



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Peter Hans, President

April 29, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: CC Presidents

FROM: Jennifer Haygood, Chief of Staff
Kimberly Gold, Chief Academic Officer

RE: Additional Guidance Regarding Emergency Grading and Methods to Complete the Learning Outcomes for Students Receiving IE or WE Grades

The purpose of this memo is to provide additional guidance on options for how students who received COVID-19 Incomplete Emergency (IE) and Withdrawal Emergency (WE) Grades can complete coursework without incurring additional costs. This memo also addresses CCP students and the documentation of instructional hours for courses that did not complete total instructional hours as originally scheduled.

Purpose of IE and WE Grades

The intent of the Incomplete Emergency (IE) and Withdrawal Emergency (WE) grades is to document the student impact of COVID-19 and to provide options for associated college processing. These grades should be used for curriculum and non-curriculum students to assist with tracking the impact on COVID-19 on enrollment and completion.

Options for Serving Students with IE and WE Grades

Recognizing that grading is a local college decision and that the shift to online instruction has had differing impacts on students, the following options are provided:

- 1. IE grade using a Make Up Plan** – In instances where the 2020SP course cannot be completed, students enrolled in the course may be graded with an IE. To assist the student in the completion of the course, the students would not be required to register in further coursework and the college would develop a Make Up Plan for the students to meet the learning outcomes of the course by an established deadline. Colleges may want to implement a unique IE grade policy extending the amount of time to complete the course beyond the college's current incomplete grade policy.
- 2. IE grade using a "Part B" course** – In instances where the 2020SP course cannot be completed and a Make Up Plan cannot adequately position students to successfully meet the course learning outcomes, students may be graded with an IE. To assist students who receive the IE grade in the

completion of the course, the college may create a **Continuing Education (CE)**¹ **self-supporting** Part B course section (use SEF-3001 course number) in a future term composed of the remaining content required to meet the learning objectives. After the student completes the Part B course, the student would receive a final grade which would replace the IE grade in the original 2020SP course. We recommend the college charge a \$0 self-supporting fee and consider using the Institutional Portion of the CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)² to support the instructional costs. Because the college will be funded based on estimated Spring FTE which includes the hours associated with original course section, additional Budget FTE would not be earned on the Part B course.

3. **Course Cancellation and Restructure as Part A & B courses** – In instances where the 2020SP course cannot be completed and using the IE grade options is not appropriate, colleges may create Part A and Part B course sections. Creating a Part A and Part B course will require cancelling the original course section and rebuilding the Part A and Part B course sections with appropriate credit hours assigned to each part, if applicable. Students would need to be reregistered in the Part A course section and should receive a grade for this portion. The refund generated from cancelling the original course section should be applied to the student account for the tuition or registration fee associated with the Part A course section. Because the college will be funded based on estimated Spring FTE, which included the hours associated with original course section, the college should then create a **self-supporting** course section and charge a self-supporting fees associated with the hours delivered in the Part B course section. The student would be able to pay this self-supporting fee with the balance of the funds previously refunded. The college could use the Institutional Portion of the CARES Act HEERF funds to support the instructional costs associated with the Part B course section.

NOTE: This option will result in a change in students’ registration hours and may impact financial aid and VA benefits; colleges may use CARES Act HEERF funds to compensate students for the loss of student aid.

- **WE grade and Repeat Course** – In instances where the 2020SP course cannot be completed using the IE grade options nor the split course options, the student or college may initiate a withdraw grade. For withdraws related to COVID-19, the WE grade should be utilized. As with a normal withdraw, students will repeat the course following normal enrollment policies and procedures. As normal, the student would be charged the regular tuition or registration fee and colleges should provide student aid using CARES Act HEERF funds or other available sources to ensure the student does not incur costs to repeat the course. Alternatively, a college could also consider enrolling students in a self-supporting course section, charging a \$0 self-supporting fee, and using

¹ Note: Since the IE will ultimately be replaced with a final grade for the original course section, we recommend using a CE course section for “Part B” to prevent the problem of awarding duplicate grades and credit.

²The CARES Act establishes the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, from which North Carolina community colleges will receive approximately \$120 million. At least 50% of these funds must be distributed to “provide emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus”. The remaining funds (the “Institutional Portion”) can be used to “cover any costs associated with significant changes to the delivery of instruction due to the coronavirus”. (*Section 18004 of the [CARES Act – H.R. 748](#)*)

the Institutional Portion of the CARES Act HEERF funds to support the instructional costs of the course section.

IE and WE Grades for CCP Students

Colleges should apply the above options for CCP students who received an IE or WE in Spring 2020.

If a high school SENIOR is unable to complete a CCP course and subsequently graduates from high school in May or June 2020, the student would be eligible to enroll in a college course as a regular college student. These students would be eligible to receive tuition assistance at the discretion of the college from CARES Act HEERF funds.

Instructional Hour Documentation

Recognizing that colleges were required to shift instructional delivery methods abruptly during the Spring 2020 semester due to COVID-19 and Stay-at-Home restrictions, it is anticipated that some courses may not have completed the instructional hours as originally scheduled. As with traditional Instructional Make Up plans due to adverse weather, colleges should document that the learning outcomes of the course were fully met through alternate assignments or other instructional methods. As with Adverse Weather plans, the college may provide students with a grade for the course and report the instructional hours as originally indicated. Colleges should maintain documentation reflecting achievement of learning outcomes for compliance purposes. In the event all learning outcomes cannot be met, colleges should document the proportional number of instructional hours completed.

CC:

CC Business Officers

CC Chief Academic Officers

CC Continuing Education Officers

CC Basic Skills Directors

CC Student Development Administrators