In recognition of the unique circumstances resulting from the global health pandemic (COVID-19), the faculty and administration of High Point University have adopted emergency grading accommodations for undergraduate students for the spring 2020 semester.

All courses will continue to be graded with the standard grading scale (letter grades) for the Spring Semester; however, students can designate their final course grades to be recorded as Pass/Fail (see the list of courses excluded from pass/fail designation). Students can choose to implement the P/F option for none, some, or all of their spring 2020 courses.

This emergency policy does not make the P/F grade mandatory for all students or for all courses. Rather, the decision to receive a letter grade or a Pass/Fail designation for eligible courses rests with each individual student.

Under this policy the grade of “D-“ or better is considered a “Pass”. Students contemplating the P/F grade should keep in mind the following:

- The grade of Pass under this emergency policy is applicable to most general education, major, and minor requirements at High Point University, but some courses are excluded.
- The grade of Pass will give the student credit hours toward graduation but will not affect his or her grade point average. A grade of Fail will be averaged into the student’s GPA.
- A note will be added to all academic transcripts indicating the extraordinary circumstances of the global health emergency in spring 2020 and its impact on higher education.
- Dean’s List Spring 2020 will still be offered; however, to be eligible for Dean’s List, students must have completed at least 12 graded hours other than Pass/Fail.
- Students will have until Wednesday, April 29, 2020, at 5:00 PM PST to elect a course as pass/fail for the spring 2020 semester.

Further details about how to designate a course Pass/Fail are in the FAQ and forthcoming.

Students should check with advisors to determine if there are issues with a passing grade in academic programs where licensure is an outcome (i.e., teaching license). In certain circumstances, faculty advisors and other university officials may recommend that students NOT elect the pass/fail option.

Students, please think carefully about this decision and communicate with your professors and advisors about the consequences of the decision.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does this new P/F policy apply to all courses?

No, although the P/F option will apply to most undergraduate courses, some courses aren’t included (see list of courses here). No graduate level courses are included. Certain undergraduate classes that lead to licensure or have discipline accreditation rules may not be approved as a P/F class. Certain classes that have a grade requirement for majors and minors are also not included. Check with your advisor and course professor.

How will I know if Pass/Fail is available for the courses I am in this semester?

We have a list of course exceptions here. In addition, your faculty member will let you know if pass/fail is an option in your course.

If at the end of the semester, I realize I am failing, do I have any options besides an F?

HPU is extending its course withdrawal date until Wednesday, April 29 (last day of the semester). Students can initiate a withdrawal, and it will be noted on their transcript as a special circumstance withdrawal (e.g., WCV). However, if this is a required course for graduation, the student will have to retake the course.

I want to switch my course to pass/fail. What do I do?

First, check to make sure your course is available for pass/fail. Some courses are not available as pass/fail (see the list here).

Second, chat with your advisor and professor before making the decision.

Third, if after communicating with your professor you decide the pass/fail is the best option, complete the Pass/Fail Grading Option Declaration “quiz” available in your course on Blackboard. This quiz includes 10-questions, and only students who answer “yes” to all 10 questions will be eligible for Pass/Fail designation. (If you want to take the course Pass/Fail, make sure this “quiz” is submitted!)

Fourth, your professor will note who has designated the course as Pass/Fail and enter either a “P” or “F” as a final grade.

How will I let my professor know I want to take the course as Pass/Fail?

Complete the Pass/Fail Grading Option Declaration “quiz” available in your course on Blackboard. This quiz includes 10-questions, and only students who answer “yes” to all questions will be eligible for Pass/Fail designation. Your professor will note who has designated the course as Pass/Fail and enter either a “P” or “F” as a final grade.
I don't want to switch my course to pass/fail. What do I do?

You don't have to do anything. Your professor will enter the earned letter grade at the end of the semester.

What is the deadline for declaring a course pass/fail?

Students have until April 29, 2020, 5:00 PM PST (last day of the semester) to declare a course/s as P/F. Details will be provided next week.

