

Student Athlete Handbook



2024-2025



TCF Missions & Athletics Mission Statement

TCF Mission:

Trinity College of Florida provides a biblically-centered education, equipping servant leaders for life and career opportunities.

The goals for achieving this mission are:

Spiritual – To orient, motivate and lead students to Christian maturity and spiritual depth.

Academic – To engage students with opportunities to integrate Biblical faith and learning.

Intellectual – To develop in students the ability for critical analysis and motivate in them a desire for continuing intellectual pursuits.

Professional – To produce graduates competent in the area of their professional training.

Social – To cultivate a culture that redefines how we learn, love, and live in a way that honors God, impacting our community for generations to come.

TCF Athletics Mission:

The first goal is to represent the person of Jesus Christ and His character in a genuine manner in the spirit and arena of athletic competition. Then to develop athletes who are playing for the glory of God, with disciplined and self-controlled attitudes, and with passion out of a love for God, their coach, and their teammates, etc. Next, to encourage and strengthen coaches while providing them the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and grace of Jesus Christ becoming more and more conformed to His image. Then, to challenge our athletes to excel in all phases of their lives: respect and love for parents and family, commitment to academics, relationships with friends, and daily improvement in their athletic skill. Including, teaching our athletes the positive benefits and value of lifelong physical fitness, training, and competitions to care for God's temple – our bodies. Last, is to teach our athletes about character growth and maturity and how they are affected by the experiences of winning, losing, and competition in general.

TCF Vision & Athletic Vision Statement

TCF Vision:

The vision of Trinity College of Florida is to be the premier provider of Biblically-focused, multifaceted and diversified higher learning to fulfill the Great Commission in the life and career. Trinity College believes that the Bible should be at the heart and core of all training, and that it is the standard for evaluating all claims to knowledge. The Bible, as the inspired Word of God, is instrumental in thoroughly equipping God's servants for ministry. This philosophy is reflected in the wide range of Bible and theology courses offered. The College believes that the Bible is the only framework within which a consistent, effective, and productive world, view, lifestyle, and life of service to God and humanity can be maintained.

TCF Athletics Vision:

A Christ-centered, Biblically-directed athletics program for the student-athlete to participate in. This is our vision and what we pray God will give us.

Athletes who genuinely have a love for God, have a conviction to represent Him on the field/court, have a teachable, humble attitude, and have a selfless "team before me" approach; Coaches who love their athletes and work hard for them in preparation, strategic improvement, and exposure; who respect and speak well of and each other, and who represent Christ's character and humility to opposing coaches, poor officiating, and undisciplined athletes.

Student-athletes who support and pray for all their coaches, who respect coaches decisions even if they don't agree, who are more concerned about their character on/off the field/court than their playing time and who are giving their valuable time to serve God in any way they can without concern for which sport, or student(s), will benefit the most by serving.

TCF Vision & Athletic Vision Statement

Administration of Athletics that is organized and enthusiastic about the successes and efforts of its teams giving due adulation of accomplishment, that is properly and fairly enforcing all regulations and guidelines, that is keeping student-athlete informed and involved in a structured and productive manner always aware of the value of their time, and that is keeping this vision ever before them in their efforts to bring glory to God in the TCF's Athletic Department.

We want a dynamic athletic program that is distinctive in its commitment to represent Christ. This vision may seem idealistic at first glance, but this description is nothing more than the mandate on the "Church" of Jesus Christ, and that is what we are as believers. Oh, that people might say of this program, "Look how they love one another, only God can do that!" Unfortunately, these thoughts can tend to get shoved aside in the "Christian" athletic arena as if they don't apply. Instead, the "negative attitude" alluded to above, that should be avoided, become an expected, even acceptable, practice. A typical comment from an outside observer would be, "Oh, they're just that way, they say they're Christians, but you couldn't tell by the way they are. They are no different than anyone else."

