



NEVADA STATE
COLLEGE

Dear Nevada State Community,

This summer, Nevada State College will continue to offer students the ability to select an S/U (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory) grading option as an alternative to our traditional letter grades.

However, this option will no longer be available for students in the Fall 2020 semester. This memo defines S/U grading, provides important due dates, and explains the reasons why a student may choose to select an S/U grading option.

What is the S/U grading option?

By default, all courses use a letter grading system (A, B, C, D, or F). Due to the ongoing health crisis, all students, both undergraduate and graduate, can request to replace the letter grading system with a grade of S or U, which represent Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory.

In the S/U grading system, undergraduates are given an S if they earned a D- or higher. They are given a U if their grade would have been an F in our letter grading system. Graduate students have slightly higher standards for an S. They must earn a C- or higher to receive that grade in the course. Any grade lower than a C- will be assigned a U.

When would I need to request the S/U grading option for my summer courses?

If you are requesting an S/U grade for the first summer session, you can meet with an advisor beginning on Monday, July 6th. If you are requesting an S/U grade for the second summer session, you can meet with an advisor beginning on August 20th. The meeting with an advisor is required. The deadline to make a request for graduating students is on Monday, August 24th. If you are not graduating in the Summer, the deadline is Monday, August 31st.

Can I request to take classes with an S/U grading option in the Fall 2020 semester?

No. NSC (and all colleges in the Nevada System of Higher Education) are not extending this option for students into the fall. Notably, some classes are offered with S/U grading by default, such as independent studies. These courses will say “S/U Grading” in the catalog.

Who can help me decide if I should choose the S/U option?

To choose the S/U option, you must talk with an advisor first. Here’s how to contact the appropriate advisor:

Undergraduates

- **If you are admitted into a major in the School of Education**, contact Sally Starkweather at sally.starkweather@nsc.edu.
- **If you are in the RN-to-BSN program** in the School of Nursing, contact Chantelle Cook at chantelle.cook@nsc.edu.
- **If you’re an undergraduate in any other program** (including pre-Education and pre-Nursing students and pre-licensure Nursing students), schedule an advising appointment by visiting [the advising website](#) or by emailing aac@nsc.edu.

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Graduate Students

- **If you are a graduate student** in the Speech Pathology program, you must speak with the Speech Pathology Program Director. Contact Dr. Angel Ball at angel.ball@nsc.edu or 702-992-2535.

Will S/U grading affect my financial aid or scholarships?

It could. You shouldn't choose S/U grading until you understand the consequences. If a course no longer applies to your degree program or major because of the grading change, you may be required to return funds that you already received to pay for the course. If you receive financial aid (grants, loans, etc.) or a scholarship, contact the financial aid office (finaid@nsc.edu or 702-992-2150) before you choose S/U grading.

If you have a Millennium Scholarship, you must have a GPA (based on letter grades) at the end of every semester to avoid receiving a strike.

How does the S/U grade affect my GPA?

A grade of S or U won't affect your GPA, as only letter grades are used to calculate your GPA. An S grade will maintain your GPA where it is, but won't raise it. Similarly, a U grade won't lower your GPA, so in some cases it may be a better option than receiving an F in a class; however, you need to be sure it won't affect your financial aid or scholarship before requesting the change. In addition, S/U grades don't directly affect your academic standing or your status on academic warning or probation.

For pre-nursing students, an S in a pre-nursing class will be treated the same as a C when the School of Nursing reviews your application and calculates your pre-nursing GPA. You will still need to meet the program-specific minimum GPA of 3.25. Keep in mind you cannot apply to the Nursing program with an S in BIOL 223, 224, or 251.

Do I have to change all of my classes to S/U grading or can I choose one or two?

We encourage you to consider each class individually. You could change all of them, none of them, or any number in between.

Will classes I take as S/U still count toward my major?

It depends on the class. When you speak with an advisor, they will discuss the consequences of S/U grading in your classes with you.

Core Curriculum and General Electives

A grade of S in a course should count toward Core Curriculum requirements and as general electives.

Major Requirements

For classes taken in Spring 2020, S grades will also fulfill major requirements, unless your program has special licensing or accreditation requirements that make letter grades essential (though it may not fulfill some pre-requisites; see the next section). **Programs where a grade of S will not fulfill coursework in the major include:**

- Master of Speech Pathology
- All Nursing majors (pre-licensure and RN-to-BSN)
- Pre-Nursing students cannot apply to the Nursing program with an S grade in BIOL 223, 224, or 251

Pre-Requisite Classes

In some classes, you must earn a C- or higher to move on to the next course (example: to move from CHEM 121 to CHEM 122, or from ENG 101 to ENG 102); an S grade in a pre-requisites class won't allow you to move to the next course. **If you choose S/U grading in a pre-requisites course, you will have to retake the class for a letter grade** (and earn a C- or higher) **to move to the next course** in the series.

If I choose the S/U option, can I switch back to a letter grade later?

No. If you choose S/U grading, we aren't able to later change it to a letter grade. Talk to an advisor to make sure S/U grading is a good choice for you. For instance, some graduate programs and medical and pharmacy schools won't accept S/U grades in key courses; if you may want to apply to a graduate or professional program after you graduate, you need to think carefully about whether an S/U grade will create problems for your future educational or career plans.

Is S/U grading similar to an audit, where I can take a relaxed approach to classwork?

No. An audit doesn't award any credits for the course, while a Satisfactory (S) grade does earn you credits for the class. You are still expected to be actively engaged in the class and to complete all your assignments.

If I choose the S/U option for my class, will this hurt my application for graduate school or medical school?

This is an unprecedented situation, and we don't know how groups outside of NSC will view S/U grades in courses that are normally letter graded. Employers, graduate and professional schools, and internship sites will be aware of the challenges we are currently facing. But we can't guarantee they will change any policies that require letter grades in certain courses. Your advisor will discuss the possible consequences of changing to S/U grading in a class. Ultimately, you will need to make a decision that you feel is best for you given your current situation and your future educational and career goals.

How does the S/U option impact the Dean's List and President's List?

For Spring 2020, you must complete 6 letter-graded credits (instead of the usual 12) and meet the GPA requirement to be on the Dean's or President's List. Students who have only S/U graded courses (and no GPA for Spring 2020) are not eligible for either list.