5/4/2020

To students enrolled in the Online Information Systems Master’s program:

I am writing as the Graduate Program Director (GPD) of the Online IS MS Program in the Department of Information Systems, and in consultation with the IS Department Chair, other GPDs, faculty, and the UMBC College of Engineering and Information Technology (COEIT) Dean's Office, to announce changes to grading policies for the Spring 2020 semester.

The department has considered whether major/minor/certificate courses could be taken using Pass/Fail grading and whether a grade of Pass would allow the course to be used to satisfy prerequisites for further courses. There are arguments on both sides of this question and the department recognizes that in the current situation, flexibility is key to ensuring your continued success. We know that this time has been uncertain, and we appreciate your commitment to continued learning.

Policy on Pass/Fail options for Graduate Courses in Spring 2020 – Online IS MS Program:

**Fundamental, Core Required, and Advanced Elective Courses:** Students will be allowed to convert their grades to “Pass (P)” if they earn a ‘D or above’ grade, by submitting a request to the Graduate School that is approved by the graduate program director (GPD) (Dr. Komlodi). Note that a course with a grade of ‘P’ will be counted towards the degree in Spring 2020 but will not be counted to satisfy a prerequisite. To satisfy the prerequisite, students are advised to keep their letter grade. If students earn an ‘F’ grade, they can request to replace the grade with a ‘Withdraw (W)’ grade. They will then need to retake the course. **Students in their final semester who applied for graduation in May 2020 need to earn at least ‘Pass(P)’ grades in their classes to advance to graduation.**

Deadline for students to request a grade change to P/F or W is **June 10**.

**Incomplete:** If a student or family member is ill, they should consult with the course instructor, GPD and advisor to discuss converting to an Incomplete (I) grade. Work for the course would need to be submitted in a specified timeframe.

According to Spring 2020 policies, you will be allowed to change a passing letter grade to P after your letter grades are made available at the end of the semester. There is no need to change your grading to P/F at this point. **If you want to change your grade to a ‘Pass’, we strongly suggest you first discuss with your IS departmental advisor and GPD. Then, you can submit a request to the Registrar’s office to make the grade change.**

Please recognize that it is possible that you may find that P grades will not be acceptable for whatever post-graduate training program you might want to apply for in the future. If you receive a letter grade normally deemed appropriate for these programs it may be in your interest not to change it to P.
For programs external to the department, please check with instructors or representatives of the other programs before making the decision to convert to a P/F in their courses.

All COEIT departments recognized that it was in the interest of all students to be given options during these trying times. This system is only in operation for this semester, and should revert to the normal process for subsequent semesters and summer sessions.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact Graduate Program Coordinator Ms. Shannon Keegan (keegan@umbc.edu) or Graduate Program Director Dr. Anita Komlodi (komlodi@umbc.edu).

Sincerely,
Dr. Anita Komlodi