

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs

### Temporary Changes to the ISU Pass / Not Pass (P /NP) Grading Policy

In response to the coronavirus pandemic in Spring 2020, Iowa State University has adopted a temporary Pass/Not Pass grading option for undergraduate courses impacted by the transition to virtual instruction, effective immediately (March 20, 2020). The P/NP option applies to undergraduate courses intended to be in-person throughout Spring 2020, but which were changed to virtual instruction as a result of COVID-19.

**UPDATED 4/13/20:** This temporary policy **will also apply** to courses that were designated to be taught fully online at the start of Spring 2020 semester (e.g. courses with a section designator starting with an "X").

#### FAQs

##### What does P/NP designation mean?

- **What grades are categorized as a P? What grade is categorized as a NP?**

This temporary policy follows the existing P/NP policy where an earned grade of A through D- will be categorized as a P (Pass), and a grade of F will be categorized as NP (Not Pass).

##### Eligibility: Students and Courses

##### Who is eligible to choose this P/NP option?

Any undergraduate student enrolled in courses intended to be **in-person or online** throughout Spring 2020 semester. This includes students on academic probation.

Graduate <<https://www.provost.iastate.edu/about/covid-19-faculty-and-staff-resources/pass-not-pass-grading-option-for-graduate-courses>>

and professional students <<https://www.provost.iastate.edu/about/covid-19-faculty-and-staff-resources/pass-not-pass-option-for-veterinary-medicine-courses-impacted-by-the-transition-to-virtual-instruction>> have separate temporary P/NP policies for Spring 2020 semester.

- **Which undergraduate courses does the policy apply to?**

This temporary policy applies to any ISU undergraduate developmental course (courses below 100-level), 100-, 200-, 300-, or 400-level course that was intended to be in person but which was changed to virtual instruction as a result of COVID-19.

This policy was updated 4/10/20 to **also include** courses that were designated to be taught fully online at the start of Spring 2020 semester (e.g., courses with a section designator starting with an "X").

##### CLARIFIED 4/13/20:

Courses that are excluded from the policy are as follows:

- Courses that concluded prior to March 16, 2020
- Courses that have a Satisfactory/Fail grading basis
- INTED, EXPRO, REQR, and L TM placeholder courses
- Courses in which the instructor has submitted a grade of "I" (Incomplete).
  - *Note.* Students may request to change the grading basis from graded to P/NP once the Incomplete grade is resolved. Students should initiate this request through their academic adviser.
- Test out and transfer courses

Original version: March 23, 2020

Updated April 16, 2020

- Courses that a student dropped

This temporary P/NP policy does not apply to 500- or 600-level courses. Although undergraduates may enroll in these graduate courses, they are subject to the grading policies of the Graduate College and the temporary P/NP policy for graduate courses.

### **How does this Temporary P/NP Policy Relate to Other University Policies?**

- **How many courses may a student designate as P/NP?**

Undergraduate students can utilize the temporary P/NP policy on all, some, or none of the eligible courses in which they are enrolled during the Spring 2020 semester.

- **Will it count towards my total number of P/NP designations?**

No. Under ordinary circumstances, undergraduate students are limited to nine P/NP credits. Courses designated as P/NP under this temporary policy in Spring 2020 will not count against the total number of P/NP credits allowed.

- **Will these P/NP courses count towards my academic program requirements?**

Yes. Courses designated under this policy will count towards ISU's curricular, major, academic progress, and graduation requirements. Before choosing the P/NP option, students should talk to their adviser; there may be future consequences of P grades to consider. Please refer to the "*GPA under 2.0*" and "*Is there a downside to using this policy?*" sections for further guidance.

- **Will a P/NP designation affect my GPA?**

No. Grades of P and NP are not factored into a student's grade point average (GPA).

- **If my overall GPA is under a 2.0, or I am on academic warning, or probation, what do I need to think about?**

Students in these situations need to consider the impact of P/NP decisions on both this semester's GPA and their overall GPA. Students should meet with their adviser or college Student Services Office to discuss options and possible impact on academic standing. A minimum GPA of 2.0 GPA is required to earn a degree from Iowa State University.

- **How will dismissal/reinstatement statuses be affected?**

No undergraduate students will be placed on Academic Dismissal following the Spring 2020 semester. Students who were on Academic Probation Following Dismissal status, will continue in that status following the Spring 2020 semester, unless they meet the requirements to advance their academic standing in the positive direction. Please refer to the "*Will my academic standing change?*" section for further guidance.

- **Will my academic standing change?**

**UPDATED 4/13/20:**

Students will start the Summer 2020 or Fall 2020 semester with the same academic status they had at start of Spring 2020.

