ILLUMINATE

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY 2018–2022 ACADEMIC STRATEGIC PLAN

PROGRESS REPORT
OCTOBER 2021

This report serves as the final update on the *Illuminate* Strategic Plan. Additional progress will be reported under the *Illuminate Forward* Strategic Plan, which was affirmed by the Baylor Board of Regents in November 2021.

Baylor University

Foundational Pillars of *Illuminate*

PILLAR 1

Unambiguously Christian Educational Environment

Since Baylor was founded as a Baptist university in 1845, our historic commitment to Christian education has continued unabated. Of course, the nature of higher education has evolved as the students' needs and the world have changed, but our commitment to our faith remains constant.

Baylor's continuing efforts to build communities for spiritual formation continue through the opening of The Wesley House of Studies within Truett Theological Seminary in June 2020. The Wesley House nurtures a new generation of Methodist students as they prepare for ministry. This unique program strengthens the Seminary's goal of becoming an increasingly multidenominational school while staying true to its historic roots.

Truett Seminary has also expanded its reach by delivering coursework in San Antonio. Located in Trinity Baptist Church's building, the new extension program will offer two master's degrees, a Master of Arts in Christian Ministry and a Master of Theological Studies, to students who are already in ministry and cannot leave to study, or those who want to move into ministry in the area.

In the last few years, Baylor has focused on preserving the significant influence of Black church leaders through Truett Seminary. First, the Black Church Studies program was created to be an interdisciplinary megaphone for Black Americans' global, historical, theological, and prophetic traditions. This program hopes to bring researchers to a deeper understanding of who God is and what God requires of us by engaging with these traditions in doctrine and ethics. This program expands our understanding of our common faith by studying a faith tradition that was silenced for so long.

Second, the Black Gospel Music Restoration Project has created a location where every song released by a Black gospel artist between 1940 and 1980 can be preserved for study and enjoyment. Finally, the creation of this project led to a $1.5 million gift from the Prichard Family Foundation that has created the Lev. H. Prichard III Chair in the Study of Black Worship. This interdisciplinary chair will allow an accomplished scholar to research the preservation and promotion of Black music, Black worship, and other salient studies.

Beyond the work of Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor has always worked to create the next generation of Christian college professors. Recent data shows that of the 246 PhDs who graduated from Baylor in the last five

years, 106 have taken positions at Christian colleges or universities. This legacy adds to the spread of faith in immeasurable ways as our graduates mentor, teach, and lead a new generation of students. In addition to fulfilling their classroom responsibilities, this new generation of graduates will also pursue their research in their disciplines using the combination of faith and education they received during their PhD work here at Baylor.

The Baylor Center for School Leadership in the School of Education is working to revolutionize the experience of Christian school leaders in both public and private school settings. The gift that created the Lynda and Robert Copple Endowed Chair in Christian School Leadership has made it possible for the University to host the inaugural Academy for Transformational Leadership in 2019, where more than 150 educators came together to study topics like collaborative leadership, managing change, and the importance of faith in all educational settings. The School of Education also launched a new dual-track Master's program in School Leadership in June of 2021 that will focus on developing the leadership skills of educators across the nation.

The administration has been forthright in expressing its belief that diversity is a part of our Christian calling and mission. The University's focus on following that mission has enabled Baylor to better understand the needs of our underrepresented minority students by creating the Trailblazer Scholars Program. Members of the inaugural class, who started at Baylor in the fall of 2021, are called the Gilbert-Walker cohort to honor the first Black graduates from Baylor, Barbara Walker and the late Rev. Robert Gilbert. This inaugural cohort is made up of 25 students from all over the United States, from Pennsylvania to Hawaii. Baylor will be impacted forever by the work of these students, as it has been by their namesakes.

This focus on the value of diversity at Baylor has also been evident in the number of diverse students, faculty, and staff who have joined the Baylor community. The size of the overall faculty increased by 5.8% between 2018 and 2020, and the diversity of the faculty has grown as well. The number of underrepresented minority (URM) faculty increased by 21.4% during that time, representing 10.4% of our total faculty. Currently, our URM student body is at 26.1%. The goal is to have a faculty that approximates the diversity of our student body. We have also seen a significant rise in female faculty; they currently make up 43.4% of our faculty, while the female student population is 60% of the student body. These strides are essential in ensuring that Baylor fulfills our Christian mission and creates an open and welcoming place for all.

