

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

Office of the Dean
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TO: CEHD Faculty and Staff
FROM: Jean K. Quam, Dean, CEHD
DATE: **March 30, 2020**

IMPORTANT UPDATED INFO for CEHD Graduate and Professional Students
RE: S/N Grade option dates and process for Spring 2020

The following information will be sent to all graduate and professional students in CEHD today.

The Provost just released the following deadline and process steps pertaining to the S/N option available to all graduate and professional students for Spring 2020 coursework.

- 1. The S/N option will be available for graduate and professional students starting **Monday, April 6, 2020.****
- 2. Here are [Step-by-step instructions](#) for students to change their S/N grade basis (located on the One Stop Student Services website)**
- 3. Here is a [FAQ page](#) about changing the S/N grading basis**

The S/N option for CEHD students is described in the 3/25/20 memo students received. *(Exceptions are also listed below and include 3 particular programs in Educational Psychology with accreditation requirements. Please talk with your instructors or advisors about these programs/courses and your options.)*

Thank you! We hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well.

The previous memo we sent to you is below.

TO: CEHD Faculty and Staff
FROM: Jean K. Quam, Dean, CEHD
DATE: **March 25, 2020**
RE: CEHD Policy re: Offering Graduate and Professional Students the Option of S/N Grading for Spring 2020

I am writing to indicate that **our college will be offering graduate and professional students the option of changing their grade basis from A-F to S/N (Satisfactory/Not satisfactory) for any number of spring 2020 and B-term (second half of term) courses.**

Exceptions to this policy apply to some courses that are part of the three degree programs listed below that are accredited or part of licensure requirements. The governing bodies for these programs restrict S/N. Thus, the courses will be offered by the university with the S/N option, but students in these accreditation programs will be advised to take the classes with the A-F grading basis. These programs are in the Department of Educational Psychology and include the following:

- School Psychology
- MA in Special Education with Applied Behavioral Analysis Program
- MA in Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology

Classes without the S/N option for students taking the course for licensure/certification include the following, all with the EPSY designator: 5403, 5404, 5435, 5623, 5851, 8132, 8407, 8431, 8504 (sections 1 and 3), 8708, 8842, 8843, 8994.

Second, **graduate students who opt to take major course requirement classes and/or core requirements for an S/N grade during spring 2020 will be allowed to do so, and these classes/grades will count toward their graduate programming.** This policy is consistent with the option offered to undergraduates.

Third, University policy states that no more than one-third of the credits applied toward a Master's or PhD degree can be from courses completed with an S/N grade. **However, our college will exempt students who may be close to the limit of one-third credits taken S/N to qualify for their Master's or PhD degree.** We will not allow this semester to count against students regarding the one-third credit rule. This action on our part is permissible per Dean Lanyon.

Listed below are questions and answers related to the S/N grade basis option.

1. Who will make the change in ECAS to reflect the new S/N option?

Central staff will do so for CEHD.

2. Who will communicate this change to students?

CEHD Associate Dean Deborah Dillon will work with Department Chairs, Directors of Graduate Studies (DGSs) and Graduate Program Coordinators, as well as staff in the Office of Teacher Education (OTE), to send a message to all graduate and professional students. Students will be encouraged to strongly consider Provost Hanson's message and contact their advisors as they consider issues related to switching to the S/N option.

Provost Hanson gave the following advice:

[to all students] *"... for whom such an option will be available will be reminded that their own decision on this matter may be complex, and they will be strongly encouraged to consult with their program advisors to consider the issues that might bear on a decision to switch to the S/N option."*

We encourage advisors to support students' decisions to select the S/N grade basis option if they choose to do so.

3. How should faculty change their syllabi to reflect the S/N option?

Instructors will alert students to this change and a statement (as follows) should be added to the top of all syllabi in Canvas: *“Students taking this course now have the option to switch to the S/N option. Grade basis changes must be submitted by April XX, 2020.”* [Date yet to be released by the university.]

4. How does the new S/N grading option impact current assignments and grading procedures?

Each instructor should specify what criteria are required to obtain a grade of “S” (satisfactory) in their course syllabus. The criteria do not have to be uniform across the college, but should be consistent with university policy (e.g., “S” represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is the equivalent to a C- or better).

Please reach out to your Department Chair or DGS if you have questions or require support as you assist our graduate and professional students with this change in grading. We deeply appreciate your willingness to allow our college to support our students by allowing them to take coursework with the S/N option during the spring 2020 semester.

