

CHAPTER SEVEN: ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SERVICES

Characteristics of Excellence: Through this chapter Trinity will demonstrate compliance with these Middle States standards:

- Standard 6: Integrity
- Standard 9: Student Support Services
- Standard 11: Educational Offerings
- Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

Student Support Services encompasses all student populations through the collaborative work of departments in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Through Academic Affairs, the respective academic deans' offices deliver academic advising, while other academic support services are part of the Provost's Office: Academic Support and Tutoring, Disabilities Services and Career Services. The Vice President for Student Affairs supervises Athletics, Campus Ministry, the Health and Wellness Center, Residence Life, Student Activities and Student Government. Disciplinary processes also span both Academic and Student Affairs; the Provost supervises academic honesty cases while Student Affairs handles non-academic disciplinary matters.

As discussed in Chapter One, the strategic design of the five academic units is supported by the centralized administrative services including Student Affairs, Enrollment Services, Academic Services, Finance, Operations and Admissions. Trinity's organizational design provides extensive student support services within the academic units as well as through the centralized departments. Co-location of many offices for Academic and Student Affairs facilitates cooperation and communication across a range of activities supporting students.

A. Academic Services

1. Academic Services Center (ASC)

With a primary location in the library to facilitate access for all student populations across a range of hours, the Academic Services Center (ASC) includes Accuplacer and other testing support; Math and Tutoring support; the Writing Center; and Career Services. The Office of Disabilities Services in Main Hall coordinates with other Academic Services to ensure excellent student support. Academic Services aims to increase retention by offering academic support programs that focus on maintaining students' good academic standing as well as helping students who are not in good academic standing increase their grade point averages.

Taking into account learning differences, academic deficits and individual challenges, Trinity works to provide wrap around services to sustain its students academically and, where possible, emotionally and socially. In 2011 the ASC, in consultation with the collegiate units, launched a Math/Tutoring Center that saw immediate use and that continues to be in relative demand, thus facilitating student success. Tutoring targets general education courses and prerequisite courses to support CAS and SPS students. The Center also incorporates technology that includes Pearson's My Math Lab and My Stat Lab. The goals of tutoring are to help students attain and

improve content knowledge and gain confidence in their ability while developing independent learners. In turn, student performance increases and impacts course grades, GPA and retention.

The staff of the ASC focus their assessments on improving student academic performance and retention of students who use the services provided. In a study of academic performance for students on probation who used the services of the ASC, the data reveal that those probationary students who visit the ASC four or more times a semester have a noticeable increase in their overall grade point averages. **Chart 7.1** illustrates the findings for 2014-2015:

Chart 7.1: GPA Change for Probationary Students Using the ASC 2014 - 2015

	n (%)	GPA Range	Fall GPA	Spring GPA	Difference
0 contacts	205 (83)	0 – 1.99	1.766	1.897	.131
1 contacts	15 (6)	.5 – 1.918	1.836	2.141	.305
2 contacts	7 (3)	0 – 1.96	1.672	2.134	.462
3 contacts	7 (3)	1.546 – 1.976	2.329	2.132	-.197
4 or more	12 (5)	.761 – 1.995	1.664	2.386	.722
Total/Overall*	246 (100)	0 – 1.99	1.801	2.009	.208

[DR 7.1 Academic Services](#) includes the annual reports and assessments for Academic Services since 2011.

2. Office of Career Services and Experiential Learning

Also located in the Academic Services Center in the Library, the Office of Career Services and Experiential Learning fulfills multiple objectives in assisting Trinity students and graduates with career planning, internships and job attainment. The Director of Career Services also serves as Trinity's Title IX Coordinator, a role discussed later in this chapter. [DR 7.2 Career Services, Experiential Learning and Title IX Reports](#) provides more detailed data on the topics summarized below.

