

University Senate Scholastic Standards Committee

October 5, 2020

Temporary University Senate By-Law Change DEADLINE FOR ELECTING PASS-FAIL GRADING

Background:

The Scholastic Standards Committee considered whether or not to put forward a proposal to extend a relaxation of the P/F rules in the 20/21 academic year, as we did in Spring 2020. An SSC working group provided two recommendations to the SSC:

- No proposal to relax P/F rules for AY 20/21
- A clear communication signed by several offices (Provost, Advising, Grad School) reminding faculty and students of the many options available to those struggling academically (including the 3 P/F courses available to any student who meets the criteria established in the Senate by-laws)

The committee discussed these recommendations and considered the fact that many students continue to struggle with academic and mental health challenges in Fall 2020 as a result of the pandemic and associated difficulties. This will likely continue into Spring 2021. Several reasons were given for not relaxing the rule in AY 20/21:

- The long-term consequences of students having several P/F courses on their transcripts are unknown.
- In Spring 2020, many universities extended P/F to students in the face of the emergency move to online teaching in the pandemic, so graduate programs and accrediting agencies were forced to make exceptions. These exceptions are not extended to Summer or Fall 2020.
- Many other, better-understood options are available for students who are struggling academically. A clear communication reminding students and faculty of these options will be shared with the University community.

The SSC was asked to consider extending the deadline to put courses on P/F grading. In order to ensure that students have some grades for most or all courses before making this decision, and in consultation with the Registrar's Office, the committee proposed later dates: 11.20 for fall 2020 and 4.9 for spring 2021.

The P/F grading option is not usually available to students with fewer than 26 credits or those on academic probation. In order to make this option open to all students, the SSC also recommends that these two restrictions be waived for AY 20/21.

Proposed modification of II.E.3.b

Grades not used to calculate the GPA (excerpt) Pass-Fail Option.

Existing Senate By-Law II.E.3.b:

A student who has earned at least 26 credits and is not on scholastic probation may elect a

maximum of 12 credits to be distributed over not more than three courses, to be recorded as 'P' for Pass or 'F' for Fail on his or her permanent record. Courses taken Pass-Fail may only be used as electives; they may not be used to satisfy general education, school/college, major or minor requirements. Students who are selecting a course for the Pass-Fail option must do so within the first two weeks of the semester. Students who are removing a course from the Pass-Fail option must do so within the first nine weeks of the semester. For courses taught outside of the fall and spring semesters, these deadlines will be adjusted in a pro-rated fashion by the Registrar. During the semester the student completes the course and is graded in the usual way by the instructor; and the instructor submits a letter grade (per 3a, above). This letter grade is translated into a 'P' ('D-' or above) or remains an 'F.' In neither event will a course taken under the Pass-Fail option be included in the computation of the semester or cumulative grade point average, but a grade below 'C' makes the student ineligible for Dean's List. The individual schools and colleges have the privilege of adopting the Pass-Fail option with or without supplementary restrictions. Students are referred to the detailed statements of the various schools in the University Catalog for such restrictions.

Proposed Modification for AY 2020/2021 only:

A student ~~who has earned at least 26 credits and is not on scholastic probation~~ may elect a maximum of 12 credits (**not including Spring 2020**) to be distributed over not more than three courses, to be recorded as 'P' for Pass or 'F' for Fail on his or her permanent record. Courses taken Pass-Fail may only be used as electives; they may not be used to satisfy general education, school/college, major or minor requirements. Students who are ~~selecting~~ **adding a course to, or removing a course from,** ~~for~~ the Pass-Fail option must do so ~~within the first two weeks of the semester~~ **by 11:59 pm on November 20, 2020 for the Fall 2020 semester and by 11:59 pm on April 9, 2021 for the spring semester.** ~~Students who are removing a course from the Pass-Fail option must do so within the first nine weeks of the semester.~~ **Students must get approval (with signature) from their advisors prior to electing to complete courses on a Pass-Fail basis.**

During the semester the student completes the course and is graded in the usual way by the instructor; and the instructor submits a letter grade (per 3a, above). This letter grade is translated into a 'P' ('D-' or above) or remains an 'F.' In neither event will a course taken under the Pass-Fail option be included in the computation of the semester or cumulative grade point average, but a grade below 'C' makes the student ineligible for Dean's List. The individual schools and colleges have the privilege of adopting the Pass-Fail option with or without supplementary restrictions. Students are referred to the detailed statements of the various schools in the University Catalog for such restrictions.