

# VANGUARD

Official Newsletter of the Adjunct Faculty Association at Nassau Community College  
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(516) 572-7294 | [www.myafaonline.org](http://www.myafaonline.org)

## We Are Thankful For What You Do!

Your AFA brothers and sisters are extremely thankful and grateful to you, the CSEA/NCC, NCCFT, NCCAA, and of course our own AFA members. You are essential workers who come to campus each day to keep our campus safe, protected, and operational at minimum levels. You leave the safety of your homes as your families worry about your health and well-being to do what is required to maintain the essential services needed to keep the NCC operating as it is. It is no small thing that you do and for that we are most thankful and grateful.

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*WE CARE  
About Our Students,  
Our Members,  
Our College!*





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# From the President's Desk



Stefan Krompier

## I AM PROUD TO BE YOUR PRESIDENT – YOU ARE THE BEST!

Here we are, in a place we couldn't even have imagined when we started classes back in January. The COVID 19 virus pandemic has thrust itself into our personal and professional lives. We worry each day for our health and safety and the health and safety of our families, friends, students, and colleagues as we continue to teach, counsel, remediate, and provide support services to the 14,000+ students who now must be educated at home.

You are sensitive to the less than desirable learning environment that too many of our students find themselves in: inadequate computer hardware, crowded living quarters, young children whose normal activity can distract from learning, etc. You console students who are trying hard to “make the grade” but are thwarted by the personal and the educational challenges that they are faced with. I commend you for your dedication and perseverance. I am extremely proud of you for these efforts. I am proud to be your president.

## NCC IS AT A CROSSROADS – WILL STUDENT ENROLLMENT CONTINUE TO CONTRACT AND FALTER OR WILL IT GROW?

Because of the dire negative effects that the COVID 19 virus has on our daily lives, economic conditions will continue to plummet throughout Nassau County, New York State, and the USA. At NCC's April Board of Trustees Meeting, a 10% decrease in student enrollment was predicted for the Fall 2020 semester. To make matters worse, it is believed that at best, New York State and Nassau County contributions to college revenue will remain at current levels. Because NCC's Reserve Fund Balance is at the lowest allowable level, the Fund Balance is not available as a source of revenue for the Fall 2020 Semester.

With that said, to my way of thinking, current economic conditions could help with re-

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## From the President's Desk

cruitment. The health and safety fears that the COVID 19 virus has thrust upon us coupled with the economic downturn that the virus has thrust upon us has changed the criteria that many Nassau County seniors and their parents apply when they are in the decision-making process of choosing a college to attend in the fall. The “Stay Home Today, Go Far Tomorrow at a Remarkably Low Price” benefits of a Nassau Community College education are very appealing to those who might not have even considered NCC as their first-choice college. Add to that, NCCs 160-plus degree and certificate programs, its high quality transfer and career preparation opportunities, a well-respected honors program, an award winning caring faculty and flexible scheduling, and it is apparent that NCC is well positioned to at least maintain enrollment and possibly increase enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester.

Being well-positioned is not enough. Where we find ourselves in terms of enrollment at the start of the Fall 2020 Semester will be the result of how well NCC markets the benefits of attending our great college. Currently our membership numbers are at 1,780. We can and must augment the colleges marketing efforts.

As contract employees, the correlation between college enrollment and the number of courses/sections that will be available for us to teach this fall is self-evident; therefore, it is essential that we communicate the benefits of an NCC education to our friends, relatives, acquaintances and interested parties.

One way to do this is by supporting the college's social media marketing effort by doing what we requested in an email that was sent last week.

Nassau Community College's Marketing and Communications department has developed a social media campaign highlighting the people of NCC who are working on the front lines during this pandemic. These profiles are posted on both the College's Instagram and Facebook accounts. We encourage

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## From the President's Desk

you to follow NCC's Instagram page at [instagram.com/nassaucommunitycollege/](https://www.instagram.com/nassaucommunitycollege/) and Facebook at [facebook.com/nassaucommunitycollege](https://www.facebook.com/nassaucommunitycollege). Please share these ads with your followers who will then be able to view and share them as well. NCC's Marketing and Communications department has acknowledged our anticipated support in this effort.

I encourage you to do as the email asks. If you do not have a presence on Facebook or Instagram, please establish one.

