

Faculty Senate Meeting

April 2, 2020

Zoom Meeting

<https://umsystem.zoom.us/j/371250827>

Meeting ID: 371 250 827

Agenda

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
K. Homan, Secretary

Agenda

II. Report of Standing Committees

A. Academic Freedom and Standards

K. Kosbar

SP20 Grading

2 April 2020

K. Kosbar

Chair, Academic Freedom & Standards
Committee

Unexpected Events

- > UM System transitions all courses to the on-line mode in mid-March, with little prior notice due to health emergency
- > Some students now work in challenging conditions
- > Some courses and instructors more easily adapt to on-line instruction than others
- > Raises questions about the appropriateness of applying the original grading scale in some cases
- > Many universities have adopted alternative grading policies for spring 2020

Other Schools

- > Anything goes. 150+ examples listed at <http://oudigitools.blogspot.com/2020/03/feedback-alternate-grading-in-crisis.html>
- > Some have no change, or have not decided yet
- > Some are forcing all classes to be pass/fail
- > Some allow students to change to pass/fail, provided they select before final exams
- > Some allow students to change to pass/fail after final grades have been posted
- > Some are creating new types of grades, such as a passing grade indicating C or better work, but not used in GPA calculations
- > Some require special justifications listed on transcripts

UM System

> Mizzou

- Allowing any/all course to be switched to S/U grading
- Students are allowed to change to S/U through 6/5/20
- S = C- or higher (at S&T, S = D or higher)

> UMSL

- Allow any/all courses to be changed to S/U grading
- Student must decide by 4/30/20
- S = C- or higher

> UMKC

- To be announced
- Allow students to change one (?) course to CR/NC
- Must decide before final exam (?)
- Extend drop deadline
- CR = C- or higher

Boundary Conditions

- > A change is coming soon, with or without FS approval
- > Increase faculty buy-in by having FS decide
- > When possible, allow faculty to notify students that their work is in the A, B, C, D or F grade range
- > Offer students an opportunity to remove some of their SP20 grades from GPA calculations
- > Honor commitment that all students are allowed to use ABCDF scale (and use grades in GPA)
- > Allow instructors and departments to continue to apply C-or-higher prerequisite and graduation rules
- > Honor commitment that S grades requested at start of semester indicate D or higher work

Boundary Conditions

- > Honor rules prohibiting capricious grading
- > Use algorithm which can be quickly implemented in inflexible academic accounting software system
- > Avoid increasing student stress
- > Avoid creating ill will with students, where they see harm being caused by a poor/unlucky choice of grading scales
- > Allow students with non-academic constraints the ability to keep a D grade without other penalties
- > Avoid unreasonably heavy advising loads
- > Avoid a large number of department changes to prerequisite or graduation requirements
- > Keep solution simple to summarize

AF&S Solution – In a Nutshell

- > All F grades will be replaced by U grades
- > Instructors will assign ABCD grades as normal
- > Students can request any, or all, of their classes be changed to S/U grading through 6/5/20
- > Students can wait to see their instructor-assigned ABCDU grade before deciding to switch to S/U
- > Students who request S/U grading between 4/1/20 and 6/5/20 will have D grades converted to U, and ABC grades converted to S
- > Special rule for SP20 “S” grades – they will be honored as a C-or-better grade for all prerequisites, and graduation requirements
- > As usual, S/U grades have no impact on GPA

Replacing F grades with U grades

- > No F grades will be awarded for SP20
- > Instructors in all classes will have the option of awarding students the grade of U, even if they signed up for the ABCDF grade scale
- > No need for student or advisor action
- > Both F and U are considered failing grades
- > No credit awarded toward graduation for F or U
- > Neither satisfies prerequisite requirements
- > Allows instructors to clearly communicate to students they have failed to meet minimum standards
- > F grades impacts student GPA, U grades do not

Changing to S/U Grade Scale

- > Allow students to change to S/U grading through 6/5/20
- > May select to change none, some, or all courses to S/U
- > Students will be able to see their instructor-assigned ABCDU grade before making this decision
- > Students should be encouraged to consult with their academic advisors, but advisor approval not required
- > Reduces stress on students, compared to some plans, because there is no need for them to gamble on how well they will do under the ABCDU vs. SU system

Changing to S/U Grade Scale

- > April, May or June changes to S/U will result in
 - D converted to U
 - A, B, C converted to S
- > Instructors can only assign S grades to students who selected S/U at start of semester. These students should still see ABCD work converted to S, and only F work converted to U.
- > Tried to fix this problem with a C-or-higher passing grade (proposed CV grade), but ran into implementation problems.
- > Tried to fix by selectively removing some grades from GPA calculation, also ran into implementation problems

Why Have the Deadline After End of Semester?

