

MEMORANDUM

TO: James Toole, Chair, Senate Executive Committee

FROM: Steven Hanke, Chair of the Educational Policy Committee

DATE: 3/25/2020

SUBJ: One-time changes to academic regulations for Spring 2020 semester

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The Educational Policy Committee supports adopting policies similar to those outlined in the “One-time changes to academic regulations for S20 semester” that was issued by the Purdue University Office of the Provost and is included on the last page of this document.

As with any policy, we recognize the proposed changes could have some drawbacks. However, recent events have had (and could have significantly more) impacts on many students lives. Therefore, the EPC recommended that PFW should adopt a similar policy so we can allow students further flexibility during these unprecedented times.

At the same time, we believe the following issues should be carefully considered and communicated to faculty/students.

- Informing students on how the selection of these options impacts their Financial Aid, if there are in fact impacts.
- Communicate the following clarifying statement from the PFW Catalog to all faculty: “P Passing Grade. Under the P/NP option, equivalent to the grade of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C or C-” (<https://catalog.pfw.edu/content.php?catoid=54&navoid=1887#grades>). We wanted to highlight this given at our meeting, there was the question raised regarding how “passing” is defined under the P/NP option.
- Based on our understanding, faculty will not “know ahead of time” if the student(s) have selected a P/NP option. Therefore, all faculty need to continue grading exams/projects to determine a “letter” grade. They also will need to enter that letter grade into Banner at the end of the semester. The system will then automatically “flip” this letter grade to a “P/NP” equivalent for the students who have selected this option.

We have communicated these concerns to the Purdue Fort Wayne Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management (Dr. Carl Drummond). He has responded that each of these concerns, as well as others (e.g., IU teach out and IUFW students), are being examined.

In regards to our first concern (financial aid issues) we have subsequently received the following information from the Director of Financial Aid at Purdue Fort Wayne (Douglas Hess):

“The biggest impact is students who were not making GPA progress after fall semester if they change to P/NP then they will not be able to improve their GPA to get back in a good standing by the end of spring semester. It could also impact credit completion if they receive a NP grade as that is the same as failing the course.

Our other impact could be on merit scholarships that require a certain GPA. Again for students not making progress after fall semester if they change to P/NP for spring they

have no way to improve their GPA or if Spring was their first term they will not have a calculated GPA so they will look like they are not earning the renewal GPA for merit.

We plan to be very liberal (as noted that we could be in the DOE directive from early March) in our SAP appeals this summer/fall.”

**Approved**

Stacy Betz  
Zhuming Bi  
Steven Hanke  
Donna Holland  
Shannon Johnson  
Kate White

**Opposed**

**Abstention**

**Absent**

**Non-Voting**

Cheryl Hine  
Teri Swim

TO: All Instructors  
FROM: The Office of the Provost  
RE: One-time changes to academic regulations for S20 semester

We deeply appreciate the efforts of all of our instructors and students working to teach and learn under the conditions imposed by the viral pandemic. While we will maintain our current grading process and standards, we are keenly aware of the pressures students face in making such an abrupt transition to a new learning mode late in a semester, as well as the challenges our instructors face in quickly adjusting their courses to unfamiliar modalities of instruction and assessment. We recognize many factors that may impact our students' ability to learn over the coming weeks: illness, caring for loved ones, challenges in a new learning mode, isolation, among many others. Therefore we are relaxing a number of deadlines with our current academic regulations and providing a one-time exception to others to provide a broad safety net for students with challenges in this new learning environment. These one-time exceptions apply to undergraduate programs. Graduate and professional programs will develop their own set of academic regulation guidelines.

This plan, which is being conveyed to all students today, will modify key dates of our current academic regulations, making as few changes as possible – while accommodating the challenging situation that you and your students find yourselves in:

- In general, assign letter grades as you normally would. However, some deadlines that have already passed will be extended:
  - o Students will have until the end of the semester (May 1, Friday before finals) to switch the course from a letter grade to P/NP. (Deadline was originally Friday before Spring Break, already extended to April 3.)
  - o Students will have until the end of the semester (May 1, Friday before finals) to withdraw from (drop) a course. (Deadline was originally March 13)
  - o Any student receiving an incomplete for a Spring 2020 class will have the full 20-21 academic year to clear the incomplete, which is the existing regulation. However, we strongly discourage the over-issuing of incompletes.
  - o No student will be dropped from the University as a result of their performance in Spring 2020. Normal regulation will be reapplied in the fall.
  - o No student will be placed on academic probation as a result of their performance in Spring 2020. Normal regulation will be reapplied in the fall.
- Your unit academic advisors will receive a plan for handling the downstream consequences of increased P/NP grades for your students' academic progress. One of the major modifications will be that a S20 grade of P will count for any and all degree, admissions indexes, and pre-requisite requirements internal to Purdue.
- A comment will be added to the transcript of all students enrolled this semester making reference to the COVID-19 pandemic for the S20 semester

Thank you all for your extraordinary efforts at this difficult time.