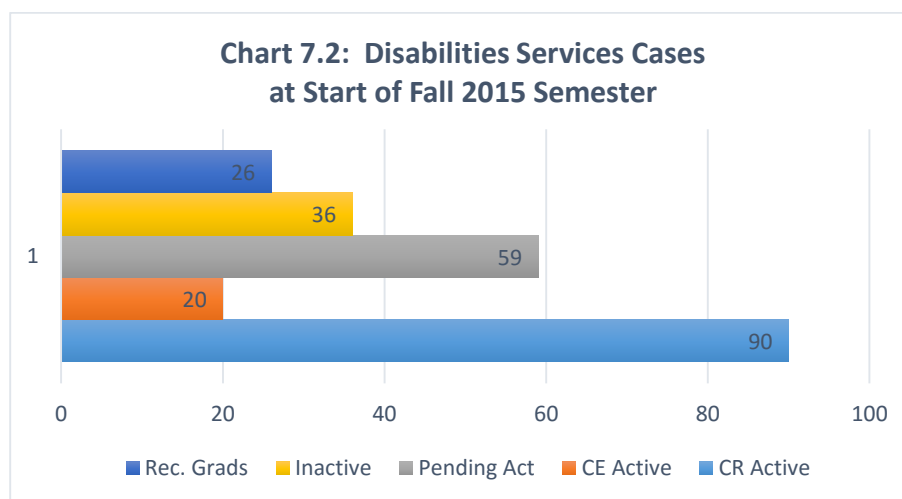
A key goal for the Office of Career Services and Experiential Learning is to capture and measure workforce readiness through an evaluation of student learning outcomes for credited internships. As a result, a new internship approval system was introduced in the fall of 2012 and is now required for all students participating in any type of internship. Once a student identifies an internship, the student must work with a faculty supervisor and Career Services to complete the Internship Learning Agreement form. The agreement form requires a job description on company letterhead outlining duties and responsibilities of the internship. The agreement also specifies learning outcomes using the [Learning Outcomes Skill List](#) created by the Office of Career Services, grounded in skill sets desired by employers through the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). As a result of this reorganized internship program, approval and collection of student internships for credit increased to 499 agreements on file compared to a count of 60 in 2012.

In 2013-2014, Career Services piloted the university's first post-internship student evaluation, and after fine-tuning the assessment with help from faculty the evaluation was fully

implemented academic year 2014-15. The objective is to assess student learning outcomes and workforce readiness based on the student's internship experience and the learning outcomes listed on the internship approval form. The analysis of this assessment yielded both qualitative and quantitative outcomes. The qualitative outcomes indicate students who completed an internship for credit during AY 2014-2015 advanced in critical thinking skills and work ethic, while areas of improvement were writing, communication, time management and ambition. Weaknesses in writing, communication, and time management are synonymous outcomes for other assessment areas across campus, which support the ongoing development of cross-departmental partnerships and collaborations to increase student success.

3. Disability Support Services

Trinity's has experienced a tremendous increase in the number of students who self-identify as needing accommodations for disabilities. About 10% of the student body requires some form of accommodation at any given time. The Office of Disability Services has managed approximately 230 cases in the last year. **Chart 7.2: Disabilities Services Cases Fall 2015** reveals that of the 230 cases in the Disabilities Services portfolio at the start of Fall 2015, 26 were students who recently graduated, 36 students stopped out, 59 were pending documentation at the time of the report, 20 cases arose in the Continuing Education program, and 90 cases arose in the in the academic units.



Disability Support Services provides support to all enrolled students. Students receiving accommodations have been diagnosed with a broad array of disabilities. Students with learning disabilities constituted the single largest group of students with identified disabilities, followed by students with physical disabilities. Continuing Education students are most likely to request interpreters for hearing disabilities. Several students are receiving accommodations for multiple diagnoses.

See the complete [DR 7.3: Disabilities Services Assessment](#) in the document room.

