

From: "VCU GRADDEAN" <graddean@vcu.edu>
Subject: COVID-19 Impact on Graduate School Policies and Procedures
Date: 27 March 2020 16:00
To: "gradstudents-l@lists.vcu.edu" <gradstudents-l@lists.vcu.edu>

Dear Graduate Students,

With the evolving changes in campus life and activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Graduate School recognizes the unique concerns that you, as graduate students, have. The VCU Graduate School is committed to supporting our graduate students in any way that we can. In particular, the Graduate School will extend flexibility in administering the policies and procedures as outlined in the [Graduate Bulletin](#).

Many of you are concerned about being able to fulfill the requirements for graduation this Spring semester. Please be assured that the Graduate School will grant extensions of the Spring semester timelines for graduation. If you need an extension, please contact your graduate program director who can submit a request for an extension to the Graduate School.

You should have received an e-mail from the VCU Provost which outlines a flexible pass/fail grading option.

(<https://orange.hosting.lsoft.com/list/ov8ia944/200326AU/a8m3omdzce2n.vib?id=0ww1wov8ia9442k>) Other grading options include a grade of Incomplete (I), Progress (PR) or Not Reported (NR). These grades can be changed to the A-F grading scheme at a later date. I encourage you to contact your advisor or graduate program director if you are considering an alternative grading option to discuss any possible implications.

If you have concerns with any of the policies and procedures, please contact your graduate program director who can submit a request for exceptions to policies and procedures to the Graduate School. You may also contact the Graduate School directly via telephone (804-828-2233) or by e-mail (gradschool@vcu.edu).

Many of you are in the process of taking comprehensive examinations, developing research proposals and defending theses and dissertations. The Graduate School will assist you and your faculty to ensure that these events can proceed. Faculty have access to the computer program [Zoom](#), which can facilitate online meetings.

For those of you involved in research, please stay in contact with your faculty advisors to develop plans to continue your research efforts in an alternative manner, such as performing on-line literature reviews, formulating research plans, analyzing data, writing manuscripts or writing your thesis or dissertation. The Graduate School will be flexible in policies related to time-to-degree and academic progress. Again, please maintain regular contact with your faculty advisors.

We recognize that graduate assistantship funding is a concern for many of you. Graduate assistants funded through the Graduate School's budget will continue to be paid through the time period stated in your contract. Research assistants must contact their faculty advisor or

principal investigator to discuss activities to continue your research in a productive manner.

As we move through this semester other issues may arise. Please consult your advisor, graduate program director, associate dean for graduate education in your school or college about concerns that you may have. They will have the latest information available from the University or will be able to access information to pass on to you.

The Graduate School, as well as the leadership and graduate faculty, at VCU, recognize the difficulties that you are experiencing. We are working collectively to address your concerns and to support you and your continued success. The Graduate School is here to support all VCU graduate students. Please let us know how we can assist you as you work toward your graduate degree.

Sincerely,

F. Douglas Boudinot, Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate School