



# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS ACADEMIC SENATE RESOLUTION

**Continuity and Compassion Amid Disruption by COVID-19:  
Student Assessment for Spring 2020**

## SENATE RESOLUTION 19-02

Motion: to approve the Resolution on Continuity and Compassion Amid Disruption by  
COVID-19: Student Assessment for Spring 2020

Passed at the April 14, 2020 meeting of the Academic Senate

Approvals:

  
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Gregory Wood (Apr 15, 2020)

**Gregory Wood, Ph.D.**  
Chair, Academic Senate

04/15/2020

Date

  
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erika beck (Apr 15, 2020)

**Erika D. Beck, Ph.D.**  
President

04/15/2020

Date



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## Continuity and Compassion Amid Disruption by COVID-19: Student Assessment for Spring 2020

**Resolution #: SR 19-02**

**Drafted By: Academic Senate**

**Approval Date: April 14, 2020**

**Purpose:**

A resolution on continuity and compassion amid disruption by COVID-19: student assessment for spring 2020.

**Resolution:**

WHEREAS on March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. On March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic; and

WHEREAS on March 11, 2020, the University announced plans to put strong social distancing measures into place by discontinuing face-to-face instruction and replace it with 'virtual instruction' starting on April 6. These plans allowed for a slow transition to voluntary virtualization of teaching followed by Spring Break and then an additional week of canceled classes to allow faculty a week to transition to mandatory virtual instruction; and

WHEREAS on March 12, the Ventura County Public Health Officer declared COVID-19 to be a local health emergency. On March 13, the pandemic led President Trump to declare a national state of emergency.<sup>1</sup> On March 15, the governor of California directed that populations especially vulnerable to COVID-19 self-isolate at home. At the same time, to accelerate social distancing in California, primary and secondary schools were closing their campuses and moving instruction online; and

WHEREAS on March 15, the University announced an acceleration of social distancing plans, canceling classes before Spring Break to allow faculty a week to transition to mandatory virtual instruction, thereby starting mandatory virtual instruction a week earlier on March 30.

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<sup>1</sup> Text of the White House declaration of national emergency <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>.



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The Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Academic Affairs intensified efforts to identify and meet student needs created by the emergency. For example, Student Affairs arranged to feed and protect 250+ students who elected to remain living in campus housing. And the John Spoor Broome Library, while searching for ways to provide needy students with internet access, used its loaning infrastructure to provide students with laptops, sending them through the US mail if necessary; and

WHEREAS on March 17, the Ventura County Public Health Officer issued the first shelter in place<sup>2</sup> order for the county which ordered non-essential businesses to close and all citizens to self-isolate at home. On March 31, this order was updated<sup>3</sup> to align with a March 19 state-wide stay at home order from the governor<sup>4</sup>. On March 22, President Trump declared the pandemic to be a major disaster for the state of California. On March 30, the county's Stay Well Stay Home order was extended<sup>5</sup>; and

WHEREAS this timeline shows the rapid development of the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid University response to the public health emergency, and the immense pressure put on all members of the University community, it puts unique and poorly understood pressures on the institution's instructional mission; and

WHEREAS many students matriculated to CI because the institution values face-to-face learning, hands-on instruction, and small class sizes; and

WHEREAS students may now find themselves in environments that are not conducive to college-level learning, some not having easy access to the internet, others having to share home computers and internet access with siblings or children who are learning from home and parents who are working from home, and some taking on responsibilities as caregivers for family who are sick or especially susceptible to COVID-19; and

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<sup>2</sup> Text of the Ventura County Stay Safe Stay Home order can be found online at [https://vcportal.ventura.org/CEO/VCNC/2020-03-17\\_Ventura\\_County\\_Public\\_Health\\_Order.pdf](https://vcportal.ventura.org/CEO/VCNC/2020-03-17_Ventura_County_Public_Health_Order.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Text of the Ventura County Stay At Home order <https://s30623.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/StayWellAtHomeOrder.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Text of the California state-wide stay at home order <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.19.20-attested-EO-N-33-20-COVID-19-HEALTH-ORDER.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Text of the revised Ventura County Stay Home Stay Well order [https://vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/March\\_31\\_2020\\_Order.pdf](https://vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/March_31_2020_Order.pdf).



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WHEREAS many students are suffering direct and indirect economic consequences from the closure of non-essential businesses, such as being furloughed from employment or having providers who are losing or have lost income; and

WHEREAS the emergency conditions surrounding the pandemic create social and psychological stress on students and instructional faculty that add to the difficulty of learning at a college-level; and

WHEREAS the US Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education issued guidance for interruptions of study related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) on March 5 (and revised on March 20) that allows courses to convert to modalities that support 'distance education' without going through normal approval processes, addresses accommodations for students whose education was interrupted by the pandemic (*e.g.*, study abroad), allows the use of COVID-19 in Satisfactory Academic Progress appeals, and describes limitations on adjustments that affect a student's enrollment status; and

WHEREAS the Chancellor's Office provided guidance<sup>6</sup> on ways to create flexibility in campus grading systems within the constraints of the Title 5 Administrative Code of California and CSU Executive Orders and coded memoranda, and that guidance described student populations that may be affected by changes to grading systems (*e.g.*, graduate and professional students, credential students, student veterans, international students, DASS students, students on academic probation or in danger of not meeting the 'Pace' standard); and

WHEREAS some programs require courses taken in sequence, making the satisfactory completion of one course a prerequisite of another, and some programs expect students to gain certain content and conceptual knowledge from pre-requisite courses; and

WHEREAS academic programs and departments, represented by the Chair, are in the best position to decide which courses that are required in their major should always be taken for a letter grade and not be allowed to count toward their major if taken for Credit/No Credit; and

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<sup>6</sup> See the March 25 document "California State University Grading Policy Considerations Response to COVID-19 Disruptions".



