

TO: University Community
FROM: Fadi P. Deek, Provost and Senior Executive Vice President
DATE: March 25, 2020
RE: Special Final Grading Policy Provisions for Spring 2020

As you know, our university community has been responsive to this unexpected pandemic by instituting measures that will protect and save lives. Now, as we return from spring break to continue our semester remotely, the university will institute modifications to undergraduate and graduate final grading policies for Spring 2020. These temporary changes are a response to the extraordinary situation created by mandated actions to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

These important changes are summarized below:

1. At the end of the Spring 2020 semester, students will temporarily see the actual grades they have earned on their transcript. Subsequently,

Undergraduate Courses

1a On May 31, 2020 all F's will be automatically converted to NAD (not academic credit). Students will have the ability to repeat the course as many times as the policy allows, as if the Spring 2020 take did not occur. The GPA will not be affected by NAD

1b On May 31, 2020 all D's will be automatically converted to "Academic Credit" shown as AC. The course will count towards graduation/degree completion provided the student does not need a higher grade as a prerequisite for subsequent courses.

Students will be given the option to convert the AC to D. A student can repeat the course, the AC attempt counts as one trial. The AC will not be affecting the GPA.

1c Grades of C or higher will have the ability to be changed. The student will have the option of converting the actual grade to "Pass" shown as P.

1d Students will have the opportunity to make changes only once and the changes must be submitted by May 31, 2020. Details of how changes will be submitted will appear later on the Registrar's web site.

Graduate Courses

1e On May 31, 2020 F's will be automatically converted to NAD (not academic credit). Students will have the ability to repeat the course as many times as the policy allows, as if the Spring 2020 take did not occur. The GPA will not be affected by NAD

1f On May 31, 2020 all C's will be automatically converted to "Academic Credit" shown as AC. The course will count towards graduation/degree completion provided the student does not need a higher grade because it is a prerequisite for subsequent courses or is a core course explicitly requiring a higher grade. Students will be given the option to convert the AC to C. A student can repeat the course, the AC attempt counts as one trial. The AC will not be affecting the GPA.

1g Grades of A and B will have the ability to be changed. The student will have the option of converting the actual grade to "Pass" shown as P.

1h Students will have the opportunity to make changes only once and the changes must be submitted by May 31, 2020. Details of how changes will be submitted will appear later on the Registrar's web site.

1i Students who cannot complete their MS Thesis or MS Project work in Spring 2020 will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Their research advisor will need to contact the Graduate Studies Office with appropriate justification; otherwise, the NAD grade will be posted. Students will have the ability to repeat the course as many times as the policy allows, as if the Spring 2020 take did not occur.

Graduate Courses taken by Undergraduate Students

Graduate courses taken by undergraduate students as part of a BS/MS program or as an elective (by approval) will follow the policies outlined in 1e – 1i above.

Bridge Courses

A list of courses considered as Bridge Courses will soon appear on the Registrar's web site and will follow the following rules.

1j On May 31, 2020 all grades lower than B will be automatically converted to NAD (not academic credit). Students will have the ability to repeat the course as many times as the policy allows, as if the Spring 2020 take did not occur. The GPA will not be affected by NAD

1k Grades of B or higher will have the ability to be changed. The student will have the option of converting the actual grade to "Pass" shown as P.

1l Students will have the opportunity to make changes only once and the changes must be submitted by May 31, 2020. Details of how changes will be submitted will appear later on the Registrar's web site.

Graduation GPA Requirements

The use of letter grading may lead to instances in which a student who is to graduate does not meet the minimum GPA requirement (2.0 for undergraduates; 3.0 for graduate students). Because of this reason the departmental academic advisors may waive the aforementioned GPA requirements for graduation.

2. For students to earn a distinction such as Presidential Medal or Dean's List must have all their actual grades on the transcript. Presence of a P will automatically disqualify the student for an academic distinction. The disqualification for the Dean's List is for Spring 2020 only.
3. The Academic Standing of students will be initially determined through the actual grades. Students who through their actual grades improve their Academic Standing relative to the earlier semester will see the improved standing on their transcript. Students who fail to improve their Academic Standing via their actual grade, will have the same Academic Standing as at the end of Fall 2019. Therefore, a student's academic standing may either improve or remain the same when evaluated at the end of the spring semester. For example, a student who receives an academic warning can be

placed on good standing, but is not at risk of being placed on probation. The policies will be modified so that this will not count against the student in the future. For undergraduate students not in Good Standing after Spring 2020, resources will be available to help them as per the usual protocol.

The timeline for students who are currently on suspension has not changed. They may apply for reinstatement after being off-campus for at least *one semester* (i.e., they can apply for reinstatement/readmission to continue their studies starting in Fall 2020).

4. Students who received an Incomplete in Fall 2019 and/or Winter 2019/2020 will have extra time to remove it. Instead of removing it by the end of Spring 2020, or it will be converted to F, the deadline will be extended to August 15, 2020. Incompletes remaining as such after August 15 will be automatically converted to F without the possibility of appeal. Students who have an Incomplete in a course they plan to take in the summer, will need to remove it by the end of this semester (as usual) or they will have to make alternate plans for the summer courses they were planning to take.
5. Because of the unprecedented circumstances and the state of emergency we are in, students have to follow the proctoring method their instructors (with the approval of chairs) have chosen. If they have any issue with the proctoring method, students are given the option to withdraw with permission from the Dean of Students. This will be shown on the transcript as WP and will not count towards the number of attempts a student has at a course. There will be no financial credit for students opting for the WP option.
6. Withdrawals other than the WP which will require the approval of the Dean of Students' Office will be handled in the usual way and they will be counting as one attempt at the course.

We hope these changes will alleviate some of the stresses our students are facing as they adjust to the sudden change in instructional mode. Let me also take this opportunity to praise our community members who continue to keep our university functioning in support of our teaching mission. I am certain that we will come back together again soon, determined, optimistic, and more resilient.

Thank you,
Fadi