Trinity Washington University

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Preparing for Trinity 2020:

2016 Trinity Middle States Self-Study

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Introduction

Trinity Washington University completes the 2014-2016 Middle States Self-Study period with a great sense of institutional confidence and pride in Trinity's progress across the last decade. Trinity's performance indicators across the last ten years are strong, and a culture of planning and assessment pervades the institution both academically and administratively. Trinity undertook this self-study at a time when the first new academic building in more than 50 years is nearing completion. By the time the visiting team arrives in March 2016, the new Trinity Academic Center will be almost ready to open (Fall 2016). The new building is the physical symbol of Trinity's progress in the last decade and even more ambitious plans for the future.

Preparing for Trinity 2020 tells the compelling story of Trinity's continuing assessment of the paradigm shift in students and programs that informed the self-studies in 1996 and 2006, and interim reports. Today's national conversation about collegiate access for low income students is Trinity's story and ongoing mission. Trinity's experience also suggests that the story is never complete, and that each generation of students pose challenges and opportunities for deeper understanding and more creative responses to the needs that historically marginalized students bring to the university enterprise.

In the next decade, Trinity must seize the opportunities inherent in this mission to create even stronger models for success for students who often have multiple risk factors impeding success but very strong ambition to surmount those challenges. Understanding how all dimensions of the university must come together to ensure that these students have all academic and co-curricular tools and supports necessary for success is a theme in this self-study and an imperative for Trinity's next decade.

Trinity in 2015-2016 is privileged to serve a student body of more than 2,100 students across a broad range of ages, life experiences, professional interests and personal challenges. Trinity sustains the historic women's college at the core of the university, now known as the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), and that unit has grown by 150% in the last ten years --- surely a record for any women's college in the 21st Century. That growth is not happenstance; Trinity's embrace of the idea of the "paradigm shift" in student populations, documented in prior Middle States reports, includes a wide embrace of low income women of color from the District of Columbia and the Washington region who are the first in their families to attend

college, sometimes young mothers or sisters with significant family responsibilities. At Trinity, these students find the support, encouragement and direction they need for success. The work is hard and often daunting, and this report documents the challenges as well as successes.

Even as Trinity has experienced remarkable growth in the historic women's college, Trinity has also expanded coeducational programs for professional women and men in the School of Professional Studies (SPS), School of Business and Graduate Programs (BGS), School of Education (EDU) and School of Nursing and Health Professions (NHP). These professional academic units offer undergraduate and graduate degrees to women and men who work in the major industries of Washington --- from the federal agencies, Congress and the White House through the local governments, private businesses, nonprofits, advocacy groups, law and accounting firms, hospitals and healthcare agencies, public and private schools. These students are parents and often the first role models in their families for academic success, and that responsibility weighs heavily on their desire to succeed. Ensuring success for part-time working students with many responsibilities is also a theme that this self-study will explore.

As more professional students come to Trinity to complete baccalaureate degrees or to pursue advanced degrees, Trinity's menu of programs and services continues to grow to meet the regional workforce demand. Trinity works closely with the regional communities of business, K-12 education, healthcare and nonprofit advocacy and service to develop the programs necessary for future managers and leaders. This self-study is also an opportunity to assess the ways in which Trinity engages curricular development to serve the larger community as well as the students who depend on these programs for advancement in the workplace.

In 2006, the Middle States visiting team recognized Trinity's fidelity to historic mission while embracing the paradigm shift, and encouraged Trinity to stay focused on mission even while adapting to changing conditions in students and programs. Trinity has kept that good advice in mind during the last decade as the university has moved in important new directions.

Some of Trinity's most significant achievements since 2006 include:

- Establishment of programs in Nursing and Occupational Therapy, leading to the creation of the School of Nursing and Health Professions and specialized accreditation through CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education) and, more recently, ACOTE (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education); Trinity is also now a candidate for accreditation with CACREP (Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) for the master's Counseling program;

- Establishment of additional new programs in Forensic Science, Early Childhood Education, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and other areas that demonstrate Trinity's mission commitment to integrate liberal learning and professional studies to ensure that Trinity students and graduates are able to engage with the Washington area economy as executives and leaders of the workplace and community;

- Development of undergraduate research programs in the sciences and social sciences, demonstrating the vital importance of active student engagement in research as a means to ensure student success;

- Achieving a strong financial foundation with annual surplus performance, with a balance sheet bottom line now surpassing $115 million, meeting and surpassing critical financial benchmarks and laying the foundation for the university's ability to proceed with plans for the Trinity Academic Center; as well, raising more than $25 million to date toward a $30 million goal in the Second Century Campaign;

