

July 21, 2020

Dear Mariner Family,

I am providing an update to you from MCU's COVID-19 Response Team. As always, we are committed to providing a quality educational experience, while maintaining a safe learning and working environment for our students, staff and faculty.

Informed by federal, state and local public health officials, the decision was made in June to extend the closure of the MCU campus through the end of July. Additionally, changes were made in how fall courses would be offered to include a blend of in-person and online. Hybrid classes will meet in person once a week in sessions of no more than 15 students to allow social distancing. Online courses will be a mix of synchronous (live) and asynchronous. As a small campus, we are better positioned to offer an in-person experience under current guidelines, which just is not feasible at larger institutions. Great progress has been made in preparing the campus. Many thanks to Monte Schmeiser and the COVID-19 Response Team for their efforts in getting us ready. This work has brought the attention of local media (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foc0k5rnZTg&t=100s>), which has been very positive for MCU.

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has provided guidance on how athletic competition would operate in the fall, modifying schedules to limit travel and establishing requirements related to COVID-19 testing. These were released at the beginning of July, but are subject to change based on new guidance from the state and county. Our CalPac Conference and the NAIA Counsel of Presidents meet this week and next to further review the fall schedule.

Our plans remain in effect; however, we continue to monitor the reports from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH). We recognize that COVID-19 infection rates within LA County continue to rise, and that has all of us very concerned. This past week, the California Department of Public Health released a directive to K-12 schools, prohibiting them from resuming in-person learning next month. We are awaiting specific guidance for colleges and universities from both LACDPH and the State of California, which has yet to be made available. The possibility of needing to move all instruction online for the fall and further extending the campus closure is currently being discussed as an option. It has always been our plan to keep this option open. Cabinet will be meeting on July 31 and will make a determination at that time.

In the interim, the campus remains accessible, but please contact Campus Safety and Facilities Manager Marc Brown should you plan to visit campus. Campus operations continue, and planning for fall remains critical, particularly efforts to communicate to students how to access services and programs virtually.

We thank you for your patience and flexibility and want to reassure you that we are doing the best we can, based on the current information we have available. Thank you to the COVID-19 Response Team for their continued efforts to ensure MCU is able to manage this pandemic while still providing a quality educational experience for our students. For your reference, here is a list of the members:

- Brian Marcotte, President
- Ryan Alcantara, Vice President of Student Affairs (COVID-19 Response Team Chair)

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- Ariane Schauer, Provost
- Osmara Reyes-Osorio, Director of Student Wellness Center (COVID-19 Compliance Officer)
- Hector Rodriguez, Chief of Campus Security
- Cindy Monticue, Director of Marketing
- Karen Thordarson, Director of Human Resources
- Monte Schmeiser, Director of Operations
- David Draper, Faculty Senate President
- Patricia Chambers, Faculty Senate Vice President
- Chad Fehr, Dean of Residential Campus
- Maury Hillstrom, Educational Technology
- Cathy Clarke, Interim Director of Athletics
- Marc Brown, Facilities Manager

If you have any questions or recommendations, please feel free to reach out to me, President Marcotte or any member of the COVID-19 Response Team.

If you have been impacted by COVID-19, please contact Karen Thordarson in Human Resources at (310) 303-7225 or email her at [KThordarson@MarymountCalifornia.edu](mailto:KThordarson@MarymountCalifornia.edu). Faculty/staff on Medi-Cal can call the Medi-Nurse Line at (877) 409-9052.

Be well,

Ryan E. Alcantara, PhD  
Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students  
COVID-19 Response Team Chair