

# SPRING 2020: Policy Modifications and FAQs

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The coronavirus pandemic made the lives of our students, instructors, and staff very difficult in the Spring 2020 semester. In an effort to alleviate some of the stress students experienced in trying to adapt to an online learning environment, the UC Berkeley Campus and the College of Letters and Science (L&S) adapted policies to support our students during this time.

This page was published in Spring 2020 to keep students informed about how L&S responded to campus policy modifications and current events. Students were notified multiple times by the College that policies were being modified and to refer to this page for policies.

**These policy modifications are only applicable for Spring 2020 and may not be applied to other semesters.**

## Spring 2020 Policy Modifications Summary

1. The Chair of the Academic Senate has announced that for Spring 2020 only, the default grades that instructors will give will be Pass and No pass.
2. A notation on every student's transcript will explain the changes made this semester. Please bear in mind that future employers and admissions committees will be seeing similar notations on transcripts from virtually every college and university in the U.S.
3. Classes taken this semester will satisfy University, Campus, College, Major and Minor requirements even though they receive P grades. This includes Reading and Composition, Foreign Language, and Quantitative Reasoning.
4. Limits on the total number of units taken P/NP will be relaxed.
5. Graduation GPA standards will be relaxed to take this semester's P grades into account.
6. Students will not be put on probation based on P grades, and progress on existing probation will be measured generously.
7. Students who withdraw this semester will be able to retain future enrollments.
8. The drop and grading option deadlines have been extended.
9. While L&S strongly recommends students keep the DPN grading option to ease academic stress, students can request a letter grade provided they do so before Fri, May 8, 2020.

## Spring 2020 Deadline Extensions:

1. The deadline to drop courses has been moved to Wed, May 6th at 11:59pm.
2. The deadline to reduce units in a course offered for a range of units (a variable unit course) has been moved to Wed, May 6th at 11:59pm.
3. The deadline to change a grading option from DPN to letter grade or from letter grade to DPN is Fri, May 8th at 11:59pm.
4. All other enrollment deadlines are unchanged.

## FAQ by Topic

### Degree Requirements

### Can a P grade satisfy....

A P grade earned in Spring 2020 will satisfy any UC Berkeley degree requirement. This includes:

- Major/Minor requirements
- Entry Level Writing
- Reading and Composition
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Foreign Language

### 1/3 P/NP Limit

At the time of graduation, P grades can account for no more than 1/3 of your total units completed at UC Berkeley. This is not assessed on a semester-by-semester basis.

P grades earned in Spring 2020 will not be counted against this 1/3 limitation.

### Cumulative GPA Requirement for Spring 2020 Graduation

Although GPA is calculated the same way as in previous semesters, the campus' shift to default pass/no pass has necessitated a change in how compliance with the GPA requirement to graduate is determined.

- For students whose cumulative GPA was between a 2.0 and a 2.5 (including a 2.0) at the beginning of Spring 2020:
  - If you earn NP grades in no more than 33% of your Spring 2020 courses, you will meet the cumulative GPA requirement.
  - If you are worried about earning NP grades in more than 33% of your courses *or* might lower your GPA below a 2.0 with letter grades, contact an L&S College Adviser to discuss your options.
- For students whose cumulative GPA was between a 1.9 and a 2.0 (not including a 2.0) at the beginning of Spring 2020:
  - If you take 13+ units (a full time load) in Spring 2020 and earn all P grades, you will meet the cumulative GPA requirement.
  - If your GPA is in this range, but you take fewer than 13 units *or* earn any NP (or D+ or lower grades) in Spring 2020, your case will be individually reviewed to determine if you meet the GPA requirement for graduation. Contact an L&S College Adviser to discuss your options.
- For students whose cumulative GPA was below a 1.9 at the beginning of Spring 2020:
  - Contact an L&S College Adviser to discuss your options.