If I selected a class as Pass/Fail and then learn that I got an “A”, can I change to a letter grade?

No, once a student opts to switch (or not switch) to the Pass/Fail system, the grading type will not be changed. But students have until the last day of class to make this decision.

I am an athlete. Can I make my grades P/F?

Student athletes should contact April Wines (awines@highpoint.edu or 336-841-4645) or Olivia Dwyer (odwyer@highpoint.edu or 336-841-9428) to discuss NCAA eligibility implications.

Will designating some classes as pass/fail affect my scholarship?

Regarding High Point University Scholarships (e.g., Presidential Scholars, Fellows), as long as your current GPA fulfills your scholarship requirement, selecting courses as Pass/Fail will not affect your scholarship eligibility. If you have an external scholarship, you will need to discuss this with the scholarship officer.

Will designating some classes as pass/fail affect my standing in the honors program?

No. As long as your current GPA fulfills your GPA requirement, selecting courses as Pass/Fail will not affect your standing in the honors program.

Will selecting some courses as Pass/Fail affect my Latin honor (e.g., cum laude)?

Not necessarily. A student’s overall GPA at graduation is what determines Latin honors at graduation. As long as a student’s overall GPA meets the threshold for Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, or Summa Cum Laude, he/she will earn honors. However, it is important to note that earning a “P” in a course will not improve a student’s GPA, but a grade of “F” will lower it.

I am in a FYS and don't see it listed on the courses excluded from Pass/Fail. Can I take it Pass/Fail?

Yes.
I have under a 2.0 in my major, but my overall GPA is a 2.2. Can I designate my classes as P/F?

In this circumstance, your advisor will recommend that you keep the letter grade in your major courses but allow you to make the decision about your non-major courses. You must have a 2.0 overall and a 2.0 in your major to graduate.

Is there a limit on how many courses you can declare for pass/fail for spring 2020—the university limit is one course per semester?

No, there is no limit on how many courses you can declare pass/fail for the spring 2020 semester.

If I select some courses as Pass/Fail, does that mean I reached the university limit (no more than 20 credits) of Pass/Fail courses I can take?

Courses declared pass/fail in spring 2020 will not contribute to the total credit hours of Pass/Fail credit allowed in a student’s undergraduate career.

I am on academic probation. Can I take my courses P/F?

Students on academic probation are strongly encouraged to consult with their academic advisor before making any decisions about the pass/fail option. Students don’t earn “quality hours,” so a Pass will not improve a student’s GPA. A Fail, however, will lower the GPA.

I took a class that ended before spring break. Can I switch that course to P/F?

This emergency policy does not apply to courses completed during the first half of the spring 2020 semester.

If I declare a course pass/fail, how is my grade determined?

The instructor of your class will compute your final grade. Letter grades of “A” through “D-” will be converted to a Pass. “F” grades will remain a Fail.

Can a pass/fail course count toward my major or minor?

The university has temporarily waived its policy prohibiting Pass/Fail for major and minor courses. However, some majors have licensure and accreditation or prerequisite requirements that require certain grades, and those courses will retain a letter grade system. This exemption of Pass/Fail for major/minor courses is only applicable to Spring 2020.

Can a pass/fail course meet General Education requirements?

Most general education courses can be designated P/F. Your professor will let you know if your class is an exception. (see list here)
If I declare a course pass/fail, can it be used in a future semester as a course prerequisite that requires a minimum grade?

Perhaps. Some prerequisite courses will not be approved as P/F options, but if the course is approved and you pass, then you can take the next course in the curriculum sequence.

If I am taking a class that is a prerequisite for another, which I plan to take, can I take my current class as pass/fail?

Depends. The answer is “Yes” as long as your current class is not on the list of excluded courses. The answer is “No” if your class is on the list of excluded classes or if there is an exception noted about your class. For example, certain math classes are excluded from the Pass/Fail designation and a couple of math classes exclude some students from taking the course Pass/Fail. Please look at the list of the excluded class and talk with your advisor if you have questions.