- Receiving the largest gift in Trinity's history, $10 million from an alumna who recognizes the significance of this moment to propel Trinity's academic future with the creation of the Trinity Academic Center; additionally, receiving a $2.8 million gift from local benefactors to create a scholarship program for Nursing students, thus recognizing the vital importance of this program for Trinity's future; and another $2 million gift from an anonymous donor;

- Establishing the Billiart Center for Social Justice, named for the founder of the Sisters of Notre Dame St. Julie Billiart, as a permanent active reminder of the vital importance of Trinity's Catholic mission and commitment to social justice;

- In 2015, the Carnegie Corporation recognized Trinity and President McGuire with the prestigious Academic Leadership Award in recognition of Trinity's work in transforming the collegiate model to serve new populations of students.

Even as Trinity has realized success on many fronts, the university has considerable challenges not unlike most institutions of higher education in 2015. Embracing a high-need population of students comes with acceptance of challenges in academic preparation, social and behavioral readiness, economic need and irregular attendance patterns impacting retention and completion. Such challenges and how Trinity responds to them are the core of this report.

Enrollment remains a challenge despite large gains in the last decade. At the time of this report, total enrollment has declined from a high of 2,600 in Fall 2012 to 2,100 in Fall 2015. While enrollment in the full-time undergraduate women's college (CAS) remains strong at more than 1,000, the graduate and professional schools have struggled with enrollment challenges documented in this report. Trinity is taking steps to address the downward trends in the professional programs.

Trinity also faces challenges imposed by the rising plethora of federal and local regulation that drive up the cost of university operations even as Trinity tries to keep tuition low and to provide significant institutional financial aid. At a time when Trinity has succeeded in gaining the financial stability that was so elusive for so many decades, the additional cost burdens of regulatory impositions are gravely disappointing. This report includes a discussion of resources and the strategies that Trinity uses to ensure fiscal stability far into the future as well as documenting the required compliance record.

Other challenges are also familiar to higher education: the impending retirement of the Baby Boom generation and the new expectations of new faculty and staff generations; the appropriate balance of full-time and part-time faculty at a time when pressure builds to hold the line on costs; the question of whether a campus-based university can or should engage online learning, and how the campus-based courses and programs might use technology more effectively; when and how to tackle the large and expensive renovation costs of aging infrastructure once the new academic center opens. Each chapter of this report tackles different dimensions of these questions.

Trinity's strategic plan *Envision Trinity 2020* lays out the necessary institutional strategies to address these and other issues. As in past accreditation reports, the plan is both the backbone of self-study and also the basis for the concluding chapter analysis to point the way to future actions in planning, assessment and institutional renewal.

Goals of the 2014-2016 Self-Study:

Through the self-study process, Trinity will:

1. Assess the overall growth and development of the university as a means to inform strategic directions for organizational design, curricula, programs and services of the next decade;

2. Analyze and assess Trinity's model for serving under-served student populations, toward strengthening the model and contributing more effectively to the national conversation on access and success, with special emphasis factors that foster student success including:

        a) Analysis of student characteristics at admission, college readiness and the need for significant academic supports in Math, Critical Reading and Writing;

        b) Effectiveness of First Year Experience and Transitions programs in creating pathways for college success for under-prepared students, particularly in foundation courses in Math, Critical Reading and Writing;

        c) Effectiveness of co-curricular support services in Academic Advising, Academic Services, Health Services and all related Student Services;

        d) Identification and analysis of the key risk factors to retention, persistence and completion, including college readiness, family responsibilities, financial condition, work schedules, health and other personal conditions that impede college persistence;

        e) Effect of engagement with major programs on persistence and completion;

        f) Career outlook and employment during school and after graduation as factors influencing college persistence.

3. In relation to the strategic analysis of the student populations stated above, assess the quality and effectiveness of all academic programs and administrative services, at all degree

levels and in all departments, particularly in relation to the needs of the student body and the larger community that Trinity graduates serve;

4. Assess the quality and effectiveness of the processes for planning and assessment to ensure that Trinity's use of assessment data leads to meaningful programmatic and institutional change;

5. Create baseline data sets for ongoing assessment;

6. Provide the assessment results and data analysis necessary for adjustments to the strategic plan *Envision Trinity 2020*.

