

CoSB Guidelines

Graduate Studies

Trinity University offers four graduate degrees: the Master of Arts (Education: School Psychology); the Master of Arts in Teaching; the Master of Education (Education: School Leadership); and the Master of Science (Accounting and Health Care Administration). Graduate work was instituted at Trinity University in 1950. The objective of the Graduate Program is to provide students with opportunities to engage in study at an advanced level and to develop professional competence in the area of their specialization, with emphasis upon the development of analytical thinking, independent and original research, and effective communication.

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Commission on Graduate Studies

The Commission on Graduate Studies serves as the academic policy committee for graduate students on all matters related to graduate degrees and programs. The Commission consists of representatives from each graduate program, two students appointed by the Graduate Student Association, the Registrar, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his or her representative.

Graduate Faculty

As a liberal arts university with selected professional degree programs, Trinity does not maintain a separate graduate faculty. Faculty members selected to teach graduate-level courses will have an earned doctorate (or other terminal degree) in their teaching field and demonstrated research capability, or will be practitioners with at least a master's degree and appropriate training and experience in the professional field they are teaching. The Department Chair is responsible for determining whether a faculty member's qualifications meet the requirements for graduate-level teaching. Eligibility to teach at the graduate level is periodically reviewed in order to maintain viable programs and specialized and regional accreditation.

Admission

Required Documentation

Persons interested in doing graduate work at Trinity University should submit the following items:

1. Application form and fee.
2. An official transcript or transcripts of all previous college and university work. These transcripts must be not more than one year old. All transcripts become a part of the University's files and will not be returned.
3. Test scores not over five years old on the Graduate Record Examination, Graduate Management Admission Test, or other examinations required by the graduate program.
4. One or more letters of recommendation if specified by the graduate program.

The application deadline is one month prior to the beginning of the semester or as established by the program. Persons outside the United States should submit their applications at least three months prior to the semester they plan to enter the University. Registration is not permitted until application for admission has been approved.

Citizens of countries other than the United States, whose first language is not English, are encouraged to submit results from the TOEFL (with a recommended score of 250 CBT, 600 Paper, or 100 iBT). In addition, international applicants who are not permanent residents of the United States must submit the Statement of Financial Support, or signed, certified bank documents demonstrating one's ability to fund a Trinity education. (Contact the International Programs Office for current financial certification requirements.) Applicants should submit certified English translations of documents. (See Foreign Studies Evaluation, below.) Trinity University will issue Form I-20, Certificate for Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status, only upon receipt of a nonrefundable deposit indicating acceptance of an offer of admission.

Bachelor's Degree Requirement

Graduates holding the bachelor's degree from an institution accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting

organization and fulfilling all other requirements listed in this bulletin may be considered for regular admission to graduate study. Graduates of colleges that are not accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting organization may be considered for provision admission. (For students who hold degrees from institutions outside the United States, see Foreign Studies Evaluation, below.)

Prerequisite Course Requirements

The requirement for background work varies with each graduate program at Trinity. The department chair or program director may recommend that prerequisites be waived for superior students or, in certain cases, that prerequisites be taken on the graduate level. Consult individual department listings for specific requirements.

Requirements for Regular Admission

To be considered for regular admission, an applicant must submit all required documentation and present evidence of the following:

1. A grade point average of 3.00 or better on the last 60 hours of undergraduate level work or a grade point average of 3.00 or better on all courses taken in the undergraduate major or any relevant concentration. (Students who have earned at least 18 hours of graduate level credit must have a GPA of 3.00 or better on all graduate course work attempted. Graduate course work may be considered in lieu of undergraduate course work.)
2. Acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination or Graduate Management Admission Test, as articulated by the individual program or department.

In evaluating an application for graduate study, the department chair or program director will consider the applicant's commitment to and suitability for the relevant profession. Applicants who meet the requirements for regular admission may nonetheless be denied admission if significant academic, ethical, or dispositional concerns are identified as part of the admission process.

Requirements for Provisional Admission

Applicants who fail to meet the requirements for regular admission may be considered for provisional admission. Students admitted provisionally are considered to be fully admitted to their respective graduate programs.

The final decision on provisional admission is made by the Office of Academic Affairs after receiving the recommendation of the department chair or program director.

Students admitted provisionally shall be reviewed after completion of their first 6 hours of graduate study. Those with a grade point average below 3.00 shall be dismissed from the graduate program.

Non-Degree Admission

Upon the approval of the appropriate academic department, students not pursuing a degree may be admitted on a

non-degree basis to enroll in graduate courses.