Stefan Krompier  
President  
Adjunct Faculty Association

## Member Recruitment

**The AFA wants you!** Please consider joining with over a thousand of your colleagues in becoming an AFA member by visiting our website at: <https://form.jotform.com/nccafa1/adjunct-faculty-association-at-nass>

## Message from the Vice-President



Scott Stark

I hope that you, and your families, are doing well in the face of this pandemic. As you are well aware, the present health crisis has provided major upheaval in our personal and professional lives. It has changed the way the college operates at present and will continue into the near future - at least the summer sessions.

These summer courses will be offered as either “Remote Courses” or “Online Courses”. The terms “online courses” and “Distant Education Courses” are synonymous.

### Remote Courses

All “face-to-face” courses are being offered remotely this summer. Remote courses will meet at their scheduled time using video conferencing. If you are qualified – departmental qualifications - to teach a face-to-face course, then you are qualified to teach that course as a Remote Course. As with face-to-face course offerings, assignments to Remote Courses must be made based on seniority **and departmental** qualifications.

This summer, Remote Courses must be taught using both email and video conferencing. You can teach through the Zoom Video Conferencing Platform **or any other Video Conferencing Platform of your choice**. The college has subscriptions to and offers training for Zoom, but other platforms can be used. These trainings are made available through the Office of Distance Education.

### Online Courses

To teach Online Courses, as with courses listed as Distance Education Courses in past years, college certification is required. **The minimum qualifications to teach online courses are the completion of the Blackboard 1 and Blackboard 2 training sessions offered through**

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## Message from the Vice-President

**the Office of Distance Education.** Additionally, many departments have departmental qualifications to teach their Online Courses.

The Office of Distance Education has been and will continue to offer training that you need to sign up for that will lead to certification to teach Online Courses. There was an email sent earlier this week. I recommend that you keep an eye out for subsequent emails that will follow for additional trainings. I also recommend that you contact your department chair and inquire about the departmental qualifications to teach distance education. I would do this with an email so that you have a time stamped email demonstrating that you have made the inquiry.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me or call me at 516-859-0250.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Scott Stark  
Vice President  
Adjunct Faculty Association

## Adjunct Pay Dates

February, 24, 2020; March 9, 2020; March 23, 2020; April 6, 2020; April 20, 2020; May 4, 2020; May 18, 2020

In order to receive 7 checks, completed and approved contracts must be received and entered prior to 4pm on Friday, January 24, 2020.

# The Inside Scoop

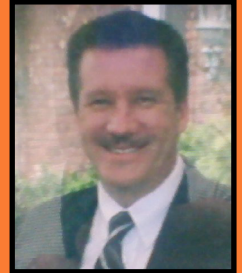
**“Heroes don’t always wear capes.”**

In times of crisis, this saying takes on profound meaning. However, heroes don’t only wear uniforms either. While each of you might not realize it, you have performed heroic deeds in the areas that you serve our college’s students. These areas include helping students complete their education, through the extraordinary measures that you took so that they could continue their education, to the tutors who are offering help across all disciplines, to the librarians who are assisting students in their research needs. Likewise, to those in Student Services who are continuing to recruit new students, assisting them in registering and advisement. Moreover, to our IT adjuncts who have provided technical support and made certain that our technological infrastructure was ready to turn NCC into a virtual college in a matter of days. While each of you might not realize it, you are probably looked upon as a hero by many that you have served.

Likewise, where would we be without our heroes in uniforms? First responders, physicians, nurses, and all in the healthcare field. Daily, these great individuals have a

front row seat staring at this disease while trying desperately to save the lives of those they tend to. Similarly, to the researchers, scientists, pharmaceutical lab personnel and medical microbiologists who are working at a feverish pace to get ahead of this pandemic.

Finally, we find the most inspiring stories coming from the nameless, faceless people who are doing the small things that collectively keep the hope and spirits alive across the nation. We have heard of those that have gone shopping for elderly people, those who have called and kept the lonely comforted through conversation, individuals who began sewing PPE items by hand, those distributing food on pantry lines and so many more great acts of kindness that have emerged from the darkness of these times.



