

November 18, 2020

**Academic and Instructional Flexibilities for Winter Quarter 2021
Sent to Academic Senate and Academic Federation Members**

Dear Colleagues,

The Academic Senate has approved several academic and instructional flexibilities for winter 2021. This information will soon be communicated to the broader campus community, and it is also available on the Academic Senate's [COVID-19 webpage](#).

We also approved one additional flexibility for our current quarter, fall 2020 (see "maximum P/NP unit exception" below). All fall 2020 flexibilities are likewise available on the Academic Senate's [COVID-19 webpage](#).

Final Exams

For winter 2021, the [requirement](#) that instructors of undergraduate courses hold final exams is waived. Instructors will decide if their course will have a final exam, and that information must be provided to students in the syllabus/course outline by the end of the first week of classes. You can view the full waiver [here](#).

As part of this waiver, the Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) emphasized that final exams are used to demonstrate cumulative (or comprehensive) understanding of course materials. COCI encourages instructors to explore alternative assessment methods that will achieve similar goals, as appropriate for their courses. Some examples of alternative assessment methods can be found on the [Keep Teaching](#) website.

Undergraduate Passed/Not Passed (P/NP) Grading

- P/NP deadline extension: The deadline for undergraduate students to opt for P/NP grading in a course, or to revert back to letter grading, has been extended to the last day of instruction for winter 2021 (March 12, 2021).
- Undergraduate students not in good academic standing: For winter 2021, an undergraduate student not in good academic standing may opt to take specific courses on a P/NP basis up to the limits specified in [Davis Division Regulation A545.B](#) via petition and approval by their dean's office.
- Maximum P/NP unit exception: Current Academic Senate policy ([DDR A545.B](#)) states that no more than one-third of the units for graduation taken at UC Davis by an undergraduate student may be taken on a P/NP basis. Fall 2020 and winter 2021 units are exempt from this one-third calculation; fall 2020 and winter 2021 units taken P/NP will not be calculated in the numerator (P/NP units taken) or the denominator (total units taken) of the one-third maximum.
 - This P/NP maximum unit exception does not override colleges' P/NP unit caps for graduation if such caps are more restrictive. This P/NP maximum unit exception also does not override additional college or major limitations on the use of P/NP courses for degree requirements.

Graduate Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Grading

- S/U deadline extension: Graduate students will have until the last day of instruction (March 12, 2021) to submit a Grading Option Change request form for winter 2021.
- Maximum S/U course exception: Current Academic Senate policy ([DDR A546.A](#)) limits the number of optional S/U courses allowed each term. For winter 2021, a graduate student in good standing (or who receives approval from the Office of Graduate Studies) is authorized to undertake, in addition to courses graded on an S/U-only basis, not more than two courses on an optional S/U basis.

Thank you for your attention to these flexibilities. Please contact me with any questions.

Take care,
Richard

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