

Covid-19 Emergency temporary regulations

(Currently applying for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021)

Withdrawals

In case the student remains above the 12 units limit:

Within the first two weeks any student can withdraw from a course without any approval. Starting the beginning of the third week, and until the end of the eighth week, the student needs the authorization of the advisor (Senate Regulation R1.1.4). In case of drop by week eight (for Spring Quarter 2020 only), the transcript will not mention the withdrawal (“W”) (Senate Regulation R1.1.5). After the end of week eight, the student needs to ask for the authorization from the appropriate Dean, who will decide on a case-by-case basis; in case of authorization, there will be a “W” in the transcript. Remember that a “W” has no impact on GPA nor is, in any form, a “punitive” grade; it is just a record that a student was enrolled for part of the quarter.

In case the student remains goes below the 12 units limit:

Dropping below the 12 units limit may cause serious consequences, including the loss of financial aid eligibility, and may jeopardize the possibility of Continued Registration (Senate Regulation R7.2). Because of that, a student can be authorized to drop below 12 units only by the Dean (Senate Regulation R1.1.4). Department and advisors should be careful to advise students that changes in the total number of units enrolled can have substantial financial aid consequences.

Pass-No Pass (S/NC) grade options

Students have until the end of the eighth week to file a petition to change their grading basis from letter-grade to S/NC. (Senate Regulation R1.1.6) Not all courses offer S/NC grading, but it is an option for most undergraduate courses. (Check the Banner listing for the course at classes.ucr.edu, which will list the possible ‘Grading Modes’ in the Catalog link of the Class Details pane). After registration is final, the student may need to file a petition to change the grading basis of any course from ‘letter grade’ to ‘S/NC’, and these petitions can be submitted until the end of week eight. Courses taken for an S/NC grade during Fall2020 and Winter 2021 will not be counted towards the 1/3 limit (Senate Regulation 1.2.2). Departments that urgently wish to provide an S/NC option for a course in the major that currently does not provide for S/NC grading should contact the Senate Committee on Courses as soon as possible. The Committee has the authority to allow a one-time change for sufficient case, by Committee vote. If departments wish to temporarily change other specific elements in a course description because of the Coronavirus crisis, please contact the Committee analyst, Beth Beatty, so that the Committee can review the matter. Unilateral changes by departments are not possible, and will not be available to students in Banner.

The decision whether to take a course for a letter grade or S/NC rests with the student, as emphasized by the systemwide Senate Committee on Educational policy. An instructor or Department may suggest that S/NC status could be more appropriate for some courses because of the shift to remote learning methods, but the student makes the final decision. Taking one or more courses on an S/NC basis may have implications on financial aid (especially for Veterans), and adverse effect on applications for Professional Schools or Graduate Programs, and for other reasons. The Senate urges departments to respect diverse student needs while pro-actively providing informed and supportive advising for students considering taking one or more courses for S/NC this quarter.

S/NC course and major requirements:

S/NC courses normally cannot be counted towards major requirements. However, department chairs and program directors have existing authority to make exceptions if a student submits a petition to their Department or Program (Senate Regulation R1.2.3). In light of the current crisis, the Senate urges Department and their Chairs to make generous use of this authority. Each department and program should decide which courses may qualify for the major if taken S/NC in Fall 2020 and Winter 2021. The Senate urges chairs to be flexible and proactive in exercising this authority, and confirms that chairs may delegate the approval of petitions to count an S/NC course towards a student's major requirements to professional advising staff. Chairs should provide criteria and guidelines describing which petitions may be automatically approved, and which petitions will still require the chair's individual review. For example, chairs might delegate approval for lower-division courses, or for "additional courses" towards the major but not core requirements, or such other criteria that reflect the department's best judgment.

If departments and programs do establish criteria for counting S/NC courses towards the major during this crisis, this should be communicated pro-actively to majors and minors. It is important to reiterate that students maintain the power to decide, based on their best judgement (informed by consultation with academic advisors and/or instructors), whether to request permission to count an S/NC course toward a major requirements through a petition. This means that it is very important for a student to consult with the academic advisor before changing the grading basis of any. The advisor can also tell whether the course being considered for S/NC grading is a prerequisite (with letter grade) for other courses in the major, which could affect the decision as well.