



[ADDENDUM] Academic Grading and Eligibility Policies (for Graduate Students)

March 26, 2020

In response to inquiries about how the new [academic grading and eligibility policies](#) affect graduate students, we offer this addendum and invite you to view related [FAQs](#) on the University Registrar's page. We intentionally used the same structure (and where relevant, terminology) as the initial memo regarding academic grading and eligibility policies. We highlight the graduate component here.

I. Pass/Fail Grading

During the Spring 2020 term only, and at the discretion of the individual student, any course may be graded on a pass/fail basis, and these courses will count toward program requirements and satisfy future prerequisite requirements if a passing grade is earned. A student wishing to move to the pass/fail grading option must notify the registrar by the last day of class for the Spring 2020 term.

Graduate students can opt to earn a Pass/Fail grade instead of an A, B, C grade in letter-graded graduate courses. For a student who chooses this option and earns a Pass (equivalent to A, B, or C) those units will count toward degree completion, but will not affect GPA. A course that was initially letter-graded (A, B, C) but converted to Pass for Spring 2020 will count toward required letter-graded units. Courses that are already S, P, F grades will remain S, P, F and are counted as non-letter-graded units.

II. Course Withdrawal

The last date for a student-initiated withdrawal from a full-term class in the current term will be moved to April 14, 2020. For non-full-term sessions, the registrar will provide similar dates. The deadline for complete withdrawal will remain the last day of class.

Note: The new deadline for individual class withdrawal occurs after students have been allowed to experience the new online modality for three weeks.

There is not currently a maximum withdrawal allowance for graduate students. However, withdrawals may negatively impact their time to degree and satisfactory academic progress. Moreover, graduate students must be enrolled in minimum units to maintain funding, graduate assistantships, and visa eligibility and are encouraged to communicate with the Graduate Program Coordinator or Director of Graduate Studies before withdrawing from a course. Review the [continuous enrollment policy](#) here.

III. Grade Replacement Opportunity and Repeating a Course and Academic Renewal

Graduate students are not eligible for grade replacement opportunity (GRO). However, the Graduate College will include Spring 2020 as an extra semester for graduate students seeking Academic Renewal. Normally, a graduate student can petition for Academic Renewal for up to 4 consecutive semesters. A student may also include Spring 2020 for consideration above and beyond the 4 semesters currently allowed. See the current [academic renewal policy](#).

IV. Graduate Academic Eligibility

The two academic statuses for graduate students are: eligible (satisfactory academic progress) and academic probation. The academic eligibility status of a graduate student at the end of the Spring 2020 term will be determined by the student's most recent status, except in the case when a student who was on probation earns a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater, in which case their status will become "eligible."

Specifically, graduate students currently on academic probation will have their probation hold lifted if they bring their cumulative graduate GPA up to 3.0 at the end of Spring 2020.

Graduate students currently on academic probation will have an additional semester to raise the graduate GPA and will NOT be dismissed at the end of Spring 2020. The deadline to increase graduate GPA to 3.0 is extended to the end of Fall 2020. See current [academic probation policy](#) and [satisfactory academic progress policy](#).

V. Incomplete Grades

University of Arizona policy states that "the grade of I may be awarded only at the end of the term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. The grade of I is not to be awarded in place of a failing grade or when the student is expected to repeat the course."

This policy and process is not being revised and we hope this grading option will be used very sparingly. However, if you feel this is the appropriate grading option, we encourage you to consult with individual students prior to assigning an I grade (in order to clearly specify the work to be completed, as well as the timeline for completion). The I grade should NOT be given to an entire class.

Graduate students must complete all "incomplete" (e.g., 'I') coursework before they are eligible to graduate.

VI. Graduate Defenses, Oral Exams, and Thesis/Dissertation Submission Deadlines

For the Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 terms, we strongly recommend that all defenses and exams be held remotely using telephone or computer-assisted remote meetings. However, please follow current University policy on gatherings and spatial distancing. [Covid-19 updates can be found here](#).

During this time, it is not necessary to request special permission for all committee members and the student to participate remotely. Please ensure that all committee members are present and that the technology is sufficient for an effective and supportive communication environment. Please make sure to announce exams on GradPath at least two weeks in advance of the exam occurring. Doctoral students should enter their program's building for the "Building" field in the Announcement of Comprehensive Exam and Announcement of Final Oral Defense forms on GradPath and list "Remote" in the "Room" field.

For the Spring and Summer 2020 terms, the deadlines for Doctoral defenses and final submission of Master's thesis and Doctoral dissertations have been extended. Please note that all other requirements for degree completion (e.g., coursework) must be completed as per University deadlines.

Master's Students

For students pursuing a Master's thesis or capstone project, the deadline to submit the final approved thesis for archiving has been extended to July 15th 2020 for Spring 2020 graduates and to October 22nd 2020 for Summer 2020 graduates. Thesis oral defenses should occur by May 15th, 2020 for Spring 2020 graduates and August 22nd for Summer 2020 graduates.

Doctoral Students

The deadline to complete the doctoral final oral examination/defense has been extended to May 15th 2020 for Spring 2020 graduates, and to August 22 for Summer 2020 graduates.

The deadline to submit final, approved, signed dissertations (or any other doctoral product such as DMA document or DNP project report) to the Graduate College has been extended to July 15th 2020 for Spring 2020 graduates, and to October 22nd for Summer 2020 graduates.

Dissertation chairs are asked to please report the results of the final oral defense on GradPath promptly after the defense itself. You do not need to wait for the student to complete all required revisions before you report the results – you can report a “Pass with Revisions”. Your Graduate College Degree Counselor will confirm whether the student has completed all the required revisions upon review of the final dissertation/document.

VII. Time to Degree

Master's and Doctoral Students whose Spring 2020 term was affected by Covid-19-related changes may extend their time to degree by one semester without submitting a petition. Coursework for Master's students normally expires after 6 years. This extension would allow for 6.5 years to complete coursework for those affected by Covid-19 during the Spring 2020 term. Normally, Doctoral students must complete all degree requirements (e.g., oral defense, dissertation submission) within 5 years of passing their comprehensive exams. This extension would allow for 5.5 years to complete requirements for those affected by Covid-19 during the Spring 2020 term.

Please know that the Graduate College is working hard behind the scenes to make sure that our students continue toward degree completion.

Be well,

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