Asking God to give us courage to be different. Not superior in attitude, but distinctive in our desire to follow Him wholeheartedly, as we participate in this program. "But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly." (Num. 14:24a) It's our prayer that God would have this testimony about the people in the TCF Athletic Department, that they have "a different spirit and follow me wholeheartedly." If God declares that following Him wholeheartedly requires "a different spirit," then that is what we want to be, different, but not arrogant, distinctive, but not special, wholehearted, but not critical, in our pursuit of our one and only passion, to hear "Well done, good and faithful servants in the TCF's Athletic Department!"

Code of Conduct

Athletics plays a significant role in the holistic education of student-athletes. It is a powerful tool to develop leadership skills and godly character development. Therefore every effort should be made to demonstrate the highest standard of excellence and godly character.

Therefore, relying on God, with the help of my coaches and teammates, you will strive to:

- Follow all guidelines of Trinity College of Florida (TCF) in letter and spirit and place myself in compliance within TCF rules and conduct.
- Treat coaches, administrators and officials with respect as authority figures placed over you as you represent TCF.
- Treat fellow student-athletes with respect and celebrate their diversity regardless of gender, ethnicity or cultural background.
- Instill Godly character in my teammates by demonstrating high standards of personal integrity and honesty.
- Accept Responsibility for my behavior and performance in the academic arena as well as athletic arena.

Core Values

Student-Athlete Welfare: We are committed to the health and safety of all our student-athletes. We will offer our full support and go out of our way to see our students excel academically, athletically and in their personal development as leaders in the community and here at TCF.

Integrity: We hold ourselves to the utmost principles in terms of sportsmanship and our conduct away from the field/court of play. We will always display a constant sense of professionalism.

Servanthood: We are committed to not only upholding the reputation of the college but advancing it through various forms of community.

Honor: We believe that treating all of our athletes, staff, faculty, opposing teams and officials with honor and respect is an unquestionable requirement that should be shown and known at all times.

Priorities, Goals and Strategies

Student-Athlete Welfare:

Goal 1.1: Put the student-athlete first.

Strategy 1.1: Prioritize the student-athlete. Create an environment for student-athletes that nurtures personal growth and development through the college.

Action Step 1.1a: Survey all student-athletes to assess and analyze any problematic areas and find what issues to improve on

Goal 1.2: Ensure the Health and Safety of each student-athlete.

Strategy 1.2: The health and safety of each student-athlete should be made a top priority before, during, and after every season.

Striving for Excellence in Academics and Athletics:

Goal 2.1: Finish in the top 10 for team GPAs in the country

Goal 2.2: All teams finish with a bid to the National Tournament

Goal 2.3: All teams finish with an above .500-win percentage.

Servanthood:

Goal 3.1: Establish a reputation within the college for developing servant leaders.

Goal 3.2: Build a report with community members outside of TCF.

Integrity and Honor:

Goal 4.1: Maintain the highest level of sportsmanship and professionalism both on and away from the fields of play.

Strategy 4.1: Build an environment in which all coaches, players, staff and faculty recognize the importance of and adhere to this requirement.

Academic Requirements

Academic Load:

A full-time student is one who takes at least 12 semester hours. Usually, a student takes from 15 to 18 semester hours to maintain the pace of their academic program. Students with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 may take up to 21 semester hours. It is necessary for participation to pass at least 12 credits per semester and 24 per academic year (this is the 12/24 rule).

Class Schedule:

TCF is on the semester plan with two semesters of sixteen (16) weeks each in the academic calendar. Classes meet for 50 minutes per week per credit. Most classes meet twice a week on either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday. Some classes meet once per week on Mondays or in the evening, or online or hybrid.

Class Attendance:

Students are expected to be present in class to assure the effectiveness of the educational process. Students obtain information, insights and differing perspectives from class sessions. It is also expected that students will contribute to class discussion and content.

Instructors establish attendance requirements for their courses. When permitted by the instructor, as stated in the syllabus, students may request that an absence be excused. The instructor will make the decision as to whether to excuse the student's absence. **All athletic contests will be considered as apart of the excused absences allowed for each class.** If a student exceeds the maximum allowed absences in a course because of extended serious illness or emergency, he or she may appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for special consideration by submitting a written explanation of the absences. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will make the decision as to whether to allow additional absences. If a student shows a pattern of missing classes, they will be suspended from participating in their sport until they make-up those classes and assignments.

