

# Important Update about Pass/Fail Grades for OCS Students

April 3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. PST

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Dear Spring 20 OCS Student,

I'm writing to update you on how the recently created ***Temporary Grading Procedures, Spring 2020*** (developed by the Whitman faculty, sent to you today by the Whitman Registrar, and attached again here) will affect you and your OCS grades.

The *Temporary Grading Procedures, Spring 2020* is essentially a set of guidelines for courses taught by Whitman faculty this semester. However, as the document states, **"OCS students may also transfer in P grades from the OCS programs."** Thus, by permission of the Whitman Faculty, **you may now opt into the PDF or Pass/Fail system offered by your program, even if a D would result in a Pass. Furthermore, OCS courses in which the student earns a P may transfer back to Whitman as major, minor, distribution, or general degree credit** (as pre-approved on your OCS Course Approval page or via email from Barbara Hoffman).

Please note that the regulations surrounding grades and credits for you as an OCS student are controlled by your OCS program--not by Whitman College. **Thus, if your program is offering Pass/Fail or PDF as an option, you now have Whitman's permission to opt in. Keep in mind that you need to opt in by your program's Pass/Fail deadline, NOT by Whitman's.** If your program does not offer a Pass/Fail or PDF option, you will need to continue to take your OCS courses for a letter grade.

Keep in mind that OCS grades appear on the Whitman transcript, but are never factored into the Whitman GPA. This procedure has not changed.

Thank you for your patience as this PDF and Pass/Fail decision was developed by the Whitman faculty. Please know that I am sending you this update at the earliest possible time.

Let me know if you have any questions. However, if you're not sure what your program's PDF or Pass/Fail policy is, please check their website and your emails from your program before asking me! If you have questions about whether opting into PDF or Pass/Fail is a good idea for you and your situation, it may be more fruitful for you to direct those questions to your major adviser and/or your pre-professional adviser.

I hope you are staying well at home.

Best regards,  
Barbara

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# WHITMAN COLLEGE

## Temporary Grading Procedures, Spring 2020

These procedures have been distributed in the past by either the Board of Review and/or the Teaching and Learning subcommittee. This document collects them in one place.

- The extension for submission of senior grades is being extended to May 27 at 9am (the same deadline that applies to returning student grades).
- This extension will not change the original date of graduation (May 24) on diplomas or transcripts.
- Faculty will submit standard letter grades to the Registrar and students may choose to keep the grade, or choose PDF or W (see the next items for details).
- All students will have the option to choose PDF or withdrawal with a W grade from any or all classes once grades have been released on May 27.
- Graduating seniors will have from May 27 to June 3 to make decisions on letter grades, PDF grades, or withdrawal with a W grade for any classes for this spring.
- If a student chooses the PDF option (and has a grade other than F), that course will be allowed to count towards the General Studies Program, which includes distribution, Encounters, and the writing proficiency requirement (RWPD 170). It will also count toward most courses in the major or minor. As noted in the college catalog, certain departments have course-specific requirements for grades. In such cases, the department should let the Registrar know whether those requirements stand, or whether a P and/or a D is sufficient to fulfill the requirement.
- Returning students will have until the end of the second week of the Fall semester to finalize their choice of grade method or withdrawal from any or all classes for this spring. This will allow reflection with advisers on how their choices impact their academic record.

- Information about Honors:
  - Seniors working to attain Honors in Major Study may not opt for PDF in their thesis class. If returning students opt for PDF, a P grade may not be converted to a letter grade in the future to improve their major or cumulative GPAs and thus help them to qualify for Honors in Major Study or Latin Honors.
  - The deadline for submitting honors theses to the library has been extended to May 20.
- OCS students may also transfer in P grades from the OCS programs.
- Final exams. All faculty should adhere to the general academic calendar. This includes conducting classes until the end of the semester and holding final exams and exercises during final exam week (May 14-19). Within that time frame, faculty are encouraged to be flexible, however. Sticking to the published final exam schedule is neither expected nor encouraged. If administering a final exam through Canvas, for example, faculty are encouraged to make the exam available for several days so that students in different time zones and facing different circumstances may take it when their schedules best allow.
- Communication with students. NWCCU guidelines require faculty to communicate clearly with students during the transition to online learning. Please communicate how to access your class, as well as any changed requirements and learning goals. It would be very helpful if your messaging to students is consistent in time and form - for example, a daily update at around the same time in a similar format.

*Questions about this document may be directed to the Registrar's office or the Board of Review.  
Finalized Friday, April 3 2020.*