



TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers

FROM: Aisha Lowe,
Vice Chancellor, Educational Services & Support

RE: Extension of Executive Order 2020-12: Temporary Suspension of Various Specified Grade-Related Regulations Due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues and social and physical distancing is still required throughout the state, the pandemic continues to substantially disrupt instruction for all institutions. As a result, colleges throughout the state continue to provide the majority of their courses online or through alternative formats. Given the continued unprecedented transition, faculty and students continue to need maximum flexibility to appropriately support students.

This memo provides guidance regarding the extension of Executive orders that impact grading policies focused on supporting students enrolled in the current environment. Topics covered in this memo include the following:

- Pass/No Pass Grade (P/NP) Options
- Incomplete or In Progress Grading Options

Pass/No Pass Grade Options

Executive Order 2021-01 extends prior executive orders, suspending the title 5, section 55022(a)(2) requirement that students select the “pass/no pass” grading option prior to the 30% mark of the term. Additionally, the executive order suspends the title 5, section 55022(c) requirement that units attempted for which the symbol “NP” is recorded be considered in probation and dismissal procedures. Students that attempt to continue to complete a course under the current situation, rather than withdraw, will not be negatively affected should they ultimately be unable to successfully complete the course. This Executive Order will remain in effect through December 2021.

There are potentially adverse transfer implications of a pass/no-pass grading option. For these reasons, colleges are advised against implementing blanket pass/no-pass grading policies and encouraged to provide updated information to faculty and students regarding the pass/no-pass grading option. A few transfer related issue areas include:

- Most transfer institutions do not compute a GPA for a P/NP course, however in some instances a passing grade is computed at a 2.0 level, potentially adversely affecting a student's overall GPA score.
- Most transfer institutions, including CSU and UC, require courses for the major be completed with a letter grade and a pass grade may result in a student needing to retake a course
- Many transfer institutions restrict the allowable transfer units that may be taken as P/NP

In enacting these grading policy changes, colleges should broadly and proactively communicate changes to students and faculty, including posting on their website where applicable. We recommend colleges provide written guidelines to students, staff, and faculty to ensure proactive advising and support for students.

Incomplete and In Progress Grading Options

Grading option symbols are not tied to an Executive Order; however, this section provides guidance on the allowable uses of these symbols and recommends how these rules may be applied to the current situation. Per title 5, section 55023(e), district governing boards may authorize the use of the non-evaluative symbols "I" for Incomplete and "IP" for In Progress.

Incomplete. Under section 55023(e), the "I" symbol may be used for students whose academic work for unforeseeable, emergency, and justifiable reasons at the end of the term may result in incomplete coursework. The condition for the removal of the "I" must be stated by the instructor in a written record that contains the conditions for the removal of the "I" and the grade assigned in lieu of its removal. This record must be given to the student with a copy on file with the registrar until the "I" is made up or the time limit has passed. A final grade shall be assigned when the work stipulated has been completed and evaluated, or when the time limit for completing the work has passed. The "I" may be made up no later than one year following the end of the term in which it was assigned. The "I" symbol may not be used in calculating units attempted nor for grade points.

Faculty should assess on a student-by-student basis when the use of an "I" symbol would be appropriate for a student impacted by COVID-19, and whether the student's individual circumstances constitute an "unforeseeable, emergency, and justifiable reason" for needing additional time.

In progress: Under section 55023(e), the "IP" symbol may be used only in those courses which extend beyond the normal end of an academic term. It indicates that work is "in progress," but that assignment of an evaluative symbol (grade) must await its completion. The "IP" symbol must remain on the student's permanent record in order to satisfy enrollment documentation. The appropriate evaluative symbol (grade) and unit credit must be assigned and appear on the student's permanent record for the term in which the course is completed. The "IP" symbol must not be used in calculating grade point averages.

The "IP" symbol should be used when a course has been temporarily suspended and is expected to reconvene and complete instruction at some point beyond the end of the established term.

Extension of Executive Order 2020-12

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Colleges should communicate this clearly to students in impacted courses and proactively plan for when courses may reasonably be continued and completed.

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