### Transfer Coursework

If you are taking coursework through another institution in Spring 2020 (i.e. through Concurrent Enrollment or instead of being enrolled in Spring 2020 at UC Berkeley) and that institution has moved to a P/NP-default or P/NP-only grading model, P grades earned will be accepted for all degree requirements (see "Can a P grade satisfy....")

## Submitting Transcripts

Due to campus mail being suspended, students who need to submit transcripts from other institutions should choose to submit transcripts electronically. Please find instructions at [Submitting Transcripts to UC Berkeley](#) (deadlines referred to at the top of the page are for newly admitted students only).

If your institution is not able to send transcripts electronically, please wait to send your transcripts until Shelter In Place orders are lifted *unless you are graduating in Spring 2020*.

Spring 2020 graduates only: If you have a Spring 2020 EGT and have outstanding transfer credit that is required for your graduation *and* your institution cannot send an electronic copy of your transcript, please [Open a Case](#) with Cal Student Central (choose: Registrar > Transfer Credit) to get instructions on how to submit your transfer credit for your graduation check out.

## Enrollment Changes

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### What is the difference between DPN and PNP?

On April 5, 2020, courses offered for optional grading were converted to the default Pass/No Pass grading option in Cal Central.

- DPN indicates to you that the course was available for either grading option and is now "Default Pass/No Pass."
- PNP indicates a course was only ever available as Pass/No Pass.

These codes are just for your CalCentral. Your final transcript will show a P or NP based on the grade earned.

### Drops

We are no longer taking drop forms at this time. The deadline has passed.

The drop deadline was extended to RRR week. Drops before this new deadline will not be considered "late" and therefore will not require a Late Change of Class Schedule request. Additionally, the \$10 fee for dropping courses after the second Friday of instruction will be waived for any drops made after March 28.

- New Deadline: Wed, May 6 at 11:59pm
- How: An online petition is available on CalCentral. This form can be found under Dashboard > Student Resources > Submit a Form > "Request Spring 2020 Class Drop" or on your Academics page under "Class Adjustment."

No requests for drops of Spring 2020 courses will be considered after the May 6 deadline, **even with a Late Change of Class Schedule petition.**

- Dropping below 13 units: There will be no penalty from L&S for dropping below 13 units in Spring 2020. However, if you are on an International Student visa, or an NCAA athlete, you must determine with these offices whether you are able to drop below minimum units. Additionally, if you are on financial aid, we encourage you to discuss this decision with financial aid.
  - International Students: If you hope to drop below 12 units in Spring 2020, you must submit a [Reduced Course Load](#) request to the Berkeley International Office by Friday May 1, BEFORE dropping below 12 units.

- If you have already used a [Late Change of Class Schedule](#) this semester to drop a course, this will no longer count against your limit. You will be able to use this Late Change of Class Schedule in a future semester instead.

### Changing grading option back to Letter Graded

The move to P/NP in Spring 2020 is meant to reduce stress on students during a challenging semester. L&S is doing what it can to make sure that choosing to take courses P/NP will not have any negative impact on you. Please bear in mind that future employers and admissions committees will be seeing an increase of P/NP grade options on transcripts from virtually every college and university in the U.S.

If you still wish to change a grading option to Letter Graded:

- New Deadline: Fri, May 8 at 11:59pm
- How: You are able to make this change on CalCentral. If you have trouble, see this [instructional guide](#).

No requests for grading option changes for Spring 2020 courses will be considered after the May 8 deadline, **even with a Late Change of Class Schedule petition.**

Letter grades will impact the UC Berkeley GPA as usual.

### Adds

The add deadline is unchanged and has passed. If you have not used your [Late Change of Class Schedule](#) in a previous semester, you may use it to add courses by the usual deadline: Fri, May 1 at 4pm.

### Variable Unit Course Adjustments

A variable unit adjustment is only for courses that are offered for a range of units (ex: 1-4). Adjustments cannot be made to unit totals for non-variable unit courses (ex: if your course says it is 4 units, this cannot be changed).

