

Baptist College & University Scholars Program

A Partnership of the Baylor Graduate School, The International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU) & IABCU Partner Schools

Created in 2008, the Baptist College and University Scholar's Program at Baylor University works closely with the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools and other Baptist colleges and universities to identify and support potential students for graduate study. The aim is to create a partnership with undergraduate institutions to retain potential doctoral students in Baptist colleges and universities. These students will be prime candidates to return to Baptist institutions as faculty.

Participating Baptist schools will identify and nominate promising undergraduate or graduate scholars using criteria set by the BCU Scholars Program. Students will apply to Baylor through the regular processes and be admitted through "blind review." Once admitted, candidates will receive a letter offering them the BCU Scholars Enhancement Fellowship. Upon acceptance the candidate will be officially recognized as a BCU Scholar.

Special programming emphasizing the connection between Baptists and higher education will solidify the relationship among the sponsors and among the BCU Scholars.

The Baptist College & University (BCU) Scholars Program will:

- Increase the number of Baptist-educated doctoral students staying in Baptist colleges and universities.
- Connect Baptist colleges and universities by partnering in graduate education.
- Retain bright doctoral students in Baptist colleges and universities as students and, subsequently, as faculty.
- Increase loyalty and involvement of Ph.D. graduates with the IABCU and Baptist colleges and universities.
- Provide continued education for bright students in a Baptist college or university committed to its religious identity.

Costs

The costs are shared by three groups:

- \$1,000 per BCU Scholar from IABCU in the year of matriculation.
- \$1,000 per BCU Scholar from sponsoring college or seminary in the year of matriculation.
- Balance (approximately \$100,000 tuition and \$100,000 stipend) funded by Baylor University.

The funds will cover student and mentor travel to Baylor and the IABCU meetings. The student's tuition and stipend will be paid by Baylor. All funds provided by the IABCU and the sponsoring college or seminary will be spent on "Special Programs" that benefit the students.

Process

- Participating Baptist schools will identify promising undergraduate scholars in the junior or senior year, or graduate scholars pursuing a master's degree in their first year, using criteria set by the BCU Scholars program.
- If other IABCU schools offer the Ph.D. in the same discipline, the student will not be eligible for this award.
- At the dissertation stage, the undergraduate faculty mentor will be invited as an additional member of the dissertation committee. On the day the Scholar defends his or her dissertation, the Graduate School hosts the faculty mentor for a meal with the Scholar and a graduate school representative after the defense.
- At graduation, the BCU Scholars will be identified at Commencement and at the Doctoral Dinner. The IABCU and the partner Baptist university will also be acknowledged at