

## Spring 2020 Semester and Quarter Pass/Fail grading

**Justification for policy:** Due to the unexpected change to virtual campus for the Spring 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic students will experience unexpected challenges. To allow continuity for student's academic goals and provide flexibility for students to adapt to the unexpected challenges students are to be given the opportunity to elect to take courses Pass/Fail for credit for this term.

**Existing policy:** The existing Pass/Fail grading is non-elective and only applies to limited graduate level courses.

### **Policy summary:**

- Students must elect to change their grading basis via form to the Registrar's Office by April 17 and may select which individual courses they wish to take Pass/Fail.
- Once an election to Pass/Fail grading is made the student cannot rescind that election.
- No letter grade will be reflected on student records for courses taken on a Pass/Fail basis.
- There are exclusions that students cannot elect for Pass/Fail grading that include but are not limited to:
  - students repeating a course
  - courses that have already assigned grades before the student submits the Pass/Fail request or courses that have completed all coursework for Spring 2020 term before Monday, March 23
  - visiting students who are taking classes under the Aurora University/Benedictine University/North Central College consortium agreement
- Student **athletes must** consult with their athletics compliance officer on their campus before submitting the request. Student athletes may need a letter grade in order to increase (or maintain) their GPA for athletic eligibility purposes.
  - Lisle campus athletics compliance officer – Jennifer Wildes [jwildes@ben.edu](mailto:jwildes@ben.edu)
  - Mesa campus athletics compliance officer – Frank Woodford [fwoodford@ben.edu](mailto:fwoodford@ben.edu)
- There are unique circumstances and courses that students should be cautious in electing for Pass/Fail grading that include but are not limited to:
  - students on Satisfactory Academic Progress Probation
  - students on academic probation
  - students trying to boost GPA for graduation purposes
  - students trying to boost GPA for honors or dean's list purposes
  - student planning to attend medical or other health professional schools
  - undergraduate students taking courses that a student intends to apply towards a graduate program
  - students planning to transfer their BenU coursework to another institution to fulfill specific requirements
  - students maintaining GPA for Student Senate participation

### **Policy detailed description:**

For Spring 2020, students will now have the option through April 17<sup>th</sup> to elect Pass/Fail grading. This policy applies to both graduate and undergraduate students. **For undergraduate students**, the "P" grade equates to a "D" grade or better. "A", "B", "C", and "D" grades will convert to a "P" grade courses that a student has elected Pass/Fail grading. "P" grades will not count in a student's GPA calculation.

“F” grades will be reflected on a student’s record as normal. “F” grades will be calculated into a student’s GPA. **For graduate students**, the “P” grade equates to a “C” grade or better. “A”, “B”, and “C” grades will convert to a “P” grade in courses that a student has elected Pass/Fail grading. “P” grade will not count in a student’s GPA calculation. “D” and “F” grades will be reflected on a student’s record as normal. The “D” and “F” grades will be calculated into a student’s GPA.

“P” grades are considered passing and meet degree requirements for all courses earning a “P” grade in Spring 2020 term only.

Once a student has elected to take a course Pass/Fail the election cannot be undone. Transcripts and other university records will only reflect the final grade on record. If a student takes a course Pass/Fail the earned letter grade will not be reflected only the “P” grade. The intent of the policy is to help ease the burden on students concerned with earning a lower grade as a result of circumstances they did not choose rather than as a result of their acumen on the course content. In this spirit, the election cannot be undone to prevent individuals from waiting to see how high their grade is before making an election.

Students that are repeating a course may not elect to take the course on a Pass/Fail basis. The original grade earned will not be excluded from your GPA calculation if taken on a Pass/Fail basis. If a student originally received an “F” grade, the “F” grade will still count towards GPA and negatively impact that student until they receive a satisfactory letter grade.

Any courses that have already ended prior to the request deadline cannot be considered for Pass/Fail grading.

Because “P” grades are not counted towards GPA, successful “P” grades will not help students that are on academic probation, on Satisfactory Academic Progress probation for financial aid, improving GPA for graduation minimum GPA requirements, in need of increasing or maintaining GPA for athletic eligibility, trying to increase GPA for honors or Deans List, or students in the process of boosting their GPA. Taking courses Pass/Fail under these circumstances could further impede academic goals. For these students it is strongly recommended that they consult with the appropriate advisors and other administrators if considering taking a course Pass/Fail.

For students that are considered pre-med or pre-health sciences with the intention of attending medical school or other graduate level health sciences degrees, many of these programs require specific letter grades in their admissions consideration. If you elect Pass/Fail, Benedictine will not be able to provide these letter grades. While some institutions may be flexible in this regard, Benedictine has no authority to ensure their admission policies allow for “P” grades.

Students planning to take courses at an undergraduate level to apply towards graduate degrees should consult with those graduate programs if they will allow “P” grades to apply towards the graduate degree requirements before electing a Pass/Fail basis.

For visiting students or students planning to transfer their Benedictine University courses to an outside institution, such as students in dual programs, outside institution policies will vary on the acceptance of “P” grades and Benedictine has no authority in other institutions’ transfer acceptance policies. Visiting students taking courses through the Aurora University/Benedictine University/North Central College consortium agreement must receive a letter grade from Benedictine University. The home institution then may elect to change that letter grade to align with their Spring 2020 grading practices.

**Responsibilities:**

Students: Responsible for reaching out to advisor, instructor, or other impacted departments as needed for advice if the change to Pass/Fail will have a negative impact. Students must submit Spring 2020 Change of Grading Basis Request by the April 17<sup>th</sup> deadline. Students will need to access their BenU email account to do so and requests from non-BenU emails will not be considered. Once submitted the student will receive an automated email confirmation to their BenU email.

Advisor: Assist any students that reach out regarding the Pass/Fail policy with submission of request and help identifying any circumstances, such as those identified above, that might inhibit their election of Pass/Fail grading.

Instructor: Assist any students that reach out regarding the Pass/Fail policy with identifying any circumstances, such as those identified above, that might inhibit their election of Pass/Fail grading or if changes already introduced to the course structure might impact the election of Pass/Fail. The grading basis for each student is reflected on the MyBenU class roster and grade roster. When submitting grades instructors will need to input a letter grade for all students taking courses on both a Graded basis or a Pass/Fail basis. If the course is Pass/Fail the passing letter grade will automatically convert to a "P" grade when posted.

Registrar's Office: Upon receipt of a request to take a course Pass/Fail a confirmation email will automatically be sent back for each student submission to the student's BenU email account. Once the Office of the Registrar receives the submission email, the grading basis for each elected course will be updated prior to the start of grading for Spring 2020 term.

**Revision Date: March 23, 2020**

**Appeals to this policy:** There are no appeals to this policy. Once an election is made the new Pass/Fail grading is final. Appeals submitted after the deadline cannot be processed in time for final grading so there is no exception for late Pass/Fail requests. Grade changes follow the normal Grade Appeal Process outlined in the Catalog.

**Approved by:** Interim Provost, D. Sonnenberger