In 2018, Baylor faculty Dr. Kevin Dougherty, Dr. Perry Glanzer, Dr. Sarah Schnitker, and gradute student Juliette Ratchford collaborated with the Division of Student Life to initiate a four-year longitudinal study to understand Baylor's influence on the faith of its students during their time on campus. Based on three years of data, they concluded that "self-reports from students and alumni suggest that positive developments in faith and character are occurring during their time at Baylor." In addition, they highlight that the students' relationships with fellow students and Baylor's faculty and staff strengthened their faith formation. "A key ingredient to faith formation in Christian higher education is access to spiritual mentors. [I]t is the intentionality at Christian universities to create an integrated, immersive atmosphere of faith that may make these settings uniquely transformative." Data from the study also highlighted the work of local congregations and faith-focused student organizations as being an essential part of spiritual formation at Baylor.

As a result of these findings, the Division of Student Life has recently made significant changes that strengthen its ability to meet students where they are and walk alongside them in their faith formation journey. These changes include creating further continuity between Chapel and Christian Scriptures classes, expanding Chapel sessions to include online offerings, increasing the number of unique Chapel options from which students can choose up to 15, and the creation of a new director-level position specifically focused on developing and supporting campus ministries and connections to churches.

While all of this excellent work is helping to make sure that the University meets its metrics in the first pillar of *Illuminate*, we are still working to make these goals a reality. The amount of work yet to be done can seem daunting, but with *Illuminate*, we believe it is possible to focus on these projects, including:

- Building more intentional outreach to local churches that are vital partners in the faith formation of our students during their time at Baylor.
- Assessing the impact of the changes that have been made to the core curriculum.
- Broadening the engagement of faculty with meaningful spiritual and professional opportunities.
- Enhancing the sense of belonging and support for underrepresented faculty across the University.
- Filling the newly created Lev H. Prichard III Chair for the study of Black Worship and building out the Black Church Studies program.
- Increasing our Pell-eligible students' retention and graduation rates.

PILLAR 2

Transformational Undergraduate Education

A Baylor education can change the trajectory of someone's life. We take this responsibility seriously.

One step in that direction was to streamline the process toward graduation. The College of Arts and Sciences recently revamped the core curriculum that affects every student at Baylor to move towards that goal. Once requiring between 65-79 hours of coursework, the core curriculum has been reduced to 50 hours. More importantly, the core is now better organized and is held together with a shared core vision that outlines the university's goals. This will allow future Baylor students to work through their core courses more quickly while at the same time strengthening and deepening the liberal arts education Baylor is known for. Recent core revisions will also enable students to pursue minors and other areas of concentration that may be of interest to them.

Baylor's strides in undergraduate research have become an essential component of undergraduate education at Baylor. There are very few places where nationally recognized academic researchers work with undergraduate students, but Baylor is one of those places. *U.S. News and World Report* has ranked Baylor as the number 17 for undergraduate research and the 34th most innovative school in the nation. One example of this kind of research is the B-TRUE fellowship. This grant-funded program provides an intensive 10-week summer research and training program for students who want to study in one of seven STEM areas: biology, physics, chemistry/biochemistry, environmental science, geosciences, anthropology, and psychology/neuroscience. Another program, Baylor's Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Achievement (URSA) initiative, continues to grow each year, serving faculty and students from all disciplines. A relatively new program to Baylor is the McNair Scholars program, a nationwide Dept. of Education funded initiative that honors Challenger astronaut Dr. Ronald McNair. McNair Scholars offers first-generation and underprivileged students the opportunity to work on a research program with a faculty member. The program also places each McNair Scholar within a highly-ranked graduation program at some of the most competitive universities in the nation. These programs show that Baylor is a place where students will find a chance to do some of the most innovative and exciting research in the nation while working on their undergraduate degrees.

