

## Spring 2020 Grading Policy Q & A

**Q: What do the grades CR/NC mean and what are the letter grade equivalents?**

A: CR/NC means students are graded "CR" for "Credit" or "NC" for "No Credit." For the Spring 2020 semester only, "CR" indicates work equivalent to a "C-" or better on the A+\* through F scale, and "NC" indicates work equivalent to a "D+" or lower. This replaces (for Spring 2020 only) the definition in Academic Regulation AR 4-5 that CR indicates work "equivalent to a C or better."

**Q: Are Winter Term Grades covered by the Spring 2020 Grading Policy?**

A: Winter Term credits are considered part of Spring semester registration. Winter Term grades are subject to the Spring 2020 Grading Policy and will be recorded as CR/NC if a student does not elect to record a letter grade.

**Q: How will Spring 2020 grades be reported to students?**

A: Grades will be posted in PatriotWeb as soon as they are available. They will be in the format reported by the professor (letter grades in courses originally designated for letter grading or CR/NC in courses originally designated CR/NC). This will allow students an opportunity to view letter grades reported by their professor so they can determine whether to record one or more letter grades in place of the Spring 2020 default of CR/NC.

**Q: How do students request to record a letter grade(s) on their transcript for Spring 2020?**

A: Beginning June 8, students will be able to submit a request that one or more of their Spring 2020 letter grades be recorded on their transcript in place of the default CR/NC. Requests will be submitted electronically. The Records Office will circulate a link through which students may submit such requests. The link will also be posted on the Records Office website.

**Q: How will Spring 2020 grades ultimately be reported in PatriotWeb and appear on student transcripts?**

A: Beginning June 22 (or earlier upon individual student request), all Spring 2020 letter grades will be converted to the CR/NC equivalent unless a student has requested that one or more letter grades be recorded on their transcript. (See previous FAQ for how to record letter grades on your transcript.)

**Q: Will a student who allows a grade in the “D range” (D+, D, D-) to convert to “NC” still receive academic credit for the course? What happens if the student elects to instead record the “D range” letter grade?**

A: A student who allows a “D range” grade to convert to “NC” (“No Credit”) will not receive academic credit for the course. A student who elects to record the “D range” letter grade will receive academic credit because a “D range” grade is a passing letter grade.

**Q: Will a student who allows a grade in the “D” range to convert to “NC” be required to repeat the course? What happens if the student elects to record the “D range” letter grade instead?**

A: A student who allows a “D range” grade to convert to “NC” (“No Credit”) will be required to repeat the course if the course is listed as required for graduation in Academic Regulation 3-3.2(a). If the course was to be used to fulfill a graduation requirement in Academic Regulation 3-3.2(b) (writing requirement), 3-3.2(c) (experiential requirement), and/or 3-3.2(d) (core course requirement), then the student may elect to repeat the same course or take an alternative course instead. A student who elects to retain a “D range” letter grade will receive academic credit for the course and so will not need to repeat the course or take an alternative.

**Q: Will course credits that were originally letter graded but later converted to “CR” count toward the 15 credit hour cap on “CR” credits that may be applied towards graduation? (See AR 3-3.1)**

A: No. Course credits that were originally designed as letter graded but converted to CR/NC under the Spring 2020 grading policy will not count towards the “CR” credit limit in AR 3-3.1. Course credits that were originally designed as CR/NC graded at the start of the spring semester will continue to count towards the “CR” credit limit in AR 3-3.1.

### **Academic Enhancement Requirements (Core Courses and Legal Fundamentals)**

Academic Regulation 3-3.2(d) provides that:

- students in the bottom quartile of their class at the end of their first academic year will be required to take a minimum of two core courses (by the conclusion of their second year for full-time students, and by the conclusion of their third year for part-time students); and
- students in the bottom quartile of their class at the end of their penultimate year will be required to take a minimum of two core courses and Legal Fundamentals in order to be eligible to graduate.

(See AR 3-3.2(d)(ii, iii) for the full academic regulation.)

