March 30, 2020

Dear students,

As you read in a message from the Provost last week, CSB/SJU is expanding the potential use of S/U grading this spring as an acknowledgement of the unprecedented world events.

We believe it will be in most students’ best interest to take most of their classes for an A-F letter grade. So, if you are considering taking an S/U for any of your classes, please read the information below especially carefully and consult with people mentioned below.

1. Read the information below, which is organized by issues that may be pertinent to you.
2. Consult with your faculty advisor and the faculty member for each of your classes leading up to the May 4th deadline in order make a wise decision for each class.
3. Feel free to consult with the members of the Academic Advising Office. We can be reached by email or by scheduling a meeting through the HIVE.

Sincerely,

Jason M. Kelly, Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising

**Summary of S/U option for Spring term 2020 only:**

* **The standard S/U grading policy is extended to first-year students, students on academic probation, and students in major/minor required courses (except for Nursing).**
* **Satisfactory (S) grade:** 
  + **Requires earned grade of C or higher on the A-F scale.**
  + **Results in credit earned for the course and satisfies relevant requirements.**
* **Unsatisfactory (U) grade**
  + **When earned A-F grade is CD or lower.**
  + **No credit is earned; no requirements are satisfied.**
* **Grades of S and U are not part of the GPA calculation.**

**Decision date:** Students must notify faculty of their wish for S/U grading by May 4, unless individual faculty allow the decision to be made during the week of final exams. Note: Students have until April 15 to withdraw from a course.

**Major courses**

* Courses graded with S will count toward a major, but courses graded with a U will need to be retaken if the course is required for the major.
* **Nursing students:**
  + All First-Year Nursing students should take A-F grading in all their courses.
    - Based on board certification and outside accreditation, Nursing prerequisite courses must be taken A-F grading.
    - Nursing pre-requisite courses are used as the first round of selection into the major and thus must be taken A-F grading.
    - In the event of a tie, cumulative GPA is the second criteria used for selection into the major and thus other courses should be taken A-F grading.
    - Nursing students should also watch for an email sometime in April from the nursing department providing further guidance on application to the major
  + Sophomore through Senior Nursing students please refer to the letter from Rachelle Larson dated March 26th and consult with your nursing department advisor.

**Academic Probation:** Students who are on first or final academic probation are strongly encouraged to speak with their primary contact in Academic Advising before opting S/U grading. Students on academic probation will receive additional information from Academic Advising that is specific to evaluating academic standing in light of S/U grades.

**Athletic Eligibility:** S/U grading is acceptable, provided that the student earns at least 24 credits in an academic year prior to the competition season and is in good academic standing (GPA > 1.8 in the first semester; cumulative GPA > 2.0 thereafter).

**Financial Aid and Scholarships:** The financial aid office will be required to assess students’ academic progress after Spring semester, following federal financial aid regulations.  Additional flexibility will be extended to students, including those electing to take S/U grading this term, in light of the disruption to the semester.  Students should contact the Financial Aid Office if they have specific questions. CSB students should contact Stuart Perry and SJU student should contact Robert Piechota.

**Pre-professional and graduate planning:** The impact of S/U grading on application to graduate or professional schools is uncertain. We recommend referral to appropriate [specialty area advisors](https://www.csbsju.edu/documents/Academic%20Advising/Pre-Professional%20Area%20Advisors%2019-20.pdf) (law, medicine, etc.) and/or specific graduate programs for further consultation prior to selecting S/U grading.

The following is general information that should be confirmed with specific graduate programs when possible:

* Historically, graduate schools have recalculated S/U grades to the lowest allowable grade; in our case a C.
* We have contacted representatives of medical, veterinary, dental, law and other graduate schools to ascertain how they will treat this semester, and the general response has been that they will consider this semester with leniency and the greater body of work for a student will be more important in an application.
* Students should understand that grades for a given semester will likely be considered in the context of the overall transcript.
* Pre-Pharmacy: Pre-Requisite courses must be taken A-F grading.
* Pre-Dental: As an example the U of MN Dental stated, “We will accept S/U courses and online labs for **spring 2020** for prerequisite courses.”