

**Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) Option for Spring 2020**  
**Frequently Asked Questions for Faculty**  
**(Last revised April 21, 2020)**

**1. How should faculty enter grades for Spring 2020? How will I know whether a student has elected the normal letter grading process or CR/NC?**

Faculty will enter grades as usual, assigning letter grades to all students except for courses that are normally graded on a CR/NC basis. The letter grades entered by faculty will be converted to CR/NC by the Registrar's office for students who have chosen this option. After your grade roster is submitted, and the grades are posted, your roster will show both the grade you submitted and the posted grade.

**2. The normal requirement for passing 100W, 100A, and certain other courses is a grade of C (not C-). But a Credit (CR) is awarded for a C- or better. If students choose the Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grading option for Spring 2020 will a grade of CR fulfill the graduation requirement for 100W and other courses that normally require a grade of C or better?**

Yes. For Spring 2020 only, a CR grade will fulfill the same graduation requirements as a minimum grade of C for 100W, 100A, and any other courses that normally require a grade of C or better. This is a temporary but necessary adjustment to allow fairness and flexibility for students across the university, in response to the extraordinary circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**3. A minimum 2.0 GPA is normally required across the three SJSU Studies courses (Areas R, S, and V). If a student chooses a CR/NC grading option for an SJSU Studies course, how will this affect the minimum 2.0 GPA requirement?**

For any student who takes one or more Area R, S, and V classes in the Spring 2020 semester (regardless of whether the student chooses to receive a letter grade or opts for CR/NC), the requirement for a minimum aggregate 2.0 GPA in R, S, and V classes will be waived for graduation.

Note: Students using R, S, and V courses in the major still must meet any major-specific grade minimum requirements for R, S, and V courses.

**4. Do students need my approval to switch to a CR/NC grading option for Spring 2020?**

No. It is the student's right to choose their grade scheme in their courses. They may seek the advice of a faculty member, but it is ultimately their decision. Students will complete a [form](#) to request a change to CR/NC grading for any course(s) they choose for the Spring 2020 semester, via the Registrar's office. Faculty members do not approve or deny this request.

**5. What is the deadline for students to choose the CR/NC option? ([Student FAQ#1](#))**

There are two time periods for students to choose CR/NC for their courses: now through May 1, and after grades are posted through June 8. Prior to May 1, students are petitioning to change their grading method from a letter grade to CR/NC. If students choose to wait until their grades are posted, they are requesting a grade change. The two methods, which vary slightly in name, result in the same outcome: a student receives a grade of CR/NC instead of a letter grade. The petitions for each of these requests will be available on the Registrar's website.

The advantage of choosing CR/NC by May 1 is that the student's transcript will reflect the change immediately upon release in June. If a student elects to change the grading option after grades have been posted, it may take several months for the transcript to reflect that change.

**6. What grade is required to earn a grade of CR? ([Student FAQ#2](#))**

For undergraduate courses, a grade of C- or better converts to a CR. The following letter grades convert to No Credit (NC): D+, D, D-, F, or unauthorized withdrawal (WU). Students who earn a NC will be considered as a repeat student the next time they enroll in the course.

For graduate courses, a grade of B- or better converts to a CR. The following letter grades convert to No Credit (NC): C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, or unauthorized withdrawal (WU). Students who earn a NC will be considered as a repeat student the next time they enroll in the course. A course that earns a NC may not be used on a candidacy form.

If a student withdraws from (or late drops) a class, their transcript will show a W, which earns neither grade points nor units. Students who have a W for a course will be considered as a first-time student the next time they enroll in the course.

**7. Can students choose the CR/NC for any course for Spring 2020? ([Student FAQ#3](#))**

Yes, students can choose which course(s) they want to take CR/NC. They should think carefully about their choices. In some cases (for example, some GE courses), a D+, D, or D- counts toward the completion of a requirement. If students choose CR/NC, however, a CR is equivalent to a minimum of a C-. In short, a NC could mean students have to retake a class, whereas a D+, D, or D- would not.

Graduating seniors should consider carefully the implications for their graduation status of earning a NC. They may want to talk to an advisor before submitting a petition to select CR/NC for courses.

*NOTED EXCEPTION:* Students do not need to submit a CR/NC petition for a Physical Education (PE) course, because all PE courses are being automatically converted to CR/NC for Spring 2020.

