

# Frequently Asked Questions

## SENIOR END OF YEAR GRADING & GRADUATION

Approved by State Board of Education 3/27/2020

### WHY DID THE STATE BOARD CREATE THIS GRADING POLICY?

- NCDPI's goals for the Senior Class of 2020 are to graduate high school seniors by meeting minimum SBE graduation requirements of **22 credits** on the originally scheduled graduation date.
- Remote learning for graduating seniors will be **prioritized to focus on meeting graduation requirements with a particular emphasis on students who were not meeting expectations as of March 13.**
- NCDPI **encourages that remote learning opportunities be available for seniors to engage students, continue student growth, and respond to social and emotional needs.**
- Students may not be able to finish the instructional year **equitably** across NC. **Access to, and quality of, remote learning for NC Public School students varies across the state.**
- Students have made progress in their learning this semester and need recognition of their learning until school closure on March 16.
- Grading practices for transcript purposes will **hold students harmless** for the impact of COVID-19. "PC19" and "WC19" are the codes being added to PowerSchool.

### WHAT WILL FINAL GRADES LOOK LIKE FOR SENIORS?

#### Fall 2019 Final Grades:

- Students will receive grades for fall courses as already stored, yearlong and semester. Fall grades will count toward GPA.
  - For year-long courses, the **fall term grade** will be counted into the GPA.
  - For semester-long courses, the **final course grade** will be counted into the GPA.

#### Spring 2020 Final Grades:

- Students will receive a **Pass "PC19"** or **Withdrawal "WC19"** based on their learning as of March 13 for spring courses.
- **If the student has an F** as of March 13 for graduation requirements, districts/schools shall provide remote learning opportunities for the student to improve to a passing grade. Seniors will have the opportunity to engage in remote learning from their school to pass graduation requirements.
- **Occupational Course of Study (OCS):** If an OCS student completes **157 hours** of the 225 hours of "paid work hours" graduation requirement, the student will receive a Pass "PC19".

### WHAT ABOUT DUAL ENROLLMENT, NCVPS, AND AP COURSES?

- **All Spring Courses** will receive a **PC19** or a **WC19** as a final grade on the transcript. Any student enrolled in a **CCP (Career & College Promise)** course through a local community college **will still have a final grade** of A,B,C,D,F reported on the **college transcript.**
- **Year-long AP courses** will be split into two half-credit courses determined by the semester break. The actual numerical grade entered at the semester break will be included in GPA calculations in parity with 4x4 block courses.
- **NCVPS courses** have remained in session as they were virtual in nature. Spring NCVPS courses and Year-long NCVPS course will still follow the guidance outlined above.

## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

**Q1: Now that grades are determined, can we go ahead and graduate seniors?**

A: No. NCDPI encourages that remote learning opportunities be available for seniors to engage students, continue student growth, and respond to social and emotional needs. This is inclusive of all student populations on the Future Ready Core and Occupational Course of Study pathways. School is not over; graduation will occur at the end of the school year. PowerSchool will have clear directions for grade entry and graduation procedures.

**Q2: Do we go ahead and give seniors who are failing a WC19? Do we work with them to pass the entire course or just content to March 13?**

A: No. Seniors who were passing a course as of March 13 will be issued a final course grade of “PC19”, but those who were not passing as of that time shall be given an opportunity to work on improving their grade to a passing mark. The scope of content to be addressed is only up through that content addressed in the course by March 13, not the entire course. The grade of “WC19” could be used for a course that is no longer needed for graduation requirements OR at the conclusion of the school year for a student who was failing as of March 13 and did not take any action to remediate content despite the LEA/Charter’s best efforts to support the student with remote learning opportunities during the extended school building closure period.

**Q3: Are seniors who were passing courses as of March 13 able to continue working via remote learning to improve their grade?**

A: Yes. LEAs/Charters are encouraged to provide remote learning opportunities to engage seniors, continue student growth, and respond to social and emotional needs. School is not over for students. For all spring courses, seniors will receive a grade of “PC19” or “WC19” for courses currently in progress on their transcripts, not the typical letter grade. All fall courses will receive traditional grades which count towards the student’s GPA. The priority is for schools to provide an opportunity for those seniors who were failing to get to passing status. LEAs/Charters may consider adopting an invitational approach to the learning opportunities for seniors during the school closure period. This could present a unique learning opportunity for seniors if approached realistically and strategically.

**Q4: How does this new policy ensure that all seniors across the state are treated equally in the calculation for GPA?**

A: All NC public school seniors are being treated equally in that the same grading system is being applied for all high school courses on transcripts using the “PC19” or “WC19” grades. Even if a senior completes a course through CCP, AP, NCVPS, those final grades will still be a “PC19” or a “WC19” on the high school transcript.

**Q5: How will Pass/Withdraw work for seniors in year long courses?**

A: Due to the variety of high school schedules represented in North Carolina, NCDPI will be proportionally calculating fall grades into the GPA. For seniors in yearlong courses, the actual grade entered at the end of the first semester will be included in GPA calculations in parity with students in 4x4 block courses. The year-long course will essentially be divided into two half- credit courses determined by the semester break.

**Q6: Will seniors lose any quality points (honors, AP/IB/CIE, CCP) that go towards their GPA?**

A: Seniors will only receive a course grade of “PC19” or “WC19” for spring courses on the high school transcript. Spring courses will not be calculated in the GPA. All fall courses will receive traditional grades and will be calculated into the GPA with appropriate weighting.

**Q7: In your discussions with the UNC System, how will students be impacted?**

A: NCDPI is having continued discussions with the UNC System and NCICU Admission Directors/Enrollment Managers. Both IHE groups see the plan for seniors to be reasonable and do not foresee any impact on students who have already been admitted to their IHEs. For students who are waitlisted, NCDPI and the IHEs are having discussions on how to gather further information regarding a student’s achievement and growth. NCDPI has brainstormed with the IHEs on different ways to do this and IHEs are committed to work with students. The UNC Board of Governors has also responded to COVID-19 by approving new Minimum Admissions Requirements effective immediately in light of the current public health crisis. A student may meet MAR by either the high school GPA “or” standardized test score to be considered for admissions rather than “and” which was the prior policy.