




May 14, 2020

To: Dylan Rodríguez, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Randolph C. Head, Chair 
Committee on Courses

Re: Division Flexibility for Grading Options for Summer 2020

Members of the Committee on Courses expressed support for continuing flexible accommodation for students who sought permission to take certain courses S/NC rather than for a grade. They noted that the same emergency substitution of remote methods for normal teaching would affect the Summer 2020 courses, and that in many cases, future review of student transcripts would include the awareness of the extraordinary circumstances that affected this period. In addition, failing to maintain consistent policies with Spring 2020, since similar teaching conditions applied, seemed potentially confusing to students, as well as potentially unfair.

As for Spring 2020, the Committee places a high value on continued effective advising of students considering this option. Given the potential for unintended consequences of S/NC grading for various categories of students, informed choice by students should be our ideal as long as these policies are in effect.

Finally, some concern arose because the letter from the systemwide Senate explicitly stated that:

"As outlined in the Appendix, the policies that govern the use of P/NP grades are almost entirely under Divisional control.

The one exception is SR782, which sets an upper limit on the number of courses that can be taken P/NP, with campuses adopting either a 25% or a 33% upper limit (see Appendix, point 1)."

In light of this statement, it is not clear whether we can continue UCR's Spring 2020 choice to amend divisional rules so that S/NC courses taken in Spring 2020 *do not count* toward the 33% limit established by divisional rules. The systemwide Senate concedes that "'there is precedent for some flexibility in the interpretation of SR782", and the circumstances of April 2020, when the mode of instruction and conditions of student work changed abruptly *after* registration had taken place, appear to justify such flexibility. In Summer 2020 and potentially Fall and beyond, however, students know that remote instruction is a possibility.

We recommend that the Division review this issue with care before we make decisions on SR788/Division regulation R1.2.2.