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by The Associated Press

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Marymount California University, a half-century-old private Catholic institution, will close this summer, its board of trustees announced.

The liberal arts school located on the Palos Verdes Peninsula south of Los Angeles has been struggling in recent years due to declining enrollment, rising costs and the coronavirus pandemic, the university said in an April 22 statement.

"This decision was not made lightly. But we felt the most compassionate thing to do was to give everyone time to make plans. Our focus now will be to help our students, faculty and staff," said Brian Marcotte, the university's president.

Marymount California has 500 full-time students and 140 full-time staff,

The university said classes will conclude with the end of the summer term in August.

In the meantime, Marymount California will work on transitioning students to other colleges and universities for the fall semester and find new work for faculty and staff.

Only a small number of employees will remain after classes end to manage the closure.

The school was founded by the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary in 1968 as Marymount Palos Verdes College, a two-year institution.

The name was changed to Marymount California University in 2013 as four-year undergraduate degrees and graduate degree programs were offered.

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