



Mary Gauvain
Telephone: (510) 987-0887
Email: mary.gauvain@ucop.edu

Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
Faculty Representative to the Regents
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

December 16, 2020

ACADEMIC SENATE DIVISION CHAIRS

Re: Extension of Guidance on Divisional Flexibility for Grading Options for Winter, Spring, and Summer 2021

Dear Colleagues:

In March, May, and September 2020, in response to the rapid pivot to remote learning under COVID-19, the Academic Council issued letters from the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) providing guidance to divisions around the use of the P/NP grading option during Spring, Summer, and Fall 2020. At its December 2020 meeting, Council endorsed a new UCEP letter with guidance to divisions on the issues to keep in mind when considering whether to extend divisional flexibility for grading options to the winter, spring, and summer 2021 academic terms.

I ask Senate Division chairs to forward the UCEP document to your respective Committees on Education Policy and Undergraduate Councils. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Mary Gauvain'.

Mary Gauvain, Chair
Academic Council

Cc: UCEP Chair Potter
Senate Directors
Hilary Baxter, Executive Director, Academic Senate

Encl.



UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY (UCEP)
Daniel Potter, Chair
dpotter@udavis.edu

Assembly of the Academic Senate Daniel Potter,
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607-5200
Phone: (510) 987-9466

December 8, 2020

Mary Gauvain, Chair
Academic Council

RE: Divisional Flexibility for Grading Options through Summer 2021

Dear Mary,

In March (link [here](#)), May (link [here](#)), and September (distributed by Michael LaBriola on 9/29) 2020, UCEP provided guidance around the use of the P/NP grading option in response to the remote learning that has occurred over the last several academic terms as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, we offer guidance on extending P/NP flexibility to the 2021 winter, spring, and summer academic terms, on the assumption that instruction will continue to be mostly or entirely remote at least through summer 2021.

As noted in the previous memos, the policies that govern the use of P/NP grades are almost entirely under Divisional control, with the exception of [SR782](#), which stipulates that no more than an average of one course per term may be taken on a P/NP basis, with campuses adopting either a 25% or a 33% upper limit (details are provided in the Appendix to our May, 2020 memo). Some campuses have therefore elected not to include courses taken P/NP during the COVID-affected terms to date in the calculation of percentage of graded courses.

As further noted in both of the previous memos, UCEP cautions that there are potential unintended negative consequences that may result from students taking courses on a P/NP basis, which are described in detail in our March, 2020 memo. Each Division should consider these carefully in developing their policies.

More broadly, UCEP urges all Divisions to remain mindful of the extraordinary challenges that students are currently facing and to exercise due caution when making decisions about educational policies for the foreseeable future. UCEP further urges Divisions to ensure that any relaxations of policies during the current pandemic are consistent across departments, schools, colleges, and campuses to whatever extent is possible. The desire to return to pre-COVID practices is strong, but conditions are still far from what we previously knew as normal, and how long it will take to find a new state of normality, as well as what that will look like, remain far from clear. Some consequences of the pandemic, including some that we may not anticipate, are likely to persist for several years and may affect different populations differently. Maintaining flexibility, sensitivity, and compassion in all aspects of policy regarding degree requirements — including major, minor, writing, and probation — will be crucial to minimizing harm to our most vulnerable students and maximizing chances of success for all as we navigate this pandemic and the transitions ahead of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Potter".

Daniel Potter, Chair
UCEP