

William Paterson University
Office of the Provost
Pass/No Credit and Withdrawal Policy Option (Spring 2020)

Frequently Asked Questions

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU DECIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is the new Pass/No Credit grading option?

For all students, undergraduate and graduate, you may choose to have a course graded Pass/No Credit through Monday, June 1, 2020. This option is only available for the Spring 2020 semester because of the global pandemic crisis.

Students need to notify the Registrar's Office if they desire the Pass/No Credit option for one or more courses. The form will be available starting May 1 on WP Connect.

Faculty are required to issue letter grades for all students; a grade will only be changed to Pass/No Credit if the students submits a request.

When should I decide about the Pass/No Credit Grading Option?

The decision should be an informed one made between May 1 and June 1. We are not making the option available until May 1st so that you have time to consult with your academic advisor and/or financial aid counselor to ensure you understand all of the academic and financial ramifications before you make your decision.

Grades will be posted by May 25, and many grades will be posted prior to that. Therefore, you may wait until you see your letter grade(s) before deciding.

Who can help me determine if I should choose the Pass/No Credit Option?

You should speak with your faculty advisor, program coordinator, department chair, or staff in Academic Advising to help you determine if the Pass/No Credit option is right for one, some, or all of your courses. The Financial Aid Office can help you determine the impact on your financial aid.

Do I need to convert all my courses to Pass/No Credit or can I choose one?

You can choose which courses to convert on a case-by-case basis, and we encourage students to consider each course individually. You could convert all of them, none of them, or any number in between.

How do I notify the university when I decide to take the Pass/No Credit option?

Students will fill out an online form on the Registrar's website that will allow them to designate which course(s) they wish to be graded Pass/No Credit. The form will be made available beginning May 1st and will be available until June 1, 2020.

Will courses I choose to take as Pass/No credit still count towards my major?

For most majors, the answer is yes. Program restrictions on the allowable number of Pass/No Credit courses are waived for this term, including any minimum grades required. In other words, you will be allowed to take required courses as Pass/No Credit this semester, and these courses will still count toward your UCCs, majors, minors, and concentrations/tracks.

Please Note: The accredited programs of Nursing and Athletic Training may still use your earned letter grade to determine progression, probation and dismissal actions. Speak to your advisor or chair if you are in one of these majors.

Does this apply to this semester's study abroad grades? How can I submit my request?

Yes, this policy does extend to students' grades from abroad. You should submit an online form on the Registrar's website designating which course(s) taken abroad you wish to be graded Pass/No Credit. The form will be available May 1 to June 1, 2020.

If I choose the Pass/No Credit option now, can I switch back to the letter grade option before the end of the semester?

If you choose to convert to the Pass/No Credit option and submit the online application, that is final. Please speak with your advisor, program coordinator, or department chair before submitting the request.

Can I choose the Pass/No Credit option after my grades are released?

Yes. The last day to choose the Pass/No credit option is 11:59 pm on June 1, 2020; grades are viewable once they are submitted by faculty. The deadline for faculty grade submissions is May 25th and many submit prior to that date.

How is the Pass/No Credit calculated into my GPA?

The "P" grade does not contribute to your GPA. If you earn a low grade in a course, switching this to a "P" or "Pass" will remove that grade from your GPA. If you earn an F in a course, that counts as 0.0 and it will lower your GPA. If you switch that course to "No Credit" the grade will not be counted in the GPA. Consistent with our current practice, faculty will still be required to enter all letter grades. The grade will be converted to "P" or "No Credit" as follows: A grade of D or better is required for a Pass in all undergraduate courses. A grade of C- or better is required for a Pass in all graduate courses.

If I choose the Pass/No Credit option for a course, does this mean I will automatically pass the course now?

No. The course will still be graded based on work you do through the end of the semester. If you earn an F in the course, it will be converted to “No Credit” if you choose this option. Even if you choose this option, you should still work to achieve the highest grade you can.

If I choose the Pass/No Credit option for my course(s), will this adversely affect my application for graduate school, internships, etc.?

