
Fwd: Regarding Brown's Grading Policy

1 message

Riccardo-Wood, Jack <jack_riccardo-wood@brown.edu>
To: Pb919@georgetown.edu

Sat, Apr 4, 2020 at 7:48 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **College** <college@brown.edu>
Date: Mon, Mar 30, 2020 at 5:06 PM
Subject: Regarding Brown's Grading Policy
To:

Dear Students,

I hope that you and your loved ones are well, and that you have been able to reconnect with your classmates and instructors today. Our primary goal in the coming weeks is to continue to support all students, including those most directly impacted by this crisis, with individualized (academic, financial, and personal) advising as well as systematic support.

I am writing to address student concerns about Brown's decision on how to handle grading this semester. Consistent with Brown's student-centered approach to education, we believe it is important to empower students to make educational choices for themselves, even when these choices are difficult. After widespread consultation with faculty and students, we adopted a policy that lets students revisit decisions to take courses S/NC up until April 17th. In addition, faculty may request that their course(s) be converted to mandatory S/NC.

In the past week, I have received numerous emails from students who would prefer a "universal pass" system, where everyone automatically receives a passing grade, arguing that this is the most equitable approach in the current circumstances. I have also heard from many students from a broad range of backgrounds who have argued that the most equitable approach is for students to retain the agency to choose a letter grade or S/NC for each course.

The communications that I have found the most compelling have come from students who have overcome challenges after struggling academically during their first years at Brown, and whose grades this term would document their success. For these students, letter grades this semester – even if only in one class – could showcase their resilience in the face of adversity, and help them secure access to future opportunities. The hopes and concerns that these students have shared are very real, and they speak directly to how education can transform our lives and those of our communities. For these reasons, we have decided against a "universal pass" or mandatory S/NC system.

I am thankful that – at this moment of uncertainty – equity and inclusion remain at the forefront of all our discussions, even if we may disagree on the right approach. My commitment in the days and weeks ahead is to ensure that you and your peers have the best support possible to make the best decisions for yourselves. Please reach out to college@brown.edu if you need support with this or other decisions.

I wish you all the best this week in reconnecting as a remote learning community, a community committed to creating, sharing, and applying knowledge in support of improving the world.

Sincerely,

Rashid Zia
Dean of the College

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