Credit/No-Credit (CR/NC) Option for Spring 2020  
Frequently Asked Questions  
(Last revised 4/6/2020)

This document contains two sets of FAQs. The first set applies to undergraduate students and particular groups such as students using veteran’s benefits, student athletes, and international students. The second set applies to graduate students.

Undergraduate Students:

1. When is the deadline for submitting a petition to select a course to be graded Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)?
   The deadline to submit your petition to the Office of the Registrar is May 1, 2020.

2. What grade will I need in order to earn CR if I take a course CR/NC?
   For undergraduate courses, if you earn a C- or better, the grade converts to a CR. The following letter grades convert to No Credit (NC): D+, D, D-, F, or unauthorized withdrawal (WU). If you earn a NC you will be considered as a repeat student next time you enroll in the course.

   If you withdraw (or late drop) from a class, your transcript will show a W, which earns neither grade points nor units. When you have a W for a course you will be considered as a first-time student the next time you enroll in the course.

3. Can I choose which courses I want to take CR/NC?
   Yes, you can choose which courses you want to take CR/NC. Think carefully about your choices. In some cases (for example, some GE courses), a D+, D, or D- counts toward the completion of a requirement. If you choose CR/NC, however, a CR is equivalent to a minimum of a C-. In short, a NC could mean you have to retake a class, whereas a D+, D, or D- would not.

   If you are a graduating senior, consider carefully the implications for your graduation status of earning a NC. You may want to talk to an advisor before submitting your petition to select CR/NC for courses.

   NOTED EXCEPTION: You do not need to submit a petition for a Physical Education (PE) course, because all PE courses are being automatically converted to CR/NC for Spring 2020.

4. What if I don’t know what my grade will be?
   If you don’t have a good sense of what your current grade is in a course, contact your instructor and discuss your performance in the class.
5. **If I decide to take a course CR/NC, how will this impact my overall GPA?**

CR/NC grades do not have grade points associated with them and thus do not count in the GPA. For example, if you take 15 units of courses CR/NC for the semester, you will earn units toward your degree and meet the course requirements (such as a major or GE requirements), but your SJSU GPA will not change.

The following table shows a calculation of spring 2020 term GPA for a student enrolled in 15 units. Note that the course units from the "F" do factor into the GPA, while the course units from the CR/NC do not. The student earned 9 units toward their degree (the A, B and CR) and 8 units were used in the GPA calculation (A, B, and F). The term GPA = 18/8 = 2.25.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring 2020 course</th>
<th>A. Course units</th>
<th>B. Grade</th>
<th>C. Grade points for that grade</th>
<th>D. Units earned</th>
<th>E. Total grade points earned (C X D)</th>
<th>F. Units used to calculate GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Course 2</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course 3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course 4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course 5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **If I am on probation, how might taking a class CR/NC impact my academic standing?**

Earning a CR in a course does not generate grade points so does not change your overall GPA and does not impact your probation. Taking a class CR/NC will not help you raise your GPA. If you think you will earn a grade of C or above, taking the class for a grade could help your GPA. Discuss your particular situation with your major advisor or your student success center advisors.

7. **I have been academically disqualified and am taking a class through Open University, can I take the class CR/NC?**

Taking a class CR/NC will not help you raise your GPA. If you are trying to raise your GPA for reinstatement, think carefully about what is the best option, a letter grade or CR/NC. If you have questions, talk with an advisor in your department or college success center.

[Department and College Advising Contact Information](#)
8. Are there certain courses that would be a bad idea to take CR/NC if I think I can get a passing grade in them?
For the Spring 2020 semester only, students are able to choose the CR/NC grading option for all types of courses (Major, Minor, Prerequisites, GE).

However, if you are planning to apply to graduate programs or internships and want your transcript to show a letter grade rather than CR for a particular course, you may not want to switch to CR/NC for that course. You should also think carefully about courses that allow you to use a grade lower than a C- (D+, D, D-) to fulfill a requirement.

In some cases, earning a D+, D, or D- will progress you toward your degree (example, some GE courses or major courses). On the other hand, if you selected the CR/NC option, a D+, D, or D- would convert to a NC. As a result, you would need to retake the class.

If you are trying to increase your GPA, be aware that courses assigned a CR/NC grading scheme are not included in the GPA calculation. You will earn units for courses with a CR grade, but no Grade Points will be included in the GPA calculation.

9. Can I earn Honors with CR/NC courses?
Students must take at least 12 units of letter graded courses in a semester to qualify for Semester Honors such as President's and Dean's Scholars, which are based on GPA. If you elect to take courses as CR/NC and that results in you having fewer than 12 units of courses that assign letter grades, then you will not be eligible to earn Semester Honors. (University Policy S17-13).

