Temporary Changes to Course Grading Policy
Faculty Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I offer the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option to students in my course, does that mean my entire course is now Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory for all students?

A: No. It simply means you have made that available to students as an option. The student must complete this form to request that option. After the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option is made available to students in a course, any student who completes the form will be graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Other students in the course will be still graded as originally determined by the faculty (typically A, B, C, D, and F).

Q. What counts as “Satisfactory”? Anything other than an “F”?

A: Faculty have the authority to determine what counts as Satisfactory in their course and faculty also have the responsibility to share that information with all students enrolled in the course. It is recommended that faculty take into account the minimum acceptable grade for their course in setting that standard. For example, if a faculty member is teaching a course for which a “C” is the minimum acceptable grade, then it would be wise for the faculty to set the Satisfactory criterion at the same level.

Q: Will students be able to count this course toward prerequisites or degree requirements, if they select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option?

A: Yes. For that reason, please consider that factor in determining your grading criteria for Satisfactory. If your course is a prerequisite that must be met with a “C” or better, then it might make sense to set the Satisfactory criteria to match what you would expect for a “C”. If not, then it might make sense to set the Satisfactory lower than that, but this is your decision for your given course. If multiple faculty are teaching different sections of the same course, faculty are advised to consult with the appropriate coordinator in their College or School to assure consistency in allowing the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option and set the same criteria for the Satisfactory grade.

Q: What grade will actually appear on a student’s transcript, and how will it impact their GPA?

A: Grades will appear as an “S” (satisfactory) or as a “U” (unsatisfactory). Neither will have an impact on the student’s GPA.
Q: Will students need advisor approval?

A: No. The logistical burden of securing such approvals would be difficult at this time, particularly now that advisors are already in the midst of preparing students for summer and fall registration. Students will need to consult with an advisor to determine if this option is appropriate for their circumstances. For example, if they need to raise their GPA to meet a criterion level for the program or to remove themselves from probation, electing this option may not be the best choice. Certain graduate and professional schools may not look favorably on S/U grades. The request form will require students to acknowledge that they have discussed the option with their advisor and understand the consequences.

Q: Will the selection of the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading system impact the faculty’s option to assign Incomplete (I) grade to students?

A: No. Faculty will still have the option of grading students who do not select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading in their course to be assessed as “Incomplete” and allow the student to meet the requirements in a future semester. Faculty should inform students of these grading options.

Q: Can I provide advising to students on how the selection of the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option will affect their financial aid, federal grants, student loans, etc.?

A: Each student’s situation is very different and a one-size-fits-all recommendation cannot be provided. A student will need to discuss the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option with appropriate personnel before making the decision.