

Academic Information

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar, following the 4-1-4 system, provides for two semesters of fourteen weeks with an interim January Term of four weeks.

Academic Standards

Trinity Lutheran College exists to educate leaders for Christ-centered service. In order to achieve this goal, faculty members have been selected based upon their academic and experiential excellence. The academic programs are designed to deliver a high quality education. Each course is taught in a manner appropriate to the student's level, and standards for student achievement are high. Students are therefore expected to study diligently and apply themselves to their coursework responsibly. Assignments are designed to require approximately two hours of preparation for each hour of class time.

The Academic Dean is charged with the administration of the academic program and, in conjunction with the Academic Committee, has oversight over questions pertaining to the academic division of the college.

The Academic Committee has immediate jurisdiction over all questions pertaining to scholarship and is responsible to the Faculty Council for maintenance of the academic standards of the college.

Course Numbering

Course numbers indicate the relative degree of difficulty of the coursework and the academic maturity expected of the student. 100 and 200 level courses are introductory and intermediate designed primarily for college freshman and sophomore levels. 300 and 400 level courses are advanced, designed primarily for junior and senior levels. The course numbers also indicate the focus of the thinking skills involved. As a general rule, the skills involved are as follows:

100 level: students should be able to *remember/understand, and apply* the course material

200 level: students should be able to *apply and analyze* texts, concepts, and theories

300 level: students should be able to critically *analyze and create* new ideas and projects related to the course material

400 level: *create and evaluate* important texts, concepts, and theories studied by the course

Academic Advising

All students are assigned to a faculty academic advisor, ordinarily within their chosen major. While Trinity makes every effort to assist students by assigning academic advisors, the final responsibility for meeting academic and graduation requirements rests with each individual student. The provisions of this catalog and information from advisors are not an irrevocable contract between the student and the college. The college reserves the right to change any provision or requirement at any time during the student's term of residence.

Trinity advisors act as mentors for students. The faculty/student ratio allows for specialized mentoring by faculty. Students may feel free to approach their professors on a variety of faith, life, and career issues.

Normal Academic Load

Definition of Credit: One "semester credit" signifies the value toward graduation of a course meeting one period of fifty minutes each week for a semester of fourteen weeks, together with satisfactory completion of the assigned out-of-class work.

Permissible Academic Load: The phrase "academic load" refers to the schedule of courses for which the student is registered. A full-time academic load for Trinity students is 12-17 credits. Courses may be taken concurrently at another institution to fulfill requirements for a Trinity academic program. Students taking more than 17 credits per semester must pay additional tuition on a per credit basis.

Reduction or Limitation of Load: A student's academic load is subject to reduction or limitation by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Committee, for inadequate scholarship or excessive employment beyond class time.

Leadership Activities: To participate in leadership activities (e.g., student government, resident assistant) students must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 during the semester immediately preceding their participation in such an activity. This minimum must be maintained throughout the period of leadership. Minimum cumulative grade point average for student body officers is spelled out in the Associated Student Body Constitution.

Absence Due to Illness

Extended absence from courses due to illness or accident should be discussed with each instructor involved. Students are responsible for contacting their instructors, either directly or through the Dean of Students, as soon as an extended absence becomes apparent. Students should note that in some instances course requirements will be impossible to complete due to the extended absence.

Independent Study / Directed Study Eligibility

An Independent Study is a project or a set of readings of special interest for advanced students, designed by the student and supervised by the instructor. A Directed Study consists of a project or a set of readings of special interest for advanced students, selected and facilitated by the instructor.

1. A student wishing to undertake an Independent Study or a Directed Study must have attained junior status (60 credits) and be in good academic standing, having a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 or higher.
2. A student may not substitute an Independent Study or a Directed Study for a course listed in the college catalog unless specific approval is given by the Academic Dean.
3. The academic level of an Independent Study is 400, and a Directed Study is 300.
4. A student may earn no more than four credits of Independent Study and/or Directed Study in any given semester and may count no more than twelve credits of Independent Study or Directed Study credit as part of the number of credits required for the bachelor's degree.
5. The Independent Study or Directed Study contract must be approved and signed by the instructor, the student's academic advisor, the chair of the department in which the study is taken, and the Academic Dean. The form is to be filed with the Registrar on or before the final date to add a course.
6. All Independent or Directed Studies must be approved by the Academic Dean.

