

Expanded Grading Policy for Spring 2021

A letter grading system with extra flexibility will be in effect during the Spring 2021 semester for both undergraduate and graduate subjects.

For all subjects, the grades that will be recorded include A, B, C, D/NE, and F/NE, and for first-year undergraduates, A, B, C, D/NR and F/NR, where NE and NR indicate that no record will appear on the external transcript. No academic credit will be received for recorded grades of D/NE (D/NR) and F/NE (F/NR). However, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students assigned a grade of D/NE will have the option of electing to accept a grade of D, which will carry with it the associated units since that may be desired in order to fulfill a requirement for graduation. This election must be made by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**).

In addition, all students may elect to have one subject graded PE/NE in the spring semester. This election must be made by Drop Date of the spring semester (**Thursday, April 29, 2021**). Instructors will not know which students have made this election; this is consistent with current practice whereby such information does not appear on class lists when students elect to take a subject as Sophomore Exploratory, Junior/Senior P/D/F, or Graduate P/D/F.

Sophomores and juniors are under [Phases One and Two of the CUP Experiment](#) and these students will retain the option to designate by Add Date up to three science core GIRs as P/NR in any semester after the first semester of their first year. This is in addition to the option of electing one subject to be graded PE/NE as described above.

First-year undergraduate students will be graded A, B, C, D/NR, and F/NR in the spring semester as defined in [Section 2.60](#) of *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty*. First-year undergraduates may elect to have one subject graded PE/NE, although in this case they will not have the option to accept a grade of D and the associated units in place of an assigned D/NE for that subject.

Subjects that are normally graded P/D/F, e.g., some UROPs, will continue to have grades submitted as P, D, or F, but these grades will be recorded by the Registrar as P, D/NE (D/NR for first-year undergraduates), or F/NE (F/NR), where NE (NR) indicates that no record will appear on the external transcript. No academic credit will be received for recorded grades of D/NE and F/NE. However, sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students will have the option of changing a D/NE to a D by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**).

The following provides additional detail regarding key features of the grading policy for the Spring semester.

1. Instructors will submit grades of A, B, C, D, or F for all subjects, including for subjects where students have elected the PE/NE option (see 4 below). Subjects normally graded as P/D/F will continue to have grades submitted as P, D, or F (see 7 below). In accord with the practice in normal years, instructors may also include grade modifiers (+/-). However, these modifiers will only appear on internal grade reports, and term and cumulative grade point averages (internal and external) will be calculated without consideration of the modifiers.
2. In the spring semester, the Registrar will automatically translate all grades of F to F/NE for sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students. For first-year undergraduates, F will be translated to F/NR in all cases, except for a subject elected to be graded as PE/NE, in which case the F will be translated to F/NE. No record of these subjects will appear on the external transcript, and no academic credit will be received for these subjects.
3. When a grade of D is submitted by the instructor, the Registrar will automatically translate the grade of D to D/NE (or to D/NR for first-year undergraduates). In this case sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students may opt to accept the grade of D, which will carry with it the associated credit. This may be desired, for example, in order to fulfill a requirement for graduation. This election must be made by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**), and can be done through the regular add/drop/change online form, with advisor approval. If a student does not choose to accept the grade of D, then no record of the subject will appear on the external transcript and no academic credit will be received for the subject.
4. All students will have the option to have one subject recorded as PE/NE, where these grades are defined as in *Rules and Regulations* 2.64 as follows: PE reflects performance at any of the levels A, B, or C; NE indicates performance at the level of D or F for which no record will appear on the external transcript, and for which no academic credit will be received. The decision to elect this option must be made by Drop Date (**Thursday, April 29, 2021**), and as for all changes in registration, it must be approved by the student's academic advisor.
 - a) In the case where students elect the PE/NE option, instructors will submit grades of A, B, C, D, or F. The Registrar will then automatically translate these grades to grades of PE, D/NE, and F/NE for the internal grade reports. However, the external transcript will only show PE for subjects where the final grade submitted is a C- or higher, and no record will appear for subjects graded D/NE and F/NE with the exception indicated in (b) below.
 - b) Sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students electing the PE/NE option and receiving a D/NE in that subject can elect to accept a grade of D, which will carry with it the associated units. This election requires the approval of the student's advisor, must be made by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**), and can be done through the regular add/drop/change online form. This option is not available for first-year undergraduates who receive a grade of D/NR or DNE.