If you wish to change the amount of units you originally signed up for in a variable unit Spring 2020 course, please read the following:

- Decreases to units: For Spring 2020, decreases in units will follow the same deadline and procedures as drops. Please see the "Drops" FAQ above.
- Increases to units: The deadline is unchanged and has passed. If you have not used your [Late Change of Class Schedule](#) in a previous semester, you may use it to increase your units in a variable unit course by the usual deadline: Fri, May 1 at 4pm.

### Withdrawal

You are able to [withdraw](#) from the Spring 2020 semester by Fri, May 8 at 11:59pm, which means leaving the entire semester and dropping all courses.

Typically, when students withdraw from a semester, all future course enrollments are cancelled (ex: if

you were signed up for Summer 2020 or Fall 2020 courses, these would be dropped from your schedule and you could attempt to re-add them once you have readmitted).

If you withdraw from Spring 2020 after April 1, 2020, you will not be dropped from future enrollments (Summer 2020 or Fall 2020) and will not have to apply for readmission\*. This means students will be responsible for tuition and fees unless they cancel their future term(s) on their own through CalCentral. You may review this policy further on the [Office of the Registrar's Service Adjustments page](#).

Students who withdrew before April 1 will need to apply for readmission as normal.

If you wish to withdraw from Spring 2020, we recommend speaking with an L&S Adviser if you have questions.

\*This does not apply to students who were medically withdrawn from Spring 2020 through the Tang Center and, as a result, have a medical hold on their account.

## Repeats/Incompletes

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### Repeats

If you are repeating a course in which you previously earned a letter grade, earning a P grade in Spring 2020 will remove the previous letter grade from your GPA (if you are still within your [repeat limit of 12 units](#) and this is your second attempt of the course).

All grades will remain on the transcript, per the standard repeat policy.

### Incomplete Grades

- If you are completing an Incomplete grade from an earlier semester, you will get either a letter grade or P/NP depending on the original grading option. If you feel Spring 2020 is not the best semester to complete your Incomplete grade, consider an [extension or freezing](#) the Incomplete. You may also discuss your options with an L&S College Adviser.
- If you are taking an incomplete grade in a course you enrolled in for Spring 2020, the grading option you choose by the May 8 deadline will determine the grade option you'll earn when you later complete the course. We recommend sticking with the P/NP grading option.
- Students typically are evaluated for continuation of enrollment if they have more than 12 units of Incomplete grades on their records. Spring 2020 Incomplete grades will not be included in the 12 unit rule.
- Students on probation: If you are on Academic Probation in Spring 2020 and take Incomplete grades in all of your Spring 2020 courses, you will be subject to dismissal and will be evaluated for continuation. Please discuss your options with an L&S College Adviser.

## Academic Probation

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### If I earn all P/NP grades, will I be put on Academic Probation?

- If you are on regular academic standing and earn all P grades, you will not be placed on Academic Probation.

- If more than half of your units in Spring 2020 are graded NP/F/I, you will be individually reviewed to determine if you will be put on Academic Probation. Your long-term academic patterns will be considered in this review.

### I'm on Academic Probation. How does this impact my status?

- If you earn 10 units or more of P grades (or letter grades of C- or better), and either have a 2.0 cumulative GPA or are fewer than 10 grade points below a 2.0 GPA (i.e. have a grade point balance deficit smaller than -10), you will clear academic probation and return to good academic standing.
  - For students who drop below 13 units after March 19, 2020: You must meet the criteria above to clear academic probation.
  - For students approved for a Reduced Course Load prior to March 19, 2020: If you earn P grades (or passing letter grades) for 2/3 of the unit load you were approved for, you will clear academic probation.
- If you do not meet the criteria to clear academic probation, but still earn one or more P grades, you will be continued on probation for the Fall semester. You will not be reviewed for dismissal.
- If you earn all NP, Incomplete grades, and/or F grades, your case will be subject to dismissal and reviewed for continuation. Your long-term academic history will be considered in this review and you will be encouraged to submit a personal statement explaining your circumstances.
- Students on academic probation are strongly encouraged to take courses for P/NP this semester to ease academic stress.
- Please set up a remote appointment with an L&S College Adviser if you are concerned about being able to earn P grades this semester.