We are in an unprecedented time and certainly employers, organizations, graduate schools, and internship sites will be very aware of the challenges we are currently facing. Like William Paterson, they too will adjust and are likely to be flexible and accommodating. However, some employers, organizations, and graduate schools may require letter grades for coursework, and thus may not view Pass/No Credit graded courses as highly as graded courses.

How does the Pass/No Credit option impact the Dean’s List?

For undergraduates, the Dean’s List criteria remain in effect, namely, to achieve a place on the Dean’s List, students must take a minimum of 12 graded credits and earn a 3.45 GPA or higher. Only courses with a letter grade will be considered.

If I am already enrolled in a Pass/Fail course, can I still choose the Pass/No Credit option?

Yes, you can, but you must choose that option by 11:59 p.m. on June 1.

SATISFYING REQUIREMENTS AND PREREQUISITES

Will a Pass in a course count toward the degree credits I need to graduate?

If the course regularly confers degree credit, then a grade of Pass will also confer degree credit.

Will a Pass in a course count toward completing the University Core Curriculum (UCC)?

Yes. Since a grade of D is passing for UCC courses, any Pass grade issued for a UCC course this semester will also count.

If I fail a pre-requisite course, and choose the No Credit option, what happens?

If you fail a pre-requisite course, you will not receive credit for that course and therefore must repeat the course before progressing to the next course in the sequence.

What if I am repeating a course in which I previously got a D or F?

You may convert a course to Pass/No Credit even if you are using it for a course you are repeating. For students who elect to switch to Pass/No Credit in a course that they are repeating to replace a previously earned D or F, the original D or F will be removed from your GPA calculation and, as with all Pass/No Credit grades, the Pass or No Credit will not impact your GPA.

How does the Pass/No Credit affect me as a graduating senior?

If you are a graduating senior and you need to raise your cumulative or major GPA above 2.0 to graduate, using the Pass/No credit option for all courses will not help you achieve this. You should discuss your situation with your academic advisor or chair and select the courses you choose for Pass/No Credit carefully so that you can boost your GPA. This is a case where waiting until you know your grades before choosing this option is advisable.

Should I tell my professor that I am requesting a Pass/No Credit for their course?

You do not have to discuss the Pass/No Credit grade conversion with your professors. This is a confidential option. Faculty will issue regular letter grades for all students in all courses. The university registrar will convert letter grades to Pass/No Credit on the transcripts of students who have requested the conversion.

How does the Pass/No Credit affect grades of Incomplete for the semester?

If you and your faculty have agreed on a grade of Incomplete, you may decide whether to select the Pass/No Credit option for the course and file the appropriate online form by 11:59 pm on June 1. If you have questions about Pass/No Credit after the June 1 deadline, or need to communicate an extenuating circumstance, please consult with the Associate Dean in your college.

What should I do if I have questions about the Pass/No Credit option after June 1?

If you have questions about Pass/No Credit after the June 1 deadline, or need to communicate an extenuating circumstance, please consult with the Associate Dean in your college.

SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL AID, AND ACADEMIC STANDING ISSUES

How will the Pass/No Credit option impact financial aid?

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is a requirement for all students receiving Federal, State, and/or University assistance while enrolled at William Paterson University. Opting for Pass/No Credit grades may impact your Financial Aid SAP standing with the University.

Things to Consider:

1. If you are on SAP probation because your GPA is under 2.0, P grades will not help you raise your GPA.
2. Every passing grade that is not recorded as a letter grade could hurt your ability to achieve the required 2.0 GPA; and
3. P grades will count as attempted credits completed and therefore contribute toward achieving SAP. No Credit grades will NOT count as attempted and completed, and therefore will NOT contribute towards achieving SAP.

If you are on financial aid, and especially if you are on SAP probation, you should speak with your academic advisor or department chair, and the Office of Financial Aid, prior to opting for a Pass/No Credit grade in a course so you can make an informed decision.

How will the Pass/No Credit option impact my scholarship eligibility?