Independent and Directed Study Guidelines

Purpose

Independent study options are available to students as opportunities to research, analyze, integrate, and present a subject of personal interest. Subjects are normally interdisciplinary, incorporating biblical and theological foundations. Requirements for sources, length, organization, application, and style are based on the academic level.

Contract terms

The contract is to specify:

- the academic level at which the study is to be undertaken
- the title and subject of the program
- the number of credits and study hours per credit
- the requirements for assigned written work, reading, or project
- a schedule of conferences between the student and instructor
- the grade (letter or pass/fail)

- the terminal date when the study must be completed, with a statement of consequences if that date is not met

Requirement Options

An example of a requirements for a project-based 300-level course would be a term paper (10 pages), 300 pages of readings per credit and at least five works cited per credit. An example of a 300-level readings based seminar would be 600 pages of reading per credit, 3-5 page evaluative essays for each reading unit. 400 level courses would be adjusted upward for both content and expectations for paper length and pages of reading.

Recording

The completed and signed contract must be filed with the Registrar prior to commencing study. The grade for the independent or directed study must be submitted within three days of the terminal date specified. That grade will be recorded on the student's transcript.

Grading System and Grade Point Average

The quality of a student's performance in a course is recognized by a letter grade that translates to points for calculation of the Grade Point Average (GPA):

Grade	Points	Explanation
A	4.0	Superior
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	
B	3.0	Above average
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	Average
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	Below average
F	0.0	Failed
P	*	Passing
U	*	Unsatisfactory
AU	*	Satisfactory audit
UA	*	Unsatisfactory audit (<i>attendance requirement was not met</i>)
I	*	Incomplete
IP	*	In progress (<i>used for courses spanning more than one semester, e.g., research project</i>)
R	*	Repeated course
NR	*	Not reported
WA	*	Administrative withdrawal (<i>dismissal from course or college</i>)
W	*	Student withdrawal from course

*Course grade not calculated into the GPA

Pass/Fail Option

Students with a 2.00 or higher GPA may take one “Pass/Fail” course per year up to a maximum of 4 courses. Such courses may not be used to fulfill major requirements. Students must declare the “Pass/Fail” option to the Registrar before midterm and secure permission from the instructor and their advisor.

Incompletes

An “Incomplete” (I) grade may be given only when the major portion of the course has been completed satisfactorily and some minor but essential requirement has not been completed for health or other reasons that the instructor considers justifiable.

Instructors will file an Incomplete Form with the Registrar’s Office specifying the deadline by which the work will be completed, and what will happen to the grade in the event the deadline is not met.

Independent Instructors may grant students’ requests for the grade of “Incomplete” only with the approval of the Academic Dean.

Dropping a Course

Before the last two weeks of a term, students may drop courses and receive a grade of “W.” During the last two weeks of a term, students must remain in courses and receive a final grade in the course.

Repeating a Course

Students who receive a grade of “C-” or below in a course at Trinity are allowed to repeat that course. The grade earned when the course is repeated is the grade which will be placed in the permanent record and which will be used in computing the cumulative grade point average. The grade earned the first time will be changed to an “R/(original grade)” and taken out of the GPA calculation. Course credits will be counted only once toward a degree. The student must notify the Registrar of the repeat by filing a Notification of Repeated Course Form.

Grade Reports

Grades are reported to students at the end of each term. As soon as final grades are submitted electronically by faculty members, the grades appear online, accessible to the student through a user ID and PIN.

Parents of students will be mailed grade reports only if the student has provided the Registrar with a signed release or if the parent has presented the Registrar with evidence of the student’s current dependent status as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. The requirement of a signed release from the student or proof of dependency status became mandatory with the passage of the federal law “Protection of the Rights and Privacy of Parents and Students” enacted August 21, 1975.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected of all students at all times at Trinity Lutheran College. Academic dishonesty constitutes a serious violation of scholarship standards that can result in substantial penalties, including denial of credit in a course, as well as dismissal from the college. Plagiarism, therefore, is a serious breach of the academic integrity of the institution.

