

## Fall 2020 Academic Policy Changes: Expansion of S/U Grading and Late Withdrawal Options

### Academic Policy Changes:

CSU will offer Fall 2020 undergraduate students (not graduate students) the Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading option instead of a traditional grade (A-F) with decisions needed by midnight December 29<sup>th</sup>. "S" is available for letter grades of C or higher, whereas D and F grades convert to U and do not garner credit. Please keep reading for critical information on how to take advantage of these opportunities.

In addition, CSU will offer the late course withdrawal (W) option for all undergraduate and graduate students for Fall 2020.

### Why?:

This decision has been made by the Provost and Executive Vice President for the express benefit of students, and in consultation with Faculty Council, the Teaching Continuity and Recovery Team, and other members of the university community. This temporary policy is meant to address some of the challenges resulting from the ongoing pandemic.

### When:

The course withdrawal (W) option will be open until December 11th, which is the last day of class, and will not be an option thereafter, except through the longstanding course withdrawal appeal process accessible through [RamWeb](#).

**Note:** *Students in sections with multiple components (lectures, labs, recitations) will need to contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) to request a course withdrawal (W) between December 9-11.*

Students will be able to request S/U grading via RamWeb 12/23-12/29. The [Office of the Registrar](#) will be available to assist student questions after the university holiday, starting 9am (MT) December 28<sup>th</sup>.

### Frequently Asked Questions

- **When can I select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option?**
  - We want you to be able to make an informed decision. After grades are entered by instructors, we will open the link to students in RamWeb on December 23rd. This allows you to see the traditional A through F grade entered by your instructor so you can review and decide if you want to retain it. The deadline to select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option will be Tuesday, December 29th at 11:59pm in the Mountain Time Zone.
  
- **Where in RamWeb do I select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option?**

- In RamWeb, navigate to the Menu and select Records. Click on the Grades link. Select the Fall 2020 term. A button labeled “Select Course(s) for S/U” will be made available December 23rd to December 29th that will allow you to see your courses for the term and allow you to make your request for S/U grading per course.
- **Which classes should be taken S/U vs. traditional grading?**
  - S is available for letter grades of C or higher, whereas D and F grades convert to U. A grade of U does not gain credit for the course.
  - Students can choose class by class which ones will be S/U or traditional grading.
  - Students interested in increasing their GPA can choose traditional grading for courses that will do so positively while choosing S/U option for those that might negatively impact their GPA.
  - Students may not use S/U grading for any course that has a required grade as a pre-requisite for the next level of class in a program of study.
  - Students earning a “D” can consider the traditional grade if they are more interested in the passing credit rather than the impact on their GPA.
- **Which courses should not be considered for a S/U grades?**
  - Students must fully understand that competitive majors **will not** accept an S in place of a letter grade.
  - Students may not use S/U grading for any course that has a required grade as a pre-requisite for the next level of class in a program of study.
- **When will I see the new grade on my transcript if I select the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option?**
  - Please be patient as we work through requests and update your record. You may check your Unofficial Transcript in RamWeb to verify all changes have been updated.
- **My instructor has not entered my grade yet; can I still choose the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade option?**
  - Please contact your instructor regarding any missing grades. The original grade must be entered by the instructor and be present on your RamWeb Grades page before you can select if you want the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade option.
- **How can I cancel a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option?**
  - Please email the Office of the Registrar (registraroffice@colostate.edu) from your CSU email account. In the email, please include your CSUID#, and specific course(s) (Subject and Course Number) for which you wish to cancel your Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option.
- **Will I be able to change back to my letter grade if I find that S/U was not the best decision for my specific circumstance?**
  - Yes, you will need to email the Office of the Registrar (registraroffice@colostate.edu) from your CSU email account. Please be sure to include your CSUID# and the specific course(s) you would like changed to your original letter grade.

- **Are students considering graduate or professional school after graduation?**
  - Graduate / Professional school admissions requirements may require students to earn a certain grade or higher in specific classes. S/U grades may not satisfy the requirements.
  - Students should refer to those schools for guidance on specific admission requirements. Be specific about which semester you are asking about. For example, a school may accept S/U credits from the spring 2020 but not fall 2020.
  
- **Can an S/U grade be used to satisfy Repeat / Delete?**
  - Yes, an S/U grade can be used to satisfy Repeat / Delete. However, neither the old grade or the new grade will be used in the student's GPA calculation because S/U grades do not count in the GPA and the old grade is removed.
  - Students who are using Repeat / Delete to boost their GPA may want to consider the traditional grade.
  - Considerations for major entrance requirements, pre-requisites, or admission to graduate or professional school should also be made.
  