**8. How do CR/NC grades affect a student's GPA? ([Student FAQ#5](#))**

CR/NC grades do not have grade points associated with them and thus do not count in the GPA. For example, if a student takes 15 units of courses CR/NC for the semester, they will earn units toward their degree and meet the course requirements (such as a major or GE requirements), but their SJSU GPA will not change. See *Student FAQ #5 for additional detail*.

**9. Are there certain classes that a student should not opt to take CR/NC? ([Student FAQ#8](#))**

For the Spring 2020 semester only, students are able to choose the CR/NC grading option for all types of courses (Major, Minor, Prerequisites, GE).

However, if students are planning to apply to graduate programs or internships and want their transcript to show a letter grade rather than CR for a particular course, they may not want to switch to CR/NC for that course. Students should also think carefully about choosing CR/NC for courses that allow them to use a grade lower than a C- (D+, D, D-) to fulfill a requirement.

In some cases, earning a D+, D, or D- will progress students toward their degree (example, some GE courses or major courses). On the other hand, if they selected the CR/NC option, a D+, D, or D- would convert to a NC. As a result, they would need to retake the class.

If a student is trying to increase their GPA, be aware that courses assigned a CR/NC grading scheme are not included in the GPA calculation. They will earn units for courses with a CR grade, but no Grade Points will be included in the GPA calculation.

**10. What about accredited programs? Can students in accredited programs choose the CR/NC grading option? ([Student FAQ#14](#))**

Rules differ by accreditation agencies. Please contact your department to check about this. A list of departments with accredited program is found here <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/schedules/accreditation.html>

**11. Will switching to CR/NC affect a student's financial aid? ([Student FAQ#16](#))**

Taking a course CR/NC will NOT impact receipt of financial aid for most students. It should be noted that if a student earns a NC then it can affect their "satisfactory academic progress" which can affect their financial aid in the future. If students have questions about how choosing CR/NC might impact your chance of passing a course, please have them contact an advisor.

Veterans and dependents using VA Benefits, student athletes, and international students are subject to special rules (see Student FAQs #17, #18, #19).

**12. Are there certain students who should think carefully about choosing the CR/NC option?**

Yes. Students using Veterans benefits, student athletes, and international students must consider additional implications of CR/NC grades. See [Student FAQs 17-19](#).

**13. What if a student makes a mistake in choosing the CR/NC option and it prevents them from graduating, causes them to not pass a prerequisite, or negatively impacts their F-1 visa status? ([Student FAQ#20](#))**

If students switch to CR/NC by May 1, 2020, but discover that this has adversely affected their progress to degree, they can petition for a grade change back to letter grades before June 8, 2020. A special petition will be provided for this purpose.

**14. What if a student realizes after the end of the semester that they should have chosen the CR/NC grading option? ([Student FAQ#21](#))**

Students can complete a Spring 2020 Grade Change petition from the time their grade is posted through June 8, 2020. This will allow them to make the switch from letter grade to CR/NC. If they choose this option there may be a considerable delay in updating their transcript to reflect the change.

**15. Can students still take an Incomplete for Spring 2020? ([Student FAQ#22](#))**

Yes. There will be no changes to the normal Incomplete policy for Spring 2020. Students should consult with instructors to request an Incomplete. An Incomplete grade may be appropriate if a student has completed a substantial portion of the course and is passing the course, but is unable to complete the course requirements within the academic term.

A student has up to one year to complete their work, though there should be a date agreed upon by the student and the instructor in the "Incomplete Contract" approved during the grading period. If a student elects to take an incomplete grade for a course, they will not re-enroll in the course, but instead work with the instructor to complete the remaining elements of the course. When the work has been completed, the instructor will assign a final grade.

NOTE: The deadline for Incomplete grades assigned for previous semesters and due to be completed by the end of Spring 2020 or Summer 2020 will be extended to December 7, 2020 (the end of the fall semester).

**16. Can students still request a late drop from a course, or the whole Spring 2020 semester? ([Student FAQ#23](#))**

Yes, petitions may be submitted through May 11. Students should talk with an advisor in their department or college success center before submitting a late drop or withdrawal request. [Department and College Advising Contact Information](#). Undergraduate forms and instructions can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/forms/>. Additional questions may be addressed to [academic.advising@sjsu.edu](mailto:academic.advising@sjsu.edu).

