Updates to Grading for Spring 2020 due to COVID-19
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. 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 advisors concerning their specific situations.

Details are set forth below. Please be sure to read the entire document. In addition, frequently asked questions (FAQs) are attached.

Pass/Withdraw Grade Option

We have added this Pass/Withdraw option to relieve the understandable anxiety that some of our students are experiencing, as well as to address potential inequities in online access. This change is also made in recognition of our core principle that the mental and physical health and safety of students, faculty, and staff must remain paramount as we cope with the COVID-19 crisis. Students who wish to keep their assigned letter grade will be allowed to do so.

Considerations

Students must understand that a decision to switch to the Pass/Withdraw system may have an impact on scholarship retention, financial aid, academic standing, eligibility for Dean's List and other academic achievement designations based solely on performance during the Spring 2020 semester. In addition, students must understand that Pass/Withdraw grades might not be considered by graduate or professional schools during the application process. Students should consult with advisors concerning their specific situations to discuss the effect of selecting the Pass/Withdraw option for given courses on their major, progress toward graduation, scholarship, athletics eligibility, etc.

Eligibility

Effective immediately, undergraduate and graduate students in Spring 2020 courses that were not completed and graded prior to March 16 will be given the **option** to select a Pass/Withdraw grading system. Students can select the Pass/Withdraw option on a course-by-course basis. The opportunity to use the Pass/Withdraw option includes courses that were to have been delivered entirely online even before the current disruption. It also includes all levels of courses (Charger Foundations, major courses, minor courses, electives, and graduate courses,).

In some circumstances, students or programs may not be able to use the Pass/Withdraw option. Admission to some programs (e.g., nursing) and external accrediting/certifying agencies (e.g., teacher education) may require that students take courses in a traditional grading format.

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. Those students would still be able to request a Withdrawal in order to retake the course. However, students who choose the Withdraw option may not have sufficient hours for financial aid purposes.

Academic Progress and GPA

A grade of Pass can be awarded for grades of D- or higher for undergraduate courses or a C- or higher for graduate courses.

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. Degree Works will be updated to indicate this. Students moving into higher level courses are advised that, even if they earn a grade of P, the presumption will be that students received all the material in lower level courses at a satisfactory level. It is important to finish the current term and learn all material in order to be prepared for subsequent courses.

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

Process

For the Spring 2020 semester, students will complete all assignments and exams through the remainder of the semester. Faculty will submit grades as usual after the final exam period, not later than May 1. Students will login 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. **Students must make this decision by May 8, 2020.**

The default option is for students to receive a letter grade. It is vital that you consult with your advisor about the implications of keeping your grades as they are posted at the end of term. Your academic advisor will help you make the best informed decision based on your current academic standing, your current GPA, your current course work, and your plans after graduation.

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.

Faculty will not be notified of a student's choice. The decision by a student to use the Pass/Withdraw option is treated with strict confidentiality.

After selected, Pass/Withdraw grades cannot later be changed to letter grades.

Incomplete Grading

We realize that, even with the Pass/Withdraw option, some students will face hardships that prevent them from finishing coursework and receiving a satisfactory grade this semester. In such cases, students would normally work out an agreement with faculty, allowing them to receive a grade of Incomplete and have until the end of the semester of enrollment to convert the "I" to a grade. Because the effects of COVID-19 could extend into the summer semester, students receiving Incomplete grades for Spring 2020 who enroll in Summer semester will have until the end of Fall semester (December 11, 2020) to work with faculty to complete work and receive a grade.