Message that will be sent to CEHD Graduate and Professional Students

Dear CEHD Graduate and Professional Students,

In support of students in these unprecedented times, all University of Minnesota – Twin Cities **CEHD Graduate and Professional students have the option to change the grade basis for graduate courses from A-F to S/N (Satisfactory/Not satisfactory) for any number of spring 2020 and B-term (second half of term) courses.** Grade basis changes must be submitted by April XX, 2020. [Date yet to be released by the university.] Information about how to make this change will be provided in a future communication from the College. If you prefer to continue with your current grading arrangements, no action is needed.

Exceptions to this policy apply to some courses that are part of the three degree programs listed below that are accredited or part of licensure requirements. The governing bodies for these programs restrict S/N. Thus, the courses will be offered by the university with the S/N option, but students in these accreditation programs will be advised to take the classes with the A-F grading basis. These programs are in the Department of Educational Psychology and include the following:

- School Psychology*
- MA in Special Education with Applied Behavioral Analysis Program**
- MA in Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology***

Classes **without the S/N option** for students taking the course for licensure/certification include the following, all with the EPSY designator: 5403, 5404, 5435, 5623, 5851, 8132, 8407, 8431, 8504 (sections 1 and 3), 8708, 8842, 8843, 8994.

Second, **graduate students who opt to take major course requirement classes and/or core requirement classes for an S/N grade during spring 2020 will be allowed to do so, and these classes/grades will count toward their graduate programming.** This policy is consistent with the option offered to undergraduates.

Third, University policy states that no more than one-third of the credits applied toward a Master's or PhD degree can be from courses completed with an S/N grade. **However, CEHD will exempt graduate students who may be close to the limit of one-third credits taken S/N to qualify for their Master's or PhD degree.** We will not allow this semester to count against students regarding the one-third credit rule. This action on our part is permissible per Dean Lanyon, head of The Graduate School.

Please be thoughtful as you decide whether to change the grade basis for any or all of your spring 2020 courses. As a reminder of the difference between S/N and A-F grading:

- In order to earn an S in a course, you need to earn a letter grade of a C- or higher. If you earn an equivalent letter grade of D+ or lower, you will not receive credit for the course and a grade of N will be posted to your transcript. [For those of you seeking a teaching license: Teacher licensure requirements indicate that courses with grade of D+ or lower, or an "N," cannot be used for licensure recommendation.]

Consult with your academic advisor if you have questions and please consider the following:

- Are you likely to earn a high grade in the course? All faculty members have been asked to be flexible when grading work. Therefore, your grade may not be negatively impacted.
- Consider your licensure, graduate, or professional program goals as some programs may not accept the S/N grade basis in prerequisite courses.
- The decision to change one's grade basis cannot be reversed. If you choose to change the grade basis from A-F to S/N for a particular course, it will not be possible to reverse your decision at a later date, even if your performance is very strong.

In addition, the last day to withdraw from classes without college approval has been moved to April XX, 2020 for full session and B-term courses. **[Date yet to be released by the university.]** A "W" will appear on your transcript. Please consult with One Stop Student Services (onestop@umn.edu) if you have any questions about how a "W" will affect your financial aid.

Please use the coming weeks to evaluate how your courses are going. In the meantime, **the University is working on the technical aspects associated with making a grade basis change; we will communicate with you when this has occurred (after April XX, 2020).**

[Date yet to be released by the university.] *The deadline for you to opt into changing the grade basis for a course will be April XX, 2020.* [Date yet to be released by the university.]

We support each of you as you continue your studies this semester and afterwards. We thank you for your patience and kindness toward your instructors and fellow students as we all learn how to navigate virtual and online instruction in these challenging and unusual times.

Notations from faculty members re: accreditation groups that information was sought from:

***School Psychology:** National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and American Psychological Association (APA).

****ABA MA:** Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB). Numerous program coordinators around the country have attempted to contact the BACB regarding shifting to S/N or P/F. Information received is as follows: "While the BACB is conscious of the current issues many of our certificants and applicants are facing with the spread of the COVID-19 virus, we have chosen not to make changes to our current requirements (aside from the recent addition of exam authorization extensions). However, please check our website regularly for updates on the BACB's response and you may review the Appeals Policy & Procedures if you feel you have been impacted by the current state of affairs."

https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/Update_COVID-19_20200316.pdf

<https://www.bacb.com/appeals/> "

*****Counseling (CSPP):** Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy

[End of Message]