I am taking a class that requires a letter grade for majors but I am not in the major yet. If I opt to take it pass/fail and then declare that as my major, what happens?

For most classes, this requirement is waived for the spring 2020 semester. But, if this is math class with a notation about minimum grades for students in a specific major, you will need a letter grade. If you select Pass/Fail for this course and then switch into a major that requires a grade, you might have to repeat the course or show proficiency in the area. If you think you might want to declare this major, we recommend that you take the course for a letter grade.

I failed a course before and am now repeating it to improve my GPA. Can I take it P/F?

Students repeating a course in order to achieve a higher grade will need to complete the course on a graded basis. But, if you just need to pass the course and not change the grade, then you can elect P/F.

Does a pass/fail course affect my GPA?

This depends on what grade you earn. A grade of “P” will not be factored into your GPA, but a grade of “F” will.

Are my faculty aware that my course has been put on pass/fail?

Yes. Faculty members have to enter either a letter grade or P/F as your final grade. But, they will not know what you selected until you use the university system to designate a course as P/F.

Will pass/fail courses count toward my earned semester hours for eligibility purposes?
Yes. Courses that you pass will count toward your earned semester hours. Courses that you fail will not count toward your earned semester hours.

**What if I already declared a course pass/fail this semester?**

If you previously elected to take a course pass/fail, it will stay pass/fail. You do not need to declare that class pass/fail.

**How will a pass/fail course appear on my transcript?**

HPU will include a transcript note on all academic records, regardless of grading, indicating the extraordinary circumstances of the global public health emergency.

**I withdrew from a course this semester. Can I be added back in and take it P/F?**

This emergency policy does not apply to courses in which the student has already elected to be withdrawn, having already earned a grade of "W".

**I have an honor code violation in this course. Can I switch it to a P/F?**

A student may not designate a course pass/fail if the final grade is an Honor Code F.

**When will I know my final grade?**

The deadline for faculty to submit grades for ALL students, including graduating students, is Monday, May 11th at noon.

**If I take a course as Pass/Fail, what will show up on my transcript?**

For each class you designate as pass/fail, a “P” or “F” will show instead of a letter grade.

**If I take this course as a Pass/Fail, do I have to take the final exam?**

Likely. Your final grade in the class will include your final exam. In most classes, the final exam is a substantive portion of the grade and not completing it would have a severe negative consequence on the overall grade.

**Will there be any note about why I took a class as Pass/Fail? I worry that future employers or graduate schools won’t know why I took so many pass/fail classes.**

Yes, we will create a note on all transcripts that identifies the circumstances students faced in spring 2020. One possibility is adding a CV to a P/F grade (For example, PCV or WCV). We will let students know what the final notation determination will be.
Even though a transcript note is being included about Pass/Fail grades for Spring 2020, could choosing a grade of Pass/Fail affect how my transcript is evaluated, for instance, by a graduate program?

Perhaps. This is complicated by the fact that graduate programs vary widely - by discipline and by school - in terms of admissions procedures. One potential risk of selecting Pass/Fail applies to graduate programs that evaluate specific courses on a student’s transcript and use a minimum threshold for grade received in those courses. Because opting to "Pass" means you earned a “D- or higher,” it may impact the program’s ability to evaluate your potential for specific coursework. That being said, the note pertaining to why Pass/Fail was offered may mitigate concerns to a degree. This issue also reflects why it is crucial to speak with your professor/advisor about your decisions in this regard.

If I have additional questions about declaring a course pass/fail, where should I go?

We encourage you to speak with an academic advisor about your choice and about any impact your choices might have for success in future courses or admissions to future programs. Success coaches and faculty advisors are available to communicate with students remotely.

Online undergraduate bulletins are located at the following link:

http://www.highpoint.edu/registrar/undergraduate-bulletins/