Defining Plagiarism

The following definition of (and explanation of how to avoid) plagiarism is used by permission from Bill Scott, Department of Psychology, Wooster College.

Plagiarism is the representation of another person's words, ideas, or information as if they were one's own. You may use another person's words, ideas, or information, but to do so without acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

For instance, you may describe Einstein's theory of relativity, but if you present it as your theory you are guilty of plagiarism. You may summarize a Supreme Court opinion in your own words, but if you incorporate the language of the original, without indicating that you are doing so, you are guilty of plagiarism. You may get an idea while reading someone else's book or term paper, but unless you acknowledge the source, you are guilty of plagiarism. Copying from someone else's paper during an examination is a form of plagiarism. The submission of a term paper purchased from or prepared by someone else also constitutes plagiarism.

Acknowledgment should be made for theories, interpretation, data, experiments, explorations, literary or artistic works, musical works, inventions, illustrations, or assistance in carrying out a project.

Beliefs so widely held as to defy citation or information (such as birth and death dates) obtainable from any of a number of authoritative sources are considered 'common knowledge' and need not be cited. Also, phraseology in common use may be duplicated without acknowledgment. The following are examples of such phrases:

Knowledge is power (Bacon); Iron Curtain (Churchill); Military industrial complex (Eisenhower); Survival of the fittest (Spencer); The shortest distance between two points (Euclid); The best of all possible worlds (Voltaire, following Leibnitz); Eat, drink, and be merry (Ecclesiastes)

The absence of any discernible attempt to give credit to your source will be taken as 'prima facie' evidence of an intent to plagiarize. In other words, if you have made no attempt, however meager, to give credit to someone else, you have created a presumption of willful plagiarism, and it is up to you to demonstrate that you were not attempting to conceal or misrepresent the true authorship.

Trinity Lutheran College Conduct Policies for those who are suspected of Plagiarism:

If a faculty member has evidence of plagiarism, they have the ability to select one of the following sanctions:

- A zero on the assignment
- An “F” in the class
- Recommendation of expulsion

Appeals Process

If a student would like to appeal the sanction they have the option to appeal through a) the Academic Dean or b) Faculty Council. Recommendation of expulsion will be heard and voted on by the Faculty Council. All sanction decisions from the Faculty Council are final.

If a student is expelled, a letter or notice may be sent to surrounding colleges and will be documented in your transcript file.

Education

It is Trinity Lutheran College’s policy to help educate students in all manners that are pertinent to future career paths. As such, students will receive instruction regarding plagiarism in the following courses:

- College Success Seminar
- English Composition
- Keys
- A selected course in each program of study

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom and freedom of inquiry are rooted within our commitment to the idea that all truth is God’s truth. Therefore, we belong to a tradition that does not seek to suppress freedom of inquiry, but to pursue it as an essential component of our faith and our academic program. The college encourages students and faculty to examine data, to question assumptions, to be freely guided by evidence, and to be learners and scholars together in the pursuit of truth.

Degree Progress

In consultation with their academic advisor, students monitor their own progress toward degree completion.

Student Honors

Dean's List: Dean's List honors are awarded each semester to students in good standing who have attained a 3.75 or higher GPA.

Eligibility for honors: Students must be registered for a full academic load at Trinity (12 credits or more) and have attained a 3.75 or higher GPA and have no Incompletes for the semester.

Promising Leader Award: Awarded by the college president to a graduating senior with excellent academic achievement, involvement in college life, and future promise of exceptional leadership.

Inspirational Student Award: An award determined by the student body to recognize a fellow student who contributes to the college's community and spirit.

Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges: A faculty-nominated recognition for juniors and seniors with outstanding academic achievements and notable community involvement.

Excellence in Writing Award: Awarded by the General Studies Department to a student who has demonstrated exceptional critical writing skills.

Biblical Languages Award: Awarded by the Biblical Studies Department to a student who has demonstrated proficiency in a biblical language.

Faculty Award for Distinctive Scholarship: A recognition given by faculty members to honor students with extraordinary scholastic accomplishments.

