

Aug. 31, 2020

Dear Students,

In follow-up to Dean Kelley's message below, I write to clarify our overall grading policies for this fall. Over the course of the last few weeks, our faculty Academic Standards Committee has met to re-evaluate the provisional grading policies that were put into effect in the spring and summer semesters, and to develop a recommendation to our faculty concerning the College's grading policies for this fall. Among other matters, the Committee discussed our progress with academic instruction in these pandemic conditions, considered how other law schools have decided to proceed, and assessed our own law school's context.

On Friday, the College of Law faculty heard from the Committee and after thoughtful deliberation voted in favor of the Committee's recommendation to restore our [normal grading policies](#) for this fall. The complete text of those policies may be found in the Academic Handbook (Section 13 (pages 35-40) of the J.D. rules; and Section 11 (pages 59-61) of the LL.M rules).

As we shared in the spring, no grading system is perfect, especially under today's conditions. However, the surprise element of online courses forced by COVID-19 in the spring is no longer present. The Committee and our full faculty weighed many factors and options and made a decision that they believe is generally best for our students and most consistent with our academic framework and rigor, including the lessons we learned over the spring and summer semesters. There will be both agreement and disagreement with this decision among our students, all of whom have different situations and perspectives. I appreciate both the faculty's service and your resolve and resilience as we all continue to navigate this pandemic together.

Additional details will follow in the next few weeks concerning our plans to institute rigorous remote proctoring services during final exams, all of which will be administered on-line this fall.

If you have any questions concerning any aspect of our grading policies, please contact [studentrecords@law.syr.edu](mailto:studentrecords@law.syr.edu).

I wish you a productive and healthy semester.

Best regards,

**Craig M. Boise**

Dean and Professor | College of Law

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Good Morning,

I hope that your semester has started well. I'm writing to address the pass/fail deadlines for the Fall 2020 semester. All associated academic rules pertaining to the Pass/Fail Option may be found under section 13.4 in the Academic rule 13.4.1 defines the types of courses which are eligible for the Pass/Fail Option – eligible Fall 2020 courses are designated with a Note 4 in the [Fall 2020 Schedule](#) of Classes.

Academic Rule 13.4.2 establishes the deadline by which petitions to select the Pass/Fail Option must be submitted. Rule 13.4.2 states “Students must make the election to be graded on the Pass/Fail Option by submitting an election form available online under the Student Request Forms prior to the thirty-fifth class of the Fall or Spring semester.”

During the Fall 2020 semester, the deadlines by which petitions must be submitted are:

- JDr Courses (courses with section numbers beginning with ‘M0’, e.g., ‘M001’, ‘M002”):  
*Tuesday, October 6, 2020*
- JDi Courses (courses with section numbers beginning with ‘M6’, e.g., ‘M601’, ‘M602”):  
*Thursday, October 15, 2020*

It is important to note the type of course in which you are enrolled. In some cases, your course schedule may contain a mix of JDi and JDr courses—you *must follow the deadline established by the type of course when submitting petitions to be graded under the Pass/Fail option.*

If you have questions, please contact the Registrar’s Office: [studentrecords@law.syr.edu](mailto:studentrecords@law.syr.edu).

J. Zachary Kelley

Assistant Dean for Student Resources and Internal Research