Group Absence Forms for TCF events, such as athletics, must be secured by the coach or athletic director and presented to the registrar before the date of each event.

If for some reason, a professor does not show up for class, students must wait 15 minutes. If the professor still has not shown up, and the class has not been advised otherwise, the class is dismissed.

Classification of Students

Student academic classifications are determined at the beginning of each semester based on the number of accumulated semester credit hours as follows:

Freshmen: up to 27 semester credit hours

Sophomores: 28 to 59 semester credit hours

Juniors: 60 to 93 semester credit hours

Seniors: 94 or more semester credit hours

All athletes with 60 or more credit hours must maintain a 2.0 or better GPA to participate in their chosen sport.

Requirements for Students Entering Second Semester Second semester students must have achieved a GPA of 1.6. Any student playing a sport that spans two semesters and becomes ineligible at the break shall cease competition as of January 1st.

Requirements after the First Two Semesters All students must pass 24 credit hours the previous academic school year. After accumulating 24-47 credit hours, the student must have achieved a 1.75 cumulative GPA. After accumulating more than 48 or more credit hours, the student must have achieved a 2.0 GPA. Exception If a freshman completes his or her first term in the spring semester or winter/spring quarter, the student-athlete would remain eligible for their second season of competition by completing 24/27 credits during the spring and following fall semester/quarter.

Summer and Inter-term Credit Hours Summer and inter-term credit hours can be used to satisfy the 24-credit hour rule and GPA requirement.

- Summer credit hours should be attached to the preceding spring term for eligibility purposes.
- Winter term credits should be attached to the fall semester.

Transfer students are those who transferred to Trinity College of Florida from another college.

Transfer students must have a 2.0 GPA in order to participate in a sport at TCF.

Full-time students are those enrolled in 12 or more semester hours.

Part-time students are those enrolled in less than 12 semester hours.

Probationary Students are those current students who earned less than a 2.00 GPA for the previous Semester as designated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs based on the Registrar's report. Entering students may also be designated as probationary by the Admissions office if they fail to meet all admission requirements.

Special Students are those enrolled in selected courses without regard for a prescribed course of study. This may only be done by permission of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This includes dual-enrolled students. See trinitycollege.edu/dual-enrollment/

Audit Students are those who attend classes and pay required fees but who are not required to do assignments, take examinations, or attend classes regularly. No credit is given for classes that are audited. After the first week of class, a student may not convert an audit class to a credit class.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Students with disabilities, both physical and learning, work with the Academic Affairs office regarding necessary accommodations. Trinity College is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for all students and assisting them in making their college experience successful. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Trinity College provides reasonable accommodations for students with currently documented disabilities ("Current" is defined as within three years from the time the request for accommodations is received). We request that students notify the Academic Affairs office of any special accommodation needed at least thirty (30) business days prior to the first day of class to help ensure the quality and availability of services needed.

Probation Policy

The success of students accepted or placed on probation requires institutional attention. The students have demonstrated in some way that they need academic assistance to be successful. Student success stabilizes the student body and serves the student by positioning them for the best chance of successful completion of their educational pursuits. This requires a 360° approach that includes academics, student life, and athletics (if applicable).

This probation policy applies to:

- Any student accepted to Trinity College of Florida on academic probation.
- Any returning student who failed to achieve a GPA (Grade Point Average) of greater than 2.0 the previous semester.

Level One Probation

A student whose GPA is below 2.0 the previous semester, and all incoming students who are accepted on probation, will be placed on level one probation for the following semester. This warning status requires the student to improve their academic performance and includes the following conditions for continued enrollment:

- Students will be limited to 12 credit hours or less per semester while on Level 1 probation;
- The student must sign a Student Agreement with the Director of the Learning Resource Center committing to weekly appointments with the Learning Resource Center on the main campus and other requirements as stipulated in the Agreement;
- The student must demonstrate that they are meeting all the course requirements in the weekly meetings with the Learning Resource Center.

