

## FAQs for Pass/Not Pass Grading Option

Revised Nov 24, 2020

### **Q: What is Pass/Not Pass grading?**

A: In most cases, P/NP grading is a way of taking a class without worrying about your grade. As long as you satisfactorily complete the course at a level of C or better, you will receive a P grade and it will not impact your GPA. There may be advantages or disadvantages to this choice, depending on your situation. This FAQ is intended to help you understand this choice.

### **Q: What defines “Pass” and “Not Pass” in letter grades?**

A: For undergraduate students: “Pass” grade is equivalent to a C or higher. “Not Pass” grade is equivalent to C- and below.

For graduate students: “Pass” grade is equivalent to a C or higher. “Not Pass” grade is equivalent to C- and below. Any course in which graduate students receive a C- or Not Pass grade must be repeated.

Pass / Not Pass grades are not used in computing your grade point average (GPA) at NDNU. You will receive units for courses you complete with a Pass; you will not receive units for courses with Not Pass.

However, some schools may count a P as a C when calculating your GPA for admission, or not allow P grades for prerequisite or required courses. It’s best to check in with the admissions department at your intended schools or programs.

### **Q: Can I see my course grade before choosing the P/NP option?**

A: You should be able to make your decision after viewing your final grades. The deadline for submitting a P/NP request is after the grade deadline for faculty. The window for selecting P/NP for Fall semester 2020 courses is Mon December 21, 2020 through Wed January 6, 2021 at 4:00 pm Pacific Time. The window for selecting P/NP for Spring semester 2021 courses is Mon May 10, 2021 through Fri May 21, 2021 at 4:00 pm Pacific Time.

### **Q: What if I decide to keep my letter grades?**

A: You don’t need to do anything.

### **Q: Are there any advantages in choosing a Pass grade instead of a letter grade of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, or C grades?**

A: Maybe. Your GPA will not be changed by a Pass grade. This could be good or bad, depending on what grade the P would replace and what your other grades are. For

example, your GPA could be raised or lowered by a C grade, but a Pass grade will have no effect.

**Q: Are there any disadvantages in choosing a NP grade instead of a letter grade of C-, D+, D, or D-?**

A: Yes. C-, D+, D, and D- grades are considered passing in terms of earning units toward graduation, however they do impact your GPA. If you choose Not Pass instead of C-, D+, D, or D-, you would not earn units for that course. You would need to repeat a course with a Not Pass grade if it is required for graduation (such as general education, major or minor courses, or for total units).

**Q: If I want to select Pass/Not Pass grades as an option, how do I do that?**

A: Students may select the "Pass/Not Pass" option using the online form linked from the Registrar's web page. Before making a decision, there are several factors you need to consider as outlined in this FAQ – it may be beneficial to keep the letter grade. We recommend you speak with your instructor or advisor and consider things such as transfer and graduate/professional school applications.

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**Q: Can I select Pass/Not Pass for one or more specific course or do I have to select this option for all my courses?**

A: You can choose to have a letter grade or a Pass/Not Pass grade posted for any of your Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 courses. Students may end the semester with a mix of traditional letter grades and P/NP grades based on their situation. Using the online form available from the Registrar's web page, you enter the course number, section number, and course name for each course you wish to be graded as Pass/Not Pass.

**Q: Is Pass/Not Pass grade an option for all types courses?**

A: For Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 courses, Pass/Not Pass is an option which students can select for **any** of their enrolled courses, including General Education requirements, and courses in the Major or Minor.

**Q: I am retaking a course I previously failed. Can I select to take a Pass [P] grade in that course?**

A: Yes. A Pass [P] Grade would exclude the F in your GPA calculation. However, Pass/Not Pass grades are not used in calculating a GPA.

**Q: I am taking a course that requires a particular grade to move forward in my program. Can I select to take a Pass [P] grade option in that course?**

A: A Pass [P] grade is equivalent to a grade of C or higher. Most prerequisite requirements or program requirements require a grade of C or better, so you could move forward in your program with a P grade. However, there are times when a program will make an exception for a grade lower than C. Please speak with your program director or chair about your specific situation. Usually, a Not Pass grade would require you to repeat a course (similar to a grade of F), where a grade below C may not.

**Q: I need to improve my GPA or maintain a minimum GPA for a scholarship. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact this requirement?**

A: A Pass grade will not change your GPA. If you need to improve your GPA, you should consider a letter grade for the course.

If you have a scholarship from an organization or agency external to NDNU (including federal or state agencies), please check the requirements with that scholarship-granting agency.

**Q: I need to improve my GPA for graduation requirements. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact this requirement?**

A: Pass/Not Pass grades are excluded in computing the GPA and will not change your GPA if you select that option.

