

Colleges and Universities Releasing Hold Harmless Statements

Information for the Class of 2020 Graduates for 2020-2021 Academic Year Admissions

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Reference Articles

[Bridge Article on Statement Issued by 40 Michigan College and Universities](#)

[Statement Issues by 40 Michigan Colleges and Universities](#)

Additional College and University Statements

University of Miami - Florida

"The Office of Undergraduate Admission will respond to any academic changes that are beyond your students' control. If your school has moved to a different format of instruction (e.g., online) or has changed its grading system (e.g., pass/fail, credit/no credit, etc.), these changes will not affect your students' offers of admission at the University of Miami."

Case Western Reserve University

"Three weeks ago our faculty senate unanimously approved a test-optional admissions policy for students entering in the fall of 2021. This applies to all fall 2021 undergraduate applicants and all programs.

We understand the policy changes that have occurred at many high schools as educators adapt to online classes and calendar shifts. We will not penalize students with pass grades on their transcripts for this period. We will accept pass grades for college credit when appropriate. Our own students have been given the pass/no pass option for all their spring courses."

DePaul University

"Pass/Fail Grades - We understand some families are getting anxious about schools that may be giving pass/fail grades for this current term in light of e-learning during school closures. Please rest assured that we will accept final transcripts with pass/fail grades for this current semester for our admitted freshman students as long as a graduation date is listed."

University of Alabama

"Pass/Fail: We realize many schools are considering pass/fail grading for the remainder of the academic year. For seniors concerned about admission or scholarships, we encourage them to keep their grades up. Scholarships or admission will not be revoked unless they fail a core course, thereby not fulfilling our academic requirements."

Yale

"The outbreak is changing how schools teach and students learn all around the world. We recognize that these changes will have lasting effects on school communities and on students' academic records, standardized testing opportunities, extracurricular activities, and learning experiences outside of school.

I want to reassure all future college applicants that a community's response to the outbreak—and students' personal circumstances associated with it—will not negatively affect a student's chances of admission to Yale.

Yale's whole-person review process relies on a committee of admissions officers, faculty members, and college deans to make admissions decisions through discussion and deliberation. This system allows for maximum flexibility when considering applicants from all backgrounds and experiences. Our upcoming admissions cycles will be no different.

Below are insights from the Admissions Committee about common areas of concern:

Academic Records

Just as secondary schools take a diverse set of approaches to curricula and assessment during normal times, schools are taking a diverse set of approaches when responding to the outbreak. We expect that many transcripts will look different for at least the spring 2020 semester. Regardless of your school's decisions, we will work to understand your school's unique context and will not penalize students whose transcripts lack letter grades. It may be helpful to know that Yale does not re-calculate or re-weight grade point averages to a uniform scale.

We also recognize that many students' personal circumstances may make it especially difficult to achieve at their typical academic level during this time. These considerations will also be part of our committee's whole-person review.

Standardized Tests

Yale requires all applicants for first-year and transfer admission to report results from the ACT or SAT. At this time, we expect there will be sufficient opportunities for all applicants to complete the ACT or SAT before the next admissions deadlines. If Yale's policies change, we will provide a public notice as soon as possible.

All other standardized tests (i.e. SAT subject tests, AP exams, IB exams, A-Level exams) are optional. We do not expect students currently enrolled in academic-year courses associated with any of these tests to complete these exams in spring or summer 2020. Students may choose to complete these exams this year if circumstances allow, or not."

University of Virginia

"Please know that students will not be at a disadvantage in the admission process as a result of school closures and cancellations associated with standardized testing. Students are not responsible for things they cannot control. With most high schools closed for the spring semester, we will need to be flexible when evaluating transcripts and academic course work, and we will continue to monitor the state of standardized testing nationally and abroad. If testing is cancelled through the summer and into the fall, we will need to discuss our testing requirements for next year. Our enrollment deposit deadline remains May 1, but we will monitor the situation over the next several weeks to determine if changes to our schedule need to be considered."

University of Chicago

"We recognize that school transcripts will look different for many students this year, and we will work with that! Academic progress as usual is currently being disrupted for students across the globe. We encourage students to continue to engage with whatever method of learning your school is able to offer, and to do so to the best of your ability. If your school moves to an alternative grading system or method of credit notation (pass/fail, credit/no credit, etc.), we will fully understand why the change has been made and it will not, in any way, be an issue for an admissions office. If a high school closes and does not provide any online or structured replacement educational opportunities, rest assured that we will understand that as well (this is a good opportunity to read something new that piques your interest!)."