### Incomplete Grades while on Academic Probation

If you take Incomplete grades in all of your Spring 2020 courses while on probation, you will be subject to dismissal and will be evaluated for continuation. Please discuss your options with an L&S College Adviser.

## Academic Honors

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### No Honors-to-Date / Dean's List

L&S will not be awarding honors-to-date this semester. There will be no Dean's list.

### Honors in Major

Students who are in the Honors Program for their major will have this semester's courses count as successful unless they have all NP grades.

Please contact your [major department](#) if you have questions about admissions into your major's Honors Program.

### Distinction in General Scholarship (Honors at Graduation)

The threshold will be lowered for each form of [Distinction in General Scholarship at Graduation](#) by 0.05. This means the following GPA criteria will be used:

- General Distinction: 3.707
- High Distinction: 3.820
- Highest Distinction: 3.909

The total letter graded units calculation will include any courses enrolled for letter grades at the time the Senate Default P/NP Policy went into effect.

## UCEAP

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### Breadth Credit

- Spring 2020 EAP courses that were pre-approved for L&S breadth requirements will still fulfill breadth if partial credit of at least 2.7 semester units is awarded. A minimum grade of C- or Pass is still required to fulfill the requirement.

Courses awarded less than 2.7 units will need to be reviewed on a case by case basis for breadth credit.

- International Studies breadth can be fulfilled by participation in approved study abroad programs. For Spring 2020, you must receive a passing grade (minimum C- or P) in all of the courses completed (not attempted) in the program. *(For example, if you complete two or more courses, you will need a passing grade in each course to receive international studies breadth credit.)*

### Grading Options

- Students on Spring 2020 UCEAP programs have the choice to take their courses for P/NP or for a letter grade. Your grades from UCEAP will appear on your UC Berkeley transcript as you have chosen.

If you are unsure of the grading options you have chosen for your courses, you may confirm your grade option selections with the UCEAP academic specialist for your program.

- L&S will accept P grades from Spring 2020 EAP courses taken to fulfill major, minor, and college requirements.

## Other

[collapse all](#)

### Extension of EGT for Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 graduation candidates

If you have an Expected Graduation Term (EGT) of Spring 2020 or Summer 2020, you will be given an extension through Fall 2020 if:

1. You request it and
2. Provide a course plan that includes at least 7 units for the Fall 2020 semester

**Deadline to drop from the Spring 2020 degree list: Fri, June 19.**

**Deadline to drop from the Summer 2020 degree list: Fri, Sept 11.**



How: Submit an [EGT change request](#) and [program plan](#) for your Fall 2020 courses to [ls petitions@berkeley.edu](mailto:ls petitions@berkeley.edu).

If you have an EGT of Fall 2020 or Spring 2021, requests to extend EGTs will not be automatic, but will be reviewed. Please submit your request per the instructions above or [make an appointment with an L&S College Adviser](#) to review your academic plan.

### Admission into Major

As previously stated, P grades can satisfy major requirements, including pre-requisites.

If, however, your intended major requires a particular grade in a course or requires a particular GPA in order to declare the major, please review the [major department's](#) website to see if they have included information about how they will respond to the P/NP default grading of Spring 2020.

If you have additional questions, please contact your intended major department. (Please review the major department's website for contact instructions during the shelter-in-place order.)

### Veteran Students

Veteran students should check in with the [Cal Veterans](#) office for a full understanding about options related to their veteran status.

### I'm concerned about law school applications

The Law School Admissions Counsel (LSAC) issued an [update](#) on March 31, 2020 noting a fairly wide consensus across schools:

"How will schools view Pass/Fail grades?"

