

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Grading Changes (Updated 4/6/2020)

In recognition of the hardships imposed on students and faculty due to the COVID-19 outbreak, UAH is providing two temporary changes to the grading policy for Spring 2020 semester, which includes the addition of optional Pass/Withdraw grading for students and an extension of the time to resolve incomplete grades. These temporary policy changes on grading may not be the best option for many students, but will provide alternatives, when appropriate. Students are strongly advised to consult with advisors concerning their specific situations.

1. *What is being changed?*

Effective immediately, students in Spring 2020 courses that have not yet been completed (The first part of term, 7-week courses were completed before Spring break) will have the option 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 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 courses with a Pass grade will count towards curricular, major, continuation, semester hours, and graduation requirements. A grade of Pass will satisfy prerequisites for subsequent courses. Beware that Withdraw grades will not count toward satisfaction of scholarship credit hour requirements or athletics eligibility. Students on financial aid should discuss their situation with financial aid and their advisors.

6. *If I like my grade and have earned enough points for a Pass can I just end the semester?*

No. There is still a significant amount of material to cover and students need to continue to demonstrate good faith effort to complete the semester in order to earn a P. In addition, students moving to higher level courses will need the content from their current courses in order to be prepared for subsequent course. It is imperative that all students finish all course requirements for the remainder of the semester.

7. *What if I am on academic warning or probation and elect to receive Pass grades?*

Students on academic warning or probation will have their current status automatically extended for another semester, unless your GPA rises above the academic action threshold.

8. *When must the decision be made?*
For the Spring 2020 semester, the decision to switch to Pass/Withdraw must be made by May 8, 2020.
9. *How do I switch to Pass/Withdraw grading for the courses that I want to change?*
Students wishing to exercise the Pass/Withdraw option for one or more courses will follow a process currently being finalized by the University Registrar and OIT staff. You will receive a separate communication with instructions on how to make any desired changes to pass/fail grading for your Spring 2020 class schedule.
10. *How will the changes to pass/fail 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.
11. *Can students change a Pass grade to a letter grade after making the election?*
No. Once you have switch a course to Pass/Withdraw grading, the changes are permanent.
12. *Will there be any exceptions?*
In some circumstances, students or programs may not be able use the Pass grading option. Students in the colleges of Nursing and Education will not be able to use Pass grading and are advised to speak with their advisors for clarification. All students will be able to use the Withdraw option. Programs will be as flexible as possible and every effort will be made to communicate this information to students. It is highly recommended that you communicate with your advisor, financial aid, athletics compliance officer, and others in order to understand the impact of Pass/Withdraw grading for your situation.
13. *Will this option also be available for graduate students?*
Yes. Graduate students are allowed to request Pass/Withdraw grading.
14. *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.
15. *What about courses that were supposed to be online all along?*
The Pass/Withdraw election is available here as well.
16. *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.