ECU’s students have made profound adjustments to their academic life as a result of the pandemic. Upon consultation with Provost Hayes, Vice Chancellor Stacy, the Faculty Senate Officers and the Chair of the Faculty Senate Admissions and Retention Policies Committee, Interim Chancellor Mitchelson offers the following initiatives to help lessen the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Pass/Fail Grading**
Undergraduate students will be able to opt in to Pass/Fail grading for a maximum of two courses (up to 8 hours) in the spring 2021 term. This means that, instead of keeping the letter grades they receive from their faculty, they can request a Pass grade for courses where a grade of D- or above is earned or a Fail grade for courses where they earned a grade less than D-.

Additional details:

- All academic transcripts have a note added to spring 2021 indicating the major disruption the coronavirus pandemic has caused to the academic experience.
- Students will be able to make Pass/Fail selections beginning Tuesday May 11th at 8 am until Wednesday May 26th at 8 am via PiratePort. Instructions about how students request Pass/Fail grading will be distributed in April, before the last day of classes.
- Courses graded as Pass/Fail will count towards applicable curricular, major, continuation and graduation requirements.
- A grade of Pass/Fail will not count toward a student’s GPA but will count toward earned semester hours.
- Some programs/majors may require a grade of C or better for their course requirements and may be excluded from the Pass/Fail option.
- Some programs/majors may not allow a grade of Pass/Fail for certain pre-requisite courses.
- All Fail grades result in no credit earned and cannot be used to fulfill any major or degree requirements. This can negatively impact financial aid eligibility and even delay student time to graduation.
- Pass/Fail course selections will be reviewed by an academic advisor after students request it. Students will be contacted if there are concerns that their choices will have a negative impact on degree progression or graduation timeline.
- If a Pass/Fail course request is flagged by an advisor or department, students will have a limited amount of time to decide if they want to adjust their course selection. Students should check their ECU email regularly up until June 7th, so they don’t miss time-sensitive information.

**Course Withdrawal Options**
The deadline to withdraw from 15-week spring 2021 courses without a GPA penalty is April 27th. Withdrawal deadlines for spring 2021 block courses are the last day of classes (March 5 for the first block and April 27 for the second block).

Any courses withdrawn from by the posted deadline during spring 2021 do not count toward the 16-hour limit that is currently set by ECU’s course withdrawal policy. Students planning to withdraw from multiple courses or request the Pass/Fail option should talk with the Financial Aid Office about any potential impacts to their future aid eligibility.
**Grade Replacement Flexibility**

ECU’s current Grade Replacement Policy allows students to replace a grade up to 4 times for courses in which they have earned a grade of C-, D+, D, D- or F. Any courses taken spring 2021 semester will not count against the 4-course limit for grade replacement if the student retakes the course(s) in a future academic term.

**Before making decisions**

Students should carefully consider all of the pros and cons before moving forward. To help them with their decision-making process they can take the following steps:

- Talk with their advisor. Many departments/programs require grades of C or better for courses or pre-requisites in their majors, and will not allow Pass/Fail grades to satisfy these requirements. The student’s choice may also impact their competitiveness for future licensures, graduate programs, or professional schools, and an academic advisor can help them make an informed decision.
- Calculate the impact to their GPA. Opting for Pass/Fail grading can protect their semester or cumulative GPA, but may also negatively impact progress toward graduation because of credit earned/lost.
- Consult with the Financial Aid Office about possible impacts on future financial aid eligibility. If students are receiving financial aid, they will still be held to the required standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress.