

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Appeals Process

In case of any dispute involving a grade or other academic policy, students should first attempt resolution by discussing the issue with the faculty/staff member involved.

Initial Appeal: If the student is unable to resolve the issue to her/his satisfaction by conversing with the faculty/staff member, the student should address her/his appeal in writing to the director of the office enacting the policy or decision (Registrar, Director of Admissions, Program Director, etc.), who will attempt to resolve the appeal in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School. In the Division of Education, initial appeals are considered by the Teacher Education Council, which is chaired by the Director of the Division of Education.

Secondary Appeal: If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the initial appeal, the student should appeal the decision in writing, to the Trinity Graduate School Council, following the procedure detailed in the *TGS Academic Handbook* (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EssewgAWi7Ge5jOwI9wX-dknV-DBL9F3PscCStNzSyk/edit?usp=sharing>). This formal, written appeal to the Graduate School Council must be initiated within sixty days of receipt of the grade or interpretation/implementation of academic policy that is in question. The Graduate School Council will act on the appeal.

Final Appeal: If still dissatisfied, the student has the right of final appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School. This appeal must be initiated in writing no later than ten days after the communication of the TGS Council's decision.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

A student may be admitted to Trinity on academic probation for either of the following reasons:

- A weak academic background as reflected in the undergraduate grade point average (GPA) and/or standardized admissions test scores
- A bachelor's degree from a non-accredited institution accompanied by marginal standardized admissions test scores

In such cases, the probationary status will be removed after successful academic performance in 12 hours of academic coursework at Trinity.

A student will be placed on academic probation at the conclusion of any semester in which that student's cumulative GPA in their current degree program falls below graduation requirements in the respective degree program. The student will remain on probation as long as the cumulative average remains below the required level. It is expected that, if on academic probation, all activities outside of regular studies would be curtailed until such time as the probationary status is removed.

The minimum cumulative GPA for all Trinity Graduate School degree programs is 3.0. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 but remains above 2.3 after 12 hours of academic coursework in their current degree program will be placed on academic probation. Probationary status will be maintained until the cumulative GPA is raised to a 3.0 or above. The probationary period cannot exceed the six-year statute of limitations for the MA degree. Following completion of 12 hours of academic coursework, a student will be dismissed from Trinity Graduate School if the cumulative GPA falls below 2.3.

Students who have either been placed on academic probation or have been dismissed have the right to appeal to the TGS Academic Council. They must do so in writing within fourteen calendar days of the postmarked notice of their academic standing. Letters of appeal may be sent to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

Following a student's academic dismissal from the university, the TGS Academic Council will consider applications for readmission only if warranted by exceptional circumstances. Such applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. Upon dismissal, a student must wait at least one semester before reapplying.

Candidacy Requirements

Admission to Trinity Graduate School's Master's in Education (MEd), Master of Arts in Leadership (MA/L), and Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling (MA/MHC) programs must be followed by candidacy for the degree. Individual programs have distinct candidacy requirements.

Admission into any master's program is not automatic acceptance into candidacy for the master's degree. Please see individual program requirements in the *Academic Handbook*.

Capstone Experience

TGS programs all require a capstone experience: professional project, major or integrative paper, internship, comprehensive exam, thesis, or a combination of these. Students should note carefully the requirement in their program curricula and consult with a program advisor as to the precise guidelines for that experience.

Capstone event writers (papers, theses) should note carefully the University writing requirements outlined in the *TIU Style Guide*, available on My.TIU.edu, and avail themselves of the counsel of the research document assistant or assigned capstone reader in their writing.

Capstone Extensions and Fees

Some capstone events are regularly completed during the semester of enrollment; however, others often extend one or more semesters beyond the original semester of enrollment. These capstones also have a capstone extension course (– 7476, – 7478, – 7480, – 7485) in which students must enroll in order to maintain their active student status (see “Active and Inactive Student Status” elsewhere in this catalog). If a student is enrolled in a capstone extension course and in no other courses, a minimal capstone extension course fee is charged for the student to maintain his or her active status and Trinity services. Students who fail to register for a capstone extension course to maintain their active status are charged the extension course fee plus late registration fees for *each* semester in which they failed to register and may be rendered inactive in their program, requiring readmission and payment of the reactivation fee (see “Active and Inactive Student Status”).

