

COVID-19 Temporary Academic Policy for 2020-2021 Academic Year Allowing Students to Elect S/U Grading

Linfield University continues to deliver the same excellence in education during the current COVID-19 pandemic. We acknowledge the unexpected circumstances and have developed the following temporary academic policy. This blanket accommodation is intended to provide an option for students to encourage them to focus on their learning, health and well-being. At the same time, we understand that this option is not appropriate for every student in every course and advise students to carefully consider their options and seek appropriate counsel from their instructors and advisors.

POLICY:

Students may make an irrevocable election to change their final course grading method from traditional grading (A, B, C, etc.) to Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) for any course they take in the 2020-2021 academic year. The deadline for this irrevocable election is one week from the grade posting date set by the Office of the Registrar.

Basic facts about S/U grades:

- You must earn a C or better to get an S grade.
- If you earn a C-, D+, D, or F grade, you will get a U grade.
- S grades do not affect either the semester or cumulative Linfield GPA.
- U grades affect the Linfield GPA in exactly the same way as an F grade.
- S grades earn the credits for the course.
- U grades do not earn credits for the course, even if the grade that would have been earned was a C-, D+, or D.
- C-, D+, and D grades are considered passing at Linfield, so in most cases, these grades are preferable to a U grade.
- Credits earned for S-graded courses will not count toward Dean's List eligibility or honors at graduation.
- Courses with S grades can count toward all Linfield graduation requirements that must be met with a C or better (e.g. Major, Minor, LC's, BA, BS, etc.).
- For Linfield's School of Nursing prerequisite courses, an S grade will be calculated as a C in calculating your prerequisite GPAs.
- Your financial aid could be affected by your choice of A-F grading or S/U grading.
- Your GPA will not be affected by S grades. This can be good or bad, depending on what grade the S would replace and what your other grades are. For example, your GPA could be raised or lowered by a C grade and an S grade would have no effect.
- You will earn credits toward Satisfactory Academic Progress for S grades and also for C-, D+ and D grades, but not for U or F grades.

FAQs about S/U grading:

Why would the university allow this?

While generally, Linfield faculty do not believe that S/U grading is the best way for a student's knowledge, experience, and proficiency to be represented on the transcript, they recognize that in these (more) stressful (than usual) times, allowing students some flexibility to show basic understanding (S=Satisfactory), without harming their GPA can be appropriate.

However, the faculty would still strongly advise caution before selecting S/U grading.

What is the process to declare S/U grading?

Students must submit a [Petition for Exception to Policy form](#). The deadline to declare S/U grading is one calendar week after the grades posted deadline as posted on the [academic calendar](#) as posted on Linfield's webpage.

This "petition" is not a petition in the normal sense—it is just a form that gets routed to a student's advisor and instructor so that there is opportunity for conversation before the grade is changed. Students can email the Office of the Registrar if they change their mind before the grade is posted.

Why is the timing so late to choose S/U grading?

This timing was chosen so that students would not select this option too early without exploring ways to improve their performance with their instructor and without a chance to thoroughly examine the consequences of their decision. With the deadline set after grades are posted for the semester, students will be able to know how they did in the course before making the decision.

Will the choice of S/U grading affect my Linfield degree?

As long as your grade would have been a C or better (necessary to earn an S grade), then the course and credits will count as any other passing course toward filling requirements for your Linfield degree.

If you were to elect to choose S/U grading for a course in which you would have earned a grade above a C, the net effect would be to lower your GPA because an S has no effect on your GPA. If any of your required GPAs (cumulative, major, minor) are close to the minimum (generally 2.0, higher for some programs), this could potentially affect your degree.

Linfield is regionally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and our accreditation allows us to offer S/U grades as an option.

Will my ability to earn honors be affected by my choice of S/U grading?

Yes, it can affect your GPA. S grades do not affect your Linfield GPA, so this could potentially raise your GPA slightly. U grades do affect your Linfield GPA negatively.

Eligibility to earn Dean's List honors each semester requires that students earn a minimum of a 3.65 GPA in at least 12 credits that are A-F graded.

Eligibility for Latin honors at graduation requires a minimum of 54 A-F graded credits at Linfield with a minimum GPA of 3.650.

Could a choice of S/U grading affect my ability to be licensed or get into graduate or professional school later?

Of course, it is hard to say what future admissions and licensing boards will decide to do with transcripts from this time.

In the past, some post-graduate programs (e.g. medical school, law school, dental school and other competitive graduate programs) have calculated GPAs by replacing S grades with C's, or not allow S-graded courses at all, especially for prerequisite courses. It is best to consult with your advisors and check in with the admissions department at your intended schools or programs.

For professional licensing, it is also best to consult with your advisors and the licensing boards in the state in which you wish to be licensed.

For Linfield School of Nursing prerequisite courses, S grades will be calculated as C's when determining eligibility for admission.

Can I change my mind once I have submitted the form requesting S/U grading?

The intention of using the petition form was to enable conversations between students and their advisors and instructors. Most of those discussions should happen before the form is submitted.

With the deadline for requesting S/U grading set at one calendar week after grades have posted, all students will have a chance to see their grade before making this request. The registrar will not change any grades to S/U until after the deadline. This will allow time for forms to be reviewed and rescinded if desired.

Once an S or U grade is posted, it cannot be changed.