Graduate Honors

Associate of Biblical Studies:

With Honors (3.5-4.0 cumulative GPA)

Bachelor's degree:

Summa cum Laude (3.9-4.0 cumulative GPA)

Magna cum Laude (3.7-3.89 cumulative GPA)

Cum Laude (3.5-3.69 cumulative GPA)

Certificate of Professional Studies:

With Distinction (3.75-4.0 cumulative GPA)

Note that before any honors can be awarded to graduating students, all coursework must be completed. Once it is completed, the award may be posted on the transcript.

Academic Standing

Good Standing

All students enrolled are expected to stay in good academic standing. Good standing requires a semester grade point average of 2.00 or higher for the immediate past semester.

Academic Warning

Students whose most recent semester grade point average was less than 2.00, whose cumulative grade point average is 2.00 or higher, and whose academic progress is otherwise satisfactory are placed on academic warning and sent warning letters.

Academic Probation

Students are placed on probation if their cumulative grade point average falls below 2.00. Probationary students must meet with the Academic Dean before the tenth day of a probationary semester to draw up a plan for improving their academic work. Failure to satisfactorily complete each course attempted in a probationary semester may result in dismissal.

Continued Academic Probation

Students whose cumulative grade point average is still below 2.00 after a probationary semester, but whose most recent semester grade point average is above 2.00 and who are otherwise in good standing, may be granted one additional semester of probation at the discretion of the Academic Committee. Failure to satisfactorily complete each course attempted in a probationary semester may result in dismissal from the college.

Academic Dismissal

Students not in good standing at the end of a probationary semester are dismissed from the college. They may apply for reinstatement by petitioning the Academic Committee.

If the petition is approved, the reinstated student continues on academic probation. If the petition is denied, the student may petition again after one semester unless otherwise informed.

Academic Appeals

It is assumed that most academic grievances will be resolved in conversation between the student and instructor, or within the department involved. However, in cases where resolution is not achieved, the student may register a written appeal with the Academic Dean for adjudication in the matter. A formal appeal of grades must begin within 15 days of distribution of the official statement of grades from the Registrar's Office.

Requirements for Graduation

Requirements for Associate of Biblical Studies degree

1. The ABS degree will not be awarded until all required coursework is completed.
2. A total of 64 credits is required. Specific course requirements are listed in the “Associate of Biblical Studies” section under the Biblical Studies Department.
3. Thirty-two credits applied to the degree must be earned from Trinity.
4. Students must complete a minimum of one January Term.
5. Students must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher.
6. All required courses must be passed with a grade of “C-” or higher.
7. Graduation requirements must be completed within three years of initial enrollment.
8. Exceptions to any of the above must be petitioned to the Academic Committee.

Requirements for Bachelor of Arts degree

1. The BA degree will not be awarded until all required coursework is completed. Students may participate in the Commencement ceremony with one 4-credit course outstanding. This may be accomplished by academic appeal by January 15th of the student’s senior year. Thus students with an internship outstanding will participate in the next spring graduation. In all cases, the graduation date will reflect the date at which all requirements are completed.
2. A total of 124 semester credits is required:

a. Trinity Core **24**

The following 6 courses are required:

RELI 101, RELI 102, RELI 103, RELI 104, RELI 201, RELI 202

At least 4 credits are required from the following:

RELI 106, RELI 206.

Transfer students must take one course in the Trinity Core for each semester enrolled full-time, until the student either graduates or completes the Trinity Core.

b. General Education **41**

Fine Arts [2]

At least 2 credits are required from Art, Music, or Theater

Humanities [12]

The following 2 courses are required:

COMM 101, ENGL 101

At least 4 credits are required from Languages, Literature, Intercultural Studies, Philosophy, Religion and Communications

Mathematics [6]

At least 6 credits are required from Mathematics

Natural Sciences [8]

At least 8 credits are required from Natural Sciences including Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science and Engineering, Geosciences and Physics.

