Florida A&M University Spring Semester 2020 Modified Grading Policy – Guidance for Students

Florida A&M University has modified the Grading Policy to allow students the option of receiving either a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) or letter grade (A/B/C/D/F) in courses that are approved to offer the S/U grade. All students (except those at the College of Law) will have the option to request the S/U option for eligible courses.

You will be able to place this request from your Student Center in iRattler from Wednesday, April 15 through Wednesday, May 6, 2020. More information on the mechanics of selecting the S/U option will be available by April 13th. We strongly recommend that discuss this with your academic advisor or your department representative before making your choice because your decision may affect your program of study due to accreditation, licensure, or other requirements.

1. Eligible courses: Although most classes will have the S/U option, deans will be able to identify courses that will not be eligible for the S/U option. If you have questions about a particular class, please check with your academic advisor and the Registrars’ website (after April 13).

2. S/U or letter grade:
   - For Undergraduate Courses: "S" grades will be given for “A”, “B”, and “C” grades and “U” grades will be given for “D” and “F” grades. In limited cases, an academic program may determine that assigning an “S” grade for an earned grade of “D” is acceptable for specific courses.
   - For Graduate and Professional Courses: “S” grades will be given for “A” and “B” grades and “U” grades will be given for “C”, “D” and “F” grades. In limited cases, an academic program may determine that assigning an “S” grade for an earned grade of “C” is acceptable for specific courses.

3. About the S/U grade:
   - S/U grades will not affect your Grade Point Average (GPA).
   - Honors: For graduation honors, your Fall 2019 GPA will be used to determine your honors level.
   - Academic Standing: If your academic standing is 'warning' or 'probation,' you will remain in this academic standing after grades are posted because your GPA will not change. An “S” grade earns credit while a “U” grade does not.
   - In some instances, a “D” grade is considered passing for certain programs. If you need that particular course for your program, it may be best to keep the “D” grade. However, deciding to keep the “D” grade will affect your GPA. Please speak to your academic advisor for further information about the best option.
   - Some programs have prerequisite courses and GPA requirements. Please take these into account when selecting the S/U option for your courses.
   - If your program requires certain grades for licensure and certification purposes, please speak to the program coordinator and advisor before selecting the S/U option.
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4. After **May 6, 2020**, you will not be able to change the letter grades to S/U or letter grades.

5. **Financial Aid:**

   - If you choose to have all your Spring 2020 classes switched to S/U, know that your GPA after Fall 2019 will remain the same. You will earn credits if your grade is “S”, as it is a passing grade. You will not earn any credits if your final grade is a “U”. A grade of “U” is not a passing grade.

   - For a majority of funded scholarships, students must maintain certain GPA standards and pass all credit hours attempted to retain your scholarship status. “S” grades will not affect your GPA; you will, however, earn credit for the course. **If you receive a “U” grade, you will not earn credit for the course.** Failing to earn credits in classes attempted may result in a loss of your scholarship and affect your ability to receive **financial aid moving forward.** Please contact your advisor and scholarship coordinator for additional clarification.

     - **Bright Futures Medallion recipients** will need to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher and earn all attempted hours for renewal next year. Your Fall 2019 cumulative GPA will be used for renewal if you select the S/U option for all of your courses.

     - **Bright Futures Academic recipients** will need to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher and earn all attempted hours for renewal next year. Your Fall 2019 cumulative GPA will be used for renewal if you select the S/U option for all of your courses.

     - For the **University Scholarship Program**, you are required to pass all courses attempted with a “C” or better. If you elect to use the “S/U” option and earn a “U” your scholarship will not be renewed.

   - **Satisfactory Academic Progress:** For the continued receipt of financial aid you must maintain minimum academic standards. For your convenience the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy is located at [http://www.famu.edu/index.cfm?FinancialAid&2020-2021FinancialAidForms](http://www.famu.edu/index.cfm?FinancialAid&2020-2021FinancialAidForms). “S” grades are counted in attempted and earned credit hours and a “U” grades are counted as attempted and not earned. If there are questions, please see your Academic Advisor or email your counselor in the Office of Financial Aid.

   - Contact your academic advisor and financial aid representative by email for details about the implication of your GPA remaining the same, regarding your scholarship (including Bright Futures), Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), and other financial aid matters.
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6. **Other Options**: Please contact your academic advisor to determine how these options can help you.

   - **Incomplete (I) Grade**: You may choose to request incomplete grades from your instructors. If you receive an incomplete grade this Spring 2020 semester, you have until Spring 2021 to complete the course requirements before the “I” grade changes to an “F”.

   - **Withdraw (W grade)**: You may choose to withdraw from your classes. Withdrawals this Spring 2020 semester will not be counted against the limit of five (5) allowed during your academic career. However, it may be counted toward excess credit hours.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Can I make my decision after I know my final grade?**

Faculty are required to finish final grading by May 4, 2020. Some instructors will make grades available on Blackboard or Canvas at that time. Please note you will not be able to see your grades in iRatter at that time. Please contact your instructor for details about their method of making grades available to you before the required deadline. Final grades will be posted to iRatter on May 7.

**After I switch over to S/U, can I stop participating in class?**

No. You are still held responsible for all course requirements and the materials presented in class. Moreover, the material in this class may be important to more advanced classes. Switching to S/U grading means that so long as you EARN a C or better on your instructor’s grading scale in the class, you are taking you will receive credit for the course, and the course will not affect your GPA. You still need to be an active participant in the class you are taking to ensure that you receive the credit for the class.

**Will S/U grading extend my probation status to help me improve my GPA?**

Your probation status will be extended one semester due to COVID-19. If your performance this semester will not help your GPA improve, the S/U option ensures your GPA does not go down further.

**Can I have multiple courses S/U graded this semester?**

Yes. Provided the classes are S/U eligible, you can elect to have one or more (or none) of your courses graded as S/U.
I'm taking a course that requires a letter grade for Graduate or Professional School Admission, or a Professional Exam, can I use the S/U option?

If the course requires a grade of “B” or higher, then the S/U option will not fulfill the requirements. If a “C” or higher is required, then the S/U option may satisfy the requirements. Please speak with your advisor or program coordinator before making a final decision.

Do I need approval from my instructor, Dean, Department Chair or Advisor to select the S/U option?

No. For Spring 2020 courses only, you are the only person required in the decision-making process. However, we STRONGLY encourage you to consult with your advisor and departmental chair before making any decision.

What if I want to receive my letter grade for a course or courses?

You do not have to do anything. The default grade for each class is a letter grade.

Can I use the S/U option for Gordon Rule courses?

Yes. A grade of “C” or better is required in each course. Thus the S/U option is acceptable for these courses.