



**Policy Title**  
**COVID-19 Special Grading Policy**

**Policy Number**  
**1-010**

<b>Responsible Unit:</b> Southern University and A&M College	<b>Effective Date:</b> April 8, 2020
<b>Responsible Official:</b> Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	<b>Last Reviewed Date:</b> N/A
<b>Policy Classification:</b> Academic Affairs	<b>Origination Date:</b> April 8, 2020

**I. Policy Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to SUBR faculty, staff, and students regarding the awarding of final grades during an academic semester that has been interrupted or impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and is being implemented in accordance with and pursuant to the COVID-19 Academic Guidelines (Attachment A) issued by the Southern University System. The policy establishes a flexible grading system that individual students may choose after final grades for the spring 2020 semester are made available. This policy offers a response to the challenges faced by students, while maintaining academic integrity and quality instruction. This policy establishes grading guidelines that will facilitate student academic progress. The Faculty, Academic Advisors, Department Chairs, and Academic Deans, the Registrar and other support staff will provide guidance to students as they consider these grading options and assess their impact on their academic progression.

**II. Policy Scope**

This policy applies to full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, staff, and students.

### **III. Policy Compliance**

This policy will impact how the final grades are recorded on a transcript of a student in response to the COVID-19 Academic Guidelines issued by the Southern University System.

### **IV. Policy Definitions**

#### *Academic Semester/Session Interrupted or Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Any academic semester or session during which the delivery of the program of education is modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic or a civic order associated with the pandemic.

#### *Student Grade Election Procedures*

The procedures which a student must use to have grades awarded by their professors changed to a different grade of "P", "I", or "W."

#### *Grades Available Due to Student Grade Election Procedure*

A letter grade of "P" will result in a student passing the course. A "P" grade is not factored into the student's grade point average.

A letter grade of "W" will appear if a student decides to withdraw from a course. Students must be re-take and pass the course if they wish to earn course credit.

A letter grade of "F" is considered a failing grade.

### **V. Policy Development and Implementation Procedure**

The policy was created in accordance with and pursuant to COVID-19 Academic Guidelines issued by the Southern University System on April 3, 2020. The policy was developed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs with input from the faculty senate and student government leadership on April 6, 2020. As an administrative policy, the policy was adopted by the Chancellor on April 8, 2020. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will be charged with implementing and enforcing this policy.

### **VI. Policy Development and Implementation Procedure**

#### **Guidelines and Grade Options**

All courses will be graded using the normal grading system. Final grades for all spring 2020 courses are due on May 13, 2020. Students will be allowed two weeks to review their final grades, make informed decisions about their academic record, and indicate how they wish to proceed until May 27, 2020. Once grades have been reviewed, the following options will be available:

- If a student accepts their final grade, no action is necessary, and the reported final grade will become permanent on their academic record.
- A student may elect to convert a letter grade earned in a course to a Pass (P) grade. The Pass grade is reserved for final grades of "A", "B", or "C" for undergraduate courses (with the exception of those

undergraduate programs where a letter grade of "D" is considered passing). The Pass grade is reserved for final grades of "A" or "B" for graduate courses (with the exception of those graduate programs where a letter grade of "C" is considered passing). Students who want to convert a letter grade earned in a course to a Pass grade will need to complete and submit an **Electronic Request to Receive a Pass Grade Form** which is available on the Registrar's website. Once the student completes and submits the form, it will be routed to the appropriate Faculty, Chair, Academic Dean, who will then route the completed form back to the Registrar's Office. **The deadline for submission of this form to the Registrar's office is May 27, 2020.**

- A student may elect to withdraw from a course (or courses) with the grade of "W". The **Withdrawn (W)** grade is more appropriate for final grades of "D" or "F" for undergraduate courses (with the exception noted above). The **Withdrawn (W)** grade is reserved for final grades of "C", "D", or "F" for graduate courses (with the exception noted above). If this option is exercised, the student will need to complete the **COVID-19 Electronic Request to Withdraw Form**, which is available on the Registrar's website. Once the student completes and submits the form, it will be routed to the appropriate Faculty, Chair, Academic Dean, who will then route the completed form back to the Registrar's Office. At each checkpoint along the way, the student may seek advice of all possible implications a withdrawal could have on all aspects of their academic and student career. **The deadline for submission of this form to the Registrar's office is May 27, 2020.**