Rice University

"Academic Record - Our holistic admission process is centered on evaluating each student in the context of their opportunities and realities. While we expect that your students will be pursuing opportunities that will best prepare them for their future success in college, we certainly understand that this school year has evolved in ways none of us anticipated. Despite these changes, we encourage students to pursue a strong curriculum, and we hope that your students will continue to challenge themselves and pursue courses that excite them and inspire them to learn. However, in light of the school year disruption caused by COVID-19 and remote learning modifications, we are prepared to accept the grading policies your high school or school district has implemented for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. Should there be disruptions in the 2020-2021 academic year we will make adjustments to accept those policy changes as well. "

Gettysburg College

"Second-Semester Grades and Standardized Testing: The Gettysburg admissions staff always reviews applications within the context of a student's situation and also secondary school policies. Given the fact that COVID-19 plans vary based upon school districts, we pledge to be flexible with students regarding second semester grades. If your school has temporarily adopted a Pass/Fail grading option, we will most certainly accept this on final transcripts for your students. Regarding standardized tests, Gettysburg is testing optional and the cancellation of standardized testing dates will not affect the holistic review of application materials."

Northwestern University

"We know schools are responding in various ways to the pandemic—remote courses, no courses, self-guided study, grades, no grades, pass/fail grades...you name it. And you may be worried about how this will reflect on your transcript. The good news is that our admission readers always strive to understand an applicant's academic context before evaluating their academic record, so our process is built to weigh the diversity of circumstances you're now experiencing. We always look to a high school's own metrics for relative academic rigor and performance rather than imposing our own standards; therefore, however your school or district responds to this situation will suit our process just fine. Finally and most fundamentally, we seek out narratives in data points as a rule of practice: grades are never just letters or numbers, but a story of your path through high school. So this spring

will become part of that story, and we'll do our best to interpret it with understanding and compassion."

Colgate University

"In these extraordinary times, Colgate University is actively supporting the needs of students by putting their best ". Due to the disruption of teaching and standardized testing worldwide caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the submission of SAT and ACT scores will be optional for all fall 2021 applicants to Colgate University.

Colgate will continue to approach application review in a holistic way by valuing the context of students' experiences. As many encounter disruptions in their learning environments, Colgate is committed to the evaluation of students' academic achievement within the context of what their schools offer. We trust that our school partners have implemented policies in the best interest of their students, and we remain supportive and flexible to ensure that students are not negatively impacted by circumstances beyond their control."

University of Richmond

"In light of the disruption caused by COVID-19, much of what we know and expect has changed and will continue to change. Despite any alteration to grading policies and academic calendars, we encourage your students to continue to engage with whatever method of learning your school is able to offer. Please know that we understand this is not how you expected this year to go, and that some changes are simply out of your control. If your school moves to a different grading system (pass/fail, credit/no credit, etc.) or different method of instruction (remote, online, etc.), these changes will not impact an offer of admission from the University of Richmond nor will Spring 2020 transcript anomalies impact future consideration for admission."

Williams College

"Additional Flexibility in the Admission Process

We understand that the pandemic has led to school closings, shifts to remote learning and pass/fail grading policies, cancellations of co-curricular activities, and a host of other disruptions that dramatically impact students' experiences. You can be certain that we'll be flexible in working with students and families no matter what challenges or limitations they've faced. None of us know what the next few months will hold, but our commitment to getting to know students and their stories will remain at the core of everything we do."

Dickinson College

"For your juniors: Our virtual visitpage includes great options for students just beginning to explore all that Dickinson has to offer—virtual tours, a virtual Q&A and a gallery that gives a look into every facet of life at Dickinson—safely, from home. We know that juniors are worried about the impact this spring will have on their college applications. Of course, our longstanding test-optional policy means canceled standardized-test administrations won't affect an application to Dickinson. We know that grades for this spring may or may not be what they would have wanted or may have changed to pass/fail. We are committed to working with your juniors. Our message to them: slow down, take a breath, control what they can and explain what they can't. We understand. "

Florida State University

"Pass/Fail Grading -If your school has decided to change their normal grading system this year to reflect Pass/Fail grades, we completely understand this decision. At FSU, we offered a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option to our own students enrolled in the Spring term. Pass/Fail grades will not negatively impact your admission status as long as you pass! For all other students enrolled in high school, Pass/Fail grades will not negatively impact your ability to be considered for admission in 2021 and beyond."

Wellesley College

"Final Transcript Evaluation

We want to assure students that their final transcript will be evaluated thoughtfully and within the context of their entire application and also current events. We recognize that some schools are issuing Pass/Fail marks on transcripts and others are finding other ways to translate previous grading scales. We want students to rest assured that we understand these decisions are beyond their control. "