10. If I am retaking a class for grade forgiveness, can I still take the course CR/NC?
Yes, undergraduate students can take a course CR/NC and still earn grade forgiveness. The grade for the previous attempt of the course will remain on your transcript but will be removed from the GPA calculation. If you have questions about repeating classes and how grade forgiveness will impact your GPA, contact AARS at academic.advising@sjsu.edu

11. Can I take a GE class for CR/NC?
Yes, only in Spring 2020 can you take a GE course for CR/NC.

GE courses in Areas A1, A2, A3 and B4 require you to pass with a C- or better. If you earn a NC in a course in GE Areas A1, A2, A3 and B4 you will need to either retake the same course or take another course in the same GE Area.

In Areas B1, B2, B3, C, D, E, R, S and V you can meet the GE Area requirement with a D+, D or D-, but not a NC, so think carefully before converting these classes to CR/NC.

12. What happens if I earn a NC for a course that serves as a prerequisite for another course I need to take?
If you earn a NC for a prerequisite course, you will not be able to take the next course and will need to retake the prerequisite course. Please review FAQ #3 as some prerequisites can be satisfied with a D+, D, or D-.
13. If I’m unsure about whether I should take a class CR/NC, who should I talk to for advice?
   If the course is required for your major, it would be best to contact a major advisor from your department. If the course is a GE course, please contact an advisor at your college’s advising and success center.

14. If I am in an accredited program, can I take courses CR/NC?
   Rules differ by accreditation agencies. Please contact your department to check about this. A list of departments with accredited program is found here http://info.sjsu.edu/static/schedules/accreditation.html

15. If I am taking a course through Open University, can I take it CR/NC?
   Yes, you can, but all of the same issues raised above should be taken into consideration (If you have been academically disqualified, see FAQ #7.)

16. If I take a course CR/NC, will it impact my financial aid?
   Taking a course CR/NC will NOT impact receipt of financial aid for most students. It should be noted that if you earn a NC then it can affect your “satisfactory academic progress” which can affect your financial aid in the future. If you have questions about how choosing CR/NC might impact your chance of passing a course, please contact an advisor.

   Veterans and dependents using VA Benefits, athletes and international students are subject to special rules (see FAQ #17, #18, #19).

17. Will students receiving veteran’s benefits be able to change to CR/NC for the Spring 2020 term and still have their classes paid for if they receive a NC?
   Although VA does not typically make payments for classes resulting in nonpunitive (i.e., NC in a CR/NC class) grades, if COVID 19 is reported as mitigating circumstances for the student’s receipt of a nonpunitive grade VA will pay for the class. NOTE: VA has not changed its policy necessarily regarding nonpunitive grade rules, but has allowed this exception as long as it is noted in the student certification that F or NC was due to COVID-19.

   If you have further questions contact the Veterans Resource Center staff at veterans@sjsu.edu, main phone: 408-924-8129 or: www.sjsu.edu/veterans

18. I am a student athlete, competing on an SJSU team. Can I take a course for CR/NC?
   There are no NCAA limitations or restrictions on the use of CR/NC courses to meet progress-toward-degree requirements. However, student athletes must earn at least 9 units each semester, while maintaining the requisite GPA (2.00 minimum), to be considered as making progress towards their degree to remain eligible for their sport. Please contact your athletic academic advisor to ensure that you do not need a letter grade to meet GPA requirements.
19. I am an international student. Can I take a course for CR/NC?
Yes, you can take a course for CR/NC. Per Federal regulations, international students in F-1 status must complete at least 12 units/semester if they are an undergraduate and 9 units/semester if they are a graduate student in order to maintain their immigration status. As a result, the student will need to earn CR for those required units by either earning a CR or a letter grade of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-. Further, an unauthorized withdrawal (WU) grade adversely affects immigration status. The regulations are complex and confusing, so for help understanding what is sufficient, please contact an international student advisor at international-office@sjsu.edu

20. What if I make a mistake and my choice of CR/NC ends up causing a problem like keeping me from graduating, causing me to not pass a prerequisite, or negatively affecting my F-1 Visa status?
If you switch to CR/NC by May 1, 2020, normally you can't later switch back to letter grades. But, in extenuating circumstances like these, you can petition to for a grade change back to letter grades before June 8, 2020.

21. What happens if I don’t petition to change to a CR/NC grading scheme for a class and after I receive my grades I realize I should have?
You can complete a Spring 2020 Grade Change petition from the time your grade is posted through June 8, 2020. This will allow you to make the switch from letter grade to CR/NC. If you choose this option there may be a considerable delay in updating your transcript to reflect the change.

22. Should I take an Incomplete grade in a course instead of choosing CR/NC?
Students can discuss an incomplete grade with their instructor. An Incomplete grade is useful if a student has completed a substantial portion of the course and is passing the course, but is unable to complete the course requirements within the academic term. A student has up to one year to complete their work, though there should be a date agreed upon by the student and the instructor in the “Incomplete Contract” approved during the grading period.

