



***Academic Affairs Grading Policy
Response to COVID-19
Spring 2020***

In response to the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing in all aspects of life, Northwestern State University has already modified delivery of course instruction by converting to the inclusive online environment for the remainder of Spring semester, 2020. In addition, the University will modify its Academic Affairs Grading Policy for Spring 2020 by utilizing creative strategies which support student success and maintain academic rigor. It is the intent of the University to support its students in as many ways as possible to ensure successful completion of the academic semester. We wish to remain flexible and responsive to student issues and hardships that have arisen as a result of COVID-19. **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 6, 2020, by 4 pm.**

Students will work in tandem with their Academic Advisor, Director or Department Head, and Academic Dean to determine which policy is best. The policies can be divided into three categories based on the timeframe in which the decision must be made. **This policy does not affect A-term grades as the A-term was finished prior to the university's move to the online environment.**

Prior to the Last Day of Classes

In the event that a student was passing a course at midterm (March 9, 2020) but, due to COVID-19 causing inadequate access or disruption to services related to any technologies needed for successfully completing courses, a student may request a grade of 'I' (incomplete). In the event a student wishes to receive the grade of 'I', they must conference with their instructor(s) via e-mail or teleconference. The instructor must verify that the student was passing the course at midterm, and the grade of 'I' will be given at the discretion of the instructor. A timeline for completion of the course must be agreed upon between the instructor and student.

- **The deadline to request a grade of 'I' will be May 1, 2020 (prior to final examinations).**
- The final date for completion of coursework to remove the 'I' will be **September 9, 2020**, 120 days beyond the last day of the semester. **If coursework is not completed by that time, the grade automatically converts to an F.**

After Final Grades Have Been Posted:

Final grades for all courses are due on May 11, 2020. The last date to withdraw from a class with a grade of 'W' **will be extended to May 25, 2020**. This allows students 2 weeks to review their final grades, make informed decisions about their academic records, and indicate how they wish to proceed. 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.



NORTHWESTERN STATE

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- A student may elect to withdraw from a course (or courses) with the grade of ‘W’. If this option is exercised, the student will need to complete the ‘**COVID-19 Electronic Request to Drop**’ form, and submit, from their NSU student email account, to: registrar@nsula.edu. The Registrar’s Office will route it to the appropriate Academic Advisor, Director or Department Head, and Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will route the completed form back to the Registrar’s Office. At each checkpoint along the way, the student will be advised 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 25, 2020.**
- **Students who are enrolled in Undergraduate or Graduate Nursing and Allied Health Courses** must have a grade posted by May 11, 2020, to be considered for progression to summer clinical/didactic courses. All clinical nursing students should be advised by course faculty and, if needed, the program director prior to withdrawing from the course. A record of academic advising will be placed in the nursing or allied health student academic file.

Pass/Fail Option

Students who want to convert a grade earned in a course to a **Pass/Fail** will need to complete an **Electronic Request to Receive a Pass/Fail Grade Form** and submit, from their NSU student email account, to: registrar@nsula.edu. The Registrar’s Office will route it to the appropriate Academic Advisor, Director or Department Head, and Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will route the completed form back to the Registrar’s Office. The **Pass** grade is reserved for final grades of A, B, or C for undergraduate courses, and final grades of A or B for graduate courses. The **Fail** grade is reserved for final grades of D or F for undergraduate courses and final grades of C, D, or F for graduate courses.

The **Request to Receive a Pass/Fail** will be reviewed and considered by the ‘Registration, Credits, and Graduation Council (RCGC), which is the policy-making body for the conduct of academic studies at Northwestern State University.

- **The deadline for submission of this form to the Registrar’s Office is May 25, 2020.**

*In all instances, students must contact their Academic Advisor, Director or Department Head, and Academic Dean to determine how decisions will affect their continued academic progress related to pre-requisites, co-requisites, and clinical/didactic enrollment for future semesters, as well as professional programs, and other eligibilities.

*Students will also work in tandem 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 NSU email account.

*The above policies are for the **Spring 2020 semester only**.

April 3, 2020; revised April 16, 2020