



S/NC Grading

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Emergency Grade Mode



- S/NC grading is **NOT** the emergency (S*/NC) grade mode used during COVID.
- The emergency grade mode is only authorized through the end of Spring term 2021.
- As COVID subsides and we look to a more or less normal Fall term it is unlikely that we would continue the use of the emergency grade mode.
- Revert to standard S/NC (aka not emergency) grade mode after the emergency mode is over.
- Outside of the emergency grades there is no S grade mode option for graduate students.

S/NC A Brief Overview

Current S/NC regulation for undergraduates:

Satisfactory: Students have the option to take **elective courses** on a Satisfactory-No Credit basis; the satisfactory level to pass is defined as equivalent to a **grade of D-** or better. (Elective courses are those that are not used to fulfill General Education, the bachelor's degree requirements or the declared major and minor requirements.) The student must **choose this option at registration** and cannot reverse that decision.



S/NC A Brief Overview

- Elective courses only limits the scope so much as to effectively prohibit using S/NC grading for most undergraduates.
- Most students cannot or do not want to make that decision as early as initial registration, before they have assessed their other classes, the syllabus, the instructor/delivery style, etc..
- On the whole it is not a feasible option for most students.



By the Numbers



Emergency Grade Mode (S*/NC):

Spring '20, Winter '21, & so far in Spring '21:

- 1,151 individuals chose the emergency grade mode
- The emergency grade mode was applied to 2,815 classes
 - 2,053 of which received S* grades
 - 416 of which received NC

Normal S/NC grading (no date restrictions = 2009 forward):

- 130 individual chose S/NC grading
- S/NC grading was applied to 199 classes
 - 149 of which received S grades
 - 22 of which received NC grades

What We've Learned

- Students used S*/NC for valid reasons unrelated to COVID and online learning.
- It has revealed other facets of student needs and other potential applications of S/NC grading.
- Students, recognizing the benefits of S*/NC grading, may question the normal S/NC restrictions.
- Every student circumstance is unique flexibility helps meet needs.
- Students are more empowered and comfortable exploring.
- S/NC mitigates barriers (i.e. the GPA impacts of a C- to D- in a class where a passing grade is sufficient) .
- Warning, Probation, & Suspension are demoralizing. May drop out entirely. Could be avoided by judicious use of S/NC in appropriate classes.



Student options when 'life happens'

Student life circumstances are a critical factor in enrollment and progress towards a degree.

Students that find themselves struggling due to unexpected life events or a challenging slate of classes have limited options all of which carry enrollment, financial, and academic consequences:



- Drop or withdraw from a class(es). Lowering enrollment, stalling progress towards a degree, and creating financial obligations for classes they will not benefit from.
- Choose to work less in one or more classes in order to focus on others, resulting in poor academic performance.
- In the last few weeks of the term an incomplete may be an option, but that is a workload they carry over to a future term.

Other Oregon Public Universities

- U of O - week 7, C- minimum for S grade for UG & B- for GR, applicability to major requirements varies by department/program.
- PSU - week 7, C- minimum for S grade for UG & B- for GR, applicability to requirements varies by major/degree, and no more than 45 towards a baccalaureate (only 20 in last 45).
- OIT - does not have this option
- SOU - C- minimum for S grade, requires prior approval, cannot be used in GR programs, and 1 class only per term.
- EOU- week 4, C- minimum for S grade, approval required to apply to program/major, 36 credit maximum towards baccalaureate.
- OSU - week 7, C- minimum for S grade, not applicable to GR programs, advisor/dean approval required, 36 credit maximum towards baccalaureate.



Recommendation



- Expand S/NC option to at least general education & electives.
- Set week 7 deadline to make the change to S/NC as alternative to withdrawing from course.
- Program determination regarding ability to apply S/NC in the major, minor, concentration, and/or certificate.
 - Initially solicit decisions in bulk. On-going incorporate into program proposals.
 - Similar to emergency grade mode, we can disable the S/NC option for certain courses.
- A C- minimum (rather than D-) in alignment with other OPUs.
 - Will mitigate many prerequisite concerns.
- Consider a cap on the number of total credits a student can take S/NC
 - Most common number at other OPUs is 36 credits

Recommendation



- Education campaign for students and advisors.
 - Ideally incorporate a workflow for advisor approval.
- Instructors would put in the syllabus whether or not class has option of S/NC.
- Add a statement about S/NC grade modes in catalog under academic regulations and add a notation to each program regarding the use of S/NC grade option.