Temporary Changes to the ISU Pass / Not Pass (P/NP) Grading Policy

In response to the coronavirus pandemic in Spring 2020, Iowa State University has adopted a temporary Pass/Not Pass grading option for undergraduate courses impacted by the transition to virtual instruction, effective immediately (March 20, 2020). The P/NP option applies to undergraduate courses intended to be in-person throughout Spring 2020, but which were changed to virtual instruction as a result of COVID-19.

FAQs

- **Who is eligible to choose this P/NP option?** Any undergraduate student enrolled in courses intended to be in-person throughout Spring 2020 semester. This includes students on academic probation.

- **Which undergraduate courses does the policy apply to?** This temporary policy applies to any ISU undergraduate course at the 100-, 200-, 300-, or 400-level that was intended to be-in-person but which was changed to virtual instruction as a result of COVID-19. This policy does not apply to 500- or 600-level courses. Although undergraduates may enroll in these graduate courses, they are subject to the grading policies of the Graduate College. This policy does not apply to courses that were already designated to be taught fully online at the start of Spring 2020 semester.

- **How many courses may a student designate as P/NP?** An undergraduate student may designate all, some, or none of their Spring 2020 courses that moved from in-person to virtual instruction as P/NP.

- **Will it count towards my total number of P/NP designations?** No. Under ordinary circumstances, undergraduate students are limited to nine P/NP credits. Courses designated as P/NP under this temporary policy in Spring 2020 will not count against the total number of P/NP credits allowed.

- **What grades are categorized as a P? What grade is categorized as a NP?** This temporary policy follows the existing P/NP policy where an earned grade of A through D- will be categorized as a P. And, an earned grade of F will be categorized as NP.

- **Will these P/NP courses count towards my academic program requirements?** Yes. Courses designated under this policy will count towards ISU’s curricular, major, academic progress, and graduation requirements. Before choosing the P/NP option, students must talk to their adviser; there may be future consequences of P grades to consider. (See *GPA under 2.0 and downside of this policy* below.)

- **Will a P/NP designation affect my GPA?** No. Grades of P and NP are not factored into a student’s grade point average (GPA).

- **If my overall GPA is under a 2.0, or I am on academic warning, or probation, what do I need to think about?** Students in these situations need to consider the impact of P/NP decisions on both this semester’s GPA and their overall GPA. Students should meet with their advisor or college Student Services Office to discuss options and possible impact on academic standing. A minimum GPA of 2.0 GPA is required to earn a degree from Iowa State University.
• **What resources are available to help me make a decision?** Advisers and college Student Services Offices can answer questions related to this temporary policy. And, the Office of the Registrar has an online GPA calculator [https://www.registrar.iastate.edu/students/gpa-calc](https://www.registrar.iastate.edu/students/gpa-calc) that many students find useful.

• **Is there any downside to using this policy?** Possibly. Students who intend to apply to post-graduate programs should discuss the potential impact of P/NP designations on their application for graduate and professional programs with their advisor. For example, some programs require a certain GPA in designated courses or programs of study.

• **When do I have to decide if I want to choose a P/NP designation?** Undergraduate students must decide between May 13 and May 19, 2020 which is after Spring 2020 grades are submitted by instructors. Students may not make a change prior to May 13.

• **If I decide to choose a P/NP designation, how do I do it?** Students will submit a form through their academic adviser/Office of the Registrar between May 13 and May 19 at 5:00 p.m. If no form is received by the deadline, the letter grade submitted by the instructor will be recorded for the course. *This process is still being finalized. Advisers will communicate the final process in early May.*

• **Will my instructor be notified about my selection?** No. Instructors will assign letter grades (A-F, I, R) as usual and submit those to the Office of the Registrar following the standard grade submission process. For each course that a student has designated as P/NP, the Registrar’s Office will convert the letter grade to a P or NP. Please note it will take a few weeks for the record to be updated to reflect that student’s decision.

• **How will dismissal/reinstatement statuses be affected?** The student’s selection of a P/NP will have no impact on GPA. If a student’s academic status changes at the end of the semester, colleges will be encouraged to expedite their appeal processes and to take individual circumstances into account.

• **Will I be able to retake a course that I elected to have designated as a P/NP?** This policy is under review.

• **Will choosing the P/NP option impact my ISU or external scholarships that have a GPA requirement?** Grades of P and NP are not factored into a student’s grade point average (GPA). The P/NP policy will not affect the status of ISU scholarships. Students should consult with external scholarship providers to determine if there are implications to selection P/NP grading.

• **What happens if I need to submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) appeal for financial aid?** Because SAP is a federal regulation, our Office of Financial Aid is waiting on guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on how to handle these situations.

• **How will this Spring 2020 semester appear on my transcript?** ISU will include a designation on students’ transcripts indicating extraordinary circumstances encountered in the Spring 2020 semester.