

SPRING 2020'S SATISFACTORY/UNSATISFACTORY GRADING OPTION: THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU DECIDE

What is the S/U grading option?

For Spring 2020, all students, both undergraduate and graduate, can request to have courses graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) instead of with a letter grade.

The default option is for you to receive a letter grade. You only need to make a request if you want to change to S/U grading for a particular course. If you want S/U grading, you must meet with an advisor and submit your request between **Thursday, May 14th and Sunday, May 31st, 2020**.

If you are graduating in May 2020, you must submit a request for S/U grading no later than Monday, May 18th, as grades cannot be changed after your degree is officially posted.

What is S/U grading?

Instead of a letter grade (A, B, etc.), you receive a grade of either S, indicating you performed at a Satisfactory level in the course, or U, for Unsatisfactory work. To receive an S grade, undergraduates must earn a D- or higher in a class; graduate students must earn a C- or higher. A grade of U (Unsatisfactory) is assigned instead of an F.

A grade of S or U will not affect your overall GPA (see below for more information about how this relates to your GPA).

When should I decide about the S/U grading option?

You have from May 14th to May 31st to request S/U grading. **You must speak with an Academic Advisor before you can submit a request;** in some cases it's better to get a letter grade in a class, and we want to be sure you understand all of the impacts of S/U grading.

Who can help me decide if I should choose the S/U option?

You must talk with an advisor to discuss whether you should choose the S/U option for your course(s). Here's how to contact the appropriate advisor:

Undergraduates

- **If you are admitted into a major in the School of Education**, contact Sally Starkweather at sally.starkweather@nsc.edu.
- **If you are in the RN-to-BSN program** in the School of Nursing, contact Chantelle Cook at chantelle.cook@nsc.edu.
- **If you're an undergraduate in any other program**, schedule an advising appointment by visiting [the advising website](#) or by emailing aac@nsc.edu.

Graduate Students

If you are a graduate student in the Speech Pathology program, you must speak with the Speech Pathology Program Director. Contact Dr. Angel Ball at angel.ball@nsc.edu or 702-992-2535.

Will S/U grading affect my financial aid or scholarship?

It could, and you shouldn't choose S/U grading until you understand the consequences. If a course no longer applies to your degree program or major because of the grading change, you may be required to return funds that you already received to pay for the course. If you receive financial aid (grants, loans, etc.) or a scholarship, **contact the financial aid office** (finaid@nsc.edu or 702-992-2150) before you choose S/U grading.

If you have a Millennium Scholarship, you must have a GPA (based on letter grades) at the end of every semester to avoid receiving a strike.

How do I notify NSC that I want to change to S/U grading?

You must make an appointment with an advisor. Once you've discussed the situation and any issues you should be aware of, if you decide to move forward with a request for S/U grading, the advisor will provide the necessary paperwork. Here is information on the appropriate advisor:

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- **If you are admitted into a major in the School of Education**, contact Sally Starkweather at sally.starkweather@nsc.edu.
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- **If you're an undergraduate in any other program**, schedule an advising appointment by visiting [the advising website](#) or by emailing aac@nsc.edu.

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Do I have to change all of my classes to S/U grading or can I choose one or two?

We encourage you to consider each class individually. You could change all of them, none of them, or any number in between.

Will classes I take as S/U still count toward my major?

It depends on the class. When you speak with an advisor, they will discuss the consequences of S/U grading in your classes with you.

Core Curriculum and General Electives

A grade of S in a course should count toward Core Curriculum requirements and as general electives.

Major Requirements

For classes taken in Spring 2020, S grades will also fulfill major requirements, unless your program has special licensing or accreditation requirements that make letter grades essential (though it may not fulfill some pre-requisites; see the next section). **Programs where a grade of S will not fulfill coursework in the major include:**

- Master of Speech Pathology
- All Nursing majors (pre-licensure and RN-to-BSN)
- Pre-Nursing students cannot apply to the Nursing program with an S grade in BIOL 223, 224, or 251

Pre-Requisite Classes

In some classes, you must earn a C- or higher to move on to the next course (example: to move from CHEM 121 to CHEM 122, or from ENG 101 to ENG 102); an S grade in a pre-requisites class won't allow you to move to the next course. **If you choose S/U grading in a pre-requisites course, you will have to retake the class for a letter grade** (and earn a C- or higher) **to move to the next course** in the series.

If I choose the S/U option, can I switch back to a letter grade later?

No. If you choose S/U grading, **we aren't able to later change it to a letter grade. Talk to an advisor** to make sure S/U grading is a good choice for you. For instance, some graduate programs and medical and pharmacy schools won't accept S/U grades in key courses; if you may want to apply to a graduate or professional program after you graduate, you need to think carefully about whether an S/U grade will create problems for your future educational or career plans.

How does the S/U grade affect my GPA?

A grade of S or U won't affect your GPA; only letter grades are used to calculate your GPA. An S grade will help maintain your GPA where it is, but won't raise it. Similarly, a U grade won't lower your GPA, so in some cases it may be a better option than receiving an F in a class; however, you need to be sure it won't affect your financial aid or scholarship before requesting the change.

For pre-nursing students, an S in a pre-nursing class will be treated the same as a C when the School of Nursing reviews your application and calculates your pre-nursing GPA. You will still need to meet the program-specific minimum GPA of 3.25. Keep in mind you cannot apply to the Nursing program with an S in BIOL 223, 224, or 251.

How does S/U grading affect my academic standing?

S/U grades don't impact your GPA and won't directly affect your academic standing or your status on academic warning or probation.

Is S/U grading similar to an audit, where I can take a relaxed approach to classwork?

No; an audit doesn't award any credits for the course, while a Satisfactory (S) grade does earn you credits for the class. You are still expected to be actively engaged in the class and to complete all your assignments.

If I choose the S/U option for my class, will this hurt my application for graduate school or medical school?

This is an unprecedented situation, and we don't know how groups outside of NSC will view S/U grades in courses that are normally letter graded. Employers, graduate and professional schools, and internship sites will be aware of the challenges we are currently facing. But we can't guarantee they will change any policies that require letter grades in certain courses. **Your**

advisor will discuss the possible consequences of changing to S/U grading in a class. Ultimately, you will need to make a decision that you feel is best for you given your current situation and your future educational and career goals.

How does the S/U option impact the Dean's List and President's List?

For Spring 2020, you must complete 6 letter-graded credits (instead of the usual 12) and meet the GPA requirement to be on the Dean's or President's List. Students who have only S/U graded courses (and no GPA for Spring 2020) are not eligible for either list.