

COVID-19 Spring 2020 S/F and P/F Grade Exception Policy

To address the significant learning and life challenges due to COVID-19 virus, IU South Bend is providing exceptions to the S/F and P/F grade policies, permitting all students enrolled in undergraduate courses during spring 2020 to appeal to have letter grades changed to replace letter grades with grades of S (Satisfactory) or P (pass).

Issue	Exception to Policy
S grades <sup>[1]</sup>	<p>Students have until May 29, 2020, to petition to switch any course from a letter grade of C or better to an S grade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• S grades for courses completed in spring 2020 will count for any and all degree, admissions indices, and prerequisite requirements internal to IU South Bend.</li><li>• S grades are not used in computing GPA.</li><li>• S grades do not count toward elective satisfactory/fail requirement maximums.</li><li>• A comment will be added to the transcript under any affected class reflecting changes related to the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic during spring 2020.</li></ul>
P grades <sup>[2]</sup>	<p>Students have until May 29, 2020, to petition to switch a grade of D-, D, D+ or C- (but not an F) to a P.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• P grades for courses completed in spring 2020 will NOT satisfy most degree requirements internal to IU South Bend. Grades of P will satisfy pre-requisites that require only a passing grade in the pre-requisite course.</li><li>• P grades are not used in computing GPA.</li><li>• P grades issued in spring 2020 do not count toward elective pass/fail requirement maximums.</li><li>• A comment will be added to the transcript under any affected class reflecting changes related to the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic during spring 2020.</li></ul>

[1] Post-secondary programs generally don't accept S grades. However, there are a number of schools switching to optional S/ grade systems for spring 2020. With the number of schools providing this option, it is unclear how graduate and professional schools will accept an S grade earned in spring 2020.

[2] Post-secondary programs generally don't accept P grades and are unlikely to provide an exception since a P grade is for letter grades of D- to C-.

The changes to S and P grades are student-initiated. A change to an S grade requires the approval of the student's academic advisor and the Dean's Office of the academic unit offering the course. A change to a P grade requires the approval of the student's academic advisor and the approval of Dean's Office of the academic unit of the student's major. Submission of the completed *Student S and P Grade Change Request* form, with necessary approvals, is due to the Registrar's Office by May 29, 2020.

Once the S or P grade request has been processed, it may only be changed back to a letter grade for exceptional circumstances by going through the standard student-initiated grade appeal process. Grades of S and P are not counted in computing GPAs; the grade of F is counted.

## FAQ

**1. Do I need to be a student in good standing (e.g., not on probation) to request the grade change?**

No, for spring 2020 only. P and S grades will not impact probationary status.

**2. Do a P and S grades count towards the GPA?**

They do not. Although the P and S course grades count toward the hours required for graduation, they are not included in calculating GPAs. The grade of F is included in the GPA.

**3. Do grades of P and S satisfy a general education requirement and pre-requisite requirements?**

The S grade satisfies all general education requirements and satisfies course pre-requisites. P grades are not guaranteed to count toward specified degree requirements or pre-requisites but will count toward elective credit requirement and satisfy general education requirements that don't require a C or better grade (e.g., not for ENG-W 131). If the student takes a P grade for a spring 2020 course that requires a C or better, the student will need to repeat this course in the future and will only earn the credit hours once.

**4. Are grades of S and P allowed in my major?**

For spring 2020, a grade of S will satisfy the requirements of the major. However, a grade of P is typically not allowed for core courses that count towards the major. In programs that accept a course grade of C- or better for satisfying a requirement, a grade of P may not meet threshold. You are encouraged to discuss this with the Office of the Dean of your academic program.

**5. If a D- or higher is accepted by the degree program for certain courses, how will the P grade be recognized as acceptable for that degree requirement?**

If the academic advisement report (AAR) was initially built to allow grades of D- or P to count as satisfying a requirement, no updates are necessary as the grade will automatically apply. If D- grades were allowable, but P grades were excluded in the AAR, the department will need to apply an exception to satisfy the requirement.

