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MEMORANDUM

TO: UMA Faculty, Staff and Students

FROM: Joseph Szakas, PhD
Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost

DATE: March 20, 2020

SUBJECT: Grading Options for Spring 2020

The disruption we have seen this spring 2020 semester is unprecedented. With half a semester still to go, faculty, staff and students are being put in challenging situations as we push through to complete this academic year. Normally, the purpose of pass/fail grading is to encourage students to enroll in courses outside their area of concentration. To help reduce stress in these trying times, a Pass/Fail grading system will be an option for students to choose by May 1, 2020. I strongly urge all students to discuss this option with your professor and your advisor. This option should only be used to support progress for the student toward graduation.

At UMA, students who choose the Pass/Fail option will receive one of three grades at the end of the semester:

- The grade P (Pass) will be assigned if the student would have received a grade of A through a C-
- The grade LP (Low Pass) will be assigned if the student would have received a grade of D+ through a D-
- The grade of F (Fail) will be assigned if the student would have earned a grade below a D-.

For the spring 2020 semester, the following adjustments to the pass-fail requirements for students will be as follows:

- All students are eligible to enroll.
- A student may take **more than one** course per the spring 2020 semester on a pass/fail basis.
- A grade of Pass for the spring 2020 semester will be seen as a grade of A through C and will count for prerequisites that require a C or above grade.

- For the spring 2020 semester only, a course taken on a pass/fail **may** be used to fulfill core, major, or minor requirements.
- “Pass” grades will not be used in computing grade point averages but will be counted toward degree credit. The P grade is assigned if a student earns a grade of A through C- in a course.
- “Low pass” grades will not be used in computing grade point averages but will be counted toward degree credit. The LP grade is assigned if a student earns a D+, D, or D- in a course.
- A failing grade in a Pass/Fail course, although recorded as an “F,” does not impact the student’s cumulative grade point average (GPA).
- Students must request pass/fail status by May 1, 2020 (for the Spring 2020 semester only).
- Once a student has chosen a pass/fail option, the student cannot change the grading back to a letter grade.

To request a Pass/Fail grade, students must submit the Pass/Fail grade form. An online form is in development and will be made available on or before April 3rd. An announcement will be sent when the form is available.

Students: contact your program faculty or advisor to discuss a Pass/Fail grade. Due to accreditation standards, a Pass/Fail grade may not be eligible in some degree programs and may impact athletic eligibility. Athletes should consult with the Athletic Director.

Finally, I am asking that all faculty communicate to students in their classes this pass/fail option.

Student Withdrawals:

Although the term withdrawal date was March 17, to accommodate the change in modality, the withdrawal period has been extended until April 6, 2020. This means, if a student completely withdraws from the university, they will receive 25% back. If it's a 7-week, session 2 class, the students have 7 days to get 100% refunded.

If a student chooses to withdraw, then financial aid may be adjusted, however, that would be done on a case-by-case basis just like it is currently done. Unfortunately, this is a federal policy over which we have no control.

The Registrar has extended the W grade to accommodate the extended withdrawal period.

Incomplete Grades:

The process of assigning an incomplete (“I”) remains the same. However, keep in mind that giving students an “I” grade in this current environment may be challenging for students to complete their work.