U.S News and World Report has also recognized Baylor's first-year experience as number 15 in the nation, one of only three schools in the top 25 with an undergraduate enrollment greater than 10,000. There are many signature experiences at Baylor that punctuate the first-year experience, such as new student orientation, the tradition of running the Baylor Line, the opportunity to get involved in one of the 360+ student organizations on campus, and the emphasis on growing in one's faith through participation in Chapel, discipleship programs and Christian Scripture classes to name a few. In addition, *USNWR* highlighted the strong religious connections that bind students together and the volunteer opportunities offered throughout students' time at Baylor. The on-campus living experience for first-year students is another component of the bond that brings our campus together. In addition to an overall high-quality residential experience for the over 5,000 students who live on campus, more than 50% of our residents live in intentional learning communities, such as a Residential College or Living Learning Program. These learning communities provide additional formative experiences centered around shared academic interests and cultivating authentic Christian communities. These and other distinct experiences led the *Wall Street Journal* and *Times Higher Education* to recognize Baylor in their rankings as 4th in the nation for Student Engagement.

Baylor Line Camp is another one of the shared experiences students find most exciting when joining the Baylor family. Line Camp is a chance for students to

learn more about Baylor and its history, make friends, and prepare for the transition to college. The combined orientation and Baylor Line Camp program provides students with a five-day experience designed to help them become new Baylor Bears. This year, Baylor provided scholarships for Pell-eligible students to attend Line Camp to help them to feel genuinely welcome and included in the Baylor family.

Since 2019, when the Office of Engaged Learning was created, Baylor has become well-known as a university where major fellowships and awards recipients attend. In 2020-2021 Baylor students broke several records; 197 students applied for nationally and internationally competitive awards. Including 64 for the Fulbright, 5 for the Marshall, and 23 for the Truman Scholarship. In the 2020-2021 academic year, Baylor had its first Mitchell Scholarship winner, its first Churchill Scholarship winner, and its first Gates Cambridge finalist. Of the 197 applicants, roughly 30% were from underrepresented minority groups, and 13% were first-generation college students.

While we continue to focus on the essential parts of creating a truly unique educational experience for our students, there are still many areas where we need to continue to work. As Baylor makes the transition to an R1/Tier 1 Christian research university, the ways in which our undergraduate students can be a part of the research process will become even more critical. Graduate students will have more opportunities as they attend Baylor and move through their programs, but our commitment to a genuinely transformational undergraduate experience will never waiver.

Other things to work on include:

- Building the Financial Literacy program in the Paul L. Foster Success Center to help teach our students about the importance of their financial decisions. Everything from student loans to budgeting and credit will be discussed in these sessions.
- Creating new opportunities for students who the new core has enabled them to have more choice in their minors and areas of concentration.
- Fully staff the Student Success Center
- Building stronger corporate connections, especially in the Hankamer School of Business.
- Expanding on options for majors in Engineering and Computer Science.
- Creating a robust Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, which will answer important questions such as the size of programs, areas of growth, and strategies for improving retention and graduation rates.
- Establish the Global Scholars program, a new program in the Global Engagement area, that will help students experience almost half of their Baylor education in other parts of the world. These students must choose a global problem and spend all four years studying that problem in the context of that country and its unique culture. This new program will accept its first class in the fall of 2022.

PILLAR 3

Research and Scholarship Marked by Quality, Impact and Visibility

Baylor's focus on research is based on its belief that the world needs a place where faith and scholarship are held to the highest standards—a place where talented Christian faculty are brought together with students who want to learn how to solve some of the world's most perplexing problems.

As Baylor works toward being the premier Christian research university in the country and achieving R1 status, several key metrics designate where we stand. The Carnegie Classification system has been the industry-accepted standard since 1970. It categorizes colleges based on their research focus. Doctoral Universities (universities that award at least 20 doctoral degrees a year and spend at least $5 million a year on research) are divided into two categories: R1 (very high research activity) and R2 (high research activity). The Carnegie Classification system is often used by grant-giving foundations and government agencies when evaluating schools for grants. While reaching R1 status has been a goal for this administration, it is not the end goal. R1/Tier 1 status simply means that a university's research is essential, and it matters to Baylor because our goal is to conduct research that matters and that others notice.

The Carnegie Classification system considers three metrics when determining rank. First, is the number of research doctorate degrees conferred. Since the 2017-2018 academic year, the number of research doctorate degrees conferred by Baylor has risen from 110 to 167 in 2020-2021. The second benchmark it considers is the university's annual research expenditures. This is another area where Baylor excels; in 2017, we spent $29.4 million on research, and in 2021, we spent $47 million. The third metric that Carnegie evaluates is the size of our research staff, specifically in the STEM, social sciences, and health fields. In this area, we have also seen tremendous growth. In the Fall of 2016, we had a research staff of 47. In the Fall of 2020, that staff had grown to 68. Carnegie could change its methodology to evaluate these variables, but we know that we are growing in each of the three critical areas. We predict that Baylor will be an R1/Tier 1 institution in the next few years at this current pace.

