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Undergraduate and Graduate Students Option To Convert Fall 2020 Classes From Graded To Pass/Fail, Or To Withdraw From Classes Without Academic Penalty Email

John C. C. Volin

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Matthew Revitt <matthew.revitt@maine.edu>

Undergraduate and Graduate students option to convert fall 2020 classes from graded to pass/fail, or to withdraw from classes without academic penalty

1 message

UMaine Provost <umprovost@maine.edu>

Wed, Oct 28, 2020 at 10:41 AM

To: umfaculty@lists.maine.edu

Bcc: matthew.revitt@maine.edu

Dear Colleagues:

Following a thoughtful and productive collaboration with Faculty Senate, Robert Dana and I shared the note below with all UMaine students (undergraduate and graduate) earlier this morning.

We recognize that guidance from academic advisors will be paramount as students make choices about the Pass/Fail option and individual course withdrawals. Thank you in advance for sharing information and insights with students in your respective departments, schools, and colleges, including counsel about courses or programs for which choosing Pass/Fail and/or withdrawing from a course may not be in their best interests.

Best regards,
John

John C. Volin
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
University of Maine
5703 Alumni Hall, Suite 201
Orono, ME 04469-5703
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Dear Students:

Your concerns are important to us and we have heard you through the town halls, flash surveys, and conversations with staff and faculty.

The UMaine Administration has been working together with the Faculty Senate to address issues in a thoughtful, and expedited manner, and so this semester we are instituting the following pass/fail/withdrawal policy.

Best regards,

John Volin, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Robert Dana, Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students

Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in University of Maine classes have the option to convert their fall 2020 class(es) from graded to Pass/Fail, or to withdraw from one or more classes without academic penalty (equivalent to a grade of W).

The university's goal in making these changes is to be as student-centric as possible by offering choices that promote academic integrity and positive learning outcomes.

The Pass/Fail and course withdrawal policy and procedure for Fall 2020 are:

Pass/Fail

1. Students will have one week after grades are posted to select the P/F option. The deadline for posting grades in MaineStreet is December 26, so the deadline for selecting the P/F option is January 2, 2021. You can select P/F for one or more fall courses by completing an online form that will be made available through the Office of Student Records on December 14, 2020. Do not submit the form until final grades have been posted. Students are encouraged to discuss their grading choices with their academic advisor.

2. Pass/Fail grades will follow the definitions in the Faculty Handbook, which are:

- a. LP, Low Pass, for a course passed on the pass/fail grading option equivalent to a D+, D, or D-. Credit is earned, but the grade point average (GPA) is not affected.
- b. P, Pass, for a course passed on the pass/fail grading option equivalent to a C- or above. Credit is earned, but the grade point average (GPA) is not affected. Students will need to consult with Faculty about requirements necessary to earn a Pass.
- c. F, Failed means that no credit is earned and the GPA is not affected.

3. With this policy and procedure, the university will allow students to take multiple courses P/F. A P/F course will be treated as a graded course for the purpose of degree completion and coded by Student Records to allow the course to meet requirements within allowable limits (e.g., a P may be required as opposed to a LP).

4. P/F courses will not count in the GPA. A grade of P will not meet a "C+ or higher" prerequisite requirement. For Fall 2020, a grade of P will be counted as a C rather than a C-.

5. Once you have chosen a P/F for a course, there is no-opt out. From that point the course will remain P/F.

6. Please note: in some majors, a P will not satisfy licensure or accreditation requirements.

Also, the transfer of a P or LP grade to another academic institution will depend on that institution's transfer policies. If you have questions, please contact a faculty member, professional advisor, department chair, associate dean, or dean. They are all here to assist you in making this choice.

7. Faculty members and professional advisors will communicate with students to ensure that each is aware of the opportunity to select P/F in one or more courses by January 2, 2021.

Course withdrawal

1. Students may choose to drop a course and receive a W grade (withdrawal) without academic penalty. The deadline for dropping is 4 p.m. on December 11, 2020. To drop a course, contact the associate dean or director of your department or college to get an official course add/drop request form and the required signatures. Check with your academic department for its procedure. Please note: Courses dropped will show on the student's academic record with a grade of W. The grade will not be computed into the semester average as a failing grade. (Bottom line: It is costly to pay for courses and drop

them, but sometimes you may need to drop a course to reduce stress. Please see your academic advisor if you have questions.)

2. Please note: students need to maintain 6 or more credit hours to keep their student loans deferred. Because each situation varies, students who receive financial aid should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid in person (Wingate Hall) by phone (207-581-1324), or at <http://www.umaine.edu/stuaid>. If you have a scholarship, check with the provider about any special stipulations. Special conditions may apply to international students and student athletes. They are encouraged to contact staff in the Office of International Programs (Stodder Hall, 207-581-3437, <http://www.umaine.edu/international>) and Academic Support Services for Student Athletes (207-581-1833), respectively, with any questions.

3. Dropping a course may affect your academic standing or eligibility to live on campus. You are encouraged to talk with an academic advisor and a representative of Residence Life or the Director of Housing at 207-581-4580 (<http://umaine.edu/rlp>) to determine your status if you drop a course.

Graduate School Policy:

There are some nuances that vary depending on whether you are a graduate student or undergraduate student in a course. If an undergraduate student intends to use the course for graduate degree credit—for example, in a 4+1 program— then Graduate School

policies (below) will apply. If you are using the course to complete an undergraduate degree, then a C- is still considered a P, whereas a minimum grade of B- is required if the credits were used towards a graduate degree.

1. Graduate students may declare a pass/fail grading option in any Fall 2020 graduate (500/600) course, recognizing that a minimum grade of B- is required to receive a pass.

2. Undergraduate students may declare a pass/fail grading option in any Fall 2020 graduate (500/600) course. A minimum grade of C- is required for a pass at the undergrad level and a minimum grade of B- is required for a pass if the student intends to use the credit in partial fulfillment of a graduate degree (e.g., 4+1 programs).

3. Graduate and undergraduate students may use the credits from a Fall 2020 graduate course listed with a pass/fail grading option in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a graduate degree.

4. Graduate students may use the credits from a 400-level course with a pass/fail grading option in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a graduate degree as long as the course is approved by the program and the Graduate School to count for the degree.

If you have questions, please contact the graduate program coordinator in your academic department or the Graduate School at 207-581-3291 or graduate@maine.edu.