



Dear Hawks:

On Monday, March 30, 2020, your Spring 2020 classes will resume in the form of distance learning.

As a community, we recognize that this change will present new experiences for all and challenges for some. With that in mind, I want to take a moment to address a few pressing topics that should help you finish the semester strong regardless of your location.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Classes Resume – Monday, March 30, 2020

Start of Academic Advising – Monday, March 30, 2020

Fall Registration Begins – Monday, March 30, 2020

Last Day to WITHDRAW from a Course (Grade of “W”) – Friday, May 8, 2020

Last Day for UG Students to select Letter Grade option – Friday, May 8, 2020 (No exceptions after this date will be made. Requests MUST be in by 5/8.)

Last Day of Class – Friday, May 8, 2020

Final Exams – May 11 – May 14, 2020

SPRING 2020 SEMESTER PREPARATION

How do I access my courses?

- You can access all of your courses via Blackboard.

For your convenience, we have created a dedicated website for you: [Blackboard Experience](#).

On this page you will find critical topics such as:

- [How to Log in to Blackboard](#)
- [How to submit an assignment](#)
- [How to review my grades](#)

- [How to get Blackboard support](#)

Please check out the Blackboard site when you have a moment. In addition, I STRONGLY encourage you to access your Blackboard portal prior to the start of classes to ensure that all of your courses can be seen and accessed.

Are we changing classes to Pass/Fail for the Spring 2020 semester?

- Yes

To support you and your academic success during this period, ALL courses will default to a Pass/Fail grading method for the Spring 2020 semester only.

What Does Pass/Fail Mean?

When taking a course the regular way, your end-of-term grade would be A, B, C, D, or F. However, when you take a course as a pass/fail, your final grade is one of two options: P for pass or F for fail. Under pass/fail grading, earning a letter grade between an A and a D will be considered a passing grade, unless the registered course requires a grade of C or better, like ENGL 101 for example.

How will Pass/Fail affect my credits and GPA?

- You will earn credit for your course(s) as long as you pass the class. In addition, your GPA is not impacted unless you earn a grade of “F”. Thus, earning grades of “P” for all of your classes for the term will not result in a 4.0 for the semester, nor will it raise your cumulative GPA.

An earned grade of “F” in a pass/fail class will count toward your GPA. In these cases, it may be better for your GPA to withdraw from the class with a grade of “W” than fail. However, the decision to withdraw from a course should be considered with GREAT care. Too many “W”s on your academic record can **and will** impact your ability to qualify for financial aid.

If you are considering withdrawing from a course, I strongly recommend that you do two things:

- 1. Speak with an Academic Advisor**
- 2. Familiarize yourself with Financial Aid’s “Satisfactory Academic Progress” policy**

What if I want my earned letter grade on my record?

- You may request a letter grade (A – F) by simply emailing the Registrar’s Office at registrar@umes.edu. Be sure to list the course number, section, and title of the course. Only emails sent from your official UMES email account will be honored.

Remember, all courses will default to grades of Pass “P” or Fail “F”, unless altered at the student’s request by Friday, May 8, 2020. (No exceptions on deadlines.)

Students who are repeating a course will automatically receive a letter grade – no action is required by the student

Can I drop my class if I don’t like this new format?

- Yes – All students will have the opportunity to withdraw from their class through the last day of classes, **Friday, May 8, 2020**.

Again, before you withdraw from your course, be sure to consider things such as:

- Will dropping this course take me below full time status (12 credit hours)
- If it is a prerequisite for a major required course
- If it is a graduation requirement
- Will it impact to your [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)

As previously stated, please contact an academic advisor prior to making a final decision.

- Once a decision has been made to withdraw, simply email the Registrar’s Office at registrar@umes.edu and request to be withdrawn. Be sure to list the course number, section, and title of the course. Only emails sent from your official UMES email account will be honored.

FALL 2020 SEMESTER PREPARATION

How do I connect with my academic advisor now that we are online?

- First and foremost, you should identify your academic advisor. To do so,
 - Login into [Hawkweb](#)
 - Select Student Center
 - Your advisor is listed on the far right of the screen
- Once your departmental academic advisor has been identified, there are two (2) ways to connect with them:
 - Email them directly to request academic advising. You can find the email address of your advisor via the [university directory](#).

- If you are having difficulty reaching your academic advisor, please contact your [Department Chairperson and/or Dean for assistance](#).

*** Be sure to check out the [Center for Access and Academic Success \(CAAS\)](#) for various online academic resources and support services***

How do I register for classes?

- Enrolling in classes is quick and easy
 - Login into [Hawkweb](#)
 - Select Student Center
 - Select “Enroll” under the Academics tab
 - Search, Select, and save your classes to your shopping cart
 - Once done, select “Finish Enrolling”

How can I apply for additional financial support?

- First and foremost, please file your [FASFA](#)
- APPLY for [Scholarships](#) and [Grants](#) through [UMES Financial Aid](#)

I know we’ve covered a lot in this email, but I hope you can appreciate the necessity of providing you with as much information as possible. As always, please send all questions, comments, and/or success stories about your experiences to emse@umes.edu.

We would love to hear from you and help if we can!

Remember, stay positive, stay informed, act responsibly, and most of all, stay safe.

Sincerely,

Hans Cooper
Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Experience