Students who have been admitted to a program on a non-degree basis and who later decide that they would like to become degree candidates must apply for admission to degree status and provide all required information including test results. There is no guarantee that courses taken on a non-degree basis will later apply for credit toward a graduate degree.

Foreign Studies Evaluation

All foreign academic credentials submitted for transfer credit or for admission to the graduate program must be accompanied by a professional evaluation performed by an approved evaluation service, including an English translation if not in English. Course descriptions or syllabi may also be required. It is the student's responsibility to procure the evaluation and to assume financial responsibility for it. Because of the importance of this information, Trinity only accepts evaluations certified as official and received directly from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) or from other approved service providers. Contact the Office of the Registrar or visit the web site for a list of approved foreign credentials evaluation services.

Evaluations should include an explanation that the institution is recognized by the ministry of education in the home country and is generally considered to offer at least the equivalent of U.S. higher education credit. In addition, the evaluation must include an explanation of the credits, the grading system and course levels, and a course-by-course evaluation. Trinity is under no obligation to award credit on the basis of an outside agency's evaluation. The professional evaluation will be used as a tool in the overall credit evaluation process.

Advising and Registration

After admission has been approved, degree students should confer with the graduate program director of the major department or with an adviser appointed by the program director to arrange a complete program of graduate studies. Students admitted to graduate study will follow the regular university procedures for registration.

Readmission

A former graduate student who chooses to seek readmission after being dismissed from the University for any reason, or who chooses to seek readmission after withdrawing from the University for any length of time, must submit an application for readmission no later than one month prior to the beginning of the term. Official transcripts from any colleges or universities attended during the time since the student last attended Trinity University must be submitted as part of the application for readmission. No new application fee is required.

The decision to readmit or not to readmit a student shall be made by the academic department or program at its

discretion. In making this decision, the department may consider, among other things, the student's performance within the program and his or her commitment to and suitability for the relevant profession. The department may require the student to submit updated application materials, including updated test scores and letters of recommendation.

If a department denies an application for readmission, the student may appeal to the Commission on Graduate Studies. The Commission may choose to gather evidence and to interview any parties whom the Commission deems relevant. The Commission may decide to uphold or to overturn the department's decision, and the Commission's decision shall be final.

Minimum Hour and GPA Requirement

A minimum of thirty semester hours is required for the master's degree.

A minimum grade point average of 3.00 is required for the master's degree. No more than 6 hours of courses graded C can apply toward a master's degree.

Applicable Bulletin

Students have the option of completing degree requirements as specified in the Trinity University Courses of Study Bulletin in effect at the time of matriculation provided all requirements are completed within six years (see Time Limit) or following requirements of any later bulletin that satisfies the six-year time limit.

Additional Requirements

Some graduate programs may require one or more of the following:

- Thesis;
 - Applied research project;
 - Portfolio;
 - Internship or residency;
 - Licensing examination.
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Graduation Requirements

Each student must secure from the Office of the Registrar an application for graduation. The student is responsible for returning the graduation application on or before the date listed in the calendar.

A degree candidate must be present for commencement exercises unless he or she has notified the Registrar of his or her intention to graduate in absentia.

A degree candidate must be registered in the semester or summer term in which the degree will be awarded. If the student is not registered for credit or thesis extension, the student will register for SPCL 6099. There will be a fee of \$200 for registration for SPCL 6099.

Academic Load

A graduate student taking at least 9 semester hours of graduate work per semester is considered a full-time student. The maximum load during the summer session is 9 semester hours. A graduate student registered for thesis credit, required internship, or residency is also considered a full-time student without regard to the number of credit hours. The first semester of thesis extension will be considered full-time enrollment, but subsequent semesters of thesis extension will be considered as less than one-quarter time.

Transfer of Graduate Credit

Ordinarily, all work for the master's degree must be done at Trinity University. Under some circumstances acceptance of graduate credit for work done in other regionally accredited institutions may be approved by the chair of the department concerned. No course completed with a grade lower than a B will be approved. Up to 10 semester hours but no more than twenty percent of the total degree requirement can be transferred to apply toward a graduate degree. No hours earned toward a completed or previously awarded graduate/professional degree may be transferred. However, students with a previously awarded graduate/professional degree may have up to 10 semester hours but no more than twenty percent of the total degree requirement waived by the chair of the department. Students granted such a waiver may not transfer any credit to apply toward a graduate degree, except on petition to the Commission on Graduate Studies. Furthermore, the GPA of transferred credit will not be applied to meet the GPA requirement for a graduate degree at Trinity. No transfer credit will be accepted or waiver approved until the student has earned 12 semester hours of graduate credit at Trinity University. The six-year limit applies to transfer work as well as to courses taken in residence.

