



Letter on Grading Policy for the Spring 2020 Semester

Dear students,

Over the past week or so, I have been following how other universities have been handling the current disruption related to COVID-19. In addition, our faculty and staff have been thinking of how we can help you this semester, considering that they are making a difficult transition to a mode of learning that none of you anticipated or planned for when you started school in January. Some other schools have adopted changes to grading for the remainder of this semester, for example, by converting all grades to Pass/Fail. Last week, in consultation with President Wilcox, the Registrar, and the academic division chairs, I decided to adopt a similar policy.

For the spring 2020 semester, Southern Virginia University students will receive no lower than the grade that they had earned up to the first day of online instruction, March 23, so long as they pass the course. This grade should currently be posted on Canvas: if there is any ambiguity about the grade you had as of yesterday, March 23, please ask your professor. You are still responsible for all coursework for the rest of the semester, and should do your best to achieve all you can in this new learning environment. But so long as you end up with a passing grade at the end of the semester, the grade on your transcript will be no lower than the grade you had before you began online instruction. The grade can improve if you do well on your remaining assignments and exams, but it can only go down if you fail the course.

In addition to this change, you will also have the option to convert any grade this semester to Pass/Fail. This means that if you pass a course, you will receive a "P" on your transcript for that course. A student receiving a "P" will receive course credit, but their GPA will not be affected. (A student receiving an "F" will be affected in the normal way: the student will not receive credit, and their GPA will be negatively affected.) Again, if you are evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis, you must still continue to work through the rest of the semester, and must still pass the course in order to get credit. Students may decide to convert their grade to Pass/Fail up until the last day of regular classes, May 6.

Your professors have been working diligently over these past several days to provide you with the best learning experience possible, in spite of these sudden disruptions. They are fully committed to help you achieve the academic goals that you and they set out at the beginning of this semester. I applaud you for your continued commitment to learning, and I hope that this relaxed grading policy will ease some worry that you may have about your GPA.

Please reach out to me or your professors with any questions about this policy change.

Best wishes,

Jeremiah John, Provost