Bicentennial Strategic Planning Commission

February 2017

Subcommittee on Learning and Skill Development Inside and Outside of the Classroom

Core Goals of a Trinity education:

A. Equip students for academic success   The first step in any pedagogical effort is to foster conditions that optimize learning: remove obstacles, create a healthy ethos, and be responsive to students who are struggling.

1. *Enhance advising*: create structures to support holistic, team-based guidance of student learning. Seek technological and organizational solutions to better coordinate multiple sources of advising (e.g., faculty advisers, Dean of Students office, Career Development Center, Accommodation Resources)

2. *Enhance CTL*: enable the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide wider support for the faculty's essential role in students' learning and skill development. Leverage the strength of Trinity's faculty and help them adapt to a changing student population.

B. Integrate reflection as a regular feature of students' learning (*Engage*) When faculty go up for tenure, they assemble a file and write a statement reflecting on their work. When employees have a performance review, they begin with a self-assessment. What opportunities do our students have to take stock of their own strengths and weaknesses, their accomplishments and unmet goals? Without robust self-awareness, students cannot achieve the intellectual strength and leadership capacity they need to meet the challenges of the world they enter after graduation.

3. *Adjust graduation requirements*: move from 36 regular credits (4-5 course load) to 32 (4-4 course load) plus a distinctive reflective engagement component. Survey data shows that requiring students to take 5 credits every second semester inhibits them from attending events, participating in student activities, and assuming leadership roles on campus. It does not foster self-reflection or the exploration of links among different courses or between inside- and outside-the-classroom endeavors. Steer students' energy away from the "fifth course" and toward directed experiential learning.

4. *E-Portfolio*: required for all students, beginning before matriculation. Helps faculty and staff provide more informed advising. Empowers students to identify and cultivate connections among their academic, extracurricular, and professional development at Trinity.

C. Create opportunities for collaborative learning (*Connect*) Self-aware students become more effective members of teams. If Trinity students are regularly challenged to reflect on themselves and their progress, they will have the strong foundation of confidence necessary to confront and cooperate with other strong individuals.

5. *Diversity & inclusion*: increase education for faculty and staff (see CTL, above) to support managing increasingly diverse classrooms.

6: *Promote collaborative learning:* create a Center for Digital Scholarship, expand internship opportunities (including on-campus research internships), and expand student community living experiences.

7: *improve communication:* assess email, event coordination, and calendar issues.

D. **Help students to be effective leaders (*Transform*)** Finally, students who have been educated both inwardly (reflective) and outwardly (collaborative) are ready to exercise their capacity to become leaders—not in the narrow sense of assuming an office in an organization but in the broad sense of taking initiative, tolerating risk, assuming responsibility, and communicating confidently to wide audiences.

8: *leadership curriculum:* develop a micro-credential program drawing on existing opportunities for leadership development; promote a campus culture that validates multiple forms of leadership.

9: *Extend orientation*: link with learning outcomes and academics, expand "pre-orientation" and incorporate into orientation for all students.