Yale Health Professions Advising COVID-19 Messaging

The Yale College Deans Office worked extremely hard to come to a consensus on how to handle grading in the midst of this unprecedented crisis. As the Spring 2020 semester progresses with courses being taught remotely, combined with the news that Yale students will have the option to complete courses Credit/D/Fail (CR/D), pre-health students and advisors are wondering what this means for completing pre-requisite courses.

As of this writing, there is no consensus among health professions schools regarding whether CR/D grades will be accepted in place of letter grades. At least one school (Harvard Medical School) has stated they will only accept CR/D for pre-requisite courses if a college or university established a “universal pass” grade option. We expect each health professions school will be handling grades in a way that best meets the guidelines for their admissions committee and there will be no “one size fits all” approach.

Because Yale College students have been given the option of taking courses for grades, we would strongly recommend maintaining the grade option for your science classes, as well as any other classes that might be considered a pre-requisite for your intended health professions program. You may consider choosing CR/D for other courses, which would allow for more time to focus on those pre-requisite courses.

In this unprecedented situation, the hope is that health professions schools will handle review of applications on a case-by-case basis. However, there will be an opportunity in the application process to provide an explanation of your choices if it is warranted. If you feel that you need to CR/D a science course, schedule an appointment with a health professions advisor so we can talk with you and provide advice based on your specific situation. Your performance this semester will be a testament to your resilience and adaptability, which are among the core competencies that medical schools seek in future physicians. Keep in mind that many medical schools are using online learning within their curricula, so the remainder of this semester will provide helpful practice. And in medicine, you will often be required to perform under stress and in unexpected circumstances, as you are this semester.

The Office of Career Strategy and the Health Professions Advisors are here for you during this time and we look forward to connecting in the coming weeks and months.