Level Two Probation

A student who does not attain a GPA greater than 2.0 while on Level One probation will be placed on Level Two Probation the following semester. Students on Level Two probation will have the following stipulations and requirements:

- Traditional seated or online students will be limited to 12 credit hours or less.
- No extracurricular activities (sports, student groups, resident assistants, praise band, etc.) will be allowed while on Level Two Probation.

- The student must sign a Student Agreement with the Director of the Learning Resource Center committing to weekly appointments with the Learning Resource Center on the main campus and other requirements in the Agreement which may be adjusted to help the student succeed.

Final Probation

If a student's GPA is below 2.0 for the semester in which they are on Level Two Probation they will be put on Final Probation the following semester. Students on Final Probation must sign a Student Agreement with the Director of the Learning Resource Center (same as Level 2 Probation) plus the following restrictions:

- Traditional in-seat students can only take 6 hours and are not allowed to take online courses. Traditional online-only students can only take 6 credit hours.
- No extracurricular activities (sports, student groups, resident assistants, praise band, etc.) will be allowed while on Final Probation. These restrictions may affect the availability of financial aid.

Academic Dismissal

A student whose GPA is below 2.0 for the semester in which they have been on Final Probation will be dismissed for an indefinite period. The student may not apply for readmission for one calendar year and must provide evidence of successful academic performance in another college or university as a part of the readmission process.

Academic Alert System for Reporting Poor Academic Performance

All professors will report to the Registrar any student who is in danger of failing his/ her course. The Registrar will then notify the Learning Resource Center and all other professors who have this student in class to clarify whether the performance is limited to one course. The Director of the Learning Resource Center will communicate the results of this online discussion to that student's Department Chairperson who will discuss with the student what is needed to improve class performance.

Academic Integrity

The expectation at Trinity College of Florida is that the principles of truth and honesty will be rigorously followed in all academic endeavors. In support of this aim, Trinity College of Florida requires all students to exhibit academic work.

A culture of academic integrity is built upon respect for others' work, commitment to doing one's own work, and intolerance for academic dishonesty in all its forms. This assumes that all work will be done by the person who purports to do the work without unauthorized aids. In addition, when making use of language and some ideas, not his or her own, whether quoting them directly or paraphrasing them into his or her own words, the student must attribute the source of the material in some standard form, such as naming the source in the text or offering a citation. Individual instructors are responsible to notify the Academic Dean and the Registrar within seven (7)

Definitions

Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating - which is the use or attempted use of unauthorized material, information, electronic device, implement, or study aid in, for example, any test, quiz, academic exercise, or assignment without the instructor's permission
- Plagiarizing - which is the unacknowledged adoption or reproduction of the ideas, words, data or statements of others; for example, fellow students, printed materials, or any digital materials
- Fabricating or falsifying - which is the unauthorized falsification or invention of any data, information, or citation in an academic exercise, including the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated assignments.
- Impersonating - which is assuming another individual's identity or allowing another individual to do so, for the purpose of fulfilling an academic requirement;
- Facilitating - which is helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty; for example, making an assignment available or using a mobile device to coach another.

If students have any questions or doubts about what cheating or plagiarism involves, or about how to acknowledge source materials, they should feel free to consult their professor, the Student Learning Center, or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The full policy on Academic Integrity is one of the announcements in every course syllabus in CANVAS LMS.

Penalties for an initial case of plagiarism are at the discretion of the course instructor and may include failure of the course. Penalties for repeated plagiarism in the same course or for plagiarism in multiple courses are at the discretion of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and may include expulsion from the college. Students may appeal a finding of plagiarism by filing a written appeal with the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs no more than one week after the original decision. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will schedule a hearing in which evidence of the alleged plagiarism will be presented by the faculty member. The student, who may have another person present with them during the interview, will have an opportunity to reply. The Academic Affairs Committee by majority vote may decide on one of the following: a) Affirm the appeal and remove the penalty, b) Affirm that academic dishonesty did occur but reduce the penalty, c) Reject the appeal and affirm the imposed penalty, d) Reject the appeal and impose a more severe penalty.

