

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University
Proposal 59-20
" EMERGENCY PROPOSAL: Pass/Fail Option for Graduate Students in
Spring 2020"

Sponsor

Carlos Amador

Submitter

Pushpalatha Murthy, on behalf of the Graduate School

Background/Rationale

The Graduate School recognizes the additional stressors that graduate students are under due to disruptions caused by COVID-19 are many and are strong contributors to their ability to fulfill their true academic potential in spring 2020. Graduate students have the additional stresses of performing research, teaching online classes, balancing full-time jobs, caring for children, and caring for families across the world. To mitigate these stresses, the Graduate School proposes allowing graduate students the option to elect to change grades from graded to pass/fail in spring 2020. A number of universities across the country have adopted similar policies for graduate students (Michigan State, University of Michigan, Virginia Tech, etc.).

Proposal

It is proposed to amend the Emergency Proposal as indicated below in red.

It is proposed that faculty members will assign grades in spring 2020 using the existing grading scheme for the course. Graduate students will then have seven days after grades are posted to decide if they would like to switch any classes from spring 2020 to pass/fail grades (grades of SCV, LCV, or ECV). A pass grade (SCV) will be assigned for a grade of C or better. A low pass grade (LCV) will be assigned for grades of CD or D. A fail grade (ECV) will be assigned for a grade F. Once a graduate student elects the Pass/Fail option for a course and the final grade is changed, the decision is final and may not be reversed. Specific information on how graduate students would communicate their choice will be provided before the end of the semester.

Classes completed in Track A of spring 2020 are not eligible for a change to pass/fail.

Policies regarding pass/fail are suspended for the spring 2020 semester to allow any course to be taken pass/fail, even if not typically allowed under normal circumstances.

By providing this choice, it is important that the University provides graduate students with the information they need to understand the short and long-term impacts of switching a course to pass/fail. This information may include, but is not limited to: GPA, course credit, academic standing, degree requirements, financial aid, transfer credit, and accreditation. It is expected that the administration will contact those individuals/groups on campus who can best provide this information (e.g., registrar's, graduate program directors, financial aid, etc).