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TO: FSU Students, Faculty, and Staff

FROM: Dr. Elizabeth Throop, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Changes to Undergraduate Course Grading and Withdrawal Policies for the Spring 2020 Semester

DATE: March 24, 2020

In light of Frostburg State University's decision to transition to a distance education model, the Provost, in consultation with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee and the Academic Standards Subcommittee, has determined that **undergraduate** students should have access to a Pass Credit/No Credit grading option **for the spring 2020 semester** and that the deadline for withdrawing from courses should be extended. (Guidance regarding graduate students will be forthcoming.)

Undergraduate students enrolled in courses that were originally offered face-to-face may elect to switch some or all of their spring 2020 courses to Pass for Credit (PC) / No Credit (NC) grading. The deadline to switch spring 2020 courses to PC/NC will be Friday, April 17th. Instructions for requesting a switch to PC/NC grading are provided below. Access to PC/NC grading aims to reduce student anxiety during this stressful time, while still providing a pathway to fulfill program and degree requirements. While students may decide to continue to pursue a letter grade (A-F) in their spring 2020 classes, the PC/NC grade may be a sensible and healthy option, depending on individual circumstances.

The deadline for withdrawing from ANY undergraduate course with a "W" will be extended to Friday, April 17th. Instructions for withdrawing from a course are provided below.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor to discuss possible academic implications prior to electing PC/NC or withdrawing from a course. Students who are receiving financial aid or scholarships should also contact the Financial Aid Office (fsufinaid@frostburg.edu) to determine any impact a "PC," "NC," or "W" grade may have on their future financial aid.

Spring 2020 Exceptions to FSU Pass/No Credit Grade Policies

The Provost has provided University-wide exceptions to normal FSU policies and procedures related to Pass and No Credit grades, including:

1. The PC grade will be employed instead of the P grade to facilitate record-keeping.
2. There is no limit on the number of spring 2020 courses/credits allowed to be taken PC/NC.
3. With the exception of English composition (pending necessary clarification from the Maryland Higher Education Commission), courses graded PC may satisfy GEP requirements.
4. Courses graded PC may satisfy major and minor requirements, including minimum credit requirements.
5. Students on academic probation may elect to take their courses PC/NC.
6. Students may use the No Credit grade regardless of the number of credit hours they have completed.

7. A course used as a replacement for a previously taken course may be taken PC/NC – with knowledge that the student loses the benefit of improving their GPA.
8. Courses taken PC/NC in spring 2020 will not count towards the total four course limit on P/F courses.

Important Considerations for PC/NC:

- The option to switch to PC/NC is open only to students originally enrolled in face-to-face courses. The option is not open to students enrolled in online courses.
- The decision to switch to PC/NC cannot be reversed.
- For all undergraduate courses, if a student opts for PC/NC, the instructor will assign grades of A, B, C, D, FX, or F to each student. (As usual, a grade of “I” may be granted at the discretion of the instructor if a student is passing a course but is unable to complete the coursework for reasons beyond the student’s control.) The Registrar’s Office will then enter a grade of PC for students earning an A, B, C, or D, but will enter a grade of NC for students earning an FX or F.
- Normally, instructors are not notified by any administrative office that a student has elected to take their course on a P/F basis. Given the unusual circumstances of these policy exceptions, **students** may elect to inform their instructor(s) of their decision to opt for PC/NC grading. Students can be assured that instructors will be receptive and supportive.
- The grades of “PC” and “NC” will **NOT** be used in the computation of the cumulative or major grade point average.
- The Provost has approved the addition of a semester-level comment to the official FSU academic transcript stating, *e.g.* “Spring 2020 courses were completed during a state and national emergency.”
- If a student wishes to transfer or attend graduate school where letter grades are necessary, they may request, in writing, that the Registrar’s Office provide letter grades for those courses in which a PC was recorded.
- If a student is repeating a course and elects to switch to PC/NC, the “PC” grade will not be calculated into the cumulative or major GPA, though the credits will count toward program and degree requirements.

Additional Grading Options

For a very limited number of courses, it might not be possible to continue instruction remotely due to the nature of the coursework. These courses have been identified by instructors, department chairs, and college deans, and students enrolled in these courses have been informed about the course status. With the approval of the department chair and college dean, instructors of these courses may elect to assign students final grades based on work completed to this point. Like all undergraduates, students enrolled in these courses may choose to withdraw from the course or opt for a PC/NC grade.

Instructions for Switching to PC/NC Grading

Students can opt for PC/NC grading by sending an email to reginfo@frostburg.edu from their FSU account. In the email they should provide their student ID and the course(s) (name, number, and section, *e.g.* MATH 109 001) for which they would like the PC/NC option applied. **The deadline to switch spring 2020 courses to PC/NC will be Friday, April 17th.**

Instructions for Withdrawing from a Course

Students can withdraw themselves from a course via their PAWS account. For assistance, contact reginfo@frostburg.edu. **The last day to withdraw from a course with a “W” will be Friday, April 17th.** The last day to withdraw from a course with a “WF” will be Tuesday, May 12th.