

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

MODIFICATIONS TO WINTER 2020 PROMOTION RULES AND RELATED ISSUES ARISING FROM CR/NCR GRADING

April 30 2020

This version is identical to the April 13 2020 version except for additions to the “Further comments and interpretations” section.

This document describes how the Engineering and Architecture promotion rules are modified, in the W2020 term only, to deal with CR/NCR grades.

Students should address questions to their academic advisor or the associate chair/director of their program.

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A. Modified Engineering Promotion Rules for W2020

Endorsed by Engineering Examinations and Promotions committee on March 25 2020.

Approved by Engineering Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee on April 2 2020.

Approved by Engineering Faculty Council on April 13 2020.

1. If the term has only numeric grades, apply the usual rules.
Exception: A “failed—required to repeat” (FLR) term decision will automatically be converted to a “failed—required to repeat, no penalty” (FLRN) decision.
2. If the term has only CR/NCR grades, then no gpa is reported, the cumulative gpa is not affected, and...
 - (a) If grades are all CR, the term decision is “promoted” (PROM).
 - (b) If there are one or two NCR grades, the decision depends on the “to be cleared (TBC)” count:
 - if the TBC count is under 3, the term decision is “promoted (conditional)” (PRMC)
 - if the TBC count is at least 3, the term decision is “may not proceed” (MNP)
 - (c) If there are three or more NCR grades, the term decision is “failed—required to repeat, no penalty” (FLRN).
3. If the term has a mixture of numeric and CR/NCR grades, then map, only for the purpose of promotion considerations, all numeric scores to CR or NCR, and apply the rules from 2. No gpa is reported, and the cumulate gpa is not affected.
4. From the point of view of allowing supplementary exams, any grade of NCR should be interpreted as a 49%.

Comments

1. A student will never get a harsher term decision if they convert numeric grades to CR/NCR.
2. A course graded as CR will be allowed to be used to clear an elective course that is dropped in a reduced-load term. That is, CR will be interpreted as 60% for this purpose.
3. An automatic FLRN (rather than FLR) term decision in 1. and 2.(c) recognizes that everyone is facing significant extenuating circumstances this term.
4. Potential negative unintended consequences of CR/NCR grades:
 - (a) Students who would not be promoted based on their numeric grades, but are promoted due to the use of CR/NCR grades, may not be adequately prepared for their next academic term. They are at greater risk of failing a term or even failing out of engineering.
 - (b) Future employers, graduate schools, or professional organizations may not look favourably upon CR/NCR grades.
 - (c) Students who elect to use CR/NCR grades may be ineligible for any scholarship, honour, or award that requires a term gpa calculation (e.g., the Dean's Honours List).
 - (d) Some courses outside of Engineering have pre-requisites that state a certain course must have a grade above a specified threshold (e.g., MATH138 has as a pre-requisite MATH 116, 117, or 127 with a grade of at least 70%). A CR grade may not be considered sufficient to satisfy such pre-requisites.
 - (e) Students who elect CR/NCR grading may not be able to change those course grades back to numeric grades at a later date.
5. Exception for students who have CR/NCR grades only because instructors assigned those grades:

Students who did not elect to have CR/NCR grades, but have CR/NCR grades because one or more instructor assigned those grades, should contact the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies by emailing smassel@uwaterloo.ca in either of the following cases:

- (a) The student desires that the term gpa (based on the weighted average of numeric grades in the term) be computed and included on their transcript and in their cumulative gpa.
- (b) The student desires to be considered for the Engineering Dean's Honours List. The gpa will be computed based on the weighted average of numeric grades in the term.

This exception can be applied only if the student has at least one numeric grade in the term.

B. Modified Architecture Promotion Rules for W2020

Approved by Engineering Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee on April 5 2020.

Approved by Engineering Faculty Council on April 13 2020.

1. If the term has only numeric grades, apply the usual rules.
2. It the term has only CR/NCR grades, then no gpa is reported, the cumulative gpa is not affected, and...
 - (a) If the grades are all CR, the term decision is “promoted” (PROM).
 - (b) If one and only one NCR grade is recorded, and that course has no more than 0.5 unit weight, the term decision is “promoted” (PROM).
 - (c) Otherwise the term decision is “may not proceed” (MNP).
3. If the term has a mixture of numeric and CR/NCR grades then map, only for the purpose of promotion considerations, all numeric scores to CR or NCR, and then use the rules from 2. No gpa is reported, and the cumulate gpa is not affected.

Comments

1. A student will never get a harsher term decision if they convert numeric grades to CR/NCR.
2. Studio courses all have 1.5 unit weight. Therefore, by 2.(c), a grade of NCR in a studio course leads to a term decision of MNP.
3. Potential negative unintended consequences of CR/NCR grades:
 - (a) Students who would not be promoted based on their numeric grades, but are promoted due to the use of CR/NCR grades, may not be adequately prepared for their next academic term. They are at greater risk of failing a term or even failing out of the program.
 - (b) Future employers, graduate schools, or professional organizations may not look favourably upon CR/NCR grades.
 - (c) Students who elect to use CR/NCR grades may be ineligible for any scholarship, honour, or award that requires a term gpa calculation (e.g., the Dean’s Honours List).
 - (d) Some courses outside of Engineering have pre-requisites that state a certain course must have a grade above a specified threshold (e.g., MATH138 has as a pre-requisite MATH 116, 117, or 127 with a grade of at least 70%). A CR grade may not be considered sufficient to satisfy such pre-requisites.

- (e) Students who elect CR/NCR grading may not be able to change those course grades back to numeric grades at a later date.

C. Further comments and interpretations (added after EFC approval)

1. **Graduation awards of excellence:** Students who elect CR/NCR grades in the W2020 term, although not eligible for the Term Dean's Honours List, are still eligible for the Graduation Dean's Honours List and the Graduation with Distinction recognition. Eligibility for the graduation awards will be evaluated in the following way: if a term has a gpa then the numeric-graded type "blank" courses in that term will factor into the calculation, and if a term does not have a gpa then the term will not factor in the calculation (much like how we treat an exchange term).

See also <https://uwaterloo.ca/engineering/current-undergraduate-students/academic-support/deans-honours-list-and-graduation-distinction>.

2. **Engineering students on a W2020 reduced-load or repeated term:** The rules on page 2 apply for all W2020 students, including those on a reduced-load term or those who are on a repeat term.
3. **Exception for courses of type DRNA, DRNC, or NRNA:** These courses do not affect gpa. Therefore if the only courses converted to CR/NCR are those of type DRNA, DRNC, or NRNA, the gpa and cumulative gpa will not be impacted by the conversion to CR/NCR. A student in this situation who desires that the term gpa be computed and included in their transcript and in their cumulative gpa, and/or who desires to be considered for the Engineering Dean's Honours List, should contact the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies by emailing smassel@uwaterloo.ca. (This comment was added on April 16 2020.)
4. **Clarification for handling of TDHL for SE students:** As always, term promotion for SE students will follow the Engineering rules. So in W2020 if a SE student elects CR/NCR for any courses, gpa will not appear on the transcript and the cumulative gpa will not be updated and the student will not be eligible for the Engineering TDHL. However, the student will still be eligible for consideration for the Math TDHL (Math will simply compute the gpa separately via an OAT query even though it won't appear on the transcript). (This comment was added on April 29 2020.)