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To: All Students

From: Daniel Matos, Registrar

Re: CUNY's NEW Flexible Grading Policy for Spring 2020

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Many of you are already aware that CUNY approved a new flexible grading policy for the Spring 2020 semester. This memo will address some of the more common questions and help you decide if applying for the policy is a good option for you.

### **What is the new flexible grading policy?**

The new flexible grading policy applies to *all students* (undergraduate, graduate, and non-degree). Under the new flexible grading policy, after final grades are posted by faculty, you can choose to convert the traditional letter grade you earned in any single course (any grade from A to F), into a grade of Credit ("CR") or No Credit ("NC"). When you elect this option, your letter grades of A to D- will convert to "Credit" while your letter grades of F will convert to "No Credit." Unlike traditional letter grades, which affect your grade point average ("GPA"), grades of Credit or No Credit will not factor into your GPA. For undergraduate students, this policy replaces the Pass/Fail option, but only for this semester.

### **Do I have to use the new flexible grading policy?**

No. It is important you understand that using the new flexible grading policy is not mandatory. You can select this **option** for one course, for several courses, or for all courses. You can also choose to keep whatever traditional letter grades you earn.

### **What should you do right now?**

Aside from speaking with your academic and financial aid advisors, there is not much to do right now. You can begin declaring the new flexible grading policy as early as May 16, as long as your final grades have been posted on CUNYFirst. The University has established the deadline of **Thursday, June 25** for declaring your CR/NC option under the new flexible grading policy.

### **What is the process for declaring a CR/NC grade?**

The University is creating a process in CUNYFirst that will allow you to select from a drop-down menu the course and original grade submitted by your professor and submit your request to have the letter grade converted to a CR/NC. Just remember, once you make the declaration, it is final. You cannot go back and change the declaration to a standard letter grade, so you really need to think through your decision before submitting the request.

## **What do you need to consider when making this decision?**

To help you “think through it,” you may want to reach out to your academic advisor or program director and your financial aid counselor to ask questions about how this may affect your degree plan and/or your financial aid awards. Keep in mind that while all CUNY colleges received instructions to accept your credit for transfer to *any other* CUNY institution, we cannot guarantee that all colleges and universities, graduate programs, scholarships, and other third parties will accept the grade of “CR” for credit.

## **When should you consider NOT declaring a CR/NC grade option?**

In any of the following scenarios or a combination of these, you should **speak with your advisor** and strongly consider **not** declaring the option:

1. **Graduating Undergraduate students with GPA below 2.0:** If your major GPA and/or cumulative GPA is currently below a 2.0 and you are graduating this Spring, this may not be a good option for you. This is because earning a high passing letter grade may allow you to raise your GPA over 2.0. If you opt for a “CR” grade, your GPA may stay the same or not be sufficiently raised to 2.0. You will not be able to graduate or receive a degree from the College with a GPA below 2.0.
2. **Graduating Graduate students with GPA below 3.0:** If you are a graduate student with a GPA that is below a 3.0, and you are graduating this Spring, this may not be a good option for you. This is because earning a high passing letter grade may allow you to raise your GPA over 3.0. If you opt for a “CR” grade, your GPA may stay the same or not be sufficiently raised to 3.0. You will not be able to graduate or receive a degree from the College with a GPA below 3.0. Please note students enrolled in dual-degree programs, (i.e., BA/MA) are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of **3.5** in order to have their degrees conferred.
3. **Considering Post-Graduate Programs:** If you intend on applying to a graduate program, scholarship, or third-party entity outside of CUNY that has requirements for minimum passing grades, you may want to think carefully about the CR/NC option. An entity outside of CUNY, such as a professional licensing body, a private scholarship organization, or a graduate program outside of CUNY, may not accept a grade of “CR.”
4. **Veteran Students Using the GI Bill:** The University Director of Veterans Services, Lisa Beatha, has notified the colleges that veterans who choose this option may owe a debt to the VA. Students are strongly advised to contact the campus Veterans Certifying Official **prior** to declaring the CR/NC option. At John Jay, our certifying official is Chrissy Pacheco who can be reached at, [cpacheco@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:cpacheco@jjay.cuny.edu)

Generally, when in doubt, it is best to speak with your **academic advisor or graduate program director and financial aid counselor**. You can also email any additional questions you may have to [registrar@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:registrar@jjay.cuny.edu) and we will do our best to help provide you with clear answers.

Furthermore, the University has created an “FAQs” document regarding the New Flexible Grading Policy that you can access by clicking [here](#).

For now, just keep focusing on your studies and know that we are here to help guide you through the successful completion of this semester and beyond.

