

Proposal for a 32 Credit Curriculum

Background: Some student viewpoints

In fall 2016, a student survey was designed and conducted by the Learning and Skill Development Inside and Outside of the Classroom subcommittee of the Bicentennial Strategic Planning Commission. The survey was sent to all currently enrolled students including traditional undergraduates, IDP students, and graduate students. Of these, 232 students responded. The completion rate of the survey was 31%, and there are more responses to the questions that appeared earlier in the survey. First-year students represented a higher proportion of respondents than the actual student population (64/ 232). This survey primarily measures student perception of the types of skills developed through different learning environments. It also measures ways that Trinity students are particularly satisfied or dissatisfied with the structure of the course curriculum and the types of experiences they were able to have through the institution. In particular, students were asked to describe their experience with the 4-5 semester schedule. Of the undergraduate respondents, 71% of students (57 students) preferred a 4 credit course load while 29% (23 students) preferred a 5 credit course load. Their specific responses are broken down in Table B1 by class year and Table B2 by type of response to a 5 credit term. Most of those responses revolved around less time for learning/ outside engagements, more stress, less sleep, less depth of learning, and lower performance. The students who preferred a 5 credit term usually discussed feeling more productive and/or financially getting the most out of a Trinity education. When breaking down student comments based on their negative, neutral, or positive responses towards a 5 credit term, 71% are negative, 16% are neutral, and 13% are positive.

(<https://www.trincoll.edu/StrategicPlanning/Documents/Learning%E2%80%9494Draft%20Report.pdf>)

Proposal

The proposal for 32 credits for graduation should be considered alongside the added experiential requirement and a reduced load of general education requirements. Students would normally be taking a 4-credit load in every semester over 8 semesters.

- 32 credits would be required as the **minimum** for students to graduate. It is likely that many students would exceed this minimum, particularly in the sciences.
- At least 16 credits must be earned through completion of courses taught by Trinity faculty (currently 18).
- Courses that currently result in more than one credit (i.e. classes with labs) would continue to do so.

- In order to be classified as a full-time student for tuition purposes a student must be registered for between 3 and 5.75 credits per semester (this maximum limit is currently the case – we could discuss lowering).
- For federal compliance purposes one Trinity credit would be defined as 3.75 federal credit hours acknowledging the greater depth of engagement we are seeking to encourage (it is currently 3.5).