

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Pass/Withdraw Grading

Updated 10/16/2020

In recognition of the continuing hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on students and faculty and the resulting changes in course delivery, UAH is extending the Pass/Withdraw grading option that was followed in Spring 2020 to the entire 2020-2021 academic year. A Pass, Withdraw, or Incomplete may not be the best option for all students, but may be appropriate in some circumstances. Students are strongly advised to consult with academic advisors concerning their specific situations.

1. *What is being changed?*

Effective immediately, students in Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 courses will have the option to switch to a Pass/Withdraw grading system on a course-by-course basis.

2. *What is Pass/Withdraw grading?*

Pass/Withdraw grading allows students to choose to receive a traditional letter grade (A-F) or elect to receive a grade of P (Pass) or W (Withdraw) on their transcript instead of the usual letter grade for a course.

3. *Do I have to switch to Pass/Withdraw? What if I like some of the grades I receive and want to keep them?*

This change is purely optional, on a course-by-course basis. For those courses where you like your grade and want to keep it, you do not have to take any action. For courses where you do not like your grade, you may elect to switch to Pass or Withdraw.

4. *What letter grades are equivalent to a Pass?*

For Undergraduate courses, a Pass grade may be used for grades of D- or above. For Graduate courses, a Pass grade may be used for grades of C- or above.

5. *What effect does Pass/Withdraw have on my academic progress and GPA?*

A Pass grade will not count toward students' grade point averages (for purposes of scholarships and otherwise), but all hours earned in courses with a Pass grade will count towards curricular, major, continuation, semester hours, and graduation requirements. For courses that are prerequisites for higher-level courses, students must earn a satisfactory grade to move on to subsequent courses. A student in a prerequisite course can still switch to Pass grading, but in order to take the next course the grade they would have earned must meet grade requirements. For example, Calculus B requires at least a C- in Calculus A. A student currently taking Calculus A who earns a C is allowed to switch to Pass grading, and move on to Calculus B; a student who earns a D in Calculus A is allowed to switch to Pass grading but will not be allowed to move on to Calculus B.

6. *What effect will Pass/Withdraw grading have on my scholarship?*

Beware that maintaining scholarship eligibility depends on your overall and semester GPA, as well as credit hours completed. Pass grades will count toward required hours, but will not count in GPA calculation. **You will need at least one graded course with a B or higher to continue your scholarship.** Also, Withdraw grades will not count toward

satisfaction of scholarship credit hour requirements or athletics eligibility. Students on financial aid should discuss their situation with the Office of Financial Aid and their advisors.

7. *How do I switch to Pass/Withdraw grading for the courses that I want to change?*
For the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, students will complete all assignments and exams through the remainder of the semester. Faculty will submit grades as usual after the final exam period. Students will log in to their Banner account to view their grades, then elect to keep the grade assigned or request the grade be switched to a Pass or a Withdraw. You will receive a separate communication with instructions on how to make any desired changes to Pass/Withdraw grading for your class schedule.
8. *How will Pass/Withdraw affect repeated credit?*
The existing policy on course repeats will still apply. Students may receive credit for a course only once, but all final grades earned for a course will be calculated into the GPA. A Pass grade counts as replacement for the prior grade. Degree Works will accept the most recent grade earned in determining if a degree or major/minor requirement has been met.
9. *Can students change a Pass grade to a letter grade after making the election?*
No. Once you have switched a course to Pass/Withdraw grading, the changes are permanent.
10. *Will there be any exceptions?*
In some circumstances, students or programs may not be able use the Pass grading option. Students in the College of Nursing and in the bachelor's and master's degree programs in Teacher Education will not be able to use Pass grading and are advised to speak with their advisors for clarification. Those students would still be able to request a Withdraw in order to retake the course.
11. *Will this option also be available for graduate students?*
Yes. Graduate students are allowed to request Pass/Withdraw grading.
12. *How will this change affect students who are applying to graduate schools such as medical school who look at grades of specific classes?*
Students are encouraged to speak with the pre-professional advisor and/or the college or program they are considering. While we are making accommodations internally at UAH, we are unable to predict how Pass/Withdraw will be interpreted by outside groups.
13. *Where should I go to have my questions answered about this policy change?*
Your academic advisor will be your best option for information specific to your situation. Check the University website periodically online for updates about implementation of this change. We will be giving deans, department chairs, and advisors as much information as possible, as quickly as possible, and they will be communicating with students about developments, in order to support you during this difficult time.