Changes in Registration and Course Withdrawals

For all add/drop changes in registration, the student must make the changes on the myTIU dashboard.

Adding or dropping classes for enrolled students

Semester-length classes

- Individual courses may be added through the end of the tenth teaching day of the semester. A fee is assessed for changes in days 6 - 10 of the semester. Semester-length courses may not be added after the tenth teaching day of the semester.
- Semester-length courses may be dropped during the first ten teaching days without record.
- Beginning with the third week of the semester (the eleventh teaching day), and through the end of Quad A (the first seven weeks of a semester-length course), a student may drop a class and receive a withdrawal grade (W) for the course. After that, an F is assigned

Quad-length (half semester) or modular classes

- A quad (7 or 8-week) course may be added through the end of the fifth teaching day of the quad.
- For modular courses, adds must be completed by the first meeting of the class. No course may be added after the first meeting of the class.
- Students who wish to drop a quad or modular course will receive a “W” if the course is dropped during the first 50 percent of class

meetings. For courses dropped after 50% of the course is completed, the grade earned will be assigned.

Students should refer to the university finances section of this Catalog (<https://catalog.tiu.edu/university/finances/tuition-refund-policies/>) regarding the possibility of tuition refunds when dropping courses. Tuition and fee assessment deadlines and financial aid deadlines may be independent from academic deadlines.

Online Courses

- A six week online course may be dropped without record through the third day of the course. Beginning with the fourth day and prior to the end of the second week of the course, a student may drop the class and receive a withdrawal grade (W).
- A twelve week online course may be dropped without record through the sixth day of the course. Beginning the seventh day and prior to the end of the fourth week of the course, a student may drop a class and receive a withdrawal grade (W).
- An 18 week online course may be dropped without record through the ninth day of the course. Beginning the tenth day and prior to the end of the sixth week of the course, a student may drop a class and receive a withdrawal grade (W).

Students should refer to the university finances section of this Catalog (<https://catalog.tiu.edu/university/finances/tuition-refund-policies/>) regarding the possibility of tuition refunds when dropping courses. Tuition and fee assessment deadlines and financial aid deadlines may be independent from academic deadlines.

Class Attendance

The development of good habits confirming Christian character and a sense of Christian stewardship implies that TGS students are responsible to attend class lectures, participate in class discussions, and complete course requirements.

At the beginning of the semester each faculty member will notify class members in writing of the attendance policy for each class. Since class attendance is important, students are urged to attend classes regularly regardless of stated attendance policies in order to participate in discussion and receive benefit from lectures and reports given in class. Because of reduced class time in modular classes, attendance at all sessions is required. Students who miss a session may be requested to withdraw from the course.

Completion of a Second Degree at TIU

After completing work for one graduate degree at the university, a minimum of 16 semester hours must be taken in the new program before obtaining a second graduate degree; however, the actual number of hours necessary to complete that degree may be higher, depending on the length of the degree. A student must also meet all specific requirements for the second degree. No hours can be applied from a first or second degree to a third. Students may be allowed to do advanced substitutions for required courses already taken.

Students accepted in BA/MA Dual Degree programs are allowed to take coursework toward an MA simultaneously with their undergraduate coursework; however, they are considered undergraduate students until all requirements are met for the BA. If the coursework for the MA is finished simultaneously with BA coursework, the MA will be awarded in the semester following the awarding of the BA. Even if the MA coursework is finished first, in no case will the MA be awarded until the BA is completed.

Course Extensions

During any given semester faculty may change due dates for an entire class for a given assignment or grant exceptions for individual emergencies; however, any extensions beyond the last day of final exam week are granted only by the Dean of Students (or by the Dean at TIU - Florida). Course extensions must be requested by Friday of exam week.

Coursework is due no later than the scheduled time of the final examination for each course (including reading, guided research, field education, and internship). Extensions for unforeseen emergencies (illness, death) may be requested from the Dean of Students. Vacations, ministry or work responsibilities, and travel plans are not considered emergencies, and such requests will generally be denied.

Note that only the Dean of Students (or the Dean at TIU - Florida), not faculty members, grants course extensions. The Dean of Students (or Dean at TIU - Florida) will notify the students and faculty member of the disposal of the request and may recommend that

1. no grade penalty be given provided the extension deadline is met or
2. a grade reduction of one full letter grade be given for each week the extension is effective.

