



## Pass+/Pass/No Pass Grading System

### General Information

After serious consideration and conversation with deans, faculty and our students, it became clear that following our standard letter grading policy during the coronavirus crisis was not the best path forward. Given the circumstances that arose during the spring 2020 quarter and carried through to the summer 2020 quarter as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19, the University of Denver will allow undergraduate and graduate students (except Law where other standards apply) to elect to convert letter course grades for the summer 2020 quarter to PASS+/PASS/NO PASS grades. Courses that were already graded on other systems such as P/F or P/NP are not eligible. *Students will have up to 3 business days after grades are available for viewing to opt into the PASS+/PASS/NO PASS grading mode.*

This system considers that many students are uncertain as to how they will perform academically in the summer 2020 term given health, economic, and personal issues. The modified grading system allows students to pursue classes without concern as to the impact on their cumulative GPAs. At the same time, traditional grades may be required for admission to graduate programs, ability to transfer to other institutions, licensure requirements, and certain benefits eligibility. For example, some professional licensing entities may not allow students to sit for an exam if a certain number of P+/P/NP grades appear on a transcript. P+/P/NP grades may not be in the best interest of students who may be near minimum GPA requirements.

Students may elect to convert any or all course(s) from letter grading to Pass+/Pass/No Pass grading. Should a student choose to convert their course:

- Pass Plus (P+) is defined as institutional credit with a grade of C- or higher.
- Pass (P) is defined as institutional credit with a grade of D+, D, or D-.
- No Pass (NP) is defined as no institutional credit because the grade is lower than D-.

Students can opt into P+/P/NP grading by logging into PioneerWeb and going into the Student tab. A new channel is available – Alternate Grade Selection for Select 2020 Terms. Click on “Alternate Grade Mode Selection.” From there you may select P+/P/NP for any eligible classes. You can also change your selection at any time up until three business days after final grades are posted.

We will modify the academic probation and dismissal policy for the summer 2020 quarter. No student will be academically dismissed on the basis of their summer 2020 quarter grades.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### How do I opt into the P+/P/NP grading system?

Students can opt into P+/P/NP grading on the Student tab in PioneerWeb. A new channel is available – Alternate Grade Selection for Select 2020 Terms. Click “Alternate Grade Mode Selection.” You may select P+/P/NP for any eligible classes. You may change your selection at



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any time until three business days after grades have been published.

### **What process will be utilized to convert an assigned letter grade to a P+/P/NP grade?**

Three business days after final grades have been made available, your assigned grade will be converted to P+/P/NP if you have opted in. After the grade has been converted, you may not change back to the original grade.

### **Did DU make this change because distance learning classes are harder than in-person classes?**

No. Working amidst uncertainty about the virus itself, changes in living situations, and concerns about loved ones makes pursuing university-level classes even more challenging than normal. Our community members vary in their access to technology, so this move is about equity for students. We understand that the transition to virtual instruction has created a challenging environment. We want to acknowledge the context in which people are working right now.

### **Can I choose individual classes for the P+/P/NP option or is it for all my classes in the entire summer quarter?**

Students have the option of choosing which, if any, class(es) they would elect to move to P+/P/NP grading. Students may choose one, some or all of their classes to be in the alternate grading mode. If interested, students must opt-in. No action is needed if students wish to remain with standard letter grading.

### **Who is eligible to elect to convert their letter grades to P+/P/NP grading for the summer 2020 quarter?**

With the exception of Sturm College of Law students, any DU undergraduate or graduate student can choose the P+/P/NP option.

### **How will the modified grading policy impact my GPA?**

P+/P/NP grades will not be calculated in a student's GPA. However, for students who choose to maintain the standard letter grade, that grade will be calculated in their GPA.

### **How many courses am I allowed to take as P+/P/NP?**

There is no limit to the number of courses in summer 2020 quarter that students may take as P+/P/NP.

### **What do I need to consider before switching to the modified grading option?**

Changing to Pass Plus/Pass/No Pass (P+/P/NP) could have implications on satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes, scholarship eligibility, veterans' benefits, prerequisite and major requirements, and competitiveness of graduate program applications, among other areas. Students should check with their program advisors before making this decision. For students receiving financial aid, please visit the financial aid website and view the special FAQ on financial aid satisfactory academic progress and modified grading.

### **What are the reasons I should not choose P+/P/NP grading for the summer quarter?**

Students who need to elevate their major/minor/overall GPA in order to meet University or



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departmental standards for good-standing, should not elect this option. Students who are on academic probation will not be able to raise their GPA with a P+/P/NP option.

Students who are concerned about licensure, professional standards, entrance into medical or graduate school, or, if scholarships or benefits require a particular GPA in order to continue, please consider whether this is the right choice, as it may have unintended consequences. Many schools and agencies are just now trying to understand the implications of alternative grading schemes themselves. You will want to check in directly with outside schools, scholarship entities, licensure programs, etc. to see what standards apply for alternative grading.

Courses with a P+/P/NP grade may or may not be accepted as transfer credit into programs at other schools.

### **Once a student decides to convert letter grade class to P+/P/NP will there be further opportunity to reverse that decision?**

After grades are available for viewing, and a student chooses to elect to convert a class to P+/P/NP, the decision is irrevocable, without appeal with respect to the mode of grading. All policies regarding general grade appeals remain in place.