Richard D. Erben

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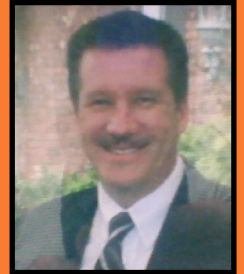


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# The Inside Scoop

There are always lessons to be learned from tragic events. During this time, the entire world population is facing an invisible enemy. This enemy is not attacking people based on their race, gender, religion, political persuasion or any other characteristic that we use to divide people. It has made us aware, at least for a brief time, that we are one people. For the most part it has brought us together to work as the singular “human race” in an effort for us to save ourselves. It is my hope that this lesson stays with all of us even post-COVID 19. I hope that we can better understand all that binds us as op-

posed to all that makes us different. It is my hope that we learn to forever appreciate all the things that we so often took for granted.



Richard D. Erben

**Richard D. Erben**  
**Chief Information Officer**  
**Adjunct Faculty Association**

The Adjunct Faculty Association extends a heartfelt thank you to our following members who have made profound efforts to assist those individuals in need during this pandemic. Their frontline service has shown their selflessness. We want you to know that your efforts have not gone unnoticed.

Thank you for providing hope in a most troubling time.

Albano	Charlie	Volunteer Firefighter
Boyle	John	Frontline Dir. Respiratory Care
Buckley	Joan	RN Volunteer
Calandrillo	Teresa	Other - Surg. Tech
Chiusano	Jane	Health Field Personnel
Comiskey	Teresa	Cmd. Officer NCPD
Eberhart	Teresa	Frontline RN
Eileen	Jones	RN ICU/Recovery
Gabrus	Joanne	RN - Other
Gattringer	John	Health Field Personnel
Heron	Saran	Frontline Healthcare
Humburg	Diane	ER Nurse
Iverine	Anderson	Frontline Service
Jane	Chiusano	Health Field Personnel
Jansen	Cathy	Health Field Personnel
Joseph	Nadia	RN First Responder
Khalifa	Catherine	First Responder
Korman	Lisa	Volunteer Red Cross
Labiento	Aleta	Outreach/Testing
Lehenbauer	Gregory	Volunteer Firefighter
Luisi	Christine	Frontline RN
Martens	Barbara	Health Field Personnel
McCallion	Deborah	Frontline RN
Mighty-Minott	Maxine	Frontline RN
Moriah	James	RN Front Line Service
Mucci	Adeline	Other
Mund	Lorraine	Frontline Outreach Volunteer
Polite	Rose Ann	Frontline RN
Pollack	Robert	Volunteer
Reynolds	Chris	Health Field/Donor
Richbourgh	Zenobia	Healthcare Personnel RN
Thomas	Jerry	Health Field Personnel



# Pass Fail Grading - My Opinion

On March 24, 2020, SUNY posted its position on the adoption of a Pass/Fail grading option. The link is listed below. I have identified Directions/Issues from this posting, which SUNY Colleges/Universities are directed to consider when deciding whether a Pass/Fail Grading Policy is right for them. **My Opinion** as to how these Directions/Issues apply to Nassau Community College is expressed below each Direction/Issue.

## Academic Continuity

SUNY State University of New York

Conversations with Program Reviewers (CPR)

Academic Programs Team Campus Reviewer Contact Information: <https://system.suny.edu/academicaffairs/acaproplan/app/find-your-campus-reviewer/>

**Direction/Issue** - Flexibly to extend policies so that students may opt —with appropriate advisement—to have spring 2020 courses graded pass/fail. No approval from SUNY, NYSED, or Middle States is needed to enact such flexibility; instead, this is a campus-based decision. If considering shifting all spring 2020 course grading to pass/fail, first consult all applicable programmatic accreditors, as well as review all licensing/certification requirements for licensure/certification-qualifying programs

**My Opinion** – Most SUNY colleges and universities, as well as private colleges and universities, across New York State that are accredited by Middle States have opted for an Alternative Grading Option so NCC will be in compliance with Middle States if the Pass/Fail option is adopted. NCC Programs/Courses that require programmatic accreditation that rejects pass grades as an alternative to a letter grade would not be eligible for Pass/Fail option

**Direction/Issue** - We advise against adopting a mandated universal pass/fail grading scheme unless absolutely necessary, because there are multiple considerations that could render such a process problematic; e.g., a student may need GPA-impacting course grades in order to meet the institutional GPA requirement for graduation

