In March and April 2020, the UM Senate passed several motions to allow undergraduate and graduate students a Pass/Fail grading choice for spanned fall 2019/winter 2020 and winter 2020 courses. In brief, students can “opt to accept the letter grade received (standard), accept the letter grade received but exclude it from UM GPA calculations (option 1), or choose to have performance categorized as ‘Pass’ or ‘Fail’ (option 2).” Senate also extended the “Voluntary Withdrawal deadline to May 10, 2020”.

These motions in full are available at: https://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/senate/motions/senate_executive_motions_2020.html

This document provides students in the Post Baccalaureate in Education (PBDE) Program with information regarding the grading choices and how these choices relate to their PBDE program. It also provides students with important information about how a spanned fall 2019/winter 2020 or winter 2020 grade of “D” or “F” can be optionally changed to a “VW”. Additionally, Faculty of Education staff have tried to anticipate your questions regarding the final grade options that have been made available. If you do not find the answer in the FAQs that are found below, please contact an Academic Advisor by email prior to the May 10, 2020 deadline for selecting final grade option(s) at: PBDE.Education@umanitoba.ca

The procedure for declaring an “option” has not yet been established. However, the Faculty of Education requires that all PBDE students’ declarations be reviewed by an Education Student Advisor before submission to the Registrar’s Office. It is important that PBDE students understand the implications of selecting Option 1 or Option 2, as both may have unforeseen impacts on their program.

It is important to note that:

1. The PBDE program regulations require students to maintain a minimum degree grade point average (DGPA) of 2.5 with no letter grade below “C”. Opting for a Pass/P* option will adversely affect a student and their standing in the program. Here are some guidelines:
   - If the minimum grade requirement is achieved (“C” or better), retaining the standard letter grade is necessary for this course to apply towards program/degree/graduation requirements. Choosing the Pass/P* option would mean the course will not apply to your program and would have to be repeated in order to graduate.
   - For courses with letter grades of “D”: Opting for a Pass/P* would still mean that the course does not meet minimum PBDE requirements and therefore, the course would not apply towards program/degree/graduation requirements.

2. A Pass/P* grade will not fulfill letter grade pre- or co-requisite requirements for other courses, preventing students from taking courses that are required for completing the program.

NOTE: Senate mandated that “regardless of any choice made with respect to course grading, students will remain obliged to meet all existing admission, prerequisite, progression, degree, and graduation policies and requirements that may apply to them.” (approved by Senate Executive Committee, April 1, 2020)
3. Pass/P* grades may be excluded from consideration for admission to another program within the University or by other Universities.

While it remains the prerogative of the student to opt for the grading schemes passed by Senate Executive, PBDE students are at particular risk of adverse impacts should such options be exercised. It is in the best interest of PBDE students to opt to accept the letter grade received (standard).

FAQ’s

Q1: If I choose the Pass/P* grading option for my course, can I use that course with a final grade of PASS/P* toward my PBDE program?

A1: No. The minimum grade for any course in the PBDE program is a “C”. If you choose to have your course grade changed to a PASS/P*, you will not be able to use that course to fulfill degree requirements.

You can select the “Exclude grade from GPA calculation” option and still use that course for your program and / or prerequisite purposes provided the grade is a ‘C’ or better.

Q2: What is the difference between “excluding a grade from my GPA calculation” and choosing the PASS/P* option?

A2: In both cases, your grade will be excluded from your GPA calculation. If you choose to exclude your grade from the GPA calculation (but not select the PASS/P* option), AURORA will still be programmed to use the grade you earned when checking for prerequisites and program declaration requirements—it just won’t count the grade in your overall GPA calculation.

Choosing the PASS/P* option excludes the course from the GPA calculation and also removes the letter grade you earned from sight. As PBDE students require a minimum grade of “C” on all courses applied toward the degree program, we are advising that students DO NOT select the PASS/P* option.

The PASS/P* grade is not equivalent to a “C” or better. You will not be able to change your mind in the future, as your original grade may not be retained.

Q3: If I choose to have any of my courses graded as a PASS/P* instead of the letter grade I earned, will I still be able to graduate?

A3: No. If you choose to change any grades to a PASS/P* for a course you require to graduate from the PBDE Program you will not be eligible to graduate.

Q4: What happens if I fail (grade of “F”) a course during the Winter 2020 term?

A4: If you should fail (grade of ‘F’) a 2020 winter term (or a spanned fall 2019/winter 2020 course), the final grade for that course will:

- Appear on your transcript as “F*”; and,
- Remain on your record; and,
- Mean that you must repeat or replace the course; and,
- NOT count in the calculation of your GPA; but will not be used by the Faculty of Education in the GPA calculation to assess whether a student is eligible to proceed.
BEST OPTION if you receive an “F” grade is to “VW” by the May 10, 2020 deadline.

Q5: What happens if I fail (grade of “D”) a course during the Winter 2020 term?

A5: If you should fail (grade of ‘D’) a winter 2020 term (or a spanned fall 2019/winter 2020 course), the final grade for that course will:

• Appear on your transcript as “D”; and,
• Remain on your record; and,
• Mean that you must repeat or replace the course; and,
• COUNT in the calculation of your GPA and will be used by the Faculty of Education in the GPA calculation to assess whether a student is eligible to proceed.

BEST OPTION if you receive a “D” grade is to “VW” by the May 10, 2020 deadline.

Q6: If I choose to exclude a grade from my GPA calculation, will it negatively impact my chances for any of the following: scholarships, prizes, bursaries, medals?

A6: Students who choose to exclude a grade from their GPA calculation may use the credit hours of that course to satisfy load requirements for any of the following: scholarships, prizes, bursaries, medals. Accordingly, the grade for the “excluded” course(s) will not be used in any GPA calculation described in the specific terms of reference for each scholarship, prize, bursary, or medal.

Q7: If I choose to have my course marked using the Pass/P option, can I use that course to satisfy the admissions requirements of another Faculty at the U of M? At another institution?

A7: No. Faculties or schools who require specific standard letter grades for specific courses will not accept a grade of PASS/P* in any required course, unless they explicitly state that they will do so in their official admissions documentation.

A grade of PASS/P* does not equal a “C” or better.

Students should also think carefully about how their target faculty or school may adjust the grade point average of applicants to their schools or programs. Selecting a grade of PASS/P* in courses now could have unintended consequences related to the adjusted grade point average calculation of their target faculty/school/institution. Before choosing the PASS/P* grading option, students are strongly encouraged to contact the admissions office of their destination.

Students who choose to exclude an earned letter grade from their GPA calculation but also choose to have the earned grade remain on their record can use that grade to meet the course and/or adjusted GPA admission requirements of another Faculty at the U of M or another institution.

Q8: I’m just finishing up a course on a letter of permission, when I transfer my course to the U of M, can I choose to have that grade excluded from my GPA and / or switched to a grade of PASS/P*?

A8: No, these modified grading options are not open to courses taken at another institution during the Winter 2020 term. The University of Manitoba will not change a grade a student has earned at another institution.