## FAQs for Faculty Teaching Graduate Courses (also See [Graduate Student FAQs](#))

### **17. What grades do graduate students need to earn credit in a graduate course? What about an undergraduate course?**

For credit (CR) to be given in a graduate course (>200 course number), students must earn a grade of a B- or better. To earn credit (CR) in an undergraduate course being used in the graduate program, graduate students must earn a grade of C- or better. Courses at both levels that earn CR can be used for candidacy. Keep in mind that no more than 40% of a graduate student's program can be made up of CR/NC courses. Be sure to check with your program advisor if you have courses that are normally required to be CR/NC, such as field or research courses.

### **18. How will the CR/NC option impact a graduate student's GPA?**

While letter grades are factored into the calculation of the GPA, CR/NC grades are NOT. For graduate students, a cumulative GPA minimum of 3.0 is required to graduate. Therefore, if a graduate student expects to earn a grade of B- or lower in a course, they should carefully consider selecting the CR/NC option for that course (Graduate FAQ #2 describes which letter grades result in a CR vs NC grade). This consideration should balance the negative impact that the course letter grade would have on their GPA (if they do not request CR/NC grading), with making satisfactory progress toward their degree. A grade of CR would count as successfully completing the course while a NC grade would not. Graduate students should consult with their advisor for guidance on whether the CR/NC option is advisable in their situation.

### **19. Are there any situations where it might be best for graduate students to NOT elect to take a course CR/NC?**

Graduate students should consider *not* taking the CR/NC option if they expect to earn a grade of C or C+ in a graduate course and if that course is required for your degree program and/or is a prerequisite for another required course. This is because the CR/NC option would result in a NC grade for a graduate course (see Graduate FAQ #2), which would not count toward fulfilling the requirements, but a grade of C or C+ would count toward the requirement. However, students should keep in mind the impact the grade will have on their GPA. In these situations it is highly recommended that students speak with a graduate advisor before making the decision. An overall graduate GPA minimum of 3.0 and an overall program GPA minimum of 3.0 (i.e on the candidacy form) are required to graduate.

### **20. Can international students take courses CR/NC?**

Yes, international students can take a course for CR/NC. Per Federal regulations, international students in F-1 status must complete at least 12 units/semester if they are an undergraduate and 9 units/semester if they are a graduate student in order to maintain their immigration status. As a result, the student will need to earn CR for those required units by either earning a CR or a letter grade of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-. Further, an unauthorized withdrawal (WU) grade adversely affects immigration status. The regulations are complex and confusing, so for help understanding what is sufficient, students should contact an international student advisor at [international-office@sjsu.edu](mailto:international-office@sjsu.edu).

- 21. How can earning a CR or NC impact a graduate student's candidacy form?**  
Courses with a grade of CR may be listed on the candidacy form like any other letter-graded course. Courses with NC grades do not count as fulfilling degree requirements and must be repeated or replaced by another course for credit. (In some situations the exact same course will need to be repeated; students should check with their advisor). CR/NC grades are not used in calculating the GPA. Remember, though, that no more than 40% of a graduate student's program can be made up of CR/NC courses.
- 22. The course that a student is currently taking is a prerequisite for another course requiring that they earn a grade of 'B' or better. Given that a CR can mean either a B- minimum (graduate course) or C- minimum (undergraduate course), how would that impact a student's ability to register for a course requiring a 'B' or better?**  
Departments have been instructed to accept courses completed in Spring 2020 with the grade of CR as fulfilling prerequisite requirements, including those that require a grade higher than those that earn CR.
- 23. What if a graduate student was taking either an internship, clinical, or field placement course and was unable to complete the required hours for the course?**  
Students should speak with their professor and/or graduate advisor to see if anything can be substituted for the required hours.
- 24. What if a graduate course does not follow the traditional SJSU semester calendar and will end before or after May 11. Do students have to complete the petition to select a course to be graded Credit/NoCredit by the deadline of May 1, 2020? Does it matter if they have already received a grade?**  
It depends. If the course was completed prior to March 9, 2020, then it was not affected by the current crisis and this new policy does not apply. If it was (or will be) completed on or after March 9, then students may select the CR/NC option by the May 1 or June 8 deadlines. In a course that ended after March 9, 2020 students may select this option even if they have already received a grade.
- 25. Can a graduate student still request a late drop or withdraw from the entire semester?**  
Yes, late drop or withdrawal petitions for Spring 2020 may be submitted through May 11. Students should talk with an advisor in their department before submitting a late drop or withdrawal request. The *Graduate Petition for Course Drop/semester Withdrawal* and instructions can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms>.

**Any other questions?**

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