#### **For Students Graduating in May 2020:**

It should be noted that any student wishing to graduate at the conclusion of the spring 2020 semester must have all final grades posted per the current University Academic Calendar. **Candidate Grades are due May 5, 2020 by 5:00 pm.**

#### **Note:**

- In all instances, students must contact their Academic Advisor, Instructor, Chair, and Academic Dean to determine how decisions will affect their continued academic progress related to prerequisites, co-requisites, and clinical/didactic enrollment for future semesters, as well as professional programs, and other eligibilities.
- Withdrawals approved in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, will not count towards limits in effect during normal operations as described in the Withdrawal Policy or Repeat/Delete Policy in the Catalog. Withdrawals will not affect eligibility for graduate assistantships, fellowships, or scholarships.
- While no quality points will be assigned to a grade of Pass, there will be no impact on the student's GPA. Students will work with appropriate offices to determine impacts including, but not limited to, TOPS, financial aid, scholarships, and any other eligibilities.
- All communication from students must originate from their SU email account.

### **Incomplete Grade(s)**

- Adjustments have been made to the Incomplete (I) grade policies. Deadlines for removing an Incomplete grade (I) have been extended. Students receiving an "I" at the end of the spring 2020 semester will be given an extension until December 10th, 2020 to complete the requirements of the course and earn a letter grade. Faculty may assign "I" grades to students who are passing the course but were unable to complete course requirements due to circumstances beyond the student's control. The final decision for awarding an "I" grade rests with the faculty member.

SUBR will include a transcript note, "Semester of COVID-19" on all academic records to indicate the extraordinary circumstances of the spring 2020 semester.

### **VII. Policy History and Review**

This policy was created in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy became effective on April 8, 2020. The policy is temporary and is subject to an annual review cycle.

### **VIII. Publication of Policy**

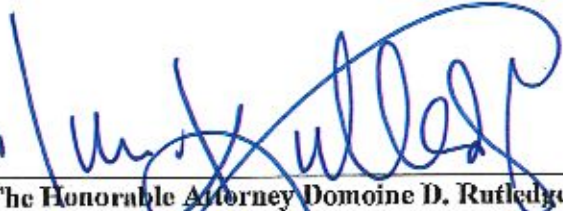
This policy is published on the Southern University System website at [www.sus.edu](http://www.sus.edu).

### **IX. Policy Approval**

This policy was approved by:

  
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Ray L. Belton, Ph.D.  
President-Chancellor - Southern University and A&M College System

April 8, 2020  
Effective Date of Policy

  
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The Honorable Attorney Domoiné D. Ruffledge  
Chairman - Southern University System Board of Supervisors

Effective Date of Policy

## APPENDIX A

### Southern University System Academic Guidelines

#### SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM COVID-19 ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

As we manage the day-to-day operations of our campuses, we acknowledge the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a significant disruption in the normal activities for our students, faculty and staff. We commend them for their successful transition to various forms of remote delivery of instruction and student support services. We are committed to ensuring that our students receive quality instruction and support as we demonstrate flexibility in our processes to meet the needs of our community of scholars. Consequently, the Southern University System has established academic guidelines that will assist the faculty and staff in making decisions that will facilitate student academic progress. These student-centered guidelines will apply to all of the institutions of the Southern University System:

1. All courses will be graded using the normal grading system. A campus policy should be established that permits a student to request a Pass/Fail (P/F) option or a withdrawal after final grades have been posted for individual and/or all courses. This policy should be developed in consultation with faculty, chairs, deans, registrar, students and other relevant administrators.
2. Withdrawal dates and the time needed to satisfy a grade of Incomplete should be extended. The maximum time the Southern University System will allow a student to satisfy a grade of Incomplete is up to the end of Spring Semester 2021. Individual campuses have the flexibility of setting shorter completion times.
3. Advisement is encouraged for all students who decide not to receive a grade through the normal grading system to understand the implications of that decision.
4. In the Southern University System, calculations of Pass/Fail (P/F) will not be used in determining scholarship eligibility.
5. Any Pass/Fail (P/F) grades earned during the COVID-19 pandemic should be noted on the student's transcript through an approach that is uniform.
6. All campuses should establish guidelines for withdrawals, incomplete and pass/fail within the parameters of the Southern University System Guidelines.
7. Each campus will establish a communications model that will provide guidance to students as they consider these options. Campus policies will be published no later than April 8, 2020.

Effective Date: April 3, 2020