- > Some students will want to keep a D grade, so they obtain credit for passing the class for non-academic reasons (financial aid, athletic eligibility, etc.)
- > These same students may prefer C grades be converted to S
- > Asking these students to select S/U before they know their instructor-assigned ABCDU grade places them in a difficult situation
- > The proposed policy also avoids asking instructors to use differing standards for the S grade. The only S grades the instructor assigns is for ABCD work, to students who picked S/U grading in January

Changes to Deadlines

- ~~2/3/20, Last day to change grading scale~~
- > 2/17/20, Last day for 50% refund of tuition
- > 3/2/20, Last day to drop without WD
- ~~3/16/20, Last day for 25% refund of tuition~~
- > 3/16/20, University moves to all-online courses
- > 4/10/20, Last day for 25% refund of tuition (NEW)
- > 4/17/20, Last day to drop with W/D grade
- > 5/8/20, Last day of lectures
- > 5/15/20, Last day of final exams

Changes to Deadlines

- ~~5/19/20, Last day for instructors to submit grades~~
- > 5/22/20, Last day for instructors to submit grades (NEW)
- ~~5/22/20, First day students can view grades in JoeSS~~
- > 5/27/20, First day students can view grades in JoeSS (NEW)
- > 6/5/20, Last day to change to S/U scale (NEW)

C or Higher

- > “S” grades normally not honored as equivalent to a C or higher
- > For the policy to be effective, the Registrar, Academic Departments, and Instructors must apply a special rule to SP20 “S” grades - honoring them where a grade of C or higher is normally required

30 Day Rule

- > Faculty Senate decisions normally take effect after 30 days
- > A 4/5 vote can make a decision applicable immediately

Detailed Motion

- > Detailed motion on following slides
- > Amendments 17, 18, 19 recently added
 - Academic probation and deficiency not enforced SP20
 - Last date of academic participation for D grades converted to U
 - Honor Roll for SP20

Academic Freedom and Standards Motion (page 1 of 5)

The unanticipated change to providing all courses on-line for spring semester 2020 may be causing difficulties for some students and instructors. To allow instructors to continue to encourage and recognize achievement, while recognizing the unexpected burden placed on students, the S&T Academic Freedom and Standards Committee recommends the S&T Faculty Senate change the grading system for spring semester 2020 as outlined below.

1. Instructors will grade students on an ABCDU grading scale, rather than the conventional ABCDF scale. The only difference between the scales, is that F level work will now be indicated with a U grade.
2. Student who initially selected the ABCDF grading scale may elect to change it to the S/U grading scale at any time through close of business on Friday, June 5th. Students will be able to view their instructor-assigned grade, now listed on the ABCDU scale, no later than Wednesday, May 27.
3. Students will be allowed to select their grading scale on a class-by-class basis. They may select S/U grades for some of their classes, while keeping others on the more conventional ABCDU scale.

Academic Freedom and Standards Motion (page 2 of 5)

4. Students who elected to change grading options in a class from ABCDU to S/U in April, May or June will have an instructor-assigned A, B or C grade replaced by an S grade. These students will have instructor-assigned D grade replaced by a U grade.
5. The Faculty Senate instructs the Registrar, all academic departments, and all instructors to accept spring semester 2020 "S" grades as satisfying all graduation and prerequisite requirements which are normally satisfied by a grade of C or higher. All spring semester 2020 A, B, C, D and U grades should be treated in the same manner as they are every other semester.
6. Note that a "U" grade will not be considered a passing grade, even if the instructor initially assigned a grade of "D".
7. "S" and "U" grades will continue to have no impact on a student's GPA calculations.
8. These changes in the grading policy are only for spring semester 2020, with every expectation of a return to the conventional grading scales and deadlines for summer 2020 and future semesters.

Academic Freedom and Standards Motion (page 3 of 5)

9. Students may unilaterally select the S/U grade, and do not require the approval of their academic advisor or instructor. However, this decision may have significant and unexpected consequences. The Faculty Senate strongly encourages students to discuss this decision with their academic advisor, and advisors in other areas such as financial aid, veteran's affairs, international studies and immigration, athletics, ROTC, taxation, and others.
10. The deadline for instructors to submit grades to the Registrar's office is changed from Tuesday, May 19 to Friday, May 22. Grades will be visible to students in the JoeSS system no later than Wednesday, May 27.
11. Instructors will not know at the time they assign semester grades, if a student has elected to change to the S/U scale in April, May or June (but obviously knows if a student selected the S/U scale back at the start of spring semester 2020).
12. Any course in which a student received an S/U grade for spring semester 2020 may be repeated in future semesters.

Academic Freedom and Standards Motion (page 4 of 5)

13. Student Academic Regulation II.G.1 will not be enforced for spring semester 2020 coursework. This regulation normally limits students to one pass/fail course per semester, and no more than 20% of their credit hours toward graduation as pass/fail classes.
14. Student Academic Regulation II.G.2 will not be enforced for spring semester 2020. This regulation normally prohibits a student from taking most of their required courses with the pass/fail option.
15. Student Academic Regulation II.G.10 will be modified for spring semester 2020. Students who change to the pass/fail grading scale after the month of March will have "D" work recorded as "U", while students who selected the pass/fail option before the month of March will have "D" work recorded as "S". All other parts of this regulation remain the same.
16. Student Academic Regulation II.G.11 will not be enforced for spring semester 2020. This regulation normally prohibits a student from changing grading options after the second week of the semester.

Academic Freedom and Standards Motion (page 5 of 5)

17. Students will not be placed on scholastic probation or scholastic deficiency based on their spring semester 2020 grades. Scholastic probation and deficiency are defined in section IX of the Student Academic Regulations.

18. The university has an obligation to document the last date of academic activity for students who receive a grade of "U", but not for students who earn grades of A, B, C, D or S. If an instructor initially assigns a student a grade of "D", and the student elects to change it to a grade of "U", the last date academic activity will be assumed to be May 15, 2020, unless the instructor indicates otherwise.

19. Students who wish to be considered for the spring 2020 S&T Semester Honor Roll, as defined in section VIII.E of the Student Academic Regulations, will need to complete 12 or more semester hours of work using the ABCDU grading scale.

(End of motion)

Agenda

III. Adjourn