

Policy on Pass/No Credit Being Considered by the University

William Paterson University

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William Paterson University's [grading policy](#) has a Pass/Fail option that students must select within a few days of the start of a term. During the Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 semesters, due to the pandemic, William Paterson, like many universities, deployed a Pass/No Credit option that permitted students instead to convert one or more of their course grades at the end of the term to a P/NC grade.¹

The University is considering the integration beginning Fall 2022 of a standing P/NC option for first year students. This policy would only apply to students within their first 30 institutional or transfer credits and be limited to 2 courses/semester for up to two semesters in non-major courses. It would permit students to select the P/NC option for a course up to one week after the submission deadline for final course grades. Additionally, failure of a course within the first 30 credits would automatically be converted to a no-credit grade ("NC").

The intent of such a policy would be to provide students a means to mitigate against poor performance, to avoid having to withdraw if they have a chance to complete a course, or to drop a grade sufficiently harmful to cause them to be on probation or dismissed or to lose their aid due to failure to make sufficient academic progress (SAP). It would formally recognize that new undergraduate students often struggle with the adjustment to college.

A P/NC policy, however, should be carefully designed to ensure that it achieves the desired goal of providing a reasonable counter to poor performance impacting long-term success while also ensuring that student motivational effort in a course is not undermined.

The University seeks recommendations on such a policy, its proposed elements, and other issues/considerations surfaced through discussion. Whatever is adopted will also need to be in compliance with financial aid regulations.

Recommendations to the Provost are requested by April 1.

Note:

Such a policy would not change related policies regarding recognition of strong performance, such as the Dean's List policy or the Latin Honors policy, which stipulate that consideration of GPA excludes earned credits with grade of "P":

Deans' List: Students carrying a minimum of 12 credits who earn a grade point average of 3.45 or better are named to the Dean's List after the completion of the Fall or Spring semester. *Courses taken under the pass/fail option are not counted toward the 12 credit requirement.*

Graduation Latin Honors Students who have completed at least 45 credits—*not including credits earned with pass/fail grades*—at William Paterson University and who graduate with a final grade point average of 3.45 or better for all undergraduate courses are recognized as honor students.

¹ The nuance of how P/NC was deployed varied between the three semesters it was utilized.