Internship Policy

Throughout the 2016-17 academic year, the Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee discussed various ambiguities and concerns pertaining to processes, policies, and course coding pertaining to undergraduate courses formally or informally regarded as "internship opportunities." In reviewing current offerings, we noticed that a significant number of internship courses were non-compliant with the existing Trinity College policy on internships. In accordance with the current established Trinity College undergraduate policy:

- Direct academic credit cannot be given solely for an internship experience unless required as part of one’s academic program. However, students may seek support from a faculty member within an academic department or program for an independent study course that would include learning derived from the internship.

In our review, we identified a number of internship courses that awarded academic credit without a corresponding independent study course. Further, in relation to course coding, we found substantial variation in the grading basis, academic credit/unit, and course description.

Using data collected fall 2011 through summer 2016, we observed the following:

- **Grading Basis:** Internships do not follow a standardized grade basis or grading scheme. For students in undergraduate careers, the grading base is either "GRD (graded)" or "S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory)"
- **Academic Credit/Unit:** There is inconsistency in assignment of units for internship courses. For example, the following courses credit internships differently:
  - EDUC 498: Secondary EDU: Internship (2 units, GRD),
  - PUBPOL 120: Internship (0 units, S/U),
  - SOCIOL 499S: Sociology Internship (1 unit, GRD), and
  - THEATRST 317: Professional Internship (0.5 units, S/U).
- **Course Descriptions:** As shown in the prior bullet, there is no standard for internship course descriptions, nor the requirements for successful completion

In order to comply with the Internship Policy, we recommend the following:

- **All internship courses will carry zero credits.** Internship courses should have a S/U grading basis.
- Internships may be mated to credit-bearing independent study courses.
- Programs can propose a practicum in place of an internship. A practicum course may involve the part-time course of study that involves the supervised practical application of previously studied theory in a given field.
- Use the Internship course component for internship courses to facilitate tracking.