Proposal for a temporary modification to the existing P/F option for Spring 2020 courses

- The P/F grading option will be available to students enrolled in all undergraduate courses until, Monday May 25, in spring 2020 ONLY.
- Students may choose the P/F option for courses that use the normal grading mode (A, A-, ...).
- Any All College Elective where the course does not satisfy a specific requirement in the student’s degree program may be taken pass/fail.
- Any specific requirement where satisfactory completion only requires passing (D- or better) may be taken P/F; this includes courses that satisfy General Education and courses in certain majors/minors where C- is not required for the course.
- Courses where achieving a C- or better is required for the student’s degree program may not be taken Pass/fail. If the student changes their major in the future to one where any course they received a P in spring 2020 requires a C- or better, we will revert to the grade awarded when the course was taken.

Here are the things we have learned through various discussions:

- Not allowing P/F for courses where C- or better is required addresses two key issues.

  We don’t have guidance from all of our accrediting bodies where we are permitted to allow a P grade satisfy major requirements. All of such programs require C- or better for courses attributed to the major.

  Allowing students who only earn a D grade in foundational courses where faculty decided C- establishes minimum competency will make it difficult for the student to be successful in other courses expecting that competency.

- There is a potential for students to have a zero Term GPA if they choose P/F for all of their courses. This can have Academic Standing implications causing the student to DQ or go on AP. We will permit such a student to return in fall 2020. There may be impact here on students getting TAP or PELL. Students must consider this very carefully before attempting to use the P/F option for all their courses.

- Based on guidance from Student Accounts and Financial Aids, there is no issue when a P grade is awarded as long the course satisfies a requirement such as allowing progress towards completing 120 credits required for graduation. There are instances where scholarships, grants, and Aid require a certain level of GPA achievement; this further reinforces the fact that students must carefully consider what courses they choose to request P/F for.
- Students will not be eligible for President's and Dean's lists if they have too many P/F grades. It does matter how many credits are used to calculate GPA in determining standing for high achievement. Given that the student is choosing which courses will be P/F for them, this is a fair outcome.

- Changing what can become a P was considered, converting C- or better grades to P and any lower grade to an F, including D grades. This change will not help students where they would have received a P under the current policy with a D-. Students will receive an F when their grade is a D; the student will not even earn credit. A P grade for a student who receives a D will help them more than only turning their C- or better grade to a P. This type of alteration would also change the rules on students who had already chosen to take courses pass/fail this semester under the existing policy.

- We need to discuss what some colleges are doing which is allowing the student to choose P/F after final grades are sent out. The temporary policy as written expects the student to choose this option through May 15 which is before they will see their final grades. Some faculty will have informed students of their final grade already by then. We can encourage all faculty to do that.

- We also need to discuss letting faculty in various programs decide if they want certain courses in their program that currently require C- or better to choose to allow a P/F for that course. The proposal here does not provide for this option.