Students can better their academic standing (i.e., move from Academic Warning to Good Standing or move from Academic Probation to Good Standing) if they:

(1) Meet the minimum Term and Cumulative ISU GPA requirements as outlined in the Academic Standing Policy

<<https://catalog.iastate.edu/academiclife/progressprobation/#academicprobationtext>>;

(2) Have at least one course that remains on a graded grading basis; and

(3) [If applicable] Do not have any courses in which they earned a grade of “NP” (Not Pass).

- **Will I be able to retake a course that I elected to have designated as a P/NP?**

This policy is under review.

- **Will there be a Dean’s List for Spring 2020?**

Yes. The Dean’s List will still occur for spring 2020, with one requirement change. Students will be required to have a minimum of 9-credit hours of graded work instead of 12-credit hours of graded work. The remainder of the original policy remains the same.

### Considerations for Students Before Choosing P/NP

- **What resources are available to help me make a decision?**

Advisers and college Student Services Offices can answer questions related to this temporary policy. And, the Office of the Registrar has an online GPA calculator

<<https://www.registrar.iastate.edu/students/gpa-calc>> that many students find useful.

- **Is there any downside to using this policy?**

Possibly. Students who intend to apply to post-graduate programs should discuss the potential impact of P/NP designations on their application for graduate and professional programs with their adviser. For example, some programs require a certain GPA in designated courses or programs of study.

Students on Financial Aid should consult with the Office of Student Financial Aid to determine whether there are any limits on the number of P/NP courses that they may select without endangering their financial aid award.

Students who are participating in our ROTC programs should consult their ROTC Adviser before making a change as the policies on accepting P/NP courses differ by service. Some services will not allow you to select the option for certain courses. In addition, selecting the P/NP option may impact your future career opportunities.

Sponsored students should check with their program about the requirements of their sponsorship before deciding to choose the P/NP grading designation.

High school students enrolled in college-level coursework (PSEO students) are strongly encouraged to talk with their guidance counselor and/or academic adviser before deciding whether they designate a course(s) as P/NP.

- **Will my instructor be notified about my selection?**

No. Instructors will assign letter grades (A-F, I, R) as usual and submit those to the Office of the Registrar following the standard grade submission process. For each course that a student has designated as P/NP, the Registrar’s Office will convert the letter grade to a P or NP. Please note that it will take a few days to process all of the changes that were requested during the May 13-19 election period. Changes will be viewable to students on the morning of May 22.

- **Will choosing the P/NP option impact my ISU or external scholarships that have a GPA requirement?**

Grades of P and NP are not factored into a student’s grade point average (GPA). The temporary P/NP

policy will not affect the status of ISU scholarships. Students should consult with external scholarship providers to determine if there are implications to selection P/NP grading.

- **What happens if I need to submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) appeal for financial aid?**  
Because SAP is a federal regulation, our Office of Student Financial Aid is waiting on guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on how to handle these situations.

#### **Process to Select the P/NP Designation for Spring Semester**

- **When do I have to decide if I want to choose a P/NP designation?**  
Undergraduate students must decide between May 13 and May 19, 2020, which is after Spring 2020 grades are submitted by instructors. Students may not make a change prior to May 13.

- **If I decide to choose a P/NP designation, how do I do it?**

##### **UPDATED 3/13/20**

Beginning at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13, students may login to Access+ to view their grades under the student tab. There will be a link that will lead them through the P/NP selection process. Students may change their selection until May 19, 5:00 p.m. (CST) by using the form in Access+.

Please note that it will take a few days to process all of the changes requested during the May 13-19 election period. Changes will be viewable to students on the morning of May 22. Students who wish to make changes to the grading basis after the May 19 deadline must initiate this request through their academic adviser.

- **Can I select the P/NP option if I have an “N” (No report) grade?**  
Yes, students can elect to change from graded to P/NP in courses that do not have a grade submitted by the instructor before the May 19 deadline. This will show as an “N” (No report) in Access+. Once the instructor submits the grade for the course, students may petition their college Student Services Office to have the grade change to a P/NP.
- **Can I select the P/NP option if I have an “I” (Incomplete) grade?**  
No, students cannot elect to change the grading basis from graded to P/NP on courses that have a grade of “I” (Incomplete) submitted by the instructor. After the Incomplete is resolved with a grade, the student may request the grading basis be changed from graded to P/NP; this request must be initiated through the student’s academic adviser.

#### **Transcript designation for Spring 2020 semester**

- **How will this Spring 2020 semester appear on my transcript?**  
ISU will include a designation on all students’ transcripts indicating extraordinary circumstances encountered in the Spring 2020 semester.