

Temporary Grading Policy for Spring 2020 (COVID-19)

Undergraduate Courses

The purpose of this policy is to provide a grading option for students in consideration of the change in teaching modality as well as other unusual personal and educational circumstances due to the COVID-19 outbreak in Spring 2020.

In providing this, we seek a temporary grading policy that is simple to understand, minimizes extra work for faculty, encourages students to finish their courses, and provides flexibility for individual students' circumstances.

This policy comes after consultation with faculty, Deans, and records administration. We believe this exceeds the request by students expressed through their representation on SMU Student Senate.

This policy applies only to undergraduate-level coursework attempted in the Spring 2020 academic term by all undergraduate students. The Provost may, upon consultation with the Deans and the Faculty Senate, renew this policy for subsequent terms that affected by circumstances related to Covid-19. In particular, the Provost will seek an endorsement of an extension through a vote by the Faculty Senate.

For graduate coursework, the individual schools and college will determine and communicate their policies in the coming days.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE GRADING OPTION (Spring 2020)

Students may declare this option any time after a grade is posted following a final exam until the appropriate deadline. In order to maintain the timely conferral of degrees and availability of final transcripts, **graduating seniors must declare this option no later than 5:00 p.m. (CDT) Tuesday, May 19, 2020. Other undergraduate students must declare this option no later than 5:00 p.m. (CDT) Monday, May 25, 2020.** The University will post degrees in May regardless of any decision about commencement ceremonies. The earlier date for graduating seniors will not change even if commencement ceremonies are postponed.

This policy provides students in undergraduate-level courses an option for grades of Satisfactory ("S"), Satisfactory Minus ("S-"), and No Credit ("NC").

- A student may choose to receive a grade of Satisfactory ("S"), Satisfactory Minus ("S-") or No Credit ("NC") according to the definitions that follow for each undergraduate-level course completed during the Spring 2020 semester or any term for which the Provost approves the use of this policy.
- Faculty will report letter grades as normal according to the grading system used for each course and described in the course syllabus.
- **A student may choose to keep the letter grade for each course.** There are many reasons why an individual student may wish to keep a letter grade in order to earn a specific GPA or meet other requirements, and they should consult with an advisor if they have any questions. If the student does not specifically choose the alternative grading scheme for a course by the deadline, the letter grade reported by the faculty member will stand.

- A student may make this selection course-by-course after the letter grade is posted in my.SMU at the end of the term. The selection must be made by the deadlines noted above. **Late declarations will not be accepted or considered.**
- **Explanation of optional marks:**
 - o *Satisfactory ("S")*
 - For undergraduate-level courses in which the student earns a grade of C- or better.
 - This grade conveys credit for the course but does not carry grade points, and therefore does not affect the GPA.
 - This will satisfy pre-requisite, major/minor and general education requirements.
 - o *Satisfactory Minus ("S-")*
 - For undergraduate-level courses in which the student earns a grade of D+, D or D-.
 - This grade conveys credit for the course but does not carry grade points, and therefore does not affect the GPA.
 - This grade will satisfy general education requirements. Depending on the course and program, it may satisfy prerequisite or major/minor requirements. Students should consult with the department or their academic advisor.
 - o *No Credit ("NC")*
 - For undergraduate-level courses in which the student earns a grade of F.
 - This grade does not convey credit and does not impact GPA.
 - This will not satisfy pre-requisite, major/minor and general education requirements.
 - For required courses, the student must retake a course for which a grade of "NC" is recorded.
- **The grades of "S", "S-" and "NC" have no impact on GPA**
- The options under this policy do not count toward the maximum number of courses taken under the separate SMU Pass/Fail policy.
- Graduate-level courses are graded according to the policy for courses in the respective graduate school or program. Undergraduate students enrolled in graduate-level courses should consult with the department for the applicable graduate course grading policy.

Outline of Student Choices for Grading Options

Grade Reported by Faculty	Option for UG courses	Satisfies General education	Satisfies prerequisites and major/minor requirements
A, A-	"S" or keep letter grade	Yes	Yes
B+, B, B-	"S" or keep letter grade	Yes	Yes
C+, C, C-	"S" or keep letter grade	Yes	Yes
D+, D, D-	"S-" or keep letter grade	Yes*	Departmental policies may vary – consult dept/advisor
F	"NC" or keep letter grade	No	No

*For the Second Language Requirement (SLR) consult with the department or your advisor.

HONOR CODE VIOLATIONS

The grading option of S, S-, NC is not allowed for a course in which the student was found in violation of the Honor Code by the University Honor Council or by Faculty Disposition. The faculty assigned grade for the course stands.

REPEATED COURSES FOR GRADE REPLACEMENT

When the Spring 2020 course is a repeat for grade replacement, the grades of S and S- will cause the original grade to be removed from the GPA and the attempt is counted against the limit of 6. The grades of NC and W are considered an incomplete second attempt, and the original grade remains in the GPA. The incomplete attempt is not counted as one of the 6. Both the original and the repeated grade will appear on the student's transcript.

COURSE DROPS

The last date to drop a course has been extended to April 24, 2020. Courses dropped between March 16 through April 24, 2020 will not show on a student's transcript, will not earn credit, and will not impact the GPA. Some students including (but not limited to) those with financial aid, veterans' benefits, or athletic scholarships must consult with an appropriate advisor before dropping a course.

INCOMPLETES

SMU will adopt special policy for Incomplete grade status in Spring 2020 courses.

- As per normal practice, faculty may assign a grade of Incomplete and stipulate in my.SMU the deadline by which a student must resolve the incomplete and the grade to be assigned if that does not happen.
- The grade of "I" will remain until a student clears the incomplete with the faculty member or until the student graduates, whichever comes first.
- At the point of graduation, any grade of "I" for a course taken in Spring 2020 will convert to "NC" for no credit. "NC" does not impact the GPA nor does it satisfy graduation, pre-requisite, major/minor or general education requirements because it does not convey credit for the course.
- Students cannot change a grade of "I" to a grade of "S," "S-," or "NC" during the window listed above after grades are posted.
- Once the replacement grade is posted the student will have 48 hours to change the grade to a grade of "S," "S-," or "NC."

TRANSCRIPT NOTATION

In addition to this grading option, a notation will appear on all transcripts for the Spring 2020 term highlighting the unusual educational circumstances due to a global health crisis.

<p>The operational implementation of this temporary policy is a work-in-progress. We ask for patience and understanding as the Registrar's Office develops the most efficient method to allow students to make this selection. Instructions will be available by April 30, 2020.</p>
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