
TO: Senate

FROM: Senators Brooklyn Frizzle, Kristi Kouchakji, Angela Campbell, Fabrice Labeau, and Gillian Nycum

SUBJECT: Motion Regarding Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021

DATE: December 15, 2020

DOCUMENT #: D20-29

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE This motion proposes an Additional S/U Option beyond the [current S/U protocol](#) for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 academic terms.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE At its most recent regular meeting on 2 December 2020, Senate had a lengthy discussion in regard to the feasibility of extending the S/U option for the current academic year. Many student Senators urged Senate to consider this way forward, in view of continued disruption to academic life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting stressors many students have experienced.

Some Senators also expressed concerns about whether it would be advisable to extend the S/U option to all courses, given potential consequences for a student's academic or career path, which may not be foreseeable at the time the election is made to have a course graded pursuant to the S/U option.

Strong concern also was expressed about the burden extending the S/U option to all courses, for all students, would impose on administrative staff.

Finally, Senate noted that, as of that time, just one other U15 institution had moved to extend a similar alternative grade notation for their Fall 2020 academic term.

In the circumstances, some addition to McGill's current S/U option appears advisable, but it should be circumscribed in scope to ensure feasibility and consistency in implementation – insofar as possible – across the University and to mitigate against possible adverse consequences to the election of the S/U for students that may not be foreseeable at the time the election is made.

PRIOR CONSULTATION Enrolment Services, and Faculty leadership, student leadership.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS N/A

IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS If this motion is adopted the following steps must be taken:

- a) communication across the McGill community;

- b) discussion, decision, and – if applicable – planning within each Faculty in regard to this motion’s local implementation; and
- c) preparation and planning for implementation within Enrolment Services.

**MOTION OR
RESOLUTION
FOR APPROVAL**

Be it resolved that Senate approve the Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option, exceptionally and only for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms, as set out in Appendix 1.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option for F20/W21 Terms.

Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option for F20/W21 Terms

Introduction

This document establishes an “Additional S/U Option” for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms.

The requirements set out in this document apply **only** to this Additional S/U Option.

The existing S/U option (available [here](#)) remains in force.

Elements of the Additional S/U Option

Exceptionally for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms, and where permitted by Faculty regulations and program requirements:

- students may take up to **a total of 6 credits over the two terms** to be graded as S/U under this Additional S/U Option;
- these credits may be associated with elective, complementary, or required courses; and
- credits designated as S/U under this Additional S/U Option do not count toward the maximum specified by the existing S/U option (10% of the credits taken at McGill to fulfil the degree requirements).

Deadlines

Students who decide to have one or more courses graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) under this Additional S/U Option must do so **before**:

- **for Fall 2020 courses:**
 - 19 January 2021
- **for Winter 2021 courses and multi-term courses beginning in F20:**
 - 12 May 2021 for students who are graduating
 - 21 May 2021 for students who are not graduating

***opening dates for request forms for this Additional S/U Option will be announced shortly*

A student **cannot make any changes** after established deadlines even if the S/U option was selected by mistake. Students are therefore encouraged to speak with an academic advisor in their home Faculty before making a decision to have a course graded as S/U.

Grading

The instructor will report grades in the normal fashion.

For **UNDERGRADUATE** students:

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- Grades of A through C are converted to “Satisfactory” (S)
- Grades of D, F, and J are converted to “Unsatisfactory” (U)

For **GRADUATE** students:

- Grades of A through B- are converted to “Satisfactory” (S)
- Grades of C, D, F, and J are converted to “Unsatisfactory” (U)

Courses taken under this Additional S/U option will be excluded from the grade point average (GPA) calculations, but they will be included in the attempted credits total. Credits for courses with a final grade of S will also be included in the number of credits earned.

Special Notes

Awards, Designations and Scholarships: Exceptionally, for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms, in order to be considered for undergraduate scholarship renewals, students must complete at least 24 graded credits in the regular academic session, not including courses completed under the S/U option. In-course awards and Dean’s Honours List designation also have requirements in regard to the number of graded credits required, which may vary by Faculty.

Visiting, Exchange, or Quebec Inter-University Transfer Agreement (IUT) students wanting to take advantage of this Additional S/U Option must first take the following steps: they must first contact their home university to ensure that a course taken under the S/U option is acceptable to their home university and that the credits are transferable; after receiving approval from their home university and before McGill's course change deadline, they must then consult their McGill Faculty Student Affairs Office for approval.

Special Students are not eligible to select the Additional S/U Option.

Students in the Faculty of Engineering:

- Students in the Faculty of Engineering should consult with an advisor in the [McGill Engineering Student Centre](#) to discuss their options and explore the potential effects of selecting the S/U option for any courses.
- Students should note the following when considering the S/U option for courses:
 - For students in undergraduate engineering programs, if the S/U option is **not** selected, a grade of D is acceptable as a pass for in the following: Complementary Studies courses (i.e., Group A *Impact of Technology on Society* and Group B *Humanities and Social Sciences, Management Studies and Law*), Natural Science Complementary Courses (for Computer Engineering students from CEGEP and all Software Engineering students), and Elective Courses (for Mechanical Engineering students from CEGEP).
 - For undergraduate architecture B.Sc.(Arch.) students, if the S/U option is **not** selected, a grade of D is acceptable as a pass for elective courses taken outside the School of Architecture.

APPENDIX 1

- The Faculty reserves the right to use the actual grade underlying the S/U to assess the relative merits of students for scholarships, awards or prizes.

Students in the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: The Faculty reserves the right to use the actual grade underlying the S/U to assess the relative merits of students for scholarships, awards or prizes.

Students in the M.D.,C.M. and D.M.D. programs: The M.D.,C.M. and D.M.D programs function on a pass/fail system. A student's final grade for each course is recorded on the student's university transcript as "*S*" *satisfactory* (pass) or "*U*" *unsatisfactory* (fail).

Students in the School of Continuing Studies: This Additional S/U Option can be elected for a *maximum* of 3 credits per term in Fall 2020 and Winter 2021.

Students in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders: The S/U option is not available.