4. Removing Small Barriers to Student Success

To support and encourage continuous student enrollment, retention, persistence and success, Academic Affairs initiated the *Removing Small Barriers to Student Success* campaign. Academic Affairs undertook an audit of processes and procedures that hinder rather than advance student progress, and made changes in a number of areas. Examples include:

- *Customer service:* Academic advising, academic support, and college unit administrative offices moved to a no-appointment, “walk-in hours” model. Under this model, no student was turned away; any student seeking an appointment could see a service provider or sign in to be seen by the next available service provider in that office. Academic Affairs directed all offices in its portfolio to develop a plan to eliminate appointment, electronic or paper barriers in their service processes. In the Department of Disability Services, for example, eliminating small barriers resulted in a 33% increase in student meetings as compared to the previous year.
- *Controlling Textbook Purchasing:* The cost of textbooks can be a significant barrier to student academic success; too many students find they must choose between purchasing textbooks or paying rent, buying food and feeding their children. The Provost has led an initiative to ensure that faculty are making wise choices with regard to requiring textbooks versus identifying quality open source materials.

B. Division of Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs is a comprehensive and collaborative unit on campus that includes the functional areas of Athletics, Campus Ministry, Dean of Student Services, Health and Wellness Center, Residence Life, Student Activities and Student Government. [DR 7.4: Student Affairs Reports](#) includes the annual reports for all departments in Student Affairs. Consistent with Middle States Standard 9 Student Support Services, Student Affairs supports the mission of the university by improving student engagement and retention through meaningful contributions to the emotional, physical and intellectual development of Trinity students. Student Affairs is committed to providing appropriate support for every student, in all academic units.

1. Enhancing Student Engagement Through Student Activities and Student Government

Student Affairs is actively focused on fostering students’ connectedness through enriched program offerings, University-wide traditions and spirit initiatives. Student Affairs recognizes and supports student clubs and student government organizations for all Trinity students. Student Engagement objectives are to foster communication, collaboration, and leadership skills as well as the values of responsibility and self-efficacy.

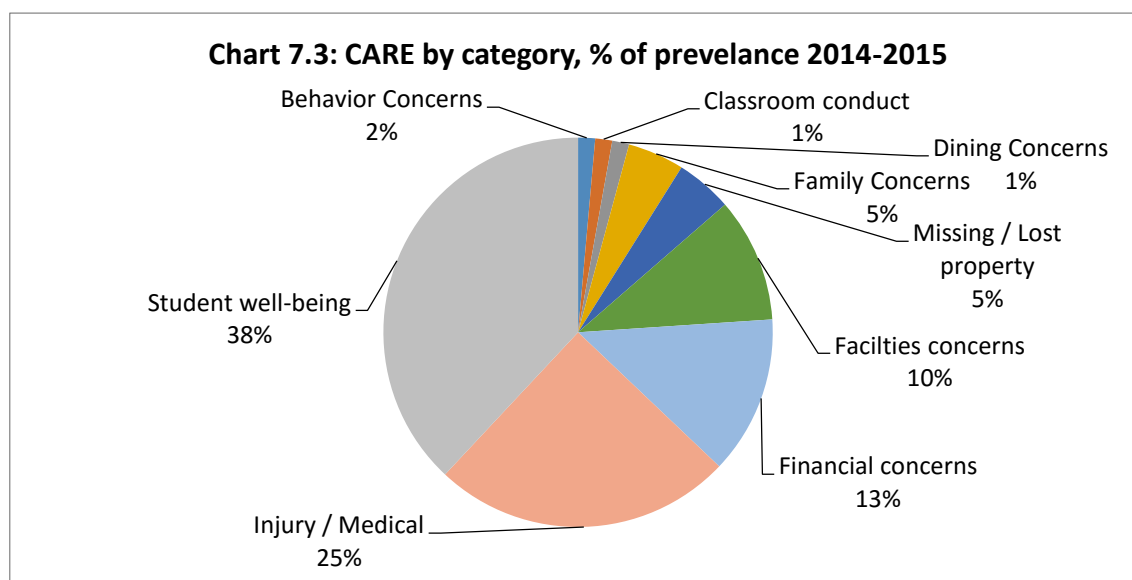
Student Affairs supports the efforts of all Trinity students in the formation of [Student Government Councils](#) and [student clubs](#). These opportunities are available to all students, in all five schools and are available to encourage student leadership, student initiated programming and to serve as a mechanism for student advocacy.

