FAQS

How will the temporary grading rules for Spring 2020 affect my GPA? A grade of High Pass (Pass +) or Pass will have no bearing on your GPA. You will earn credit for that class. A failing grade will factor into your GPA. As noted previously, 1L LCAP courses will still be graded.

How will the new grading rules work? Are professors required to “fail” a certain percentage of the class? Professors are not required to administer any failing grades. Professors may not issue failing grades to more than 10% of the class. Professors must award a High Pass to the top 10% of the class, and may award a “High Pass” to up to the top 25% of the class. A High Pass will be indicated as P + on the transcript.

Will class ranks be computed at the end of the Spring 2020 semester? Yes. Because there may be some fluctuations in GPA, class ranks will be re-calculated.

Will the limits on pass/fail credits set forth in the Student Handbook still apply? The classes that have shifted to pass/fail this Spring 2020 semester will not count towards your pass/fail limitation. That limit will still apply, but your Spring 2020 classes will not be included in that tally.

Will Dean’s List still be released? Because the Dean’s List is compiled on a semester-by-semester basis, we will not be determining a Dean’s List for the Spring 2020 semester.

How will academic exclusions be determined? All academic exclusion and probation decisions will be temporarily suspended until the end of Fall 2020. At that time, your academic standing will be assessed for compliance with the cumulative GPA thresholds stated in the Student Handbook. Ex: For 2019 day program matriculants, a student with less than a 2.0 at the end of 29 credit hours would have been excluded at the end of Spring 2020 semester. With this temporary suspension of academic exclusion, we will assess 2019 day program students at the end of Fall 2020. Those with a cumulative GPA less than 2.0 will be excluded at that time.

Note, evening students who entered their 1L year in 2019 will be assessed for academic standing at the completion of Spring 2021.

How will conditional scholarships be impacted by this decision? Conditional scholarship entitlement will be assessed at the end of Fall 2020, instead of Spring 2020.

How will this affect my ability to opt-out of the curriculum required for 2019 matriculants? The required curriculum contains a set of courses required for the majority of law students. Those who earn a 3.0 or higher may opt out of certain classes, but those classes are highly recommended for the majority of all students. All students must take Professional Responsibility, an Upper Level Writing Requirement, and 6 credit hours of experiential learning. Determining eligibility for opting out of components of the required curriculum will be assessed
at the end of Fall 2020 for the 2019 daytime entering class, and at the end of Spring 2021 for evening section D. All current 1Ls should plan to take classes satisfying the required curriculum.

**What about other rules contingent upon 1L CGPA?** There are a number of other rules in the *Student Handbook* that are based on an assessment of 1L cumulative GPA. For our current 1Ls, those assessments will be paused until the end of Fall 2020.

**What if I am pursuing a certificate in compliance which requires a “B” grade in certain course?** The Compliance Certification Board will accept a “pass” if it is certified that the pass was of “B” quality. Assistant Dean Shannon Sevier will be reaching out to those few course instructors affected to make sure that this temporary change does not disrupt the certificate process.

**What if I was already enrolled in an online course – does this change apply to those classes as well?**
Yes – the change applies to all classes including M.Jur. and LLM only classes. Though some course were already in an online format, the disruption to our student body includes students taking online courses.

**What if my employer will only reimburse tuition for coursework earned at the level of B and above?**
For M.Jur. and LL.M. students, Assistant Dean Shannon Sevier will be reaching out, upon request, to certify with individual professors that earned Pass grades meet the grade threshold required and letters will be issued to this effect by Associate Dean Marks to make sure that this temporary change does not disrupt the tuition reimbursement process.

**As an LL.M. candidate, what if I exceed the pass/fail threshold for New York bar eligibility?**
A request for Programmatic Waiver of Strict Compliance is being submitted on behalf of the St. Mary’s American Legal Studies LL.M. program for variances during the Spring 2020 term.