

## Frequently Asked Questions For Students Pass/No Pass Grading Spring 2020

From Scott LaMascus, Chief Academic Officer  
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On March 28, 2020, I sent a communication to all faculty and students with several items about this unprecedented moment in higher learning at OC, including a P/NP choice available to students for Spring 2020. The option of a P/NP choice is intended to be a recognition of the many, uncontrollable variables in a student's ability to demonstrate their learning in a course, due to the Covid-19 response world-wide.

Below are several questions frequently asked and our responses on each item. We hope this clarification assists you, but please send questions to me at: [scott.lamascus@oc.edu](mailto:scott.lamascus@oc.edu). I will be happy to provide assistance.

**QUESTION: When I'm deciding whether to choose P/NP for a course, can you please tell me how my faculty members will be grading me? Will my faculty member know what I chose?**

**ANSWER:** We anticipated that faculty would teach their course as designed for the online delivery model due to Covid-19. No change in your grading scale is anticipated. Standards of work for an A, B, C, D or F would be unchanged or as your faculty member adapted them for the sudden, online delivery mode; assessment, evaluation methods, or grading rubrics would not be changed by this policy, per se. Once each faculty member submits the letter grades earned by each student according to the syllabus, the Registrar will apply any and all Pass/No Pass options chosen by students. Grades of D or better become a "Pass" for the course. The student's grade will appear on their report and in university records as the appropriate Pass or Not Passing grade.

**QUESTION: What about courses where faculty policy has indicated that a C or better must be earned to allow the student to count the course as a prerequisite?**

**ANSWER:** If a student chooses P/NP for a course which ordinarily requires a C to proceed to the next course in a sequence, for example, the letter grades of A, B, C, or D will be considered a "Pass." The Passing grade will qualify the student to proceed to the next course with the exception of Nursing, where national and state requirements and licensure ordinarily require a score cut-off. School of Nursing cut-offs will apply to those courses. Nursing students should consult their Nursing faculty advisor before selecting a P/NP grade option. Passing grades will be sufficient to enroll the student into the next course in all other program sequences.

**QUESTION: Will there be any exceptions to this rule?**

**ANSWER:** Only Nursing, with its direct linkage between letter grades, the NCLEX scoring system, and our program's accreditation by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing, will be allowed to require a letter grade for a course, as they direct their students. Dr. Jennifer Gray is the only person authorized to grant an exception to the University's P/NP policy for Spring 2020.

**QUESTION: Our announcement to students indicated that each student should speak to their advisor, athletes should visit with NCAA compliance officer, Veterans should seek counsel from the VA advisor, and so on. How should students weigh this advice?**

**ANSWER:** We recommend each program develop the specific guidance for its students. The possibilities are too many for a list of recommendations university wide. But the sound advice faculty give their advisees will be invaluable to the student. For example, a student athlete should ask Teresa DeBoard or Mike Farris about NCAA eligibility rules, but the faculty advisor might, for example, tell the student that a medical school application will be strongest with letter grades for major courses. OC cannot be responsible for whether a graduate school will or will not later accept a P/NP grade for a prerequisite.

**QUESTION: Some programs require a C-level of performance to be accepted into upper-division status. How will P grades be interpreted?**

**ANSWER:** A Passing grade in Spring 2020 courses **will allow** a student to proceed to a subsequent course.

**QUESTION: Is the P/NP decision based on the grade at the end of the class only? Could this not encourage students to not finish strong?**

**ANSWER:** While we always want to encourage students to finish strong. We believe most will make every effort to do so this term because they know that learning and growth are the larger goals at OC. The P/NP option for students is being extended in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances in which we find ourselves. We are faced with the reality that some students may be in physical, family, emotional or financial circumstances beyond their control (such as being at home without reliable internet, having family members struggling with COVID-19 illnesses, or unforeseen immediate hardships). Despite their best efforts to finish strong, they may not be able to do so. The P/NP option provides a compassionate means for these students to complete their semester without being unduly penalized. The P/NP choice also provides a safe alternative rather than students with special circumstances seeking the usual, "grade appeals" procedure provided for in OC policy.

For more help, please contact your faculty advisor, mentor, Chair, Dean or CAO. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this unusual time. May God bless you all. God is our rock and refuge.