

## Graduate Academic Policies in 2020-21

### Statement from the Graduate Council, Berkeley Division

December 10, 2020

The Graduate Council has approved the following graduate academic policies for the academic year 2020-21. Please check the website maintained by Graduate Division for the latest information ([Covid-19 Information for Graduate Students](#)).

#### Grades

Divisional Council (DIVCO) has asked the faculties of schools and colleges to “enact flexible and compassionate policies and practices” with respect to undergraduate grading policies (see [here](#)). The Graduate Council likewise encourages graduate programs to enact similar measures, including the acceptance of Satisfactory grades for courses that meet degree requirements. Some programs may, however, be limited in their ability to accept S/U grades due to accreditation or other requirements.

Note that students who matriculated in fall 2020 or spring 2021 can only take up to 1/3 of their total units on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. However, the Berkeley Division has authorized DIVCO to temporarily suspend or amend Berkeley Division Regulations to support student needs related to COVID-19 during this academic year. If the faculty of a graduate program believes that suspension of this limit is necessary to support their students, a request can be made to DIVCO. Please contact Assistant Dean Linda Song of the Graduate Division ([lhsong@berkeley.edu](mailto:lhsong@berkeley.edu)) for more information.

Graduate Council has approved an extension of the deadline for students to change their grading option for a course. The fall deadline has passed, but late or retroactive changes may be requested according to Graduate Division procedures (see [here](#)). The deadline for spring 2021 has been extended to April 29, 2021.

#### Conduct of milestone exams

Graduate Council has extended the following policy regarding the conduct of milestone exams in graduate programs through summer 2021. These milestones include qualifying exams in PhD programs, comprehensive exams in master’s programs, and the defense of position or field papers required in certain programs. These exams can be conducted using Zoom or similar video conferencing software following established best practices ([see here](#)). Given the concerns about proctoring exams, this policy has been reviewed and approved by the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost.