Spring 2020 Grading Policy for Graduate Courses
Graduate and Non-Matriculated Students (see pg. 2 for undergraduate students)

As a temporary measure, graduate and non-matriculated students enrolled in SMD graduate courses will now have the option to be assigned Satisfactory/Failure (S/E) grades in lieu of traditional letter grades (A-E). Students may make this decision on a course-by-course basis. The decision to provide this option is based on our desire to foster student learning, and counter, in some way, the anticipated disruption to students’ academic, professional, and personal lives.

The S/E option will be the default grading system. Students who select the letter grade option (A-E) must inform their course instructor and the SMD Graduate Registrar no later than April 22, 2020. If students do not inform their instructor that they are selecting the letter grade option (A-E) by April 22, 2020, they will be assigned the default, S/E option. Students may still request that their instructor assign an Incomplete (I) at the end of the semester should their circumstances warrant doing so. We encourage students who are unsure of what path to take or their standing in the class to contact their course director.

Instructors will not be expected to provide an underlying grade for students selecting the satisfactory/failure (S/E) option. Instructors will evaluate whether the student has met the threshold for a course grade of satisfactory (S) or has failed the course (E).

In considering whether or not to opt out of the default, S/E option, students should determine if there are consequences to the S/E option based on their individual circumstances. Below are two examples, but there may be others that students should consider:

1. Will receiving an (S/E) rather than a letter grade affect your tuition reimbursement from your employer?
2. If you are an international student, does receiving an (S/E) rather than a letter grade affect any agreements you have with your country to study abroad?

Neither instructors nor graduate program representatives will be able to provide answers to these questions, so when questions such as these arise, students are encouraged to direct them to informed sources (e.g., employer or UR International Services Office).

Our hope is that affording students the option to choose between earning an S/E or letter grade will further their ability to make academic progress as they attend to current and anticipated disruptions in their professional and personal lives.

Process to Choose a Letter Grade Instead of the Default S/E Option
To convert to the letter grade option in any of their classes, students must email their course director and the SMD Graduate Registrar at Grad_Registrar@urmc.rochester.edu. The email must be sent by April 22, 2020 or grades will remain the default, S/E option.
College and Eastman School of Music Undergraduates in SMD Graduate Courses

The College and Eastman will transition all courses to the satisfactory/fail (S/F) grading option to assist undergraduates and their instructors in managing course expectations and grading over the remainder of the semester. All registrations for all students will move to the S/F option as of March 23. Students will be allowed to select a letter grade (A-E) option for any/all of their courses, but must submit a formal request by April 10. Information will be forthcoming on accessing the online form to make this request.

Instructors will have the choice of entering a grade of “P” if a student’s performance is satisfactory and an “F” if the performance is not satisfactory. The use of “P” ensures that students will have courses correctly associated as meeting degree requirements, which is especially important for graduating seniors.