Baylor researchers are doing the kind of high-impact research that matters. As a part of the "Give Light" fundraising campaign, Baylor has spent the last few years working to bring more exceptional professors to our campus to help guide and mentor our students and conduct research that changes lives. The Baylor Academic Challenge has encouraged donors to give within a dollar-for-dollar matching program enabling the university to endow new faculty positions, helping to offset their cost. These new professorships allow Baylor to secure the very best researchers and teachers in the world and enable them to focus on studying and solving some of the world's most widespread problems. The Baylor Academic Challenge has doubled the University's total research chair count in two years by creating fourteen additional research chairs. The University now holds 22 research chair endowments to advance R1-level research and enhance the University's efforts toward a top-tier designation. To date, fourteen Academic Challenge chair positions have been announced, focusing on entrepreneurship, biomedical engineering, materials science, health science and leadership, physics, and the study of Black worship. To date, three of those positions have been filled, and we are currently searching for four more of those endowed chairs.

While having the best researchers and teachers on our campus is essential, providing them with the technology to conduct quality research is critical. There have been several important advances towards this goal. Focused on interdisciplinary research, the Baylor Research and Innovation Collaborative (BRIC) has provided the

opportunity for many graduate students and researchers to work with some of the most advanced equipment available. In 2019, Baylor acquired a Raith Voyager E Beam System for Materials Testing and Characterization. This instrument provides researchers with the ability to create nanoscale patterns in thin films at the highest resolutions. This kind of research lays the groundwork that our Materials Science program will need to thrive and help Baylor reach R1 status.

Another important acquisition for the Materials Science program has been the 3D X-Ray Inspection System, which can perform non-destructive two-dimensional digital radiography and 3D computed tomography (CT) imaging on small and large components. These data can then be used to evaluate different manufacturing processes. This instrument has been used in the automotive, aerospace, military, and defense industries. Housed in the Baylor Sciences Building, this piece of equipment has been an essential component of our Materials Engineering program.

While having this kind of equipment is essential for our researchers and graduate students, it comes at a cost. Baylor has funded much of this advancement through collaborations with industry. Research funding from corporation partnerships grew from $1.0 million in FY 18 to $4.0 million in FY 21. Our industry collaborators value these partnerships because we can help them advance their knowledge while also advancing their investment in educating the next generation of innovators and employees.

Baylor's focus on research means that most of this equipment has been paid for through grants and additional funding from external sources. For example, Baylor has seen our federal research funding grow by more than $10 million over the last few years, from $8.4 million in FY 2018 to $18.5 million in FY 21. Most of this increase came from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the Departments of Education, Defense, and Agriculture.

But research doesn't only happen in a scientific lab; sometimes, it happens in other places. Baylor's Lab to Market Collaborative is a perfect example of the kind of hands-on and innovative research for which we are known. The Lab to Market Collaborative is where students can learn how to build and commercialize their products. Then they learn how to beta test and move those products out into the market, where investors can provide the funds to repeat the process and create startups. In the last eighteen months, the Lab to Market Collaborative has launched three startups that have secured more than $18 million in early-stage investment capital to get those companies into the marketplace.

While facilities and instrumentation are essential to the research enterprise, human capital is also crucial. Between 2018 and 2020, 33 new tenured and tenure-track faculty were hired; however, because of the pandemic, we have not been able to do much hiring between 2019 and 2021. As a result, the 2021-2022 school year will be a time for more than 150 new faculty hires. This kind of advancement takes time as we find those researchers who are the perfect fit for Baylor.

While we are making great strides in our *Illuminate* goals, there are still areas of work to be done:

- Adding twenty new faculty annually in areas that support *Illuminate*.
- Building out the College of Engineering and Computer Science.
- Increasing investments in research staff and operating budgets to ensure an effective research enterprise.

PILLAR 4

Nationally Recognized Programs in Human Performance Through the Arts and Athletics

The value of the creative process in human life is apparent in the joy of artifacts like paintings, sculptures, music, theater, dance, and design. The gift of artistic expression has been central to the growth of all of the arts at Baylor and is something we celebrate through our faculty and students. The arts community provides opportunities for discussion, encouraging the integration of cultural traditions, encouraging expressions of faith, nurturing faculty-student mentoring, and developing communities of intellectually curious artists. Despite the difficulties created by the pandemic, the Arts at Baylor have continued to thrive.

