Graduate Council Policy Update

March 24, 2020

These proposals were approved by Graduate Council on March 24, 2020. They have been submitted to Faculty Senate for adoption.

Proposal to change the deadline for late drops for Spring 2020 classes only

UTK will make a transition to fully online teaching and learning from March 23 to the end of Spring term 2020 to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Some students will experience personal and academic disruptions associated with this transition to online education. In cases where the transition to online education will represent an obstacle to students' academic success, students may be better served by dropping a class and retaking it (if necessary) in a future semester.

The current deadline for dropping Spring 2020 classes is March 31, 2020, for full-semester classes and April 6, 2020, for second-session classes. The last day of classes for Spring 2020 is April 24, 2020.

Because of the additional work required to quickly transition to online teaching, some instructors may experience a temporary delay in returning graded work to students. As a consequence, some students may not know their standing in a class when the drop deadline arrives.

The current proposal is to extend the drop deadline for full-semester and second-session Spring 2020 classes to April 22, 2020, or — in the event that the last day of classes for Spring 2020 is adjusted — to the third from the last day of classes.

Proposal to extend of the deadline to choose S/NC grading for Spring 2020 classes only

The deadline for students to choose S/NC grading is the 10th day of the semester for full-semester classes. For Spring 2020, this deadline was January 17, 2020. Given the substantial academic disruption that the transition to fully online teaching and learning might present to students, we are extending the deadline for students to switch to S/NC grading to coincide with the late drop deadline as described in the second proposal above. This will apply to courses taken for graduate credit in Spring 2020 (both full term and second term) that currently allow S/NC grading. Courses that currently only allow letter grades are not included but departments may opt in by notifying the Office of the University Registrar of their intention to allow students to choose S/NC grading for the Spring 2020 term only.

Students who received VA benefits and opt to take S/NC grading will be directed to speak with the Veteran's Resource Center prior to selecting this option due to the fact that they may have to repay benefits.