The number of Student Clubs, their membership and programming has grown over the past five years, and during the 2014-2015 academic year, 94 events were held by student clubs and organizations. One of Trinity's most active student clubs, the Women's Student Action Coalition (WSAC) hosted several events focusing on women's empowerment, domestic violence awareness including the Clothesline project and the annual Take Back the Night. The most rapidly growing student club at Trinity is the Dreamers Alliance, hosting events including a discussion about Faith, church involvement and the immigrant community. Ladies Fierce in Research, Science and Technology (Ladies F.I.R.S.T.) is a math and science student club at Trinity that is dedicated to promoting the interest of students in STEM disciplines. Members recently presented at the 2015 Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) in Seattle, WA and at the 2015 Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Conference in Washington, D.C.

2. CARE Team

The Division of Student Affairs employs a case management approach and related strategies to ensure that students with significant medical, mental health, socialization, and behavioral needs, and students at risk for poor academic performance, receive appropriate interventions to improve their health, safety and academic success. In the fall of 2013, Student Affairs launched the CARE team (Crisis Assessment, Response and Education), a cross-functional behavioral intervention team designed to immediately address students experiencing personal or academic difficulties. This team identifies and culls reports of students of concern, and establishes intervention and outreach plans for students in need. The data analysis identifies areas of programming need as well as any process / policy change that may be a barrier to student success.

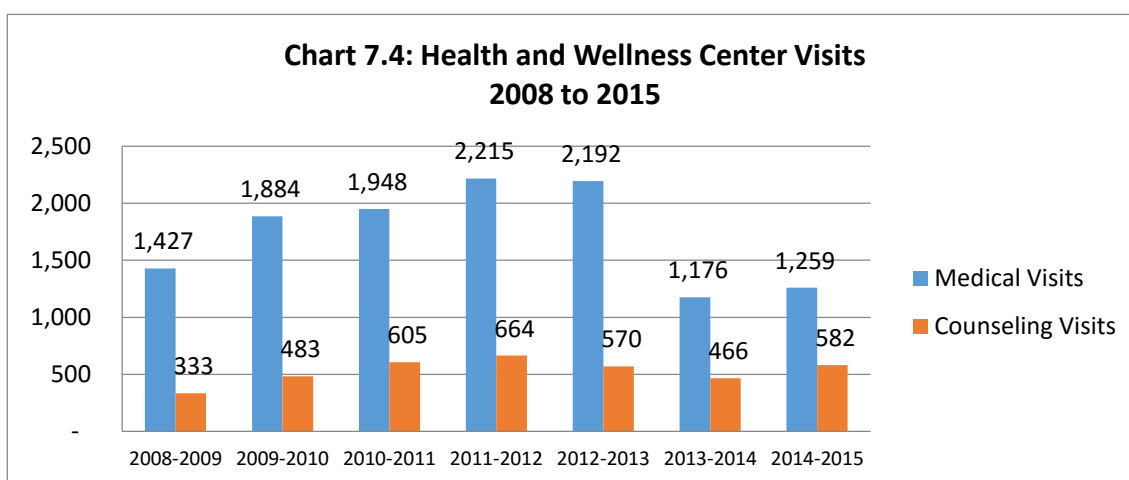
In 2014-2015 Student Affairs responded to 213 CARE reports for students of concern; identified trends and needs for education programs, support, guidance and other interventions and partnerships with community resources. **Chart 7.3 CARE Reports** summarizes the types of interventions.