**Q: I am trying to make the Dean's list. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact this requirement?**

A: We do not anticipate changing policies regarding honors for undergraduate students. This includes requirements to qualify for the Dean's list. To be included on the full-time student Dean's list, an undergraduate student must have attained a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher in a program of 12 units or more of letter-graded courses in the previous semester. P/NP grades will not count toward Dean's list.

**Q: I want to be eligible for Commencement Honors. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact my eligibility?**

A: We do not anticipate changing policies regarding honors for undergraduate students. This includes requirements for Honors for Commencement and eligibility to be a Commencement Speaker.

In honoring an undergraduate student at Commencement, NDNU uses the cumulative grade point average and units completed at the end of the Fall semester for the May ceremony. All letter grades will be used to calculate honors eligibility GPA. All passing

grades, including those that have been excluded from the GPA calculation will count toward the 46 unit requirement.

The criteria for eligibility to be the undergraduate commencement speaker are: a minimum GPA at NDNU of 3.7, a minimum of 46 units earned at NDNU at the time of completion, and outstanding writing and speaking skills. All passing grades, including those that have been excluded from the GPA calculation will count toward the 46 unit requirement. Selection is made by a committee each spring.

The criteria for eligibility to be the graduate commencement speaker are: a minimum GPA in all university work attempted (at NDNU and other institutions) of 3.9, a maximum of 6 transfer credits from other institutions, expected completion of all work before the commencement ceremony, and outstanding writing and speaking skills. Selection is made by a committee each spring.

**Q: I want to be eligible for Graduation Honors. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact my eligibility?**

A: We do not anticipate changing policies regarding honors for undergraduate students. This includes requirements for Honors at Graduation.

To be eligible for academic honors at graduation, undergraduate students must have satisfied a minimum of 46 units at NDNU and achieved a qualifying GPA. All letter grades will be used to calculate honors eligibility GPA. All passing grades, including those that have been excluded from the GPA calculation will count toward the 46 unit requirement.

**Q: I am planning to transfer to another college/university. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact my transfer of units?**

A: With the COVID-19 situation, many colleges and universities may relax their policies and accept Pass grades for transferable or prerequisite courses. Note that some schools also limit how many units you can transfer in with Pass grades, however this may also change in light of COVID-19. Check with the Admissions Office of that institution to be certain. You should not expect courses with Not Pass grades to transfer.

**Q: I am applying to professional or graduate schools. How will selecting the Pass [P] grade option impact meeting professional or graduate school admission requirements?**

A: With the COVID-19 situation, it is not clear if graduate or professional schools will relax their policies and accept Pass grades in courses required for admission. Typically graduate and professional schools do not accept Pass grades in courses required for admission. You should check with the Admissions Office of institutions you are interested in or applying to.

**Q: I am a graduate student in a program that results in the granting of state licensure [e.g., counseling, teacher education]. Can I select a Pass/Not Pass option or are there regulations or professional program standards that require me to have only letter grades posted for my some or all of my courses?**

A: Accepting of Pass grades for courses required for state licensure depends on state regulations. Please check with your advisor to see if Pass grades are accepted for California licensure in your discipline. Note: if you are applying for a license outside the state of California, you will find that regulations vary by state.

**Q: What should I do before making the decision to select the Pass/Not Pass option?**

A: Check your posted grade. Check with your advisor, program director, or department chair to determine how Pass/Not Pass will have an impact on all the things listed in this FAQ. It may be beneficial to keep the letter grade.

The window for selecting P/NP for Fall semester 2020 courses is Mon December 21, 2020 through Wed January 6, 2021 at 4:00 pm Pacific Time. The window for selecting P/NP for Spring semester 2021 courses is Mon May 10, 2021 through Fri May 21, 2021 at 4:00 pm Pacific Time. Please be sure that this is the best decision for you at this time.

**Q: What if I submit a request for Pass/Not Pass option before the deadline and then change my mind?**

A: If you submit the online form requesting the Pass/Not Pass option for one or more of your classes before the deadline and then change your mind, **use your NDNU email** to email the registrar at [registrar@ndnu.edu](mailto:registrar@ndnu.edu). In your email provide your name, NDNU student ID number, and what changes you want to make. **You need to make this request by the deadline:** 4:00 pm Pacific Time on Jan 6, 2021 for Fall courses; 4:00 pm Pacific Time on May 21 for Spring courses.

**Q: Why is the timing so late to choose P/NP grading?**

A: This timing was chosen so that students would not select this option too early without a chance to thoroughly examine the consequences of their decision. This includes taking the time to contact and discuss your options with an advisor, program director, or department chair. With the deadline set after grades are posted for the semester, you will be able to know your grades in your courses before making the decision.