**My Opinion** – A Pass/Fail Grading Policy is necessary because too many students who were doing well in a face-to-face teaching learning environment are now faltering. Many of these students will drop out of NCC and never return because of the damage that will be done to their grades/GPAs if they are not provided with a pass/fail option

**Direction/Issue** - A student may need GPA-impacting course grades in order to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress

**My Opinion** – See \*Objections /Concerns to the pass/fail grading policy on page 14

**Direction/Issue** - Inter-SUNY transfer plans could be impacted in some cases

**My Opinion** – Most, if not all, SUNY four-year institutions have adopted an Alternative Grading Policy and are

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accepting P grades for transfer. Because of safety concerns and the dire economic outlook, four-year colleges will be hurting for students in the fall and beyond. They will welcome NCC transfers who opted for the pass/fail grading option

**Direction/Issue** - A student may want GPA-impacting course grades in order to be competitive for graduate school admissions (and other purposes external to the program)

**My Opinion** – Students with course grades that are favorable to their GPAs will opt for them. Students with course grades that are unfavorable to their GPAs will opt for an alternate grade. Because of safety concerns and the dire economic outlook, graduate schools will be hurting for students in the fall and beyond. Gaining acceptance into graduate program will not be a problem

**Direction/Issue** - Programmatic accreditors may have requirements regarding the maximum percentage of courses that may be graded pass/fail and/or the particular kinds of courses that may be graded pass/fail

**My Opinion** – The current alternate grading plan is for the Spring 2020 only and limits the number of pass/ fail grades to two courses so there is no problem exceeding the maximum percentage course requirement

**Direction/Issue** - Licensure/certification-qualifying programs may be impacted by licensing/certification requirements

**My Opinion** – Students in licensure/certification-qualifying programs that require a letter grade would not be eligible for the Alternate Grading Option

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## Pass/Fail Grading Policy for the Spring 2020 Semester

### Rationale:

### A Comparison of Remote Teaching/Learning vs. Face-to-Face Teaching/Learning

It is my strong belief that classroom faculty at NCC and throughout the nation are doing their absolute best to continue the high level of teaching that they brought to their face-to-face classes prior to our transition to remote teaching. They are making every effort to maintain, and when possible, enhance both the breadth and depth of student learning as they teach via a remote teaching modality.

With that said, the quantity and quality of what our students and students throughout the country are learning via the remote teaching mode in comparison to the face-to-face teaching mode are being negatively impacted for the following reasons:

- The personal interaction with their instructors and classmates that the face-to-face classroom brings to the teach-

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ing learning process cannot be duplicated via remote teaching.

- Many, if not most, students who chose to enroll in courses taught face-to-face rather than through remote teaching did so because they learn best in a face-to-face classroom setting.
- Most classroom faculty have honed their face-to-face teaching skills over many years. Many classroom faculty are now first learning how to teach remotely and are only beginning to hone that craft.
- Hands-on courses (e.g., Ceramics, Fashion Design), and Lab Courses by their very nature are not taught as effectively via remote teaching as compared to face-to-face teaching. These courses become more theoretical in a remote teaching environment, thus penalizing those students who demonstrate their learning in the form of creative, tangible work under the watchful teaching and supervision of face to face instructors.
- Many students do not have the computer hardware needed to take classes remotely. This problem is only partially solved with the laptops that the college has distributed to students.
- Most, if not all, economically challenged students are overwhelmed because of the added work and family responsibilities that these trying times have heaped upon them. Learning remotely is especially difficult for students living in tight quarters. Academic achievement of our economically challenged students is suffering greatly.

### **Keeping Students Whole**

Here at NCC and throughout the country, many students have been able to learn at the levels they would have in a face-to-face teaching/learning environment. These students will receive letter grades that are reflective of that learning thus keeping them whole. However, the level of learning of too many students thrust into a remote teaching/learning environment has dropped greatly. The letter grades that they will receive under the current letter only grading system that are reflective of their diminished learning will penalize their GPA's and, by extension, their academic standing.