**Q: How will the core course requirement for students in the bottom quartile of their class at the end of their first academic year be handled if Spring 2020 grades do not impact cumulative GPA or class rank?**

A: The determination of which students are in the bottom quartile (and therefore subject to the academic enhancement requirement of taking two core courses in a subsequent year or years) will be based on Fall 2019 ranks - the only ranks available for first year students. Students who believe they should not be subject to the requirement because of their Spring 2020 performance (even though Spring 2020 does not impact GPA or class rank) may petition to have the core course requirement waived. Such petition should be emailed to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Rachelle Perkins, at least two weeks prior to the start of the academic year in which the requirement must be fulfilled.

**Q: How will the core course and Legal Fundamentals requirement for students in the bottom quartile of their class at the end of their penultimate year be handled if Spring 2020 grades do not impact cumulative GPA or class rank?**

A: The determination of which students are in the bottom quartile (and therefore subject to the academic enhancement requirement of taking two core courses and Legal Fundamentals in their final year) will be based on Fall 2019 ranks - the most recent ranks available. Students who believe they should not be subject to the requirement because of their Spring 2020 performance (even though Spring 2020 does not impact GPA or class rank) may petition to have core course and/or Legal Fundamentals requirement waived. Such petition should be emailed to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Rachelle Perkins, at least two weeks prior to the start of the academic year in which the requirement must be fulfilled.

### **Academic Performance (Assessing Minimum GPA and Exclusion Points)**

Academic Regulation 3-3.6 provides that, in order to maintain their matriculation:

- students must earn a minimum grade point average of 2.33 each academic year (defined as consecutive fall and spring semesters, summers excluded); and
- students may not earn more than three exclusion points in any one single semester or over the course of any two consecutively enrolled semesters (excluding the summer term) (Exclusion points are earned for withdrawals, grades in the D range, and grades of F or NC).

(See AR 3-3.6 for the full academic regulation.)

**Q: How will minimum GPA be assessed for this academic year (2019-2020) if Spring 2020 grades do not impact cumulative GPA?**

A: Academic year minimum GPA for 2019-2020 will now be assessed based on Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 GPA (instead of Fall 2019 and Spring 2020). Academic year minimum GPA for 2020-2021 will be assessed based on Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 as contemplated by the academic regulations. At each point, a student must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.33 in order to maintain their matriculation.

**Q: How will exclusion points be counted for Spring 2020?**

A: Exclusion points will be waived for Spring 2020 (meaning no exclusion points will be earned or counted based on Spring 2020 grades or withdrawals). Instead, Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 will be considered "two consecutively enrolled semesters" for purposes of determining whether a student earned three or more exclusion points in any one single semester or over the course of any two consecutively enrolled semesters.

### **Graduation Honors**

**Q: How will graduation honors be determined given that Spring 2020 grades do not impact GPA or class rank?**

A: Graduation honors will be based on Fall 2019 cumulative GPA and class rank. Students who were top 1% after Fall 2019 will graduate *Summa Cum Laude*, students who were top 10% after Fall 2019 will graduate *Magna Cum Laude*, and students who were in the top 25% of the class after Fall 2019 will graduate *Cum Laude*. *Cum Laude* extends to top 25% at graduation because the academic regulations provide that "the top twenty-five percent of the class (based on GPA through the final semester) receive this honor" and Fall 2019 is now considered the final semester for class rank and graduation honor purposes.

**Q: Can a student move in to, or fall out of, a category of graduation honors based on their Spring 2020 academic performance?**

A: A student cannot fall out of a category of graduation honors based on their Spring 2020 performance (because GPA and class rank are unaffected by Spring 2020 grades). However, if factoring in all of a student's Spring 2020 grades (whether or not the student elected to report the letter grade(s) on their transcript), the student's cumulative GPA would move then into an honors category based on the Fall 2019 honors cutoffs, then the student will graduate with the higher category of honors.

For example, if factoring in all of a student's Spring 2020 grades would raise the student's cumulative GPA after Spring 2020 from a 3.69 to a 3.70, and 3.70 was the cut off for *Magna Cum Laude* after Fall 2019, then the student would receive *Magna Cum Laude* as their graduation honors.