Dear Students,

Thank you for your dedication to continuing your coursework under such challenging circumstances. We know many of you have limited technology and Wi-Fi to support your work. In addition, many of you (and your faculty) much prefer the interaction of the classroom. Due to these issues we have adopted a pass/fail policy for Spring 2020. We will offer our students expanded options with regard to how your grades are recorded on your transcript due to the academic disruptions caused by the global pandemic.

- You will receive your official letter grade for each course at the end of the semester just as you usually would.
- You will then have 3 weeks to review your grades and decide for each course whether it is in your best interest to keep the letter grade that you have earned or opt to have your grade for that course changed to simply indicate pass/fail. In the case of the pass/fail option, a pass means that you passed the course and earned the credits but the letter grade you earned will not have an impact on your GPA. In the case of a failed course, you do not earn the credits, but the F does not become factored into your GPA. The deadline to make your decision is June 1, 2020.

There are some important points to consider, one of which relates to your semester and cumulative grade point averages.

- For example, you might earn 2 As, a B, 2 Cs, and a D. That would give you a 2.66 GPA for the semester. If you opted to take a P instead of the D, that would give you a 3.0 for the semester.
- You will also need to consider your overall GPA. If you currently have a 4.0, you may consider electing to take Ps for everything below an A so that you maintain your 4.0. If you currently have a 2.5, you would want to consider taking a P for the Cs and the D.
- You can use the attached GPA calculator to help you determine the best choices for you and you can also consult with your advisor.

Please be advised that certain courses will not be able to be converted to pass/fail because they are required to have a grade by the accrediting body or other certifying agency for your degree program.

- Please review the list below. Certain programs require a C to move forward in specific courses to move forward. Advisors will review the posted grade from the end of the semester to determine forward progress in those majors.
- Some programs cannot utilize pass fail options. Please review the list below.
- If one or more of your courses does not allow for a pass/fail option, you can still use the pass/fail option for your other courses.

There will be a notation on your transcript that states “COVID-19 – grading flexibility in place” as a reminder to anyone viewing the transcript in the future that Spring 2020 was an unusual semester.

There will also be a 3-year window within which students can choose the reverse their decision to exercise the pass/fail option.
Majors that will review key grades for forward progress:

COE:

- All programs in the COE have at least some requirements for particular grades in certain courses for progression through the program. Usually, if a student earns an F, that F can be replaced on the transcript by retaking a course and earning a higher grade. How would earning a P in this situation affect the GPA? Would it remove the F?
- Also, the section that begins “Please be advised that certain courses will not be able to be converted to pass/fail...” seems to suggest that the bullet pointed examples below are of instances in which the grade cannot be converted. However, I believe those are instances of when the grade can be converted for the transcript but may still be used for program progression. Perhaps I’m misinterpreting that, though.

COST:

- Possible exceptions for the P/F letter:
- Letter grades must be reported to CoAES for Exercise Science students.
- Penn State requires letter grades from students in the 3+2 engineering program.
- Students bound for Grad/Professional schools may need defined grades.

COLA:

- Communication Studies 207 (Research Methods) and 209 (Examining Communications) C or better is required.
- History 298 (Historiography and Historical Methods) and 398 (Research and Writing Skills) C or better is required.
- Music: C or better is required for major courses.
- Psychology majors must earn C or better in 101 (Introduction to Psychology), 160 (Applied Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences), 281 (Research Methods), and 282 (Research Applications).

ZCOB:

- The only degree program requirements that cannot do the Pass/Fail option is Business Education as a “C or better” is required for all Business and Education courses.
  - ALL Business Core Courses, ALL Professional Education courses, All Exceptionalities courses, English Language Learner course, ALL Business Professional Education course.

Majors that cannot allow pass/fail in major courses due to accreditation.

Nursing

Graduate Programs: Note that a D is considered failing under pass fail rules. My assumption would be that a P in a course that was repeated would replace the F. I would want to see an adviser working with those students in particular to be sure that the P was doing more for them than whatever grade they actually earned though.
**Probation:** Students currently on probation will be automatically reviewed for continuation at the end of the Spring 2020 semester.