Since its start in 2015, the Church Music program in the School of Music has awarded six PhDs, all of whom have secured full-time positions in prominent churches or universities around the United States.

The School of Music became the first institution of higher education to win the *American Prize for Musical Excellence* in both the Orchestral category and the Mixed Voices Choral category in 2019. This honor for the Baylor Symphony Orchestra and the Baylor A Capella Choir was received before the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the shape of the arts and athletics at Baylor during the 2019-2020 academic year. Events that usually happened in person had to be initially canceled and eventually reimagined into virtual and hybrid events. More than 280 cultural arts events were offered throughout the university despite the cancellations, with more than 11,000 people attending the events.

Still to do:

- Rebuild audience attendance after COVID-19.

Athletics has made incredible strides during Illuminate, becoming one of the most nationally recognized athletic programs. Winning the 2021 Men's Basketball National Championship for the first time in the University's history was a significant achievement that set Baylor's entire athletics program apart. In conjunction with the national championship in women's basketball in 2019, Baylor's programs are unmatched. But, the power of Baylor Athletics is more than the sports; the legacy of the Baylor Bears is a history of an unwavering commitment to athletic excellence, academic achievement, character formation, and faith.

The legacy of Baylor's success in Athletics has spread across all sports and can only be attributed to the hard work of our student-athletes, coaches, and staff. While our national championships in men's and women's basketball have received a great deal of media attention, many other Baylor programs have won national championships in the past few years. The track and field team had three individual national champions in 2021: Aaliyah Miller in the 800 meters, Ackera Mugent in the 60-meter hurdles, and KC Lightfoot in the pole vault. The acrobatics and tumbling program won its sixth-straight national championship in April 2021. The men's tennis program reached the NCAA title match and finished as the runner-up in the 2021 NCAA Tournament. Since 2018, Baylor has had more than 80 students named as All-Americans. In addition, more than 200 student-athletes have been named All-Big 12 selections, and more than 680 of our student-athletes have been named Academic All-Big 12 selections. Baylor's student-athletes work incredibly hard to be successful in the classroom and their respective sports.

The University's academic achievements in athletics are the most impressive of any member of the Big 12 Conference. This past year, Baylor had the highest graduation success rate it has ever had, with more than 94% of student-athletes graduating. Baylor has led the Big 12 in graduation success rate for the past seven years. In the fall of 2020, the average GPA for all student-athletes was 3.35, the highest cumulative GPA in Baylor Athletics history.

Baylor's athletics leadership sets high standards in athletic and academic success and character formation. Since 2018, Baylor student-athletes have spent more than 6,000 hours in community engagement, reaching out to the Waco community that supports them. More than 200 student-athletes have participated in Leadership Retreat, Leadership Institute, and the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. And 132 student-athletes have traveled to participate in mission trips, spreading their faith to communities in need.

Baylor's commitment to athletics, academics, and faith has been clear. This focus has led to a comprehensive athletics program that has been blessed in so many ways and only has success in its future. Continued support of our student-athletes, coaches, and staff will only lead to more championships and generational impacts for the Baylor Bears.

Five Signature Academic Initiatives

DATA SCIENCES

Data Sciences is a rapidly advancing, interdisciplinary field that relies on techniques and theories drawn from machine learning, data mining, scalable data storage, digital communication, and the disciplines of statistics, mathematics, and library sciences. Data Sciences in the field can drive all others, and investments in this area will significantly strengthen parallel initiatives like Health and Human Flourishing. Baylor's commitment addresses the mounting need for dynamic and rapid data analytics that spans all major campus research emphases.

Baylor is creating several new grad programs to prepare students for the data sciences industry. Including a new MS in Computer Science, which was launched this fall, a concentration in the online MBA program in cybersecurity, an MBA with a concentration in business analytics coming in the fall of 2022, and an MS in Business Analytics is in the final stages of review now. Finally, discussions have been initiated to put together several new concentrations within the current PhD in Statistics. Students can focus on statistics related to data sciences and biostatistics to work on data in the medical field.

