Winnipeg, April 13, 2020

Subject: Grade options

Dear students:

I hope you are doing well in these exceptional circumstances and profiting from analyzing your data, writing your manuscripts, thesis etc. Recently, you have received emails about the approaches to grade. I would encourage you to read it carefully and understand the consequences of your choice on your future steps.
- In particular, you have to keep in mind that the minimum requirement to satisfy UM pre-requisite or admission to any other program is still valid (See text below.)

The three approaches to grades are now as follows:

- **Standard Approach:** Accept the Letter Grade received: This is the standard grading approach approved at the UM and represents the default grading approach for students. The grade will be used in GPA calculations.

- **Option 1:** Accept the Letter Grade received but exclude it from the UM GPA calculations. Letter grade will appear on the student’s transcript with a notation indicating that the student chose to exclude it from their UM GPA calculations due to the COVID-19 situation. Grades excluded in the calculation of the GPA will not be used in calculating GPA for the purpose of program progression and/or overall graduation GPA requirements. However, letter grades will continue to be used to satisfy UM pre-requisite requirements for entry into other courses, or admission to other programs, and to satisfy any other program requirements. (APPROVED BY SENATE EXECUTIVE; MARCH 25, 2020).

- **Option 2:** Choose to have performance assessed as ‘Pass’ or ‘Fail’: In this scenario no letter grade will be recorded or retained. A notation will be used to indicate that the student chose this approach. ‘Pass’ grades will be available only if the original letter grade is ‘D’ or higher and will not be included in the UM GPA calculations. (APPROVED BY SENATE EXECUTIVE; APRIL 1, 2020)

So if you decide to choose pass or fail option; it is important to note that:

1. FGS standards require graduate students to maintain a minimum degree grade point average (DGPA) of 3.0 with no letter grade below “C+” (unless otherwise specified by individual graduate programs supplemental regulations). Opting for a Pass/Fail option may adversely affect a student and their standing in the program.

Some guidelines:
- If the minimum grade requirement is achieved, retaining the letter grade is necessary for this course to apply towards program/degree requirements.
· For courses with letter grades of “C” or “D”: Opting for a “Pass” would still mean that the course does not meet minimum FGS standards and therefore, the course would not apply towards program/degree requirements.
· A “Passed” course cannot be repeated to achieve the minimum grade and program requirements; only a “Failed” course can be repeated/substituted.

2. Passed courses may not fulfill letter grade pre- or co-requisite requirements for other courses, preventing students from taking courses that are required by the program of study or otherwise desirable for students in the timely completion of their educational goals.

3. Passed courses may be excluded from consideration for admission to another program within the University or by other Universities.

4. For programs that are professionally accredited, the granting of passing grades to students that would not normally pass under the standard grading scheme may risk the continued accreditation of the program by professional oversight bodies. Such action may also adversely affect the student’s ability to obtain professional licensure in the future.

Finally, although the eligibility to scholarship and awards will not be affected, it will certainly affect your competitiveness to local and national levels (such as Research Manitoba, NSERC and CIHR). See text below.

[Student Scholarships:]

Regardless of which grading option students choose, their award eligibility will not be affected: If a student keeps their letter grade these grades will be taken into account as usual. If a student decides to exclude a grade from the GPA calculation it will also be excluded from an award GPA calculation. Finally, if the decision is made to choose a Pass, this notation will not be included in an award GPA calculation. In each of the last two options the courses where an alternate grade option was selected will still count toward minimum credit hour thresholds when determining award eligibility.

A series of FAQs is being developed and will be disseminated as soon as possible.

In the meantime, please feel free to discuss with your supervisor.

Stay Safe

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