

**MCW Graduate School**  
**Alternative Grading Plan for Fall 2020**

Recognizing the extraordinary impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of students, faculty, and staff, the following alternative grading plan has been approved by the Graduate Studies Council (GSC) for Fall 2020 courses ending between August 10, 2020 and December 11, 2020 only.

Policy:

1. The MCW Graduate School will retain the current grading system for all courses graded on a standard grade scale of letter grades (A-C, F) as articulated in the Graduate School Handbook as the default. At the end of the semester, faculty will enter the earned grade for the course into MCWconnect, using the current standard grade scale.
2. If a student wants to keep the letter-grades earned in the Fall 2020 term for courses ending between August 10, 2020 and December 11, 2020 only, the student needs to do nothing further.
3. On a course-by-course basis, students in the MCW Graduate School will have the option of replacing the letter grade they received for each course completed during the Fall 2020 semester with the associated option applicable only to the Fall 2020 term: E, G, SD, U.
  - a. Definition of E, G, SD, U:
    - i. Excellent (E): credit; no GPA; a permanent grade indicating equivalent work of A or A-.
    - ii. Good (G): credit; no GPA, a permanent grade indicating equivalent work of B+ or B.
    - iii. Substandard (SD): credit; no GPA, a permanent grade indicating equivalent work of B-, C+, C, C-
    - iv. Unsatisfactory (U): no credit; no GPA, a permanent grade indicating equivalent work of F
4. For any program-specific requirements for which students need a specific letter-grade in a course, students who earn a "Good" will be determined to have met that program-specific grade equivalents for that course. Individual programs will determine if students who earn a grade of "Substandard" will meet program-specific requirements. For purposes of meeting program-specific requirements, a grade of U shall be considered equivalent to an F.
5. Students will have the choice of replacing letter grades with the E, G, SD, U option until December 31, 2020, the choice made by the student (i.e., letter grade or E, G, SD, U) for a course will become permanent.

The policy outlined above has significant implications. The following are proposed to help clarify these implications and to mitigate potential negative consequences for students:

1. **All students are urged to work with their mentor and/or Program Director prior to making any decision regarding replacing letter grades.** This is particularly important for students required to meet criteria for certification, licensure, and those students seeking tuition reimbursement from an employer.
2. Students choosing to retain the traditional letter grades they were assigned will have those letter grades included in the calculation of the GPA. In contrast, E, G, SD, U grades will not be used in computing GPA.
3. E and G grades earned in Fall 2020 will fulfill all degree and prerequisite requirements.
4. Students are subject to Satisfactory Academic Progress for Title IV aid, as these are federal regulations and cannot be waived.
5. Students will be subject to academic standing policies. An additional term will be afforded to students to achieve good standing.
6. Transcripts will have notification indicating COVID-19 pandemic to record the unique grading system employed in Fall2020.

## **Time Clock Accommodation for Fall 2020**

### **Emergency Extension to Time to Degree - Doctoral**

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within 7 years of the date you first enrolled in a doctoral program at MCW. This includes all coursework, the dissertation, and examinations required for the degree. *If you entered your doctoral program before or in Fall 2020, your time to degree limit will be extended by one year.*

### **Emergency Extension to Time to Degree - Masters**

If your master's program requires 30 credits or fewer, you must complete all degree requirements within four years of your first enrollment in the program. If your program requires over 30 credits, you must complete all requirements within five years. *If you entered your master's program before or in Fall 2020, your time to degree limit will be extended by one year.*

### **Emergency Abbreviation to Outline Approval – Doctoral**

An outline of the proposed thesis research should be presented to and approved by the Committee, and forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval prior to initiation of the major portion of the research, or no less than 18 months prior to the dissertation defense date for the PhD candidates. *If you entered your doctoral program before or in Fall 2020, the outline approval should be submitted for approval no less than 12 months prior to the dissertation defense date for PhD candidates.*