### **Proposed Pass/Fail Policy**

**I propose that Nassau Community College adopt a Pass/Fail Grading Policy for the Spring 2020 Semester that will do the following;**

- o Allows students to feel less pressure and anxiety about their grades as they navigate this new distance education environment
- o Maintains student's academic continuity and ensures that students are able to finish the semester and protect their financial aid
- o Does not negatively impact a student's current GPA
- o Enables students to progress successfully toward degree completion
- o Allows all students who are scheduled to graduate at the end of this semester to graduate if they pass the courses that they need to graduate
- o Enables all students to move to the next semester without having to retake courses that they took during the

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Spring 2020 semester

- o Provides an opportunity for students who want to acquire the level of learning that they might have received if their classes remained face to face
- o Maintains the college's standards of student retention and progress
- o Most, if not all, of our economically challenged students are overwhelmed because of the added work and family responsibilities that these trying times have heaped upon them. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy for the Spring 2020 Semester works to keep these students whole in terms of their course grades, GPA and academic standing.

## Proposal

Up to 20 business days after the College's final grade submission deadline or the date of actual grade posting, whichever is later, students will be given the choice of one of the following; **1) a Letter Grade 2) a Pass Grade 3) a No Credit Grade**

**Letter Grade:** For courses that a letter grade is chosen: the appropriate number of quality points will be factored into the student's GPA.

**Pass Grade:** This signifies that the student has met the minimum course requirements necessary to earn the current letter grade D. The **Pass Grade** would satisfy degree requirements. This grade:

- Enables students to receive course credit without negatively impacting their GPA
- Protects the student from the stigma of a D grade on their transcript
- Enables students to graduate if they are positioned to do so at the end of the Spring 2020 Semester.

**No Credit Grade (NC):** Students who fail a course(s) can opt for a NC rather than an F. The NC grade does not factor into a student's GPA; therefore, the student's GPA is not damaged as it would if they had received an F.

Before choosing a pass/fail grade option for one or more of their classes, students will be encouraged to seek advisement regarding the potential impact to their financial aid, licensure requirements, and transfer school admissions requirements.

The grade glossary attached to each transcript will be updated to include a notation denoting that Spring 2020 grades, including **P or NC**, were earned during a major disruption to instruction as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students placed on academic probation at the start of the Spring 2020 semester shall not be penalized with academic dismissal based upon their grades earned this semester.

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## **Objections /Concerns to the Pass/Fail Grading Policy**

Concerns have arisen that **students who opt for an alternative grade will jeopardize their financial aid**. It is absolutely true that students who do not demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) can lose their financial aid. “D” and “F” grades that factor into a student’s SAP can put them below the required documentation of satisfactory academic progress. A “P” or an “NG” grade that a student may opt for instead of an “F” letter grade will not factor into the student’s GPA. Therefore the student’s financial remains in place because their SAP does not go below the acceptable level.

\*A concern was also raised that **a student who seeks to transfer to a four year college will be rejected** because of their choice of a pass/fail grade(s) would be rejected at the college of their choice. Most, if not all, SUNY four year institutions have adopted an Alternative Grading Policy and are accepting a “P” grade for transfer. Because of safety concerns related to the Covid-19 virus and the dire economic outlook, public and private four year colleges throughout the country will be hurting for students in the fall and beyond. Transferring a “P” grade should not be a problem and in fact could be easier than it was prior to the Covid-19 virus pandemic.

It has been said that **a pass/fail grading policy that comes at this late date is unfair to those who have withdrawn from class who would have stayed if that an pass/fail grading option chose had been available to them**. Yes it is unfair, however, the damage is already done. It is a greater wrong to do damage to the students who have stayed in courses and have persevered over the course of the semester under very trying circumstances.

It has also been said that the college does not have the wherewithal to process alternative grades. The college needs to get the wherewithal. The money that the college will save by keeping students in school will more than compensate for this additional expense.

## **Furthermore**

As an institution of higher learning, we have always done what is best for our students. More than 3,000 students have signed a petition favoring a pass/fail grading policy for the Spring 2020 Semester. I have to believe that they know what is in their own best interests.

It is not too late. NCC needs to adopt a pass/fail grading policy for students this semester. During these terrible times when too many students are struggling to stay in college and our retention numbers are on a downward spiral, a pass/fail grading policy makes absolute sense and must be put in place soon.

## **My Opinion**

Stefan Krompfer  
President  
Adjunct Faculty Association