



**Guidance on Applying Pass-Fail Grades for Illinois Articulation Initiative Courses  
Guidance on Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Scores  
for Spring and Summer 2020 Terms**

**Issued by:**

Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)  
Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)  
Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI)

**The following guidance originally released on April 9, 2020 for coursework taken during the Spring 2020 term has been modified by extending the timeframe to include coursework taken during the Summer 2020 term.**

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This guidance advises postsecondary institutions in Illinois on supporting and accommodating students who elect to take courses on a pass-fail (P/F) basis or take AP/IB courses during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Spring and Summer 2020 COVID-19 Guidance on Applying Pass-Fail Grades was prepared in collaboration with statewide faculty from private and public two-year and four-year institutions and statewide transfer experts, and with reference to corollary guidance from the NCAA, NJCAA, AACRAO, specialized accreditors, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and many other companion resources.

For the purpose of this guidance only, P/F will be interpreted to include credit-no credit or satisfactory-unsatisfactory or similar non-qualitative binary grading nomenclature. This guidance applies to all passing grades reported as “P” regardless of the standard set by individual institutions.

The Spring and Summer 2020 COVID-19 Guidance on Applying Pass-Fail Grades is designed to address IAI specifically, but the expectation is that institutions will apply the same policies to transfer students as they do for native students for P/F grading during this COVID-19 public health emergency. Therefore, it is the position of the IBHE, ICCB, and IAI that that students’ courses which are completed under these crisis-driven alternative course delivery methods shall be deemed transferable and earn credit as they were originally intended during the Spring and Summer 2020 semesters and be applied toward major, minor, and General Education requirements.

**Application of Courses Completed with a Passing Grade:**

Institutions are expected to treat transfer courses the same as they treat their own courses that fall within this framework and time.

Courses completed with a passing grade should be applied as intended for IAI credit and should count toward completion of the General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) package.

Courses completed with a passing grade should be used for meeting general education requirements if they are approved as part of the IAI GECC.

Regardless of how or if an individual institution may choose to implement a P/F grade option for students, no student shall be required to repeat an IAI general education course for general education credit who received a “P” or passing grade at any IAI participating institution.

Courses should be allowed to meet graduation requirements within the specific institutional policies as implemented by the graduating institution. All leeway afforded to native students during the Spring and Summer 2020 semesters and the COVID-19 pandemic should be equally afforded to transferring students.

### **Assisting Students in Making the Choice to Elect P/F grading:**

The importance of making sound decisions on P/F grading cannot be underestimated. Factors to consider include but are not limited to: GPA calculation for scholarships and other forms of aid (eligibility and continuance), including VA benefits; academic probationary status; and repeated course policy. GPA and minimum grade standards may also affect graduate and professional school admission, licensure programs, and programs with specialized accreditors. It is incumbent on institutions to provide timely advice to students as information becomes available from graduate and professional schools, external agencies, and accreditors. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation has provided a website summarizing changes made by recognized accrediting bodies: <https://www.chea.org/chea-and-usde-recognized-accreditors-and-covid-19-information>.

### **Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Examinations:**

The College Board has announced changes to the AP exam content and format for spring 2020. The IBHE and ICCB will honor all existing transfer credit articulation for spring 2020 AP exams on which scores of 3, 4, or 5 are earned. Existing IAI GECC AP recommendations remain in force. Similarly, all IB scores of 4, 5, 6 or 7 shall be honored per existing institutional policies.

### **Transcript and Catalog Information:**

It is the recommendation of ICCB, IBHE and IAI that institutions make clear what standard is used to determine P/F grades on their transcripts.

To ensure transparency and consistent application of policy in years to come, it is the recommendation of ICCB, IBHE and IAI that institutions include in future catalogs all policies and policy changes specifically in effect for the COVID-19 pandemic period.

### **Note:**

IAI and the Boards will continue to monitor and make adjustments to these policies and recommendations as needed going forward.