The top 3 presenting reasons were (1) student well-being, (2) injury/medical and (3) financial concerns. Behavior concerns significantly decreased from the previous year as a result of proactive interventions, particularly with residential students. Additionally, as noted in [DR 7.4: Student Affairs Annual Report](#), the number of non-academic disciplinary Code of Conduct violations has decreased by -37.62%.

3. Health and Wellness Center

The overall goal for the Health and Wellness Center is to meet increased demand for patient visits and measure student satisfaction of the Health and Wellness Center. As **Chart 7.4** reveals, the Health and Wellness Center experienced a 12.12% overall increase in medical and counseling visits for 2014-2015 (total visits 1841 compared to 1642 in 2013-14).



This increase was primarily due to staffing changes and provider availability. There was a 7% increase in medical and a 25% increase in mental health visits this year. In years prior to 2013-14 administrative visits were included in the visit totals (i.e. questions pertaining to insurance, making appointments, picking up prescriptions was counted in the medical visits data). The data from 2013 forward only includes patient visits with providers.

The data shows that only 34.18% of the students who have access to the Health and Wellness Center actually use the services. More analysis needs to be done to identify and remove any barriers to service that may exist. The Nurse Practitioners had 1,259 patient visits in 2014-2015. The three most common reasons for visits to the Health and Wellness Center were gynecological (40%), immunizations (26%), and respiratory issues (12%). During the 2014-15 school year the Counselor conducted 428 individual sessions. The top three diagnoses for these students were: depression (35%), trauma (23%) and stress/anxiety (19%).

In April 2015, the Health and Wellness Center solicited student feedback using a short survey. While not fully comprehensive, the survey provided a great deal of insight into the students' overall perception of the Wellness Center. The results demonstrated that students were satisfied with the care they received from providers (87.76%), and that they learned how to improve their health as a result of the care they received (67.27%). These are strengths of the Health and Wellness Center that need to be carried forward. Areas that were found to be of concern from

the students were patient wait times and the overall sense of welcoming to the Health and Wellness Center. These two areas are the improvement goals for the 2015-16 school year.

4. Residence Life

Residence Life works with residential students to develop their social skills and life skills, and assist in addressing the personal and emotional well-being of students. Staff members strive to provide attention and nurturing while developing students' self-confidence, self-reliance, and problem-solving abilities. Through creating an environment that is supportive and confidence-building, Residence Life contributes to students' success at Trinity and beyond.

Goals for Residence Life include increasing the number of students living on campus by 10%; maintaining overall occupancy at 85% or higher; keeping spring semester occupancy level within 3% of fall semester level; having 40% of the first year class living on campus; measuring student satisfaction with campus residence. Occupancy goals for Campus Housing were exceeded due to increased marketing, outreach and programming for residential students. Achievements include 17.24% increase in total campus residents (from 290 to 340); occupancy at 91.30% at close of academic year; 48.78% of first year students living on campus and decrease of less than 5% (2.33%) from Fall to Spring. Campus Housing Occupancy contributes to Trinity's strategic goal for student retention. **Chart 7.5** shows overall occupancy and First Year student occupancy for the last four years.

Chart 7.5: Average Occupancy per Academic Year

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Average Occupancy	285	254	290	340

First Year Student Fall Occupancy Comparison

	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
CAS FT New Students	345	363	361
First Year Residential Students	97	141	158
% First Year CAS Students Residents	28.12%	38.84%	43.78%

