COVID-19 Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) Interim Graduate Grading Policy for Graduate Courses

Version 2: In effect starting Summer 2020

**Rationale:** This policy is intended to assist graduate programs in determining how to meet existing Graduate School policies during the University’s COVID-19 response. The Coronavirus pandemic has led the university to shift to remote learning, a modality that is new for many faculty and students. These uncharted learning conditions, coupled with the current social and economic instability our students are currently experiencing, will create challenging quarters. Out of an abundance of care, a final recommendation from the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) is for faculty to consider these exogenous factors when designing courses, assignments, and other methods of assessment to ameliorate student anxiety and encourage a focus on learning.

This interim policy does not apply to 690 Thesis and 691 Field Project credits and these courses will remain A-F graded. This interim policy does not apply to S/U courses and they will remain S/U graded. This interim policy does not apply to noncredit bearing program-specific graduation requirements.

To best guide graduate programs, the existing Graduate School policies are identified, and interim policies are described if relevant. This Interim Policy was unanimously approved by the GFCC on 5/19/2020.

**Scholarship Standards**

**Current Policy:**
Pass/No Pass grades are not applicable toward a graduate degree.

**Interim Policy:**
This policy is waived if all other relevant policies in this document are met.

Faculty will maintain rank grading (A-F) records during the quarter, with the default reporting of grades to continue as A-F for graded courses. Students have the right to convert to a P/NP grade, rather than their letter grade, in any graduate course except those specifically excluded in this interim policy. To receive a P/NP, a student must initiate this grade change prior to the last two weeks of the quarter during the regular academic year and prior to the last week of the course during summer quarters. The procedure to select the P/NP grade option needs to be included in either the syllabus or within the Canvas site. Students may be advised against requesting P/NP for reasons such as program-specific requirements or if they need to increase their GPA to 3.0 for graduation. Consultation with an advisor is recommended.

For the quarter when P/NP interim grading policies are in effect, all grades of C- and above will receive a P if the student selects the P/NP option. If the student selects the P/NP option, a grade below C- will be recorded as an NP, which will not carry credit towards curricular, major, continuation, and graduation requirements or be reflected in the GPA. Programs can use their
discretion and choose a minimum grade higher than a C- for a P if this is communicated to students no later than the day the course commences.

A grade of P received when P/NP interim grading policies are in effect will carry credit towards curricular, major, continuation, and graduation requirements, but will not be reflected in the GPA. However, students will be held to the 3.0 GPA requirement for graduation with the GPA calculated based on any rank graded courses received while the student was a graduate student.

The number of credits with a P grade that will count towards the degree is limited to a maximum of 6. Under special circumstances, a student can petition the Graduate School to count additional P graded credits towards the degree. This limit on the number of P credits that count towards the degree is in effect starting summer 2020 term; all P grades received during the spring 2020 term will count towards the degree.

Faculty have control over their curricular decisions and may elect to have different assignments required for P/NP or A-F grading, but the distinction must be made clear to students the day the course commences and must allow for students to make the choice of grading options prior to the last two weeks of the quarter in the regular academic year and prior to the last week of a summer quarter.

**Current Policy:**
To remain a candidate for the degree, a student must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in courses listed on the plan of study.

**Interim Policy:**
No change to current policy. P grades will not be calculated in the GPA.

**Current Policy:**
A maximum of 10 credits of C grades (C+, C, C-) is allowed towards completion of a graduate program.

**Interim Policy:**
No change to current policy; however, P grades will not be calculated into the maximum number of C grades allowed in current policy.

**Current Policy:**
Courses in which a D+ or lower is earned may not be applied towards completion of a graduate program.

**Interim Policy:**
No change to current policy; however, credits from a course where an NP grade was received will not be applied towards completion of a graduate program.
Current Policy:
There are certain courses that must be passed with a grade of B or better; program descriptions note such requirements.
Interim Policy:
No change to current policy; however, programs can decide to revise or waive this program-specific requirement while this policy is in effect and communicate this to students no later than one week before the start of the term.

Current Policy:
An incomplete (K) grade may be assigned in accordance with the regulations outlined in the Academic Policies section of this catalog.
Interim Policy:
No change to current policy.

Awarding of the Master’s Degree
Current Policy:
A student must be enrolled for at least two regular credits or GRAD 699 during the quarter in which the degree is awarded.
Interim Policy:
No change to current policy.

Continuous Enrollment Policy
Current Policy
Interim Policy:
No change to current policy.

Terms of this Interim Policy
This interim policy is in effect for the entirety of quarters in which P/NP WWU undergraduate interim grading policies are in effect.