Courses offered by accredited universities at extension centers or other off-campus locations, or in online formats, will be evaluated individually by the Department Chair. Such courses will be accepted only when course

requirements and quality standards comparable to regular on-campus offerings can be demonstrated. Credit for work done by correspondence will not be accepted for the graduate degree.

In some graduate programs, students may obtain academic credit for from 3 to 12 hours of graduate work on the basis of previous academic preparation and/or successful experiences. In order to obtain this credit, the student must demonstrate the attainment of objectives identified for the particular course or courses in the program. Candidates may demonstrate the attainment of these objectives by satisfactorily completing a written and/or oral examination administered by the department. The academic credit will be placed on the student's permanent record.

Independent Study

No more than 6 semester hours of credit in independent study/problems courses may be applied to the student's degree program.

Grades and Minimum Performance Requirements

The grading system for all graduate courses is as follows:

A	Excellent, Superior Performance
B	Good, Solid Performance
C	Fair, Marginal Performance
F	Failure, not meeting course requirements
I	Incomplete
PR	In Progress, for thesis or special study/research courses
PP	Pass in a pass/fail course
FF	Failure in a pass/fail course
NC	Non-credit
Pass/Fail	Departments desiring to offer selected courses only on a Pass/Fail basis may do so with prior approval of the Office of Academic Affairs.

W

Withdrawn – Graduate students may withdraw from a graduate course with a grade of W any time up to the time that mid-semester grades are due for that semester or during the first two weeks of summer session. Such withdrawal must be filed at the Office of the Registrar. Nonattendance does not constitute withdrawal from a class. Students may withdraw with a grade of W up to final examination week. However, such withdrawal must be approved by the Department Chair or Graduate Program Director in consultation with the instructor.

Unless the instructor specifies an earlier completion date, grades of “Incomplete” will be changed automatically to “F” in the Registrar’s Office after one year. Under unusual circumstances, an extension of time may be granted by the Office of Academic Affairs upon request of the instructor.

No credit course may be changed to “non-credit” after the last day of registration.

Probation and Dismissal:

Probation:

A graduate student will be placed on academic probation following any term in which the student fails to achieve a grade point average of at least 3.00 or receives a grade of “F” in any course, regardless of the level of courses taken and the cumulative grade point average. A student on probation may not hold a graduate assistantship. Academic probation is removed when the student completes a subsequent term and achieves a term grade point average of at least 3.00 with no grade of “F” in any course and a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 in all graduate level courses completed at Trinity University.

Dismissal:

1. A graduate student will be dismissed from the graduate program following any term in which the student earns a grade point average of less than 2.00, regardless of the level of courses taken and the cumulative grade point average.
2. A graduate student placed on academic probation will be dismissed from the graduate program if the student fails to meet the requirements to be removed from probation after attempting nine semester hours.
3. Students dismissed from the graduate program have the option to appeal to the faculty members of the Commission on Graduate Studies. The appeal must be made in writing by the student within 10 days of notification of the decision. When making a decision on an appeal, the Commission will consider the recommendation of the student’s academic department.

Grade Appeals

Trinity University recognizes that students are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. However, the University also recognizes that students should have protection through orderly procedures against prejudicial or capricious academic evaluation. In all cases, the burden of proof rests on the student initiating the appeal.

The procedures for student appeal of semester grades contain the presumption that student grades are the responsibility of the course instructor. As a matter of academic principle, the process of appeal remains in the hands of the teaching faculty. Except for the actions specified in Section 5 below, members of the Administration shall not influence the outcome of the grade appeal process.

All parties in a grade appeal shall make every reasonable effort to complete the appeals process in a timely manner. If any party is absent from campus (for example, if a faculty member is on academic leave or if a student is studying abroad), the appeals process may be deferred until all relevant parties have returned to Trinity. In this case, however, the appellant must still meet the stated deadline by submitting written notification of his or her intention to appeal.

An instructor who has pieces of student work in his or her possession shall retain those pieces of student work until they can no longer be relevant to a grade appeal.

1. To initiate the appeal of a semester grade, a student must submit a written appeal to the instructor no later than ten (10) business days after the beginning of the following semester. The instructor shall notify the student of the outcome of his or her review of the grade no later than five (5) business days following receipt of the written appeal.
2. If the student wishes to contest the instructor's decision in step one, he or she may request a mediated discussion involving the student, the instructor, and the Department Chair. To initiate this step in the appeals process, the student must submit a written appeal to the instructor's Department Chair no later than ten (10) business days following receipt of the instructor's decision. The instructor shall receive a copy of this statement.

