UW-Madison offers students option to receive pass-fail grades this semester amid COVID-19 pandemic

From the Pandemic numbers, hospital updates and more: Keep up with the latest local news on the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak series

Kelly Meyerhofer | Wisconsin State Journal
Mar 27, 2020
UW-Madison students can skip the letter grades this semester, one of several recently announced measures by the university to offer flexibility during the pandemic.

Under the new policy, students will still receive grades for each class they take, but they now have the option to receive on their transcript a pass or fail designation related to the coronavirus. Students must decide by May 22, eight days after final grades are due.

"Recognizing that our lives have been significantly impacted by COVID-19, our grading and credit policies must adapt," UW-Madison provost John Karl Scholz said in a message to the university community.

The pass-fail option will be available for most courses, but Scholz said there may be some course exceptions, such as those with rules related to program accreditation or strict degree requirements.

Another step UW-Madison has taken to ease the anxiety associated with the coronavirus: the extension of the so-called "tenure clock."
Junior faculty members typically have a certain number of years before their university reviews their body of work and decides whether to grant tenure, an indefinite academic appointment that provides broad job protections most workers lack.

"Given the unprecedented challenges we face due to the COVID-19 crisis, it is unreasonable to expect that all assistant professors are able to make normal progress toward tenure in all areas of faculty activity: teaching, research, and service," Scholz said in a Wednesday announcement.

With academic conferences canceled, courses moved online, research reduced, or in some cases suspended, and personal obligations greater for many than it was pre-pandemic, faculty can now request a COVID-19 related extension.

UW-Madison's new pass-fail policy and tenure clock extension are similar to measures taken by universities across the country.
UW-Madison offers students option to receive pass-fail grades this semester amid COVID-19 pandemic | Higher education | madison.com

Pandemic numbers, hospital updates and more: Keep up with the latest local news on the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak

Concerned about COVID-19?
Sign up now to get the most recent coronavirus headlines and other important local and national news sent to your email inbox daily.

Email Address  Sign up!

* I understand and agree that registration on or use of this site constitutes agreement to its user agreement and privacy policy.

Related to this story

UW medical students celebrate virtual Match Day before starting residency in COVID-19 era
Mar 21, 2020

Kelly Meyerhofer | Wisconsin State Journal
Kelly Meyerhofer covers higher education for the Wisconsin State Journal. She can be reached at 608-252-6106 or kmeyerhofer@madison.com.