM

### Softball

Team	W	L	Streak
Saint Vincent	2	0	W2
Westminster	2	0	W2
Thiel	5	1	W1
Geneva	1	1	L1
Waynesburg	6	3	W1
Bethany	4	3	L1
W&J	0	0	-
Franciscan	0	0	-
Chatham	4	6	W1
Grove City	4	6	W2

**Schedule:** PSU-Beaver 3/15 3 PM, PSU-Fayette 3/17 3 and 5:30 PM, @La Roche 3/19 1 PM

### Men's Volleyball

Team	W	L	Streak
PSU Behrend	13	5	W3
PSU Altoona	9	7	W1
Hiram	11	9	L6
Geneva	12	10	W8
Medaille	6	12	L1
Thiel	6	13	W3
Mt. Aloysius	4	13	W1
Saint Vincent	3	12	W1
Hilbert	2	14	L1

**Schedule:** PSU-Altoona 3/16 7 PM, @Hilbert 3/19 2:30 PM, @Geneva 5 PM

### Women's Lacrosse

Team	W	L	Streak
Grove City	3	1	W3
Chatham	2	1	W1
Bethany	4	2	L1
Saint Vincent	2	1	W1
Westminster	1	1	W1
Franciscan	2	2	W2
Waynesburg	0	1	L1
Thiel	0	1	L1
W&J	0	3	L3

**Schedule:** @Wilson 3/16 4 PM, Marietta 12 PM, Davis & Elkins 3/20 3 PM

### Men's Lacrosse

Team	W	L	Streak
Saint Vincent	3	0	W4
Westminster	3	1	W2
Bethany	3	2	W1
Franciscan	2	1	W2
Thiel	2	2	W2
Grove City	3	4	W1
W&J	1	3	W1
Chatham	1	4	L3

**Schedule:** @Marietta 3/19 7 PM, @Allegheny 3/29 7 PM, @Grove City 4/2 3 PM

### Men's Tennis

Team	W	L	Streak
Westminster	4	1	W4
Saint Vincent	4	2	L2
Grove City	3	2	L2
Waynesburg	2	2	W1
Thiel	0	0	-
Geneva	1	3	W1
Franciscan	1	3	W1
W&J	1	4	L1

**Schedule:** @Daemon 3/19 7 PM, PSU Behrend 3/20 1 PM, @Waynesburg 3/25 4 PM

### Men's Outdoor Track & Field

**Schedule:** @West Virginia 3/19, @Carnegie Mellon 3/25-3/26, @Slippery Rock 4/2

### Women's Outdoor Track & Field

**Schedule:** @West Virginia 3/19, @Carnegie Mellon 3/25-3/26, @Slippery Rock 4/2

# ARTS & CULTURE

## Not throwing away their shot

Erin Brody, Arts & Culture Editor



SVC students visited the Benedum Center in Pittsburgh to see *Hamilton*. (SOURCE: SVC APB)

The Activities Programming Board (APB) planned a trip to Pittsburgh to see *Hamilton* on Mar. 11, and APB was thrilled by students' responses to this endeavor.

"The reaction and outcome of this trip was amazing," Emily Fultz, junior accounting major and APB team leader, said. "We had 30 tickets go on sale Monday, Feb. 21, at 8:30 a.m., and by 9:00 a.m. that same morning, we were completely sold out!"

Fultz explained that APB "helped generate some talk and anticipation for the ticket release" through announcing the intended sale at other events the club hosted.

"It's always so fun seeing students

get excited for an event beforehand," Fultz said.

Azzia Berestecki, freshman education major, attended the trip after being "obsessed with the musical since freshman year of high school."

"I was ecstatic to be there," said Berestecki. "I was shocked to have such great seats on the bottom floor. My expectations were blown out of the water."

Berestecki was also "very surprised to see APB offer an event like this." However, she reported that she would "love to do something like this again".

"So many people complain about not having anything to do on campus, but APB is working at always trying to

provide something for us," Berestecki said.

Luckily for Berestecki and other students who have been enjoying the APB events this semester, APB is planning similar trips in the future. One of these pending events is a visit to the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium on Apr. 2.

"A big goal we have here in APB is making sure we are planning events for students with different interests and allowing students to experience things they may not have the chance to otherwise," Fultz said.

APB is open to suggestions for future events that students would be interested in.

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# OPINION

## SVC in Paris

Samantha Hilyer, Editor-in-Chief



The group of 27 SVC students and staff gathered for a picture by "Rue St. Vincent" during a walking tour. (SOURCE: HOLMES)

“Travel while you’re in college” is a phrase I have heard repeatedly throughout my academic career. And when I was still an underclassman, I thought I would have two full years to travel if I wanted to. However, as we are all aware, those years would not be full of traveling. But the pandemic has certainly taught me not to take opportunities—or life—for granted, so when I saw the Americans in Paris class, I knew this class was my final chance, as a senior, to study abroad.

Throughout the semester leading up to spring break, there were several times when it appeared the trip

may abruptly be canceled due to COVID-19, so when no cancellation occurred, the day of the flight to Paris, France, felt unreal. However, after seven agonizing hours of sitting and enduring two airplane meals, the reality of the situation began to sink in—we were in Paris, the city of light and love.

One of the biggest culture shocks I personally experienced in Paris was the hostel we stayed at, called “The Generator.” Hostels are generally known for their inexpensive group lodging, and while “hostel” is only one letter away from being a “hotel,” I can confirm that it is not like any American hotel I had

been to in structure or experience. However, the lobby and the cafe/bar were great places to meet new people and fellow travelers.

Another culture shock I experienced was the amount of walking expected of us—we averaged 10 miles one day—and the amount of public transportation available. But I was pleasantly surprised at how easy navigating Paris on foot or by Metro could be.

As a class, we went on several walking tours to explore the city,



Several protests took place during our visit. (SOURCE: HILYER)

including a tour of Montmartre. We also took an exquisite day trip to the outskirts of Paris to explore *Continued on page 8*

# I would escargot again

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1) The Eiffel Tower is a historic landmark of Paris, France. (SOURCE: HILYER)



2) A cafe, like many, was decorated with fake floral arrangements. (SOURCE: HILYER)

the chateau of Chantilly—a grandly preserved castle.

Each day, usually after a tour by foot or a trip to a museum such as the Louvre—home of the Mona Lisa—we were given free time to explore as we wished. During that free time, a group I was with went to the Eiffel Tower and took an elevator—although we debated taking the stairs—to the top of the tower where we could see the city, aglow with vibrant nightlife.

We also frequented several different cafes to sample food in our spare time. While I did try escargot, my favorite meal was the avocado toast I had while sitting in an outside, heated cafe covered in picturesque blooms. However, I am convinced

that any meal in Paris inherently tastes better than it would at home simply because it is being eaten in a beautiful city.

For all its *magnifique* attractions, Paris also had its ugliness like any other city. The dangers of pickpockets—an announcement that was routinely heard on the Metro—the amount of homeless people huddled on the sidewalks wrapped in blankets, the protests and the police all made for an uneasy atmosphere at times.

However, Paris was still a wondrous experience, and I would love to escargot back again one day.

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Dennis McDaniel

The Review office is located  
next to the Wimmer Bridge.  
Office Number:  
724-805-2513

Contributions, Comments,  
Questions, Advertising:  
review@stvincent.edu

Website:  
stvincentreview.com

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