### **Will students who request an Incomplete for a summer 2020 class be permitted to convert the class to P+/P/NP grading?**

No. Courses must be completed in the summer 2020 quarter to be eligible for this grading mode. Once an incomplete is assigned, it must be finished in the agreed upon time or it will atrophy to an F.

### **If I choose to take an Incomplete grade for a Summer 2020 course, can the final earned grade be converted to P+/P/NP once it is posted to my transcript?**

No. Students can only opt into the alternative grading mode for classes *completed* during the 2020 Summer term.

### **Will students who finish an Incomplete (assigned in a prior quarter) during summer quarter 2020 be able to opt into P+/P/NP?**

No. Only summer 2020 classes are eligible for this grading mode.

### **Should I choose P+/P/NP grading if I become ill during the quarter and cannot finish the work?**

No. We have regular processes in place to help students manage any illness that precludes them from successfully finishing a class.

If 60% of the class has been completed with a passing grade, students can request an incomplete from their faculty member. Students should only choose this option if they think they will be able to complete the course successfully. Here is the full incomplete policy:

<https://www.du.edu/registrar/records/incompletegrade.html>. If a student is so ill that withdrawal from all courses is necessary, please consider taking a medical leave.

<https://www.du.edu/studentlife/advising/policies-forms/>



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### **What resources will be available to help a student decide whether to convert their class to P+/P/NP grading?**

Students should consult an academic advisor, dean's office, financial aid officer, or any other campus resource with whom they regularly work on decisions related to registration, add/drop, or repeating coursework. Please know that many colleges and universities have taken similar steps in creating different grading modes for this quarter, but the external agencies are still trying to understand the impact. We share information as we learn it.

Students are responsible for completing their own due diligence to be fully aware of the implications of their decision to convert their letter grades to P+/P/NP grading.

Taking this step will be especially significant as students consider the implications of their GPA and its impact on scholarships (athletics and other), financial aid, veterans' benefits, licensure, graduate/professional school admission, and/or other professional goals.

### **What if I don't want the faculty member to know I'm taking the class as a P+/P/NP?**

Faculty members will not know whether or when a student elects this option. If a student's regular advisor also is the faculty member teaching the class, confidentiality can be preserved by working with a staff academic advisor. However, there are many good reasons for speaking directly with the faculty member about the option, in order to accurately make an assessment about your final grade in the class.

### **How does this affect prerequisites?**

Prerequisites do not change. If a course specifies that a previous course must be passed with at least a C- grade, then a PASS grade will not satisfy that prerequisite. A PASS+ grade satisfies minimum grade requirements for advancing within a program of study.

### **How will this affect Deans' List and other honors?**

Our policies remain unchanged. To be eligible for the Dean's Honor List, a student must achieve a quarterly grade point average of at least 3.75 with 12 earned quarter hours or more. A student who earns a quarterly GPA of 4.0 with a minimum of 12 earned quarter hours is named a Hornbeck Scholar. Students must earn grades that carry grade points (A - F) in the required number of credit hours to be eligible for these awards.

### **How will this affect Latin Honors?**

Our policies remain unchanged. Only letter grades will be used in determining Latin Honors. The university will observe the 90 quarter hour requirements with required letter grades in those courses.

### **How will my P+/P grade impact a course I am repeating?**

Consistent with our policies, the P+ grade will count toward your major or minor, and it will replace grades of D+ and lower for the purpose of fulfilling the major/minor requirement. However, your GPA will not be impacted; thus the lower grade that will be replaced is still used in GPA determinations.



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### **Will a “P” grade apply to my major or minor?**

No. PASS grades are equivalent to D+, D, or D-, and for that reason they will not apply to undergraduate majors or minors. Generally, PASS grades (D level grades) will not count toward a graduate degree.

While institutional credit is earned with a PASS grade, it does not mean that students—especially those within professional schools that lead to professional licensure/certification—should elect this option and move forward within their major.

Advisors should discuss prerequisite benchmarks in detail with students. Students will have to repeat the class if it is required in order to satisfy major/minor GPA requirements.

### **When is the best time for me to consider opting into the P+/P/NP system?**

We’ve set the deadline for choosing the alternate grading mode AFTER students know their grades for the quarter, 3 business days after grades are made available for viewing. We encourage students to make their decision once they have full information about their performance in the class and they understand whether the grade will permit them to advance in their program.

### **What if I don’t want the P+/P/NP grading?**

If students take no action, normal letter grading will apply. Students must opt into the P+/P/NP grade mode via PioneerWeb. Students who wish to receive normal letter grading for the summer quarter do not need to take any action.

### **What happens if a student earns a No Pass (NP)?**

Grades of NP will have no impact a student’s GPA, nor will they impact the calculation of a student’s cumulative course completion rate.

### **Can the decision to take a class Pass Plus/Pass/No Pass be reversed?**

No. Once students opt into this grading mode, the decision cannot be revoked.

### **How will future employers and universities know that DU decided to allow an optional Pass Plus/Pass/No Pass grading for summer 2020?**

Official University of Denver transcripts will include a notation that explains that for the summer 2020 quarter, students had the option to elect the P+/P/NP system. The notation will indicate the grading standards for each level:

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### **Can students on academic probation earn their credential (degree or certificate) and graduate after summer quarter if they receive PASS+ or PASS in their summer courses but their program is below the published standard?**

No, all other institutional policies – such as required GPA for graduation remain in place.