Attendance Requirements

Chapel Attendance:

Chapel is designed to be an important part of the development of one's spiritual life. The following guidelines are established to promote faithful chapel attendance:

- Full-time students (12 hours or more), resident students and students with a class immediately before and after chapel services are required to attend chapel. Students enrolled in chapel are allowed three (3) absences in a semester in order to receive a passing grade. Being late, leaving early or not checking in will equal one absence.
- **A “satisfactory” grade in chapel is necessary for graduation and to participate in sports.** The Office of Student Development will determine make-up work for an “unsatisfactory” grade.

Christian Service:

The Christian Service Program involves weekly participation in a specific ministry approved by the Dean of Students and will begin by the fourth Thursday of the semester. Christian Service is required for all full-time students. A “satisfactory” grade in Christian Service is necessary for graduation and to participate in sports. In addition to this, all students beginning their sophomore year will be required to participate in Trinity College of Florida’s Career Development Program. Freshmen and sophomores will minister in a variety of programs that may or may not correspond to their chosen major. Juniors and seniors will minister in the areas of their chosen major. Students involved in an internship are excused from Christian Service. Students graduating from TCF and participating in sports or other student groups must have at least a “satisfactory” mark in Christian Service for every semester at TCF. **Failure to comply with any of the above stipulations will result in a non-passing grade and/or loss of the ability to participate in sports or any student group.**

Suggested Areas of Service:

Church Related Services: Student Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Youth Pastor, Music/Choir Director, Sunday school teacher, etc. **Para Church:** Campus Crusade for Christ, Inter-Varsity, Youth for Christ, Child Evangelism, Fellowship, etc. **Community Related Service:** YMCA, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother and Big Sisters, Nursing Home Ministry, Rehabilitation Centers, Orphanages, Prison Ministry, etc.

Eligibility, Termination and Re-establishment**Seasons of Competition:**

- Each student is limited to four seasons of college competition.
- Students who have completed four seasons of college competition in a sport may utilize a fifth year in a different sport if the student-athlete is within their first 10 semesters of full-time attendance.

Not Enrolled Full-Time for One Year:

- If a student sits out of competition for one full season of competition, he/she may return to a TCF and be immediately eligible.

- Students who become ineligible at the break must sit out the remainder of the academic year and satisfy all GPA and credit hour requirements (24 over two preceding terms) outlined above to reestablish eligibility.
- Upon matriculating to TCF following a one-year leave of absence, student-athletes will adhere strictly to all TCF guidelines, including normal progress requirements.

Student Not Identified with Institution During First Term:

A student who has not been identified with an institution during the first term and meets all eligibility requirements will become eligible to participate for the second term on January 1st upon enrollment, confirmation of a full course load by the institution, and adherence to all eligibility requirements.

Eligibility Forms for Sports Spanning Two:

Semesters Two eligibility forms must be filed for sports spanning two semesters. Any student playing a sport that spans two semesters and becomes ineligible at the break shall cease competition as of January 1st.

Student's Graduating from Two-Year Institutions:

A student who has graduated from a two-year institution the preceding semester shall be immediately eligible to participate.

Military Exemption:

Military exemptions will be granted to students whose careers are interrupted by service in the military.

Seniors Enrolled in Less than 12 Credits:

A student athlete in their final semester may be enrolled in less than 12 (semester) credits if he/she is taking the credits necessary to complete graduation requirements.

Students with Bachelor's Degrees:

Students with a bachelor's degree are ineligible for athletic competition.

Exception #1: Student athletes may complete one of their four total years of eligibility as a graduate student, only if they are participating as a full-time student at the institution for which they received their bachelor's degree and seeking a second degree under normal matriculation at the same institution.

Exception #2: Additionally, the student may complete one year as a graduate student, regardless of previous institution, if the student has never participated in the sport for which they will participate at the member institution. This exception applies to transfer students only.