Law schools are fully aware of and understand that many undergraduate schools are going to some version of a pass/fail grading system for Spring 2020. In fact, many law schools are making the same decision for their current students. Law schools will be understanding of the situation and will not penalize any applicant for having Pass/Fail grades. LSAC will place a letter in the CAS report of every applicant enrolled during Spring 2020, to remind law schools going forward that the semester was one in which many schools changed their grading systems in light of the COVID-19 pandemic."

If you have concerns about a particular law program you wish to apply to, we recommend checking their admission pages and contacting their admissions representatives with further questions.

### I'm concerned about medical/health professional school applications

UC Berkeley's Career Center has developed a [Pre-Health COVID-19 Resource](#) page that provides updates about medical and health professional programs admissions. While there has not been a consensus across all programs and the situation remains fluid, multiple California medical schools have signed a [joint statement](#) stating that their schools will "accept pass/fail grades, without prejudice, for courses taken during the COVID-19 pandemic."

If you have concerns about a particular med/health-professional program you wish to apply to, we recommend checking their admission pages and contacting their admissions representatives with further questions.



## I'm concerned about graduate school applications

Graduate schools are well aware of the trend of P/NP happening at many higher education institutions and student concerns about it. UC Berkeley has released the following statement:

*UC Berkeley evaluates applicants for admission to its graduate and professional schools holistically, meaning that we consider an applicant's combination of personal accomplishments, letters of recommendation, personal statements, academic record, and test scores in making our admissions decisions. Such a review will take into account the significant disruptions of COVID-19 when reviewing students' transcripts and other admissions materials from Spring 2020. We understand that many institutions across the country instituted P/NP grading policies during that semester. Thus, we will not penalize students for the adoption of P/NP and other grading options during this unprecedented period, whether the choices were made by institutions or by individual students. Our admissions evaluation will focus primarily on a student's academic performance prior to this period, and if applicable, following this period. What is most important is that applicants demonstrate that they pursued a challenging curriculum that was relevant to their plan for graduate or professional school.*

If you have concerns about a graduate program you wish to apply to, we recommend checking their admission pages and contacting their admissions representatives with further questions.

## UC Berkeley Summer Sessions

UC Berkeley has made the decision to continue remote delivery of instruction in place of face-to-face classes through Summer Sessions 2020. Departments have been asked to work with instructors to identify courses that cannot be delivered remotely and cancel them on the Online Schedule of Classes by April 10th.

We are sure you have many questions. We encourage you to use Summer Sessions' [COVID-19 Information](#) Page to keep updated on information related to Summer Sessions itself. We will update this page as more information related to academics becomes available.

## Fall 2020

We are sure you have many questions about what Fall semester will look like. Here is a statement from a recent email sent to students from the Vice Chancellors:

"In-person vs. remote instruction decisions

We will not cancel the fall semester. We are working closely with our local public health officials to determine when we will resume in-person instruction. At this time we don't have an estimated date. Some or all instruction for all or part of Academic Year 2020-2021 may be delivered via remote instruction. We do not know exactly when these decisions will be made because the public health picture remains uncertain. We are monitoring the situation closely and will make a decision about the fall semester as soon as there is enough information to do so. The health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff will always be our top priority.

Given the uncertainty the world faces, some students may not be able to safely travel to campus. We plan to continue to offer remote instruction as an option for Fall 2020, even if classes are held in-person.

We're making every effort to minimize disruptions to our educational mission and recognize that many students are eager to return to campus as soon as possible. When we do resume in-person instruction, it will likely be a phased approach with certain types of classes considered more appropriate to resume in-person than others. We will also likely make changes within classrooms and laboratories to observe public health directives and guidance such as increased hand washing, avoiding sharing equipment when possible, and recommendations on facial coverings and/or physical

distancing. Decisions about broadly offering Passed/Not Passed (P/NP) or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading for fall semester will be made by the Academic Senate and will take into account the situation at the time. We appreciate your patience as we weigh these factors and gather more information about what the situation may be like in the fall."

L&S Advising appreciates that this uncertainty is challenging. While we are unable to provide additional insight into what may happen with Fall 2020 semester, we will continue to update this page as more information becomes available.