Social and Behavioral Sciences [13]

The following course is required:

PSYC 100 for entering freshman

One of the following courses is required:

PSYC 101, SOCI 101

At least 8 additional credits are required from Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology, Social Work, Children Youth and Family Studies, Early Childhood Studies, and Business Studies.

c. Major 40-44

d. Additional credits to total required 124

3. Thirty-two credits applied to the degree must be earned from Trinity.
4. Forty credits applied to the degree must be upper-level (300 or 400 level). A transfer student must earn a minimum of 20 of the 40 upper-level credits from Trinity.
5. Students must complete a minimum of two January Terms. (Transfer students at the junior level must complete a minimum of one January Term.)
6. Students must complete the requirements for at least one major as part of their degree.
7. All required general education and Trinity Core courses must be passed with a grade of "C-" or higher. All required major courses must be passed with a grade of "C" or higher. (Some academic programs may require higher course grades.)
8. Students must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher. (Some academic programs may require a higher GPA.)
9. Graduation requirements must be completed within six years of initial enrollment.
10. Exceptions to any of the above must be petitioned to the Academic Committee.

Change in Catalogs

This official college catalog represents an understanding between the student and the college, spelling out graduation requirements. In the event that the catalog changes before a student graduates, the student may elect to remain under the catalog requirements in place at the time of enrollment at Trinity, provided that the student has been in college continuously; or, may elect to graduate under the new catalog, but not a combination of both. If students have been away from Trinity for two semesters and are taking at least one course at another college that transfers to meet their Trinity requirements, they may be considered active students and continue under the catalog used during their previous attendance. Students not studying at any institution for a period of one year or two consecutive semesters or more will be required to graduate under the catalog in place when they re-enroll.

The provisions of this catalog are not an irrevocable contract between the student and the college. The college reserves the right to change any provision or requirement at any time during the student's term of residence.

See also "Re-Admission of Former Students".

Student Records Policy

Student records at Trinity are subject to the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The student's file is open to the student except for confidential recommendations placed there before January 1, 1975. Students' requests to see this file will be granted as soon as possible, and in all cases within 45 days of the request. Students may also review their own academic records. Faculty and other college personnel may review a student's file and academic record when legitimate academic interests dictate. Information may also be provided to scholarship or government agencies regarding financial aid eligibility.

No other requests for information, other than "directory information," will be honored unless authorized by the student in a signed release, which states to whom and for what purpose the information shall be supplied. Directory information includes the following items: student's name, address, telephone, email address, date of birth, place of birth, major, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and most recent previous educational agency or institution.

The college does not supply directory information indiscriminately to commercial concerns for such purposes as mailing lists. A student may direct the withholding of any or all of this information by supplying a written request to the Registrar.

Should students, after viewing material in their file, think that information is incorrect, they may place a written refutation of the information in the file or they may proceed with the college's judicial process to request that incorrect material be removed. The claim of incorrect material must, of course, be substantiated before any material will be removed.

Library

The library of Trinity Lutheran College is dedicated to the highest professional standards in serving the academic needs of Trinity students. Professional library help is readily available for any student facing difficulties with a perplexing research project or a challenging paper. The library also boasts a Writing and Tutoring Center, coordinated by the librarian, and staffed by exceptional student tutors who are able to assist fellow students. Standardized descriptions of the various types of papers grammar helps, and resources for academic success are also available.

The staff of the Trinity library is committed to providing students with first-rate current information resources. The library subscribes to the best in peer-reviewed journal materials both in hard copy and full-text computer format. Currently, the library subscribes to hundreds of academic journals related to the programs offered at the college. The library offers a full-text PsycINFO subscription, full text journals in various fields through JSTOR, a collection of up-to-date, full-text psychology articles selected by the American Psychological Association. Because courses at Trinity depend on journal research, and because many students prefer to do their research from their apartments, the library focuses its budgetary resources on providing remotely accessible journal resources.

Information technology is readily available to students on a number of levels:

- The library maintains electronic access to its holdings through its new online catalog system called SOPHIA.
- The library circulation system is automated.
- CD ROM-based research resources are on reserve and may be used on the library computer stations.
- Docking stations, as well as a wireless printer, are available in the library for students owning laptop computers.
- Recently added are: (1) the ATLA Religion Database, the premier index to journal articles, book reviews, and collections of essays in all fields of religion; (2) ATLAS (ATLA Serials), an online collection of major religion and theology journals selected by leading religion scholars and theologians; and (3) the Scholar's Edition of LOGOS Bible software and (4) the various journals through JSTOR.