The Chair will attempt to mediate a discussion between the student and the instructor to clarify the matter and suggest possible resolutions. If the Chair happens also to be the instructor involved, then the student may request that the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs: Curriculum and Faculty Development ask another faculty member of the department to receive the student's appeal.

3. If the student wishes to contest the outcome of the mediated discussion in step two, he or she may request a departmental review. To initiate this step in the appeals process, the student must submit a written appeal to the instructor's Department Chair no later than ten (10) business days after receiving the outcome of the mediated discussion.

The Chair (or the Chair's substitute) will appoint two tenured members of the department to serve as a review committee, and will notify the student and the instructor of this action. In the case of a General Education course or cross-listed course, the instructor's department will serve as the site for the appeals

process. If the student is a major or minor in the department, the student may ask his or her adviser to be an additional member of the committee. If a small department cannot provide two eligible faculty members to serve on the committee, then the Chair (or the Chair's substitute) will ask a faculty member from a department similar in curriculum and academic evaluation to serve on this committee. Departmental review committees may be convened only during an academic semester.

The departmental review committee will receive written statements from both the student and the instructor, as well as copies of any graded work involved. In addition, both the student and the instructor (and the student's academic adviser, if requested) may be present for the duration of the hearing (prior to voting), during which both parties may offer clarifying statements. The Department Chair will also be present at the meeting, but will not be involved in the determination of the appeal. If, after considering these statements, the committee decides that the grade was not based on prejudicial or capricious evaluation, the Chair (or the Chair's substitute) will give written notification of this decision to the student and the instructor.

However, if the departmental committee determines that the grade was indeed based on prejudicial or capricious evaluation, the Chair (or the Chair's substitute) shall advise the instructor to reconsider the student's semester grade in a manner consistent with proper and stated procedures. If the instructor rejects this advice or fails to comply in a manner satisfactory to the committee, then the committee may undertake an evaluation of the student work in question and assign the grade it deems appropriate.

4. If the student or the instructor wishes to contest the outcome of the departmental review in step three, he or she may request a further review by the Commission on Graduate Studies. To initiate this step in the appeals process, the student or the instructor must submit a written appeal to the Chair of the Commission no later than ten (10) business days after receiving the outcome of the departmental review.

The Commission may collect any evidence it deems necessary, including any written statements that have been generated in the previous stages of the appeals process. The Commission may choose to interview the concerned parties, and it may also choose to conduct a formal hearing.

For the purposes of this process, the voting members of the Commission shall include the faculty representatives on the Commission as well as the Registrar or his or her designee. No faculty member who belongs to the department in question may participate in the Commission's deliberation or decision making.

If the Commission decides that the grade was not based on prejudicial or capricious evaluation, the Chair of the Commission shall give written notification of this decision to the student and the instructor. If the Commission determines that the grade was indeed based on prejudicial or capricious evaluation, the Chair of the Commission shall advise the instructor to reconsider the student's semester grade in a manner consistent with proper and stated procedures. If the instructor rejects this advice or fails to comply in a manner satisfactory to the Commission, then the Commission may undertake an evaluation of the student work in question and assign the grade it deems appropriate.

5. If either the student or the instructor wishes to contest the outcome of the Commission's review in step four, the appellant may petition the Vice President for Academic Affairs for further consideration. To initiate this step in the appeals process, the student or the instructor must submit a written appeal to the

Vice President no later than ten (10) business days after receiving the outcome of the Commission's review. The Vice President may then rule in one of two ways:

- A. That the decision of the Commission on Graduate Studies will stand as rendered;
- B. That the Commission on Graduate Studies reconsider its findings and render a decision based on the reconsideration.

This review is the final step in the grade appeals process.

Completion of Credit Courses

Credit will not be allowed for a graduate course unless the work of that course shall have been completed and so reported to the Office of the Registrar within one year after official ending of the course.

Time Limit

A student is allowed six years in which to complete the master's degree. Under certain circumstances, the student may revalidate by examination courses that are outdated by the time limit. This can be done only with permission of the Department Chair, the graduate program director of the department, and the Commission on Graduate Studies. It is not possible to revalidate courses that have been transferred from another institution and that are out of date.

Withdrawal

After a student has been duly enrolled in a class, he or she is considered a member until he or she has been dropped from the class or has withdrawn from the school. Merely discontinuing class attendance does not constitute a drop or withdrawal. Withdrawal from the University or from a course must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar before final examinations begin.

After mid-semester or the first two weeks of a summer session, a student may withdraw with grades of W only with the approval of the Graduate Program Director. Withdrawal without approval will result in grades of F and dismissal from the graduate program.
