Why is there an Emergency Grading System?
The COVID-19 emergency and the resulting closure of college campuses and transition to remote instruction, has created access and learning challenges for many Virginia Community College System (VCCS) students. To ensure that students’ academic progress is not adversely impacted this semester, the VCCS has developed a special policy that institutes a default Pass/Withdraw/Incomplete grading system for those courses that were not scheduled to end before April 6. Courses that have already ended, such as first session 8-week courses, will follow the standard grading scale.

What is the Emergency Grading System?
The emergency grading policy is primarily a “Pass” system, and applies to all classes that were not scheduled to end by April 6, including dual enrollment. Unless students request to be graded under a traditional A-F grading system, one of four “default” grades will be issued: P+, P-, W, or I. This system may be applied on a course-by-course basis. For example, students may use the default grading system for one class, but request the A-F grading system for another. Developmental courses will still be graded using the S, R, U grading rubric.

These grades are described in more detail below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>What does the Grade Mean?</th>
<th>How does it Apply?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P+</td>
<td>Pass with a grade of “C” or higher</td>
<td>Applies to college transfer and technical education courses. A grade of P+ will not impact a student’s GPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-</td>
<td>Pass with a grade of “D”</td>
<td>Applies to college transfer and technical educational courses. A grade of P- will not impact a student’s GPA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdraw</td>
<td>A student may withdraw themselves up until 5/7/2020. For courses scheduled to end prior to 5/8/2020, students may withdraw until the day before the last day of class. Dual enrollment students must work through the normal process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>The faculty member and student may agree to a plan to complete remaining course requirements (by the end of the Fall 2020 semester).</td>
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</table>
What does it mean that the Emergency Grading System is the “default” system?
The emergency grading system described above will automatically be used by your instructors to report spring 2020 grades in all courses not scheduled to end before April 6. You do not have to request that the P/W/I system be used. If this is the approach you want your instructors to take in one or more of your courses, you don’t have to do anything at all. Please see below for additional instructions regarding withdrawals (W) and incompletes (I).

What if I prefer the A-F Grading System (a letter grade)?
If you wish to be graded under a traditional A-F grading system for one or more of your courses, you must notify each instructor separately of this request by 5/8/2020 (prior to final exams). If your course is scheduled to end prior to 5/8/2020, you have until the day before the last day of class to make your request. Please remember that once you choose to be graded under the A-F system for one or more courses, you may not switch back to the P/W/I system. It is important, therefore, that you weigh your options and take your time making this decision.

Here is how you will be asked to make the request, depending on the kind of course:

(1) **Canvas-Based Courses.** You will receive a “survey/quiz” for each course you are taking that is being delivered via Canvas. Please complete and submit the survey for each course to indicate to your instructor that you want to receive a letter grade in the course.

(2) **Dual Enrollment and Non-Canvas Courses.** If you are taking a dual enrollment course or a course that is not being delivered via Canvas, you will receive an email from your instructor about the need for you to “opt-in” to receive a letter grade. You will be asked to respond directly to your instructor’s email with a statement regarding your request to receive a letter grade. If you are taking more than one dual enrollment or non-Canvas courses, you will receive separate emails for each course – and will need to follow this same procedure for each if you want a letter grade.

How Will the Instructor Determine if I Should Get a P+ or a P-?
The instructor will use the grading policy published in the course syllabus. For course grades of C or higher, a P+ grade will be reported. For course grades of D, a P- grade will be reported. For course grades of F, you may withdraw from the course with a grade of W. If you earn a grade of F and do not withdraw from the course, the instructor will withdraw you. The P+/P- grade does not affect Grade Point Average (GPA).

When is the Grade of W Used?
A W grade is for students who choose to withdraw from the course, or who would otherwise earn an F grade in the course. If you withdraw yourself, a W grade will be reported on your transcript. If your instructor reports the withdraw grade, your transcript will also reflect a grade of W. The W grade will not affect Grade Point Average (GPA). For information on how to withdraw from a course by 5/7/2020, please visit vhcc.edu/withdraw. If your course is scheduled to end prior to 5/8/2020, you have until the day before the last day of class to make your request. If you are a dual enrollment student, you may not withdraw yourself; you must work through the normal process.
When is the I Grade used?
The I grade signifies that the student has not completed the course. The I grade does not affect Grade Point Average (GPA). The I grade will be used only in the following cases:

1. The college is unable to deliver instruction before the semester ends because of COVID-19.
2. You have not completed the course and you and instructor agree that it will be possible for you to complete the remainder of the course by no later than the end of the Fall 2020 semester. You must request that the I grade be used. However, the final decision about whether to award the I grade rests with instructor.

Can a student earn a grade of “F” under the emergency grading system?
Under most circumstances, students will earn a “W” instead of an “F” under the default emergency grading system. You can, however, earn a grade of “F” if you have requested that your faculty use the traditional A-F letter grading system. At the faculty’s discretion an “F” may be awarded in extreme circumstances, such as those surrounding an academic dishonesty situation.

How will P/W/I Grades Affect GPA?
The grades will not be factored into the student’s GPA.

How will P/W/I Grades Affect Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), Academic Warning, Probation, and Suspension?
The P/W/I grades will not affect your SAP. Students on Academic Warning, Probation, or Suspension will remain in those statuses until the next semester in which A-F grades are awarded. Students may appeal Academic Warning, Probation, or Suspension. Students on Academic Warning, Probation, or Suspension will not be further penalized for not having exited those statuses in the Spring 2020 semester.

Will P+ and P- Grades Count Towards Degree Completion and Graduation Requirements?
The P+ and P- grades will be counted towards course completion and graduation requirements for required courses, except for courses where a grade of C or higher is required (which would need a P+).

Will P+ and P- Grades Count for Courses that are Prerequisites for other Courses?
For courses which have a prerequisite with only a passing requirement would need a P+ or a P- grade. In the case of courses that have a prerequisite that require a grade of C or better, a P+ grade is needed.

How will P/W/I Grades Transfer?
The State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) has received assurances from all public colleges and universities in Virginia that courses graded P+ will be awarded transfer credit (with the exception of the University of Virginia). W grades will appear on your transcript, but will not count for course completion for transfer. I grades must be completed by the end of the Fall 2020 semester or they will become W grades, unless you choose the A-F grading scale, in which case the I grade will become a grade of F.

With regard to for-profit colleges and universities in Virginia – and public, private, and for-profit colleges and universities in other states – it is the VCCS’s hope that they will accept P+ grades for transfer, but the decision will ultimately rest with those institutions. If you plan to transfer to schools like this, you should check with them about how the P+ grade will transfer.

How will other Colleges and Universities know what the P+ and P- Grades Mean?
A note will be placed on your transcript indicating what the P+ and P- grades mean.