How do I know if I should take a class Pass/No Pass?

Taking a class Pass/No Pass can be an effective strategy in safeguarding your GPA because a “P” or “NP” is not used in your GPA calculations (some exceptions apply). Therefore, it has no negative (or positive) effect on your GPA.

Here’s an example of a student who is using Pass/No Pass grading effectively:

John has a 3.0 UC transferable GPA after completing 15 units. He is currently enrolled in 15 units but 4 weeks into the semester, he is concerned about doing well in one of his general education courses. He did some “what if” calculations and this is what he found:

~ If he receives 2 A’s, 2 B’s and an F, his cumulative GPA would be 2.9
~ If he receives 2 A’s, 2 B’s and a NP, his cumulative GPA would be 3.2
~ If he receives 2 A’s, 2 B’s and a C, his cumulative GPA would be a 3.0

Based on his calculations, he decides to take the general education course he is struggling with on a Pass/No Pass basis to protect his GPA.

HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN DECIDING IF PASS/NO PASS IS RIGHT FOR YOU

- Most SBCC AA/AS degrees require that you take the department requirements for a letter grade (this includes the major and controlled electives). Check the curriculum guide for your major.
- Many, but not all, preparation for major courses should be taken for a letter grade. Check www.assist.org regarding your major and the institutions you are applying to.
- Credit will be granted only when the work is of a quality equivalent to a grade of "C" or better.
- If you earn a “D” or “F”, the only way to repair your GPA would be to retake the exact same course. If you take a class for PASS/NO PASS and receive an “NP”, you do not have to retake that exact course because your GPA was not affected.
- The UC’s will accept up to 14 units with a “P” grade. The CSU’s have no uniform limitations (check the institutions’ specific catalog).
- Some transferring institutions may not accept all courses with Pass/No Pass grading.
- Pass (“P”) can be used for IGETC (even in English and Math). International students may need to take English for a letter grade depending on the transfer institution.
- Once you submit the approved PASS/NO PASS petition, you cannot change your mind even if you are getting an “A” in the class.
- Check with a counselor at the Academic Counseling Center about the appropriateness of taking a course Pass/No Pass.
- Check the academic calendar for the deadline to petition for Pass/No pass grading.

Students may elect Pass/No Pass grading in any course listed in the general catalog, with the consent of the instructor, no later than the 5th week (30% length of the class for classes not full-term) of the semester (1st week during summer session). To request this grading option, obtain your instructor’s signature on the petition for Pass/No Pass Grading and submit to Admissions and Records by the deadline date.