


PRESIDENT'S POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 270 (Revision to PPM 204)

TO: All Faculty and Undergraduate Students

FROM: Charles W. Steger 

DATE: June 17, 2011

SUBJECT: Pass/Fail Policy Grade Option for Undergraduates

Approved by University Council: March 21, 2011
Approved by the President: March 21, 2011
Approved by the Board of Visitors: June 6, 2011
Effective Date: Fall Semester 2011

The Board of Visitors on recommendation of the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies approved a resolution regarding the pass/fail policy grade option for undergraduates.

Following is the text of the resolution.

WHEREAS, the current pass/fail option exists to encourage students to enrich their academic programs and to explore more challenging courses outside their majors, without the pressures and demands of the regular grading system; and

WHEREAS, students may currently apply the pass/fail option to no more than ten percent of the required hours for graduation completed at Virginia Tech; and

WHEREAS, students and advisors are confused by this sliding scale percentage model, which reduces the total allowable pass/fail hours for currently enrolled students who complete transfer credits; and

WHEREAS, by definition, students who transfer to Virginia Tech have fewer hours available for the pass/fail option than do native students; and

WHEREAS, the State Policy on Transfer requires an equitable application of policies for both transfer and native students; and

WHEREAS, students enrolled in the Corps of Cadets are disadvantaged because of the total number of leadership courses that are offered only as pass/fail courses and are required for participation in the Corps;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that for students in a four-year program, the total maximum allowable credits for pass/fail shall not exceed 12 semester hours, exclusive of courses offered only pass/fail; and for students in a five-year program, the total maximum allowable credits for pass/fail shall not exceed 12 semester hours, exclusive of courses offered only pass/fail, **or** ten percent of the required hours for graduation completed at Virginia Tech—whichever is greater; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that other policy restrictions continue without modification, including: a required minimum grade point average of 2.0; excluding application of this option to courses in the Curriculum for Liberal Education (CLE) and any required course(s) for the major; no more than two (2) courses per term as elective pass/fail credit; and the grade threshold of “D” as passing for a pass/fail option course.

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