**6. Will S and P grades count for admission to other IU South Bend programs?**

The S grade will count for admission to other IU South Bend for courses completed in Spring 2020 only. For some students, it will be advantageous to have a letter grade to meet the GPA requirements to enter a program. The P grade doesn't meet requirements for other programs.

**7. How will an S or P grade affect Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and other financial aid awards?**

IU South Bend SAP rules require students to maintain a 2.0 program GPA, successfully complete at least two-thirds of attempted coursework and complete planned degree program within 150% of program length.

- S or P grades do not carry GPA value so will have no effect on the requirement to maintain a 2.0 program GPA
- S or P grades are considered successful completion, so will increase credit completion rate

- S or P grades result in earned credit hours and apply toward maximum timeframe program length

The Office of Financial Aid also approves SAP appeals on “contract” with students, expecting them to successfully complete all courses and/or graduate as planned. In their review of Spring 2020 SAP contracts, the Office of Financial Aid will provide latitude and/or appeal options to students that have had academic progress negatively impacted by the coronavirus crisis.

**8. What is the impact of S and P grades on IU merit scholarships that have GPA minimums?**

S and P grades do not carry GPA value so should not have an impact on merit scholarship renewal. S and P grades do result in earned credit hours, which is considered for merit scholarship renewal.

**9. Will an S or P grade count toward 21<sup>st</sup> Century (21C) scholarship credit hour requirements?**

Yes, S and P grades still result in a student earning credit hours for a course and will count toward the annual credit totals required to maintain 21C scholarship. Note that ICHE has provided some COVID-19 related relief: “the Commission will waive up to 15 credit hours for students who use either the 21st Century Scholarship, Frank O’Bannon Grant, or Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship during Spring 2020. These waived hours will be added to the Credit Bank once Spring 2020 credit completion data is reported. Students will not need to submit an appeal to receive the waived hours.”

**10. What is the impact of S and P grades on any external scholarships (outside of IU)?**

Students will need to contact any external donor or scholarship provider directly to determine the impact of S and P grades.

**11. How will an S or P grade affect a veteran student who is using the GI Bill™ and Federal Tuition Assistance?**

If a student is receiving the GI Bill™ or Federal Tuition Assistance, receiving an S grade does not negatively affect benefits because it will apply towards that particular course in the degree program. However, receiving a P (Passing) grade could translate to a student being required to return money to the Veterans Administration or Department of Defense. A student asking about having their grade changed to a P is to be referred to the Office for Veterans Affairs for guidance. The Office for Veterans Affairs will send a note to the advisor, who will add a note to the advising system (AdRx) certifying the approval.

**12. Will an S and P grade count towards the maximum elective satisfactory/fail and pass/fail classes that can be taken?**

No; grades of S and P earned in Spring 2020 will not impact the limits for the number of courses that can be taken as satisfactory/fail and pass/fail.

**13. Will graduate and professional schools accept an S and P grade as part of their admissions?**

Post-secondary institutions generally don’t accept S and P grades. However, there are a number of schools switching to optional S/F and P/F grade systems for Spring 2020. With the number of schools providing this option, it is unclear how professional schools will accept S and P grades earned in Spring 2020.

**14. Can P and S grades be changed to a W (Withdrawal)**

Grades, including S and P, can be converted to a W (withdrawal) following the normal student initiated grade appeal policy and procedure.

**15. Will S and P grades impact my eligibility for the Dean's list?**

S and P grades don't count toward the GPA or required credit hours for the Dean's list. If there is a minimum number of required hours of grades it may negatively impact eligibility for the Dean's list.

**16. Is an Incomplete (I) grade still an option?**

Yes it is. If the instructor and student are able to work out an arrangement where the student has the opportunity to end up with a reasonable earned grade, that is a viable option and good use of the existing Incomplete grade policy.

**17. Will S & P grades impact transfer between IU campuses?**

All IU campuses are providing some version of an S exception. IUPUI and the regional campuses are following the same process and providing an exception for both S and P grades. IU Bloomington is following a different process for S grades only. In any case, S grades in Spring 2020 should be considered as satisfactory across all IU campuses. If a P grade has been satisfactory for a particular degree program that would remain the same.