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WHEREAS the faculty in academic programs and departments, represented by the Chair, is in the best position to communicate to their major students and prospective major students any restrictions to adjusting the grading systems for their required courses taken in Spring 2020; and

WHEREAS it is critically important that all efforts are made to provide students, faculty, and staff timely, full, and accurate information with regards to the consequences of a student modifying a course's grading option; and

WHEREAS the members of the Academic Senate agree that now is a time that we make every effort to treat one another, our students, and all our CI colleagues with compassion as we all work to preserve our academic and professional standards so the University and its students are positioned to continue their work in Fall 2020.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that at the end of the Spring 2020 semester all faculty will submit letter grades for each student in all courses that use the letter grade system of grading, and that students may opt to change their letter grade to a grade of Credit/No Credit according to the following rule:

- For undergraduate students, grades of C- and better are considered Credit, and all lower grades (D+ and below) are No Credit. Whether or not a grade of Credit satisfies existing major requirements will be determined by each department or program. (See below.)
- For graduate and professional studies students, the rule used to assign a grade of Credit and a grade of No Credit will vary between programs.

Students shall be given the ability to change their grading system from graded to Credit/No Credit in CI Records starting on April 21 and ending on May 15. Grade rosters will be available for faculty to submit semester grades on or before May 22 and will be due on May 29. If after May 29 a student feels they made an error in their choice of grading system, they may have until June 9 to make a written petition to the Registrar to have their grading system changed. The procedure for the appeal will be created by the Registrar's office, approved by the Executive Committee of Academic Senate, posted on the Registrar's 'Policies & Procedures' web page, advertised through the COVID-19 FAQ web page for students, and broadcast using social media channels that serve students. Petitions to change from letter grade to Credit/No Credit shall be granted without review.



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BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that all instructional faculty teaching a course that uses the letter grading system will maintain and retain gradebook information that will allow them to assign a letter grade to each of their students who chose the Credit/No Credit grading option in their courses. This information shall be in a form that the Chair can access if a student petitions to change their grading option after May 29.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any course that receives a grade of Credit in the Spring 2020 semester will not count toward any limit on the number of courses a student may take for a grade of Credit in the University's General Education requirements, major requirements, or other requirements for successful graduation.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that students can withdraw from any course as late as May 29th, 2020, and no faculty or Chair signature will be required for withdrawing from a Spring 2020 course. The Registrar shall not require additional outside documentation to support a student's reason for withdrawal (such as doctor notes, employer notes, *etc.*) and may accept electronic requests of withdrawal; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the Chair of each academic program or department will list those courses required in their undergraduate major(s) that SHALL NOT satisfy a major requirement if taken for Credit/ No Credit. Chairs shall submit that list by email to their Dean, the Provost, and the Chair of the Academic Senate<sup>7</sup> by the end of business day on April 20. On April 21, the Chair of the Academic Senate will disseminate the entire list to Academic Advising and Enrollment Services. The program or department Chair will also work with their faculty to disseminate guidance to students on choosing the grading system for their major courses during Spring 2020. If no list is submitted by a Chair by the April 20 deadline, then all required courses in the major will satisfy major requirements if taken Credit/No Credit and earning Credit; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that students of any academic standing at the end of the Spring 2020 semester (except in cases where there has been a finding of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct) may petition to exceed the 16-unit limit for Course Repeats for Grade Forgiveness, to exceed the 12-unit limit on Course Repeats for Grade Averaging, and to bypass the prohibition

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<sup>7</sup> Lists should be submitted to the Chair of Academic Senate by emailing them to [senate@csuci.edu](mailto:senate@csuci.edu).



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against the repetition of lower-division courses for a third repeat and/or beyond the 12-units repeated for Grade Averaging; and, be it further

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that students who would normally be subject to disqualification under Senate Policy 16-09<sup>8</sup>, *Policy on Academic Disqualification*, will be allowed to continue on probation for an additional semester; and, be it further

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that directors of other offices that advocate for students as related to grades during Spring 2020 (e.g., Veterans Affairs Program, International Programs, Academic Advising for students on academic probation, DASS) shall proactively give students guidance on their choice of grading system.

If any resolution or part of a resolution in this document conflicts with or contradicts guidance on other University policies or procedures, these resolutions shall prevail without invalidating any other portion of the University policy or procedure. If any part of a resolution statement in this document conflicts with existing CSU policy, executive order, or coded memoranda, or if any resolution in this document conflicts with local, state, or federal statute, or the Collective Bargaining Agreement, that part of a resolution statement will be declared invalid without harming any other resolution statement in this document.

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<sup>8</sup> Link to Senate Policy on Academic Disqualification (Senate Policy 16-09):  
<https://senate.csuci.edu/policies/2016-2017/sp-16-09-revised-policy-on-academic-disqualification.docx>