Baylor has recently hired Dr. Henry Han as the McCollum Family Chair in Data Sciences. Dr. Han studies artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and quantum computing. His ability to build and revolutionize our data sciences program will change the future of the work at Baylor. In addition, his specialty in bioinformatics and health informatics will be beneficial for our health programs.

HEALTH

The nature of healthcare has radically changed; determinants of health cover a broad range of areas, including biomedical research, health policy, law, environmental factors, and undergraduate health and medical education. As a result, research and collaboration on health initiatives have spanned the entire university, bringing together interdisciplinary partnerships across divisions and colleges. These collaborations are the foundation on which the future of Baylor's healthcare research will be built.

Through the generosity of several key donors, the Baylor Academic Challenge has provided us the chance to grow our health sciences and bring some of the best scholars in the nation to our campus. In addition, the James Robert Parker Endowed Chair in Health Science and Leadership will provide funding for research and instruction related to leadership for our pre-health and pre-medical students in the Honors College.

The James R. Schofield Endowed Chair in Biomedical studies will support our students seeking careers in

healthcare. The position is still being filled in the College of Arts and Sciences, but scholars from biophysics, cell biology, molecular biology, and pharmacology are being considered.

The Vance Masteller Endowed Research Chair for Communication Sciences and Disorders will offer expertise in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) to complement the new ASD clinical expansion, providing cutting-edge research opportunities and national recognition for the Baylor Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic within Robbins College.

The Herrington School of Nursing has seen phenomenal growth, more than tripling in growth in ten years--in the Fall of 2011, the upper-division Nursing enrollment was 385 students. In the Fall of 2021, the enrollment was 1,235. Concurrently the number of faculty has increased. This past year more than half of the new class of faculty were from the School of Nursing. In addition, the online Doctorate of Nurse Practioner program has grown over the last few years in ways we never expected. Current enrollment is almost 700 students. If our conservative projections are correct, by 2025, the enrollment could be 1,300. The growth in the medical field combined with the strong reputation of the Baylor name has created a situation where our programs can only go up.

The College of Arts and Sciences has 10-12 faculty working on a Cancer Collaborative project to deepen their reach with larger collaborative teams by doubling the number of faculty focused on cancer research in the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Biochemistry. This program focuses on better screening and early detection methods, new therapeutics, and precision treatments. The program is a partnership with entities within Baylor like the School of Engineering and Computer Science and the College of Health and Human Sciences, and external partners like Baylor Scott and White Healthcare, Baylor College of Medicine, UT Health Sciences, MD Anderson, St. Jude's, Harvard Medical School and Columbia University School of Medicine.

The Brain, Behavioral and Mental Health Initiative, led by the faculty from the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, has provided a whole new area of research for our students. Contemporary healthcare is inextricably tied to behavior: diet, sleep, exercise, stress, and pain management. Although Baylor's faculty have already been conducting world-class research in areas such as sleep, addiction, mind and body integrative health, anxiety and stress-related disorders, this initiative will provide them with the structural and administrative needs to build a Center for their continued work. While this project is still in its early stages, it promises to set the standard for psychology and neuroscience for years to come.

Still to do:

- Develop and implement new degree programs:
  - PhD in Public Health
  - Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD)
  - Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT)
  - MS in Medical Science
  - New PA program in Robbins (DScPAS)
- Expansion of the Masters in Communication Sciences and Disorders into an online program.

HUMAN FLOURISHING, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

Baylor will be a recognized leader in understanding the conditions by which humans, communities, and societies flourish. As a Christian institution, Baylor reflects the image of God as we study, teach, research, and promulgate the aspects of what it means to pursue a life well-lived. Entrepreneurship and ethics are factors that promote healthy human beings, intact families, stable communities, and a thriving society.

The Institute for the Study of Religion's participation in the Global Flourishing Study will lead to some of the

most critical advances in understanding what flourishing means in many different contexts. Working with partners like Gallup and Harvard University, the Global Flourishing Study will evaluate more than 300,000 people in 22 geographically and culturally diverse regions representing 72% of the world's population. Currently, in its planning and development stage, the project is being funded by the John Templeton Foundation.