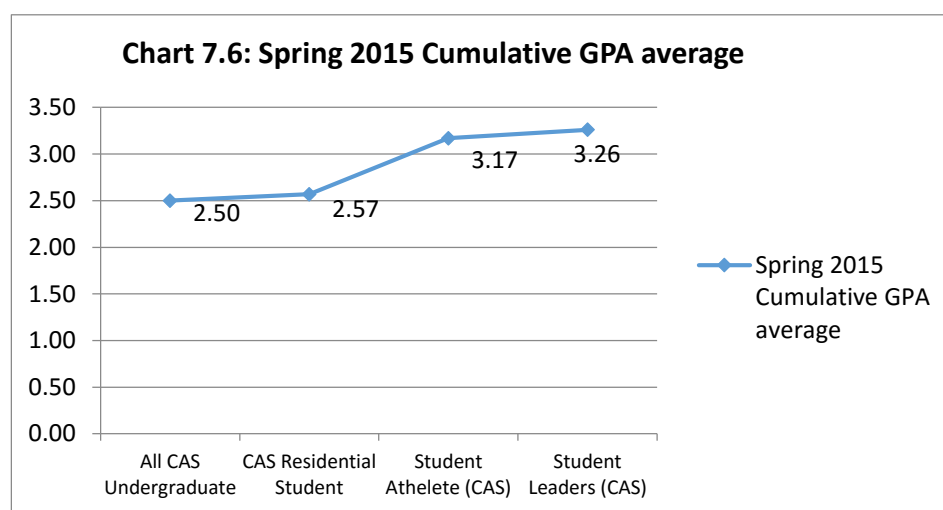
The average occupancy rate increased by 50 students (17.24%) between the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years. Fall 2014 had a peak of 344 residents in on campus housing, a 15.05% increase in residential occupancy from Fall 2013 (299 residents). The goal for Fall to Spring housing was a loss of under 3%. This goal was met, and surpassed. There was only a 2.33% decrease from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015; a total loss of 8 students. Overall occupancy remained higher than previous years at 336 residents. Utilization percentages against current occupancy plan are strong. Fall 2014: 93.48% occupancy and Spring 2015: 91.30% occupancy.

The Residence Life Survey (see [DR 7.4: Student Affairs Report](#) for the Campus Housing Report) identified students' perceived strengths of their floor/residence hall/living on campus. The top three strengths reported are: respect for each other (38%); sense of community (34.9%); and convenience (14.3%). The survey also identified the top three challenges for on campus

residents as: facility concerns (39.77%); noise and disruptions (22.7%); and the cleanliness and hygiene of fellow students (15.9%).

5. Assessment of Student Engagement Impact on Academic Performance

Student Affairs reviewed the relative academic performance of students engaged in different activities compared to the overall CAS population. Through academic focused programming (mandatory study hall for athletes, tutoring in the evening in Cuvilly Hall, and co-sponsored/promoted advising workshops), the average GPAs for students engaged in specific activities was higher than the overall CAS average in Spring 2015 as depicted in **Chart 7.6:**



In comparison to the overall all CAS Undergraduate cumulative GPA(2.50) at the end of the Spring 2015 semester, the subpopulations of CAS Residential student (N=318), Student Athletes (N=48), and Student Leaders (N=35) all had higher cumulative GPA's. The difference in the Residential Students was not nearly as significant as anticipated given the availability of tutoring in the Residence Halls, and access to services for residents, and this will require further analysis. The outcomes for Athletes and Student Leaders are evident in their strong overall academic performance.

6. Campus Ministry and Alternative Spring Break

Campus Ministry embraces and sustains Trinity's heritage, which is rooted in the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and the Catholic tradition. Trinity welcomes persons of all faiths in the pursuit of the larger purposes of learning and the human search for meaning and fulfillment. Campus Ministry provides ongoing service opportunities, social justice programming, alternative break trips and a vibrant gospel choir. The complete annual report for Campus Ministry is included in [DR 7.4: Student Affairs Report](#).

For the last three years, 10 students have traveled to Selma, Alabama as part of the annual Alternative Spring Break service trip sponsored by Campus Ministry. This trip demonstrates learning outcomes on one learning domains for Student Affairs: Social Responsibility. Student participants who participate in Student Affairs programs, activities and services will demonstrate

an understanding of and commitment to social justice and apply that knowledge to create safe, healthy, equitable, and thriving communities. Students and faculty report significant levels of engagement and satisfaction as a result of this learning opportunity.