Grading and the duration of the extension will depend on the severity of the emergency. Course extensions will not exceed four weeks from the end of the final exam week or from the last session of a course. All work must be submitted by the assigned deadline, or a failing grade (F) will be permanently recorded.

Course extensions beyond four weeks occur only in the event of the most serious extenuating circumstances. A written request accompanied by the support of the faculty member should be filed with the Dean of Students (or Dean at TIU - Florida).

Course Registration: Trinity College Undergraduates into TGS

Trinity College students may register for one TGS course each fall or spring semester at no additional charge (summers not included). Such coursework may be counted for either undergraduate or graduate credit (not both) and may not be used to fulfill general education requirements.

Registrants must be a full-time undergraduate student with junior or senior status with a minimum GPA of 3.0. The requisite form, which must be accompanied by the college academic dean's signature in the case of juniors, is available from the Academic Records office. Undergraduate students registering for graduate classes are subject to all deadlines, grading policies, and late fees of TGS.

General Graduation Requirements

The following graduation requirements apply to all master's candidates at Trinity Graduate School:

- Completion of all prescribed coursework for the program
- Completion of at least 24 hours in graduate-level TIU coursework. Some programs may require additional hours.
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in program coursework with no grade below "C" applied to the program
- Successful completion of the program's comprehensive examination, project, practicum, or thesis
- Completion of the program within six years of matriculation
- All financial obligations to the university settled with the business office
- Approval of the faculty

Grade Changes

Faculty members may not change a student's grade for a given course unless an error was made in computing or recording the grade originally. Students who wish to contest an assigned grade may petition via the academic appeals process but should be aware that a faculty member's decision in assigning grades is rarely overturned. Such cases would only be reviewed seriously in the case of a faculty member (normally visiting) who was not aware of general standards expected in grading at Trinity.

Graduation and Participation in Commencement Ceremonies

A student may graduate in May, August, or December of any academic year; commencement ceremonies are held in May. Degree completion requires submitting the Application for Graduation (https://tiu_forms.formstack.com/forms/tgs_teds_application_for_graduation/) form.

For each academic year, there are three completion semesters: fall, spring, and summer. Students who complete their program at any session are eligible to participate in the May commencement ceremony. Participation includes both walking in the ceremony and being listed in the program.

Fall applications are due by July 15 preceding the intended graduation semester. Spring and summer applications are due by December 15 preceding the intended graduation semester.

Students will be informed of the details of the upcoming ceremony by a commencement coordinator. Additional ceremony information will be available on the TIU commencement website.

Participation in commencement ceremonies does not imply graduation. Graduands should note the following special requirements for participation in commencement:

- Program requirements of six or fewer hours remaining, student has registered for those requirements to be completed in the subsequent semester (summer or fall for May participants)
- The capstone experience, internship, and/or clinical practice, are completed and passed during the regular semester deadlines.
- No other program requirements remain outstanding.
- Completion of the online commencement participation form between January 1 and March 1 (for the spring ceremony).

Graduation with Honors

The following criteria are established for the determination of graduation honors for students in the Master of Arts programs of the graduate school:

cum laude	minimum cumulative average of 3.50
magna cum laude	minimum cumulative average of 3.80
summa cum laude	minimum cumulative average of 3.90

Leave of Absence or Withdrawal from the University

Leave of Absence

A student who desires not to register for classes for a period of one to three semesters (a maximum of twelve months) should request a leave of absence (LOA) via the academic withdrawal/leave of absence form available from the Graduate Student Life Office (studentlife@tiu.edu (studentservices@tiu.edu)). The form must be submitted prior to the proposed leave. The student should schedule an appointment with the Dean of Students at the time of submission of the form to ensure that all matters are in proper order. A LOA may be granted for personal, financial, or other reasons, but the expectation is that students will return to their program within a twelve-month period.

During the LOA, the student is considered “active” but “on leave” and should maintain contact with TGS, ensuring that address information and other relevant data are kept current through the Academic Records office. At the end of the leave, arrangements for course registration and returning to school should be made directly with the Academic Records office. During the LOA, the program statute of limitation clock keeps ticking; however, the students remain in their program of admission, and no continuation fees are assessed. LOA status is not intended to merely delay program deadlines or other program responsibilities but is rather a genuine absence from the TGS community.

