

Trinity College

Petition for Reduced Academic Courseload for Second Semester Seniors

Supplemental Instruction Sheet

Trinity students typically earn between 4.00 and 5.75 credits each semester. Attempting fewer than four credits results in academic probation. In rare cases, students may petition to be granted permission to take a reduced academic load (attempting fewer than four course credits) without incurring academic probation.

The final semester of college is a time to complete and enhance your academic endeavors of the past four years. In your written statement, you must make a compelling argument for why you should be allowed to undertake a lesser workload than what is required of everyone else. A reduced academic load will be granted only as a rare exception, usually when the student is undertaking academically-relevant activity outside of regular course work (for example, an internship out-of-state that requires the student to spend large amounts of time away from campus). Please note that writing a senior thesis, conducting a job search, or studying for graduate school admissions exams do not constitute reasons for part-time study, nor does having reached 35 credits.

NOTE: Students must be in good academic standing to request part-time status.

Consider the following before you submit your petition:

1. Potential Employer and Graduate School Perception? Students should keep in mind that employers and graduate schools look for additional achievement in the final semester of college, so it is in your best interest to achieve more, not less, in your culminating final semester.
2. Financial Aid Impact? Financial aid recipients should also be aware that a reduced load may lower the amount of your award and should check with the Financial Aid Office to find out how this would affect your aid package.
3. Tuition Impact? Contact the Student Accounts Office to see what impact a reduced credit load might have on your tuition. The definition of full-time status is different for billing and academic purposes, so permission to take fewer than four credits does not automatically result in a reduction of your tuition.
4. Athletics Impact? Varsity athletes need to contact an athletic administrator for additional information regarding eligibility. Do this before submitting your petition and keep in mind that Academic Affairs Committee must approve your petition before you can participate with a reduced academic load.

5. International Student Status Impact? International students need to contact the Office of International Students and Scholars to understand the impact of being enrolled less than full-time. Do this before submitting your petition.
6. Health Insurance Coverage Impact? Finally, be sure to find out from your (or your parents') health insurance company how a reduced load might affect your coverage.

Instructions:

1. Review Your Degree Plan -- Credits Needed: Print an unofficial transcript and verify that you will have enough credits to graduate. There are two columns of numbers showing total credits. Sometimes the two numbers will be the same, but for many students the number on the left is higher than the number on the right. The column on the left is credits attempted (which includes F's, W's, IP's, etc.) and the number on the right is credits earned. Make sure that the credits you are taking this semester plus your credits earned will add up to at least 35 credits. If your total is less than 35, you need to outline what additional credits are in progress, such as past transfer credit that hasn't been processed.
2. Review Your Degree Plan – Requirements Completed: Confirm that you have not exceeded the limits on certain courses (for example, one credit of Physical Education, four credits of applied music, two credits of TA, etc.) If you have exceeded these numbers, your total credits earned will need to be greater than 35. The Academic Affairs Committee will not be checking these numbers for you, so you need to make certain you aren't caught by surprise when the graduation audits are conducted.
3. Submit your Petition Form: Attach the unofficial transcript along with your statement and the petition form and submit it to the Registrar's Office. Petitions will first be accepted during the advance registration period for your final semester. It is best to submit your petition prior to the start of your final semester so that you still have time to add additional credits if your petition is not approved.

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