7. Athletics

The intercollegiate athletics program at Trinity strives to develop students' knowledge of and skill ability in sport; to cultivate leadership skills as well as the skill of cooperation necessary for effective team play; to develop time management skills necessary for meeting the demands of academic and athletic pursuits; to improve the overall health of the student-athlete; to foster a desire for lifetime fitness through athletic participation; to provide an avenue for advancement through competition and to ensure academic growth and staying on track for graduation. Varsity sports include soccer, volleyball, basketball, tennis, and softball. The complete Athletics report is included in [DR 7.4: Student Affairs Report](#).

In 2014-2015 there were 49 athletes participating in 5 varsity sports for Trinity. As part of their involvement athletes participate in study hall, orientation with the Athletic Director and Trainer, develop specific sport skill sets, focus on health and wellness and general life skills like teamwork, discipline and healthy competitiveness.

C. Campus Safety and Sexual Assault Education

Ensuring the safety and security of every student, employee and visitor on Trinity's campus is the highest priority for Trinity's management. Trinity devotes considerable resources to Campus Safety, and improvements to the environment for safety and security are ongoing.

Trinity's [Annual Safety and Security Report](#) (Clery Act Report published on Trinity's website) indicates a low incidence of crime on campus. Trinity maintains this strong track record for campus safety through ongoing training of staff, faculty and students; continuous communication about safety protocols; and delivery of specific programs and services designed to heighten campus awareness of good safety practices. Trinity also maintains a strong relationship with the Metropolitan Police Department and is also a member of the Consortium of Universities Campus Safety group.

Trinity's campus safety practices are enhanced by policies that support good security: the campus has no major cross roads through Trinity's premises, and access via the driveways requires IDs and sign-in for visitors. IDs and sign-in are also required in all buildings. Visitors must have escorts. Additionally, residence hall visitation is limited; no 24-hour visitation occurs. Trinity is a dry campus and alcohol and drugs are strictly prohibited.

1. Sexual Assault Awareness, Training and Title IX/VAWA Compliance

As an institution with a particular mission to women, Trinity has a heightened awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities that women face every day in many places they pass through each day. While Trinity's on-campus track record on sexual assault shows zero offenses, Trinity students face threats in their neighborhoods and communities.

Trinity's Title IX Coordinator receives and documents reports of sexual assault and misconduct, and works with Health Services on victim support and advocacy, and campus training programs. (See [Sexual Assault Resources](#) on the website.) Trinity pays particular attention to orientation of new students as well as continuing education for all members of the campus community.

In Spring 2015, the Title IX Coordinator reported three cases of sexual assault or domestic violence off campus and one pregnancy requiring support per the Title IX requirements. In Fall 2014 the Title IX Coordinator reported three cases of domestic violence off campus and one case in which a student reported a domestic violence incident involving a family member.

In all cases, the Title IX Coordinator, working with Health Services and Student Affairs, coordinates victim support services, follow-up assistance with class absence excuses or other needs, and additional reporting as necessary.

Trinity also is part of the D.C. Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Trinity staff have been active participants in programming with that organization. Trinity also participates with the Consortium in the [U Ask DC](#) assault services mobile app program.

Conclusion to Chapter Seven

Providing a robust environment for student service and support is a cross-functional effort at Trinity involving Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Campus Safety and many operational departments. The collaborative nature of Trinity's administration creates a strong safety net for students in all programs.

Recommendations:

Trinity constantly seeks improvements in the network of services for students, and in future plans, Trinity will be addressing these issues:

- Increased support mechanisms to proactively address student needs including mental health concerns and transition to collegiate life;
- Develop more systematic assessment of learning outcomes for Student Affairs programs;
- Develop a more structured leadership development programs for all students;
- Closer collaboration of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs on first year experience programming.