If during the LOA students find that they must withdraw from the university or need further extended leave beyond what was originally filed, they must communicate their intentions with the Student Life office. LOA beyond twelve months is considered withdrawal from the university, and the student must reapply with no guarantee of readmission. If readmitted, students will be subject to the catalog current to their readmission date and may face programmatic or course requirement changes.

Withdrawal from the University

Complete a withdrawal form available from the Graduate Student Life Office (studentservices@tiu.edu). The student should schedule an appointment with the Dean of Students at the time of submission of the form to ensure that all matters are in proper order. Withdrawal is not complete until final settlements have been made with the Office of Student Financial Services and the Academic Records office. Grade accountability, if students withdraw from Trinity after the start of a semester, is the same as that of dropping a class. Withdrawal from the university deactivates the students’ file, and if they desire to return at a future date, the students must reapply with no guarantee of readmission.

All students who have withdrawn from Trinity and desire to return for study must apply for readmission through the admissions office. The readmitted student will then be subject to the catalog requirements in effect at the time of reenrollment, rather than the catalog in effect at the time of the student’s previous enrollment.

Withdrawal for Students Called to Active Military Duty

Trinity students called to active military duty have the following options:

1. Receive course grades for the current semester, or extensions for all courses, if approved by your professors.
2. Receive administrative drops with a refund for some courses and grades/extensions in other courses, if approved by your professors.
3. Withdraw from all current semester courses with a full refund of tuition and fees.

Contact the Academic Records office for information on the procedures to follow and departments to inform in the event of call to active military duty.

Statute of Limitation for Program Completion, Program Extension, and Program Readmission

Program Completion

The statute of limitation, which is the maximum length of time permitted for completion of a program, is six years from the date of admission for all programs in Trinity Graduate School. When the statute of limitation is reached, the student is administratively withdrawn from the program and a hold is placed on further registration unless a program extension request is granted and is on file with the Academic Records office.

Program Extension

A program extension request is considered by petition to the TGS Academic Council and generally does not add more than two years to a program's statute of limitation. Petitions should be filed at least one semester before the statute of limitation ends and show consistent evidence of program progress and a definitive plan for program completion. Students granted program extension will be required to pay continuation fees (see "continuation fees" elsewhere in this catalog).

Program Readmission

Students who withdraw from Trinity without completing their program and desire to reapply may make application for readmission under the current catalog. Readmission is not guaranteed. A written statement outlining plans for program completion must accompany application materials. Readmission is solely for the program to which the applicant is making application.

Students who are readmitted to a program two years or more beyond their original statute of limitation date can expect to complete additional program hours and may have to retake a significant portion of the coursework for the program. The conditions for readmission and program requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the department or program director as applicable. These conditions will be outlined in the letter of readmission.

Transcripts and Records Retention

Admissions documents are retained for accepted students who do not enroll for two years and for those who enroll for a period of five years beyond the date of last attendance.

Academic records are retained permanently. Official student transcripts bear the seal of the school and are distributed in a sealed envelope. Students may request their academic transcript by presenting or mailing a transcript request form to the Academic Records office or submitting a signed letter requesting the transcript. Official transcripts will be sent directly to an institution upon request or may be picked up in the Academic Records office. Downloadable forms and complete instructions for these options are available at www.tiu.edu/tiu/records/transcriptinfo (<http://www.tiu.edu/tiu/records/transcriptinfo/>). Unofficial transcripts are also available and may be faxed.

Allow ten business days for completion of transcript requests. Transcripts are not issued for students who have outstanding accounts unless payment arrangements have been made. Consult the catalog or the records office for fees for transcripts.

Formal Student Complaint Policy

Trinity Graduate School, as part of Trinity International University, in accordance with the Federal compliance policy, keeps a record of formal student complaints. Formal complaints should be addressed in writing (dated and signed) to the dean's office. If unresolved, the student may choose to submit the formal complaint to the TGS Academic Council, the provost, or the president. Upon first receipt of the formal complaint, the person to whom it is addressed will initiate the Student Complaint Tracking form, which records the nature of the complaint, the steps taken by the institution to resolve the complaint, the institution's final decision regarding the complaint, and any other (external) action initiated by the student to resolve the complaint. Information regarding student complaints is accessible to members of the Higher Learning Commission evaluation team. The university will protect students' privacy by removing their names from files before submission to an outside team (unless they have given express permission for use of their names).