

## Grading Policy Changes for the Spring 2020 Semester

provost@slu.edu

Fri 4/3/2020 1:16 PM

Dear Members of the Saint Louis University community,

A week ago, the President shared that we were revisiting our grading policy for the remainder of the Spring 2020 term, including the prospect of “pass/fail” grading. Today, after many discussions with a group of students, faculty, staff and deans, we hope to bring you clarity.

In select courses, we plan to allow our students the option of choosing from either a “pass/low pass/no pass” grading policy for individual courses, or the standard grading process. We encourage our students to consider their grading choices carefully, course by course, to make an informed decision. Our goal is to provide flexibility for you, recognizing that this unprecedented situation has created – and will continue to create – challenges for many as we adjust to remote learning.

Here are a few key points from [the updated policy](#):

- This applies to **undergraduate courses only**.
- The “pass/low pass/no pass” grades **correspond with the typical letter grades** of an average grading policy, giving students the option to replace traditional letter grades with P (for Pass, grades A-C), LP (for Low Pass, grades of C- and D), and NP (for No Pass, the grade of F). With this in mind, students should know that choosing this alternative to grading could be problematic for certain program/degree requirements. It also is important to understand that there may be long-term consequences to this decision. For example, particular graduate programs (such as medical schools) might not accept alternative grading policies.
- At the end of the semester, faculty members will submit typical letter grades for students as they normally would. The Office of the Registrar will then map the letter grades to the corresponding pass/low pass/no pass grade.
- Students may request to change from the standard letter grade system in one or more current courses to a pass/low pass/no pass grading system any time from April 27 to May 15. We are still identifying how we will field these requests, so please bear with us and know that information is coming. Students may decide to opt-in or opt-out of the pass/low pass/no pass grading system, course by course, anytime during that time period, but all decisions are final after May 15.
- There are certain exemptions for specific schools/colleges. More information will be provided soon by your dean.

We appreciate those of you who have reached out with opinions about this topic. Your feedback has helped advise us on a workable resolution. We are confident this provides the most flexibility for our students to help meet them where they are during this challenging time.

As I said above, you can expect to hear from your respective dean within the next few days about what nuances might apply to your particular school or college. Again, I encourage you to [review the policy](#) in the meantime to get some additional clarity.

To our students who are considering this alternative option: **Please make an informed decision.** You have time before you have to decide – use that time to read the policy, wait for guidance from your dean, consult with an academic advisor or mentor, and talk to a loved one. Weigh your options. And again, understand that while many universities are pursuing a similar path, there is still a great unknown about how outside agencies (i.e. accreditation bodies and potential graduate programs) plan to adjust to meet these changes.

I hope that this clarity helps relieve the anxiety I hear from some of you. Know that we are anxious, too. Nothing about this situation is easy, and we have worked – and will continue to work – extremely hard to create additional pathways to success.

Thank you, and God bless.

Chester Gillis, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost