



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pass/Fail Grading Option (Undergraduate)

Policy Number 1-20

Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania

Approved by University Senate, April 9, 2026

Issued by President Jeffery Osgood, April 23, 2026

Responsible Office: Office of the Provost

Previous Policy Number: IAP 38

1. Purpose

A limited Pass/Fail grading option provides students with additional flexibility in achieving their academic goals. Taking a course Pass/Fail can be beneficial to students in various circumstances, such as low-risk opportunities to explore potential areas of interest or decreasing academic stress during high credit-load semesters.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate students enrolled in credit-bearing courses at the university, including those in traditional, online, and hybrid formats. It governs the procedures and timelines for electing the Pass/Fail grading option and the implications of electing to take a course Pass/Fail. The policy also applies to faculty and administrative staff responsible for advising, registration, and academic recordkeeping.

3. Definitions, Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Definitions

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3.1.2. Pass: Earned grade of D or higher.

3.1.3. Fail: Earned grade of F.

3.1.4. Credit-Bearing Course: A course that contributes to the total number of credits required for degree completion and is recorded on the student's academic transcript.

3.1.5. Non-Traditional Term: Any academic session outside the standard fall or spring semester, such as summer, winter, or intersession, which may have modified timelines.

3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

3.2.1. Students:



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Review academic calendars and deadlines related to Pass/Fail grading option election deadline.

Consult with academic advisors before electing Pass/Fail option.

Submit Pass/Fail requests within the designated timeframe.

Monitor their academic records to ensure changes are accurately reflected.

3.2.2. Academic Advisors:

Provide guidance to students on degree requirements and the impact of normal vs Pass/Fail grading options.

Assist students in understanding the implications of electing the Pass/Fail grading option.

Approve grading option changes when required by university policy.

3.2.3. Faculty Members:

There are no additional responsibilities required of faculty members when a student elects to take a course Pass/Fail. Grading requirements for the course are unaltered and grades are entered normally.

3.2.4. Registrar's Office:

Maintain and enforce the official academic calendar and deadlines.

Process Pass/Fail requests and ensure accurate updates to student records.

Provide support and documentation for students and staff regarding Pass/Fail election procedures.

Record the pass (P) or fail (F) grade in the student's academic record as determined by the letter grade submitted by the instructor of record at the end of term.

4. Policy

4.1. Students may take a maximum of 12 credits on a Pass/Fail basis; however, no more than one course each semester may be taken under the Pass/Fail option.

4.2. Pass credits are not reflected in the student's GPA; however, a passing (P) grade is counted as credit hours earned. A passing grade is considered D or better. A grade of F will impact the GPA.

4.3. Students may elect the Pass/Fail option through the tenth calendar day of a regular Fall or Spring semester. For non-traditional terms (e.g., summer or intersession), the deadline will be adjusted accordingly. Students may neither change the Pass/Fail option to a letter grade nor select the Pass/Fail option after this deadline.

4.4. Two failures under the Pass/Fail option will constitute a loss of the option.

4.5. Pass/Fail credits cannot count towards more than one course of General Education.

4.6. One course in the academic major or minor may be taken as Pass/Fail at the discretion of the program and requires the Department Chair's signature.

4.7. Students may not repeat a course using the Pass/Fail option.



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- 4.8. If the Pass/Fail grading option cannot be used towards an individual course or if there is a minimum grade standard for a course, then this requirement will be clearly stated in the catalog and will supersede the general policy restrictions.

5. Compliance and Enforcement

- 5.1. Every University policy will undergo a regular review on a five-year cycle, with approximately 20% of the total policies inventory being reviewed each year.
- 5.2. All policy reviews will be conducted by the responsible Senate Committee to assure that the policy remains relevant and aligns with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, PASSHE Board of Governors policies, and other University policies, procedures, standards, or guidelines.

6. Additional Information

6.1. Supporting Documents

6.2. History

- 6.2.1. Replaces Interim Academic Policy 38
- 6.2.2. Effective Date – April 23, 2026
- 6.2.3. Revised – April 23, 2026
- 6.2.4. Next Review Date – Spring 2031

6.3. Related Policies

6.4. Contacts for Additional Information and Reporting

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