Fall 2020
Temporary Changes to Course Grading Policy
Student Frequently Asked Questions

Q: The policy says that the S/U grading option may be limited by accreditation. How will I know if my courses are affected by this?

A: Your instructor will let you know if there are limitations based on accreditation requirements that will prevent the S/U option in their course. This is an issue for only a very small handful of programs that are in the health professions.

Q: How do I opt in to be graded using the S/U grading mode?

A: To elect the S/U grade option, students are required to fill out this form before the deadline. The deadline to request an S/U for fall 2020 courses is Dec. 3, 2020.

Q: How do I know if the S/U grade mode is best for me?

A: This decision tree is a highly simplified map to help you choose whether or not to opt-in to the S/U grading option. Make sure you understand your instructor's grading criteria, and contact your advisor before finalizing your decision.

Q: Am I required to take the course as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory?

A: No. You may elect to remain in the traditional grading mode. Please consult with your professor about your progress in the course before considering this option.

Q: If I elect this option, what will my grade look like?

A: Grades will appear as an “S” (satisfactory) or as a “U” (unsatisfactory). Neither will have an impact on the students’ GPA.

Q: If I am trying to use this course to raise my GPA to get off of probation or to reach a particular GPA criterion level that I need to move forward in my program, will this help?

A: It is extremely important for you to discuss this option with your advisor, to determine if this choice would be appropriate for you. While a “U” grade will not lower your GPA, an “S” grade will not raise your GPA.
Q: Where can I learn more about the temporary grading policy for fall 2020 courses?

A: The full policy can be found here: https://www.utep.edu/provost/_Files/docs/instruction/Temp-Satisfactory-UnsatisfactoryFall2020.pdf

Q: How will graduate and professional schools view a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade?

A: This varies from program to program and it depends upon how the course is related to your intended field. While many institutions across the U.S. are moving to allow Pass/Fail or S/U grades this semester and will likely understand that this was an unusual term, there are some fields where you will want to be very careful. It is imperative that you consult with your advisor about electing this option, especially if you are considering graduate or professional school.

Q: Is it possible to select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option for only one of my courses but leave the original grading in my other courses?

A: Yes, students can choose to select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading or stay with the original grading for any undergraduate or graduate course, except for courses where accreditation requirements limit that possibility.

Q: What other options do I have to work with my grade, aside from the S/U grading option?

A: Please consult with your instructor to determine if your particular situation may warrant the granting of an “Incomplete” grade, which will allow you to complete the course in a more familiar mode in the future. If that is not likely to be a good option for you, please note that the temporary grading policy also allows students to drop a course, all the way until the last class day. This drop will not count toward the 6-drop limit in the state of Texas.

Q: If I select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option and earn an Unsatisfactory grade, will I be eligible to earn a Satisfactory grade next time when I take this course again?

A: The current grading policy change applies to the Fall 2020 semester only. All courses would revert to their scheduled grading mode in future semesters.