7. Demonstrate fulfillment of all Middle States standards for accreditation.

Steering Committee:

The self-study steering committee includes the senior staff managers responsible for all major administrative areas as well as the faculty chairs of faculty committees. The steering committee membership list is at the end of this section on p. 7

Incorporation of Existing Processes:

This self-study is based upon the ongoing work in planning and assessment conducted through all academic and administrative programs and departments. To the greatest extent possible, the work of self-study is not "extra" work, but rather, a moment for synthesis of the planning and assessment efforts that are ongoing.

Cohort Institutions for Benchmarks:

For many years, Trinity has developed benchmarks for performance using a cohort group of similarly sized historic women's colleges (some now coed) and Catholic women's colleges in urban centers. The cohort includes these schools:

Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI
Carlow University, Pittsburgh, PA
Cedar Crest College, Allentown, PA
Chatham University, Pittsburgh, PA
Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia, PA
Col. of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, NY
College of St. Benedict, St. Cloud, MN
College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ
Emmanuel College, Boston, MA
Hood College, Frederick, MD
Immaculata University, Immaculata, PA
Lesley University, Cambridge, MA
Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY

Marymount Manhattan, New York, NY
Marymount University, Arlington, VA
Meredith College, Raleigh, NC
Mount Saint Mary's, Los Angeles, CA
Notre Dame of Maryland Univ., Balt.MD
Rosemont College, Rosemont, PA
Sage Colleges, Albany, NY
Salem College, Winston-Salem, NC
Simmons College, Boston, MA
Stevenson University, Stevenson, MD
Univ. of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT
Ursuline College, Pepper Pike, OH

References to benchmarks throughout this planning document usually use benchmarks derived from a cluster of all or some of these institutions unless otherwise noted.

Organization chart:

Trinity's master organization chart is at the end of this section on p. 8

Virtual Document Room:

The self-study has a virtual document room at http://www.trinitydc.edu/2014-2016-self-study-document-room/ (Password = **trinityweb**)

NOTE: Trinity has developed the self-study as a natural progression from the presentation of mission and analysis of the student populations through chapters on academics and outcomes, then co-curricular services and programs, with administrative topics following, and a final chapter tying the self-study analysis to ongoing strategic planning considerations. Because this format does not follow the Middle States standards seriatim, the chart below shows the alignment from the Middle States Standard to the Self-Study Chapter and strategic goals.

Trinity Self Study Alignment of Chapters, Middle States Standards and Strategic Goals				
Middle States Standard	Standard Title	Trinity Self-Study Chapter	Chapter Title	Chapter Aligns with Strategic Goals
1	Mission and Goals	1	Introduction: Retrospective on the Paradigm Shift	1,2,10
2	Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal	1	Introduction: Retrospective on the Paradigm Shift	1,2,10
3	Institutional Resources	9	Resources to Support Trinity's Mission	2,4,5,10
4	Leadership and Governance	8	Assessment of Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness	5,6
5	Administration	8		5,6
6	Integrity	2	Trinity Students	1,8,9
6	Integrity	7	Student Services	1,8,9
7	Institutional Assessment	8	Assessment of Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness	5,6
8	Student Admissions and Retention	2	Trinity Students	1,8,9
9	Student Support Services	7	Student Services	8
10	Faculty	6	Faculty Resources	5,7
11	Educational Offerings	5	Assessment of the Academic Programs	3
12	General Education	4	Foundation for Learning in General Education and Academic Support	3
13	Related Educational Programs	4	Foundation for Learning in General Education and Academic Support	3
13	Related Educational Programs	5	Assessment of the Academic Programs	3
14	Assessment of Student Learning	3	Assessment of Student Learning	3

2014-2016 Trinity Middle States Self-Study
Steering Committee

Co-Chairs

Dr. Carlota Ocampo, Provost
Dr. Karen Gerlach, Vice President for Student Affairs

Steering Committee Members

Dr. Pamela Barnett, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS)
Dr. Mary Romanello, Dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions (NHP)
Dr. Janet Stocks, Dean of the School of Education (EDU)
Ms. Jeannette Frett, Dean of the School of Business and Graduate Studies (BGS)
Dr. Nevada Winrow, Dean of the School of Professional Studies (SPS)

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        and Assistant Professor of History (CAS)
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Mr. Michael Burback, VP Information Technology
Ms. Carole King, VP Human Resources
Mr. Michael Malewicki, VP Administration
Ms. Ann Pauley, VP Advancement
Ms. Cathy Geier, VP Enrollment Services

Trinity Organization Chart (January 2916)

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FACULTY BGS	DEAN BGS — Jeannette Frett
FACULTY NHP	DEAN NHP — Mary Romanello
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