

From: Matthew Cotter <Matthew.Cotter@cuny.edu>  
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 11:52 AM  
Subject: On Behalf of UFS Chair Martin Burke

Dear colleagues,

Good morning. At the request of UFS Chair and FGL Martin Burke, I forward you the below. Please share with your respective governance bodies.

With thanks,

Matthew  
Dear All:

As I mentioned in the course of the 12/4/20 meeting of the Council of Faculty Governance Leaders, the Chancellery has just issued a "Guidance" regarding a Flexible Grade Policy for the Fall 2020 term. The text of the e-mail from the Office of Academic Affairs to the presidents is below. A copy of the "attestation form" mentioned in the first paragraph will be sent once available. Ditto for any "additional information."

Please note that discussions with shared governance bodies are referred to in that first paragraph. Please bring this late-in-the-term change in policy to the attention of your colleagues, and please take any/all steps to ensure that the relevant parties/bodies (e.g. chairs, curriculum committees, college councils) are involved in this process.

Sincerely,

Marty

Guidance Statement:

The City University of New York will extend the Spring 2020 Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy (Spring 2020 CR/NC Policy) to the Fall 2020 term, providing colleges the opportunity to localize the policy by choosing one of the following three options:

1. Allow the use of CR/NC grades for all Fall 2020 courses as in the Spring 2020 term.
2. Allow the use of CR/NC grades for all Fall 2020 courses except those the college designates to be excluded.
3. Do not allow the use of CR/NC grades in Fall 2020 but expand access to the college's existing flexible grading policies using the University's P/NC grading framework.

In choosing and operationalizing one of the above options, college presidents and deans shall engage shared governance bodies in discussions that give due consideration to issues concerning academic progression, accreditation and licensure requirements, transferability of

credits, and financial aid eligibility, among others deemed to be important to their respective campus communities. College presidents and deans must communicate their college's decision to the Office of Academic Affairs by December 11, 2020 via an attestation form that will be sent under separate cover. Additional information regarding when and how to communicate courses to be excluded for those colleges that choose option #2 will be provided shortly.

Students in colleges that choose to allow the use of CR/NC grades will be able to opt-in to CR/NC grades for courses not explicitly excluded by their college during an "opt-in window" following the last day by which faculty must submit grades for the Fall 2020 semester. We expect this window to open and/or close in January 2021. More information will be forthcoming.

As part of this effort, colleges must develop and implement a broad communications and advising plan to ensure equitable access to the localized policy to students and informed implementation to faculty and staff. The Central Office will reengage the Spring 2020 Credit/No Credit Policy Implementation Team and campus liaisons to support the work of campuses that choose to support CR/NC grades in Fall 2020 and will modify the CUNYfirst "opt-in engine" to accommodate local course exclusion rules.

Please note that in extending the Spring 2020 CR/NC Policy to the Fall 2020 term, the University is also extending to all colleges the provision in said policy stating that "students with Credit/No Credit grades will be able to transfer those courses across colleges within CUNY, per current CUNY policy." And as was administratively determined for Spring 2020, consistent with the intent of the University's COVID-19 CR/NC Policy, for students transferring to CUNY from outside the University, the University will honor and transfer in binary grades for all courses taken in Spring and Fall 2020 that would normally transfer, without negative impact on admission, transfer credit, or degree requirements. This provision must be honored even if colleges choose to expand access to their own flexible grading policies using the P/NC grading framework.

Furthermore, the University acknowledges that in extending the Spring 2020 CR/NC Policy to the Fall 2020 term, it is also extending to all colleges the provisions of the Special COVID-19 Graduate Admissions Policy approved by the Board of Trustees on April 27, 2020, which seek to ensure that "in evaluating future candidates for admission into graduate programs, they will not disadvantage students who present P (pass) or CR (credit) grades in their transcripts for courses specifically taken during Spring 2020 and other terms which could be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic — regardless of whether their institutions imposed a flexible or similar grading policy for all students or gave them the choice to opt-in" and that to this end "all University graduate admissions committees shall adjust their selection processes to honor this commitment while keeping with the norms of their specific programs and corresponding disciplines." These provisions must be honored even if colleges choose to expand access to their own flexible grading policies using the P/NC grading framework.