

TEMPORARY DISTANCE LEARNING GRADING POLICY

Board Approved: April 23, 2020

Amended:

Policy Number: 409

I. Background

Given the unique circumstances of distance learning and the timing with which it was implemented, Spectrum feels it is necessary to take a unique approach to determining students' grades for their courses across the school. It is important to make a distinction between grading practices for individual assignments and the grading system used to determine the final grade. It is not the intent of this policy to significantly change the manner in which individual assignments and assessments are graded. This policy addresses the latter of the two.

In the school setting (on-campus), teachers have the ability to influence the inputs and other variables that affect a student's education. In distance learning, while the information is made available in a digital format and many supports are put into place, teachers have less of an opportunity to influence the inputs. In the distance learning environment, more variables enter into the equation - quality of access to the internet, student motivation, students' mental health, or other factors at home that can detract from the student's ability to complete their work in a timely and efficient manner.

After thoughtful consideration and ongoing research, Spectrum has established the following grading policy for the distance learning period or 3rd quarter of the 2019-2020 school year. This policy overrides the Grading Policy found in the previously approved 2019-2020 Student/Family Handbook (page 19).

II. College/University Partners

Spectrum's concurrent enrollment college partners are modifying their grading systems due to the COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning (see below).

If a student is taking PSEO classes, they are encouraged to check with the individual college to understand the grading policy and the potential impact on their transcript. Spectrum also recommends seniors contact their intended post-secondary institution to understand any possible admission's impact. Spectrum will accept all PSEO credits as they are conveyed by the respective college/university.

Students should carefully consider their future goals when making the decision to change a grade to something other than a standard letter grade (A-F). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a worldwide impact, and programs and employers will be aware of these unprecedented circumstances. However, colleges/universities, scholarship committees, athletic programs, professional and graduate programs, and employers will make individual decisions that are not predictable. Given the unknown implications, it may be safest (when possible) to retain A-F grading for courses being taken as prerequisites for graduate or professional schools.

Important Notes:

- *The information below is summarized based on information available from partner colleges/universities. Any decisions made by those organizations will cause the summaries below to be modified and take precedence over information included in this policy.*
- *It is the students responsibility to contact their Spectrum School Counselor if they intend to have a different grade (i.e. P/NC) included on their high school transcript from what they chose to include on their college transcript.*

A. University of Minnesota (U of M)

The U of M is allowing students to change their grading scale from A-F to Satisfactory(S)/Not Satisfactory(N) if they enter their choice (into [this form](#)) by April 30. Once a student makes a choice, it cannot be changed. The default is grading on an A-F scale. To receive an S grade, students must earn a C- or higher. If a D+ or lower is received, the U of M will not convey college credit. A student's U of M GPA will not be affected by their choice. For more information from the U of M, please click [this link](#).

B. Anoka-Ramsey Community College (ARCC)

If students are interested in electing a different grading option at ARCC, they will need to work with their High School Counselor first. Students have until June 5th to elect a Pass/No Credit (P/NC) grade. If students choose the P/NC option, their A-F grade will be converted to a corresponding "Pass" or "No Credit" grade. Students can make these decisions on a course-by-course basis. The A-F grading scale is the default option. Students will need to access their eServices account with their Star ID and password to change their ARCC grade to P/NC. Students may also modify their ARCC transcript grade to a Pass, while also maintaining the A-F letter grade for the high school transcript. If a student opts into a P/NC grade at the college, they must have a C- or higher, otherwise they will not receive college credit.

C. Pine Technical and Community College (PTCC)

After the semester has ended and grades have been awarded, students will have 9 days to request to have their grade converted to a P/NC designation. If students choose the P/NC option, their A-F grade will be converted to a corresponding "Pass" or "No Credit" grade. Students can make these decisions on a course-by-course basis. The A-F grading scale is the default option. Students will need to access their eServices account with their Star ID and password to change their PTCC grade to P/NC. Students may also modify their PTCC transcript grade to a Pass while also maintaining the A-F letter grade for the high school transcript.

D. Central Lakes College (CLC)

Awaiting decisions from (CLC)

III. Spectrum High School (SHS - grades 9-12)

- A. Given the complexities of distance learning and the potential impact to a student's transcript and high school grade point average (GPA), SHS will be allowing students to choose a P/NC option according to the guidelines below.

- B. Students should carefully consider their future goals when making the decision to change a grade to something other than a standard letter grade (A-F). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a worldwide impact, and programs and employers will be aware of these unprecedented circumstances. However, colleges/ universities, scholarship committees, athletic programs, professional and graduate programs, and employers will make individual decisions that are not predictable. Given the unknown implications, it may be safest (when possible) to retain A-F grading for courses.
- C. Guidelines for choosing P/NC
1. If students are interested in electing a P/NC grading option, they will need to work with their High School Counselor.
 2. Electing the P/NC grading option will be on a “per course basis”, meaning students will need to elect this option for each individual course for which they would like it applied.
 3. The A-F grading scale will be the default grading method for all SHS courses - meaning a student must opt-in to the P/NC option by connecting with their School Counselor in order for it to apply.
 4. All courses chosen as P/NC will not impact a student’s GPA (either positively or negatively). However, choosing NC for a course that is needed to fulfill a graduation requirement means the student will have to retake the course for credit at a later time.
 5. The decision to change a course to P/NC must be made by June 5th and may not be changed once adjusted.
 6. All other Spectrum graduation requirements remain.

IV. Spectrum Middle School

- A. With the complexities of needed learning and training on a whole new grading system (Pass/Fail), among other challenges, Spectrum Middle School (SMS) is keeping the current grading *system* for the rest of the 2019-20 school year. SMS will address student concerns/needs by making some adjustments in grading *practices* and will be responsive on a case-by-case basis.
- B. SMS will continue to be supportive of its learners, especially with regard to the challenges of this unique crisis. SMS has the best interests of its students and their families in mind. Adjusted due dates, additional attempts to revise work, fewer graded assignments, etc. are all examples that can be controlled by SMS. When communicating with families, SMS will individualize a response that is appropriate to the unique situation and needs of that student, keeping equity through the grading system the same for all SMS learners.
- C. This approach, with the intention of supporting *all* students, is designed so students can earn grades reflective of what they were earning prior to Distance Learning - thereby minimizing the overall impact on final grades.

V. Sting Service

Due to the implementation of distance learning and the inability for students participating in Sting Service to serve as teachers' assistants during the 4th quarter, students who earned credit for the 3rd quarter will receive 0.0625 credits. There will be no requirements or grades posted for the 4th quarter.

VI. Service Learning

- A. Due to the limited time for teachers to prepare for distance learning (2 weeks) and the inability to connect with outside organizations during the pandemic, Service Learning requirements ended after the 3rd quarter.
- B. There will be no requirements for 4th quarter and no grades will be posted.
- C. Students who earned credit for the 3rd quarter will receive 0.125 credits.
- D. Consideration will be given to the inability for students to earn this 0.125 credits of service learning/elective credit when reviewing student transcripts and graduation requirements for the classes of 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023.