



Announcement from the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dear Students,

As you may be aware, Academic Leadership has been continually monitoring and assessing the needs and impact of the current crisis response on academic operations. In this process, it has been determined that the circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis require us to **continue with online classes through the end of the semester. Furthermore, it has been determined that the summer session will also be completed online.**

I recognize that many traditional aspects of how a course is offered, managed, and how students are assessed have changed. For this reason, I asked faculty to engage with you on your experience with online course offerings and on how the details of assessment at semester's end might need to evolve. Graduate Affairs in conjunction with representatives from the [Graduate Student Council](#) have also reached out to you with surveys, and your feedback has been shared with faculty and with senior leadership.

We are fully aware that the demands of the Covid-19 crisis including the abrupt move to online classes, the challenges with addressing health and safety, and other daily needs of yourselves and family members lead to anxiety and stress. Based on this, as well as the feedback you shared, this semester **students taking classes which were originally to use the Letter grade format will have the option of having a traditional Letter grade or a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade (corresponding to Pass/Fail) recorded on their transcript.** ([see Table here](#)). When you receive your final grade from your professor, you will have the opportunity to discuss your grade with him/her and you may choose either a Letter grade or a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade. We trust that this option will give you some relief and allow you to focus on getting the most out of the remaining weeks of the semester.

Having classes online and requiring you to work remotely from home, either from your on-campus accommodation or out-of-campus accommodation, is necessary for your safety and the safety of the staff who have to perform occasional essential services in laboratories or office spaces. For this reason, **I emphasize again that all students are required to work from home. Students are not permitted on the academic campus – neither in the lab nor in office or study spaces.** It is necessary for you to adhere to this

requirement and to all other requirements and restrictions announced by the University during this crisis.

I wish you a safe, healthy, and successful remainder of the semester. There are more challenges ahead. Together we will address them in a manner that is aimed at keeping everyone safe and well and that is also receptive to your feedback and concerns.

Yves Gnanou
Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs