

# MARYMOUNT

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY

September 14, 2020

Dear Marymount Community,

Nearly 600 students began the fall semester remotely last month—marking the start of an academic year unlike any other in MCU's history. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health imposed restrictive guidelines as Covid-19 cases and community transmission of the disease surged locally the latter part of the summer, causing us to reverse our original plan to bring students back to campus. There is no question 2020 has been a challenging time.

While we had been busily preparing for a hybrid semester of both face-to-face and online classes, including investing in faculty training, improved technology and modifications to our campus facilities, we were able to pivot quickly to offer online-only instruction. We regularly consult with health authorities, but our campus remains closed for in-person classes, and on-campus housing can only be provided for students who do not have viable alternative options. As a result, we have concluded that we will proceed with online-only instruction through the end of the fall semester. However, we are continuing to offer all services and events to our students virtually at this time. While disappointing, we are fully committed to protecting the health and safety of the Mariner community.

We are grateful for the efforts of faculty and staff whose persistence and dedication have demonstrated enormous flexibility and ingenuity. Our students are showing creativity and resilience as they adapt to virtual classes and experiences. I'm pleased to report our online classes are proving to be effective, with faculty sharing that student engagement and attendance have been outstanding. Kudos to all. This doesn't come easy. In anticipation of the challenges of online learning, we boosted our learning support, with multiple options to give students the help, advising and tutoring they need—whether they're first-generation (about 30 percent of our population), an honors student or a ready-to-graduate senior.

Make no mistake, this is hard work. We're all continuing to cope with the realities of an unrelenting pandemic and the resulting fallout. Many schools like Marymount are experiencing drops in enrollment exacerbated by additional restrictions imposed on international students and competitive sports. We seek and encourage your continued perseverance, collaboration and support as we continue to offer a robust virtual experience for all of our students. Help us by encouraging the necessary hard work required for success. We will do our part, and we need our students to do their part.

Thank you for being a part of our community and making this a successful year. We can accomplish anything when we put our minds to the task!

Go Mariners!



Brian Marcotte  
President