Baylor's unabashedly Christian faith goes beyond the classroom and meets needs wherever we find them. For example, when the pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, it quickly became apparent that rural families who depend on free and reduced lunches at school to feed their children had nowhere to go. As a result, the USDA reached out to the Baylor University Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty (BCHP) to begin working on public and private partnerships that would help support and feed children all over the country. By December of 2020, BCHP and other public and private partners were able to send more than 38.7 million meals to 270,000 children in 43 states through the Emergency Meals to You program. The newly announced Jim and Tammy Snee Family Chair in Food Security is an example of the work we can do when we bring together donors who want to make a difference with faculty members working on solving some of the world's most complex problems. Dr. Craig Gundersen, an economist whose career has focused on addressing food insecurity, emphasizing publicly funded nutrition programs, is the inaugural Snee Chair.

The creation of new degree programs allows students to study in new areas that are currently unavailable and helps open new avenues for research and scholarship that can change the world. Baylor has opened several new programs that focus exclusively on human flourishing. The MA in global ethics, in conjunction with Hong Kong Baptist University, will open up a new conversation and allow for a deeper study of ethics with our partners in China. The MA in Theology, Ecology, and Food Justice will provide students with a deeper understanding of the environmental needs around the globe and the devastation of food insecurity.

Human Flourishing can also spread to our organizational partnerships as we learn to work, lead and focus our organizations through difficult periods. The EdD in Learning and Organizational Change prepares educational leaders to systematically drive change in higher education, K-12 school systems, private and nonprofit firms, and governmental organizations. Also, a new certificate program is offered in Dallas through the School of Education to provide graduates with a certificate to become school psychologists.

MATERIALS SCIENCE

Over the last 50 years, Materials Science has played a pivotal role in defining modern society by improving technologies that make products faster, stronger, and lighter. Composite materials are increasingly used in the aerospace and automotive industries, revolutionizing the way we travel. Materials Science has led to advances in computer technology, smartphones, High Definition (HD) televisions, and other communication systems and enhanced the development of efficient energy storage, solar energy, and electric cars. In addition, materials research extends into the medical field, specifically in developing artificial implants and nanoscale materials that may offer alternatives for drug delivery in cancer treatments.

Baylor is currently growing its program in Materials Science and has made significant investments to see this area grow. Through the Baylor Academic Challenge program, we have secured funding for three endowed chairs to research and teach in the area.

The Mearse Endowed Chair in Biological and

Biomedical Engineering will address the areas of biological and biomedical engineering. It will be a significant contributor in furthering the School of Engineering and Computer Science's position as a national leader in this area. Dr. Alan Wang has recently been appointed as the inaugural Mearse Chair. A specialist in photonics and optoelectronics, Dr. Wang is an exciting addition to our faculty.

The search for the Eula Mae and John Baugh Chair in Physics has begun. It will bring Baylor a distinguished faculty member to conduct innovative research and teaching in materials science. While the search continues, we have found some exceptional candidates. The fast growth in materials science will offer students cutting-edge training in scientific and instrumentation, and fabrication methods.

The Kenneth and Celia Carlile Chair in Materials Science will extend our materials science research and contribute to the university's aspirations to be recognized as an R1/Tier 1 institution. The search for this position has already brought in several exceptional candidates, and we hope to entice several of them to join the faculty in various capacities.

The Carliles have also provided the funding to purchase a new transmission electron microscope (TEM) in the Center for Microscopy and Imaging. This instrument has uses across multiple colleges and divisions and will be utilized by more than 60 users from 24 research groups and eight different departments. This instrument will enable researchers to perform ultrastructural analysis of chemical composition and 3D reconstruction of nanoparticles, composite/polymer materials, and biological structures.

The Department of Chemistry has recently hired Baylor alum, Dr. Julia Chan, to return to Baylor in January 2022. Dr. Chan is a chemist with a specialty in intermetallic characterization and crystal growth. As a fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, she will be an essential addition to our program.

The School of Engineering and Computer Science, along with the College of Arts and Sciences, has between 10 to 15 faculty conducting research in materials science. But, with the new funding coming from the Baylor Academic Challenge and other external sources, this is an area that will be growing exponentially over the next few years.

BAYLOR IN LATIN AMERICA

The creation of the Center for Integrative Global Environment and Health Research has created an opportunity for an endowed chair in water sciences in Latin America. This program will give faculty from many different departments, including Anthropology, Biology, Environment Science, and Sociology, the chance to work together to advance international education and research engagements at the intersection of global environment and health. The funding for the Jackson Family Endowed Chair for Baylor in Latin America has been secured, and the search committee is looking for the perfect candidate.


Baylor University