- c) Instructors will not know which students have elected to have a subject recorded as PE/NE. This is consistent with current practice whereby such information does not appear on class lists when students elect to take a subject as Sophomore Exploratory, Junior/Senior P/D/F, or Graduate P/D/F.
 - d) This PE/NE option can be applied to any subject, including those used to fulfill General Institute Requirements, minor requirements, and departmental requirements.
 - e) For undergraduate students, exercising this PE/NE option will not change the number of Junior-Senior P/D/F options remaining or available in future semesters (subject to any emergency policies in effect due to further significant disruptions).
 - f) For graduate students, exercising this PE/NE option will not change the number of Graduate P/D/F options remaining or available in future semesters (subject to any emergency policies in effect due to further significant disruptions).
5. The “normal” [Junior-Senior P/D/F Option](#) and [Graduate P/D/F Option](#) will be available during Spring 2021. Note that the “normal” Junior-Senior P/D/F and Graduate P/D/F options are more restrictive than this spring’s PE/NE option since in contrast to this spring’s PE/NE option, they cannot be used for departmental and Institute requirements. Please also note that designation of Junior-Senior P/D/F and Graduate P/D/F must be made by Add Date (**Friday, March 19, 2021**).
 6. Under Phases One and Two of the CUP Experiment, sophomores and juniors will retain the option to designate up to three science core GIRs as P/NR after the first semester of their first year. This is in addition to the option of electing one subject to be graded PE/NE as described above. This designation must be made by Add Date (**Friday, March 19, 2021**).
 7. Subjects that are normally graded as P/D/F, such as UROP subjects, will continue to have grades submitted as P, D, or F. The Registrar’s Office will record these grades as P, D/NE (D/NR for first-year undergraduates), or F/NE (F/NR). Grades of D/NE (D/NR) and F/NE (F/NR) will not receive academic credit. However, for a grade of D/NE, sophomores, juniors, and seniors can elect to accept a grade of D, which will carry with it the associated units. Students have the option to change a D/NE to a D by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**).
 8. The IE grade option will be available in lieu of the normal grade of I (Incomplete) during Spring 2021. If a minor part of the requirements for a subject is not fulfilled, the instructor can assign a grade of IE, which has a more flexible deadline for completion as compared to the normal grade of I. Grades of IE submitted during Spring 2021 must be resolved by the last day of the final exam period in Fall 2021. If a student receives a grade of IE and subsequently completes the work, the student’s grade will be changed to show IE/final grade. If the IE is received in a subject the student has designated for the PE/NE grading option, then the final grade will show as IE/PE or

IE/NE. Note: A grade of IE does not have to be resolved prior to graduation; however, an unresolved IE does not carry credit, and incomplete subjects required for graduation by the Institute or by a departmental program must be completed prior to graduation.