If you elect to take an incomplete grade for a course, do not re-enroll in the course, but instead work with the instructor to complete the remaining elements of the course. When the work has been completed, the instructor will assign a final grade.

23. Can I still request a late drop or withdraw from the entire semester?
Yes, petitions may be submitted through May 11. Please talk with an advisor in your department or college success center before submitting a late drop or withdrawal request. Department and College Advising Contact Information Undergraduate forms and instructions can be found at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/forms/. Additional questions may be addressed to academic.advising@sjsu.edu.
Graduate Students:

1. When is the deadline for submitting a petition to select a course to be graded Credit/NoCredit (CR/NC)?
   The deadline to submit your petition to the Registrar is May 1, 2020.

2. What grades do I need to earn credit in a graduate course? What about an undergraduate course?
   For credit (CR) to be given in a graduate course (>200 course number), you must earn a grade of a B- or better. To earn credit (CR) in an undergraduate course, you must earn a grade of C- or better. Keep in mind that ordinarily no more than 40% of your program can be made up of CR/NC courses. However, if you are in the situation where you want to take courses CR/NC in Spring 2020 that will put you over the 40% threshold, then you (or your program director) should contact the College of Graduate Studies for a case-by-case consideration for approval.

3. How will the CR/NC option impact my GPA?
   While letter grades are factored into the calculation of the GPA, CR/NC grades are NOT. For graduate students, a cumulative GPA minimum of 3.0 is required to graduate. Therefore, if you expect to earn a grade of B- or lower in a course, you should carefully consider selecting the CR/NC option for that course. Your consideration should balance the negative impact that the course letter grade would have on your GPA (if you do not request CR/NC grading), with making satisfactory progress toward your degree. A grade of CR would count as successfully completing the course while a NC grade would not. Graduate FAQ #2 describes which letter grades result in a CR vs NC grade. Please consult with your advisor for guidance on whether the CR/NC option is advisable in your situation.

4. Are there any situations where it might be best to NOT elect to take a course CR/NC?
   You should consider not taking the CR/NC option if you expect to earn a grade of C or C+ in a graduate course, and if that course is required for your degree program and/or is a prerequisite for another required course. This is because the CR/NC option would result in a NC grade for a graduate course (see Graduate FAQ #2), which would not count toward fulfilling the requirements, but a grade of C or C+ would count toward the requirement. However, you should keep in mind the impact the grade will have on your GPA. In these situations, it is highly recommended that you speak with your graduate advisor before making the decision. An overall graduate GPA minimum of 3.0 and an overall program GPA minimum of 3.0 (i.e. on your candidacy form) are required to graduate.
5. **How can earning a CR or NC impact my candidacy form?**

Courses with a grade of CR may be listed on the candidacy form like any other letter-graded course. Courses with NC grades do not count as fulfilling degree requirements and must be repeated or replaced by another course for credit. (In some situations the exact same course will need to be repeated; please check with your advisor). CR/NC grades are not used in calculating the GPA.

Ordinarily, no more than 40% of your program can be made up of CR/NC courses. However, if you are in the situation where you want to take courses CR/NC in Spring 2020 that will put you over the 40% threshold, then you (or your program director) should contact the College of Graduate Studies for a case-by-case consideration for approval.

6. **The course that I’m currently taking is a prerequisite for another course requiring that I earn a grade of ‘B’ or better. Given that a CR can mean either a B- minimum (graduate course) or C- minimum (undergraduate course), how would that impact my ability to register for a course requiring a ‘B’ or better?**

Departments have been instructed to accept courses completed in Spring 2020 with the grade of CR as fulfilling prerequisite requirements.

7. **What if I’m taking either an internship, clinical, or field placement course and was unable to complete the required hours for the course?**

Please speak with your professor and/or graduate advisor to see if anything can be substituted for the required hours.

8. **My graduate course does not follow the traditional SJSU semester calendar and will end before or after May 11. Do I have to complete the petition to select a course to be graded Credit/NoCredit by the same deadline of May 1, 2020? Does it matter if I have already received a grade?**

It depends. If the course was completed prior to March 9, 2020, then it was not affected by the current crisis and this new policy does not apply. If it was (or will be) completed on or after March 9, then you may select the CR/NC option by the May 1 deadline. In a course that ended after March 9, 2020 you may select this option even if you have already received a grade.

9. **Can I still request a late drop or withdraw from the entire semester?**

Yes, petitions may be submitted through May 11. Please talk with an advisor in your department before submitting a late drop or withdrawal request. The Graduate Petition for Course Drop/semester Withdrawal and instructions can be found at [http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms](http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms).