

Substitute Motion on Alternative Grading for Spring 2021

Submitted by Anand Rao to the UMW University Faculty Council

Rationale: Spring 2021 will not be a typical semester. It will start later than normal, will have a compressed schedule with no spring break, and a majority of courses offered will be online. The ongoing pandemic will likely impact the lives of many of our students as they, and their families, may face serious health emergencies. There are many reasons to provide additional flexibility for students as they navigate the upcoming semester. However, some faculty are concerned that extending alternative grading through the spring could be detrimental for students if they have too many CR/P-19/NC entries on their transcripts. After discussing earlier draft motions with colleagues, I am offering this substitute motion. It has been suggested that to offer CR/P-19/NC in the fall and then to not offer it in the spring, when very little has changed, would be difficult to justify, so this substitute motion extends the application of this policy through the spring. However, there are many faculty who have voiced concerns about students potentially having too many CR grades on their transcript, and this appears to be more of an issue within the major. This substitute motion would not allow CR/P-19/NC to count for major courses. The remainder of how the fall policy was administered, including department/college determinations for which courses could receive a P-19 or must have a Credit grade to count for major requirement/prerequisites, would stay the same.

Motion: Alternative Grading for Non-Major Courses in Spring 2021. UMW students will have the option of an alternative grading system of Credit/P-19/No Credit for *non-major* courses during the Spring 2021 semester. Credit represents a C or higher letter grade; Pass represents a C-, D+, D; No Credit represents a failing grade. Credit or Pass can satisfy general education requirements. Departments and colleges can decide whether a student must receive credit or pass for specific courses. All students will first receive letter grades, in accordance with the regular UMW grading system and the regular timeline for final grade submissions by faculty and their entrance into the system by the Registrar's office. After letter grades have been submitted, students will have the option of retaining the letter grade or switching to the alternative grading system for one course. Their overall GPA will then be adjusted accordingly, with an alternative grade not affecting the GPA. An exact deadline will be determined by relevant academic and administrative offices.