9. As in normal semesters, sophomores may designate one subject as [Exploratory](#). With an Exploratory subject, the student can either accept the letter grade awarded or change the class to listener status (in which case no credit is awarded and the subject does not appear on the transcript). This option is in addition to the option to have a subject graded PE/NE, as described in (4) above. Designation of a subject as Exploratory must be made by Add Date (**Friday, March 19, 2021**). Note: If a sophomore designates a subject as Exploratory, they may not elect to have this subject graded PE/NE.
10. First-year undergraduate students are covered by the new [Flex P/NR grading option](#), under which they have the option to designate up to 48 units to be graded on a P/NR basis after their first term and at any time during their course of study. Any subject is eligible for Flex P/NR designation including those that fulfill General Institute or departmental Requirements. To use the Flex P/NR option, students must designate the subject(s) after final grades are submitted and before Add Date of their next enrolled regular term. During Spring 2021, first-year undergraduates will retain this option in addition to the option of electing one subject to be graded PE/NE as described above.
11. Grades of OX and IE will resolve to the election made by the student for the subject in Spring 2021, i.e., either (a) ABC D/NE F/NE; or (b) PE/NE. Note: An unexcused O grade is treated as an NE: it receives no academic credit and is not used in the calculation of GPA.
12. Instructors will submit grades of A, B, C, D, or F for SB and SM theses that are **completed** during Spring 2021. The same is true for multi-term subjects. As with regular subjects (described above), these will be recorded by the Registrar's Office as A, B, C, D/NE, F/NE. Grades of D/NE and F/NE will not carry academic credit. However, a student can elect to accept a grade of D, which will carry with it the associated units, since that may be desired in order to fulfill a requirement for graduation. This election must be made by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**), requires approval of the advisor, and can be done through the regular add/drop/change online. In addition, a student can also elect the PE/NE option (described above) to apply to a thesis or multi-term subject that a student is completing during Spring 2021. The decision to elect this option must be made by Drop Date (**Thursday, April 29, 2021**), and as for all changes in registration, it must be approved by the student's academic advisor.
13. Instructors should submit a J or a U grade for SB and SM theses that are **not** completed during Spring 2021, and a T grade for multi-term subjects that are **not** completed during Spring 2021.

14. The SA grade applies as usual to doctoral theses completed during Spring 2021.
15. For sophomores, juniors, and seniors, Advanced Standing Exams (ASEs) taken in the Spring 2021 semester will be graded A, B, C, D/NE, F/NE since they will appear on the Spring 2021 grade report/transcript and that is the grading system in effect for Spring 2021. Grades of A, B, and C will appear on the external record as A&, B&, and C&. Grades of D/NE and F/NE will appear on the internal record as D/NE& and F/NE&. Upperclass students assigned a grade of D/NE will have the option of electing to accept a grade of D, which will carry with it the associated units and which will appear on the external record as D&; this election must be made by Add Date of the Fall 2021 semester (**Friday, October 8, 2021**). **Note:** The PE/NE option **cannot** be applied to ASEs.
16. For first-year undergraduates, Advanced Standing Exams (ASEs) taken during IAP 2021 through the first days of classes of the Spring term will be graded P/NR and will not impact the Fall 2020, IAP 2021 or Spring 2021 credit limits. ASEs taken at any other point during the Spring 2021 semester will be graded ABC/NR and will count toward the Spring 2021 credit limit. A passing grade appears on the external record as A&, B& or C&. Grades of D and F appear only on the internal record, as DN& and FN&.
17. For first-year undergraduate students in the spring semester, the only passing grades permanently recorded by the Registrar will A, B, C, P, or PE. The key elements of the normal first-year Spring semester grading scheme will remain in effect, including the reporting of hidden grades to the Registrar. The first-year credit limit for the Spring also remains in effect (60 units + 9 units of Discovery Subjects), and Early Sophomore Standing will not be offered.
18. The grades submitted for MIT students who cross-register for subjects at Harvard or Wellesley will be recorded by the MIT Registrar's Office according to the grading policies described above. MIT students may use the PE/NE designation on a cross-registered subject.
19. For students who cross-register at MIT from other institutions (i.e., Harvard or Wellesley), the grades of A, B, C, P, D/NE or F/NE will be reported to their home institution. The option to designate one subject to be graded PE/NE is not available for students who cross-register at MIT.

Please note that in the event that the conditions of the pandemic worsen significantly during the spring, it is possible that a system of alternate grades ("universal" PE/NE) could be mandated for all subjects as was the case in Spring 2020.

Details on the definitions of specific grades and how they are to be awarded, unless superseded by the Emergency Regulations above, can be found in [Section 2.60](#) of *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty*.