Exception #3: Student may appeal with governing body on hardship waiver if they have not used all four years of eligibility

Transfer-Students Who Have Participated in Athletics

- If a student transferring to a member institution has ever participated in intercollegiate athletics, the student must have been academically and athletically eligible had he or she remained at that institution.
- If the transferring student is ineligible, they are required to complete one full academic year of residence at the certifying institution before being eligible to compete for the member institution.
 - An academic year shall be completed when the student is enrolled in and has completed a minimum of 24 credits (semester).

Transfer Form:

The institution to which the student is transferring must submit a formal request to the institution from which he/she is transferring from to determine the student's eligibility.

Mid-Season Transfers:

Students transferring into member institutions during a two semester sport shall be eligible to participate, provided that each institution's athletic director signs off on the transfer, and that the student was academically eligible at the institution from which he/she is transferring. The transferring athlete will abide by bylaws, which states that the student athlete is eligible as of January 1st.

Hardship Cases:

Hardship cases deal only with seasons of competition.

Appeal Criteria:

- The appeal must involve an injury, illness, or personal circumstance beyond the control of the student.
- The athlete involved shall not have participated in more than 30% of the games played during that particular season.
- For medical waivers, the injury must have discontinued the student's participation.

Filing a Request for a Hardship Waiver:

- Hardships should be filed no more than 30 days from the last day of competition
- Member institutions shall consult with the governing body for all documentation regarding hardships.

Name, Image & Likeness and Amateur Status

Name, Image, and Likeness

- Student-athletes can engage in NIL activities that are consistent with Federal, State, and Local laws and TCF policies where the school is located.
- Institutions must develop reporting procedures (required in most states) for student-athletes to report any NIL appearances and/or contracts.
- Student-athletes must report all NIL activities in accordance with all date and time requirements consistent with state law and all conference and/or institutional guidelines. (i.e. 7 days prior to execution in the state of Pennsylvania).
- Student-athletes who attend a school in a state without an NIL law must abide by all Federal and TCF NIL policies.
- Student-Athletes are encouraged to enlist the guidance of a licensed professional service provider, in accordance with state law, if applicable, for NIL activities.
- Student-athletes may not earn compensation as a result of the use of their name, image or likeness in connection with a person, company or organization related to or associated with the development, production, distribution, wholesaling or retailing of any of the following:
 - Adult entertainment products and services.
 - Alcohol products.
 - Casinos and gambling, including sports betting, the lottery and betting in connection with online games and mobile devices.
 - Tobacco and electronic smoking products and devices.
 - A controlled dangerous substance.
 - State and federally restricted categories (i.e. firearms, pharmaceuticals, etc.)

Amateurism Status:

Only amateur students shall be eligible to participate in a given sport. A student athlete would not be considered an amateur and thus be ineligible if they engage in any of the following:

- Accept payment, promise of payment, or reimbursement (direct or indirect) outside of NIL policy (Federal, State, Local, TCF) that exceed expenses of travel, meals, and lodging.
- Receive payment for any public appearance or promotion of product/business without following all federal, state and institutional NIL guidelines.
- Participate in any event where a cash prize is awarded AND accept any prize monies that exceed the cost of event registration.
- Sign a contract of commitment of any kind to play professional athletics, even if no pay or compensation for expenses are received, without prior approval from the governing body, including competition on National Teams.
- Enter into an agreement of any kind with an individual or group of individuals (“sports agent”) authorized to represent the athlete with a professional sports organization for marketing and/or to seek a professional contract.
- Enter into a professional draft

Substance Abuse Policy**Trinity College of Florida’s Policy:**

Trinity College of Florida holds to the standard that players of TCF must refrain from practices such as the use and promotion of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, and/or tobacco. Failure in this type of behavior may result in immediate suspension from classes and will result in the loss of participation in the TCF Athletics’ program. The Drug Testing Program was created to protect the health and safety of student-athletes and to ensure that no one participating might have an artificially induced advantage or be pressure to use chemical substances. Therefore, student-athletes will be subject to drug testing throughout the school year at the discretion of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Students and/or Athletic Director.