PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE SPRING 2020 PASS FAIL POLICY

Rationale presented:
The current Covid pandemic has continued to create major disruptions in the personal and educational lives of the students at WSU. Families continue to have unique challenges around child care, elder care and self-care. Students are juggling multiple personal challenges while attempting to be successful at their educational endeavors. At WSU, their education were impacted by the shift to increased online learning, coupled with the move to all online/remote learning for the first month of the semester and the current two week shelter in place with all online/remote learning. These planned and unplanned shifts have both an emotional and learning impact on students. Further, the real life personal struggles also impact students' education. Given these challenges we believe that a continuation of the spring policy is warranted. To support the belief that there is widespread student desire for this change, at the present time we offer as evidence the change.org petition requesting this change for WSU students that has 1150 signatures at the time of this writing (https://www.change.org/p/westfield-state-university-pass-fail-option-for-westfield-state-university-fall-2020-semester?redirect=false)

POLICY

A. During the 2020-21 Academic year only, the end date for students to change their grading status to Pass/Fail is extended to the last day of classes (December 16, 2020 for Fall semester; May 3, 2021 for Spring Semester) for all undergraduate courses, except as specified in Section D below. Students wishing to convert to a Pass/Fail grade must submit the Pass/Fail Option Form to the Registrar's Office by 4:00pm the last day of the classes, as noted above. This is a binding decision and deadline. Once a student has submitted the paperwork, they may not change the decision. Additionally, no forms submitted after the deadline will be considered.

B. The deadline to withdraw from a class should also be extended to the last day of classes (December 16, 2020 for Fall; May 3, 2021 for Spring).

C. Students may take a maximum of three (3) classes Pass/Fail each semester.

D. Due to strict licensing and accreditation requirements as well as major requirements, academic departments and programs must be able to decide what classes in their area are eligible for the Pass/Fail option.
   - Department Chairs and Program Directors may determine that specific courses taken for the major, minor, concentration, or program are not eligible for this extension. Pass/Fail eligibility must be consistent across all sections of a course.
   - Department Chairs and Program Directors may also decide that courses taken for the major, minor, or concentration outside of the home department or program may not be used by students to count toward the major requirement.
   - Department Chairs and Program Directors may also elect to limit the number of courses in the major, minor, concentration, or program that will count toward that major, minor, concentration, or program.

   The Registrar will be notified of these excluded courses within 5 business days of the policy being approved. For any courses determined not eligible for the Pass/Fail option, the Department Chair must email students in those sections within 10 business

days of the policy being approved, letting students know the course is not eligible for Pass/Fail grading and providing a brief rationale as to why that decision was made.

E. Consistent with current practice, faculty will submit a letter grade for each student. The Registrar will then convert letter grades as noted in Section F below for students who have submitted the request form for classes that Department Chairs or Program Directors have not specifically made ineligible for a grade of Pass/Fail.

F. Only a grade of D- or higher will constitute a "Pass."
   - If the grade submitted by the faculty member is a D- or above, the grade will be converted to a Pass. This will not factor into the student's GPA.
   - If the grade submitted by the faculty member is an F, it will be noted as a Fail on the transcript, but it will not be factored into the GPA.

G. Pass/Fail grades issued under this policy will be followed on transcripts by an asterisk, indicating that the course was taken during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 COVID-19 emergency and that a grade of "P" is equivalent to a D- or higher.

H. If a student is retaking a course due to a previous unsatisfactory letter grade, and chooses to take the course Pass/Fail, the Pass/Fail designation will replace the letter grade.

I. Courses taken Pass/Fail during the 2020-21 Academic year will not be counted toward the total number of Pass/Fail courses a student is allowed to apply to their final WSU graduation credit hours.

J. All courses taken Pass/Fail during the 2020-21 Academic year only will fulfill Major, Minor, Concentration, Prerequisite, Common Core and Honors requirements, except as specified in Section D above.

K. Any course taken Pass/Fail during the 2020-21 Academic year may be retaken at a later point for a letter grade.

L. This policy intends, for the 2020-21 Academic year only, to override Pass/Fail Policy 1180 Section A 1, 2, 4 and Section B 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10.