Students who have been awarded Merit Scholarships are normally required to maintain a minimum of a 3.0 GPA. For the Spring 2020 semester, we are suspending that requirement. As long as students are in good academic standing, they will retain their merit scholarships for the Fall 2020 semester.

For more guidance on specific scholarship requirements, please contact the appropriate scholarship coordinator or the Office of Student Enrollment Services at studentservices@wpunj.edu.

How will the Pass/No Credit option versus withdrawing from a course impact financial aid?

If you withdraw from courses, you will not earn credit for them. Therefore, they will not contribute towards your achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for financial aid. Many students withdraw because they do not want an F grade to lower their GPA. The Pass/No Credit option lets you see your grade before making that decision. However, financial aid rules can be complex so students are strongly encouraged to address any questions they have with the Office of Student Enrollment Services at studentservices@wpunj.edu.

What happens if I am following an Academic Plan for Financial Aid Standards of Academic Progress and want Pass/No Credit grades, but need letter grades to raise my GPA?

With the Pass/No Credit option, you may be able to raise your GPA by choosing carefully which grades you keep, and which grades you convert to Pass/No Credit. However, implications for financial aid can be complex and students are strongly encouraged to address any questions they have with the Office of Student Enrollment Services at studentservices@wpunj.edu.

What if I need to raise my GPA for Academic Standing purposes, but I want Pass/No Credit grades?

You should discuss the impact of your grades and the Pass/No Credit option policy on your academic standing with your academic advisor, program coordinator, or department chair prior to choosing the Pass/No Credit option. Each situation is unique, and your advisor will be able to help you understand the potential impact on your academic status.

MILITARY-AFFILIATED STUDENTS

How will selecting a Pass/No Credit option affect my Post 9/11 G.I. Bill benefits?

The selection of a Pass/No Credit option is considered a grade; therefore, the university is not required to report it to Veterans Affairs. These options won't affect your Post 9/11 G.I. Bill benefits.

Which policy do I choose (the Pass/No Credit or the Military Leave Policy) if I am called into active military service in support of the state's response efforts to mitigate the spread & impact of COVID-19?

Students on active duty have options during their time of service regarding his/her courses. You may decide to use either the Pass/No Credit option or the Military Leave Policy option.

Military Leave Policy may be found here: <https://www.wpunj.edu/veterans/military-leave-policy-student-bill-of-rights/>

If you are activated during the COVID 19 pandemic, and plan to use the Military Leave Policy, please e-mail your orders to the Coordinator of the OVMA, Silvia Barrera, at: barreras1@wpunj.edu to assist you in the compliance of Military Leave Policy with your professors.

I am an International Student. Will Pass/No Credit grades impact my visa status?

Any questions or concerns you may have should be directed to [The Office of International Students and Scholars](#).

Will a Pass/No Credit impact my ability to graduate with Honors?

Courses with a Pass/No Credit grade are not calculated as part of your GPA. In other words, Pass/No Credit grades will not raise or lower your term or cumulative GPA. Generally, it is not a good idea to invoke the Pass/No Credit option for any course in which the letter grade would raise your cumulative GPA. Contact your faculty advisor about department honors. Consult this policy about academic honors: <https://academiccatalog.wpunj.edu/content.php?catoid=1&navoid=77>. Students who are members of the Honors College should contact them at: Honors@wpunj.edu.

How will the Pass/No Credit option affect my application to a Graduate or Professional School?

Students who plan to apply to a graduate or professional school should consult with the appropriate William Paterson faculty or program advisor and/or the schools you are planning to apply to before opting for the Pass/No Credit option.

What is the deadline for withdrawing from Spring, 2020 courses?

The spring 2020 deadline for withdrawing from a course **with a WD grade and no refund** has been extended from April 9th to 11:59pm on April 30th. The Pass/No Credit option may be a better alternative to withdrawal. You can wait until you see your grades before making the decision. If you do fail the course, this can be converted to a No Credit which will have no impact on your GPA in the same way as a WD will not.