- **Can S/U grades be used for classes that only met during the first half of the semester (i.e.: 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week classes)?**
  - Yes, these courses for Fall 2020 are eligible for S/U grading
  
- **Do S/U grades impact financial aid?**
  - Satisfactory Academic Progress considerations
    - When the Office of Financial Aid evaluates [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) during the week of January 4, S/U grades will be included in that evaluation. No additional action will be required by the student for S/U grades to be included in the SAP evaluation.
    - Opting to take an S/U grade will not impact GPA and therefore will not impact the minimum cumulative GPA standard of SAP
    - U, F, and W grades are not considered passing which can affect the completion rate standard of SAP. These grades are counted as attempted but not completed credits.
    - Students can view their current SAP status, including completion rate, on the financial aid eligibility section of RamWeb.
  - Scholarship considerations
    - Academic standards for CSU scholarships are reviewed at the end of each spring semester. This means if a student opts for S/U grades for fall 2020, this does not affect disbursement of their spring 2021 scholarship. Cumulative GPA is reviewed, not semester GPA.
    - For students with scholarships external to CSU, they should contact their external scholarship to inquire about potential eligibility impact of opting into S/U grades

- Please direct students to the satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading FAQ's on the Office of Financial Aid website (<https://financialaid.colostate.edu/grading-faq/>) and they can [contact the Office of Financial Aid](#) for additional questions
  
- **I am considering transferring, should I ask for any S/U grades?**
  - Students should refer to the transfer institution. An S/U grade indicates a score of C or better in the class, but final transfer will be up to the receiving institution. Be specific about which semester you are asking about. For example, a school may accept S/U credits from the spring 2020 but not fall 2020.
  
- **I am struggling in some or all of my classes, should I take the S/U grading option?**
  - Students have until 11:59 p.m. (Mountain Time) December 29th to make this call.
  - Before December 11, students can consider course withdrawal for the classes in which they are struggling; or, university withdrawal if they are struggling in *all* their classes.
  - As with all course and university withdrawals, students should keep in mind that there may be financial implications (i.e.: no refund, drop below full-time student status, potential Financial Aid impact, etc.)
  
- **I am in the academic probation process or worried that I my grades may be below a 2.0 cumulative GPA. Should I consider the S/U option?**
  - Any traditional grades a student earns in Fall 2020 will impact their cumulative GPA which could impact their ability to raise it above 2.0 in future semesters.
    - If students are earning an A or B in a class, keeping the traditional grade may make the most sense to help improve GPA.
    - S/U grades can be chosen on a class by class basis so students are able to keep the traditional letter grades for the classes in which they are doing well and take the S/U for classes in which they are not doing as well so as not to negatively impact their GPA.
  - Academic standing will be calculated on the letter grades earned and posted that way for Fall 2020. After S/U is elected, the student's GPA will be updated and as will the academic standing for Spring 2021—please allow 5-7 business days to see the adjustment. Students can view their academic standing on RamWeb and the unofficial transcript—it does not appear on the official transcript.
  - Students should also consider credit accumulation for this semester and how that might impact their timeline (i.e.: Future grades/credit needed to return to good standing.
  - If students are concerned, advisors are available to discuss the implications of which type of grade they should take given other factors including GPA, competitive majors, transfer, etc.
  - If they are earning or have earned a C grade, students will want to consider options and take into account other grades and other implications that have cumulative GPA implications (i.e.: pre-requisites, controlled major requirements, graduate or professional school requirements, etc.)
  - Before December 11, if students are earning D or F grades, they may want consider course withdrawal or university withdrawal

- If final grades have already been submitted, they could take a U grade instead of a D or F to minimize the impact on their cumulative GPA. The deadline for requesting a change to an S/U grade is December 29th. Contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) with questions after December 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Helpful GPA tools:
  - [How a CSU GPA is calculated](#)
  - [GPA Predictor Tool](#) on RamWeb
    - *Use after Dec. 22 when all final grades have been submitted by instructors*
- **How will S/U grading impact students using the GI Bill?**
  - Students using the GI Bill should contact the Veterans Education Benefits Office at [ro\\_gi\\_bill@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:ro_gi_bill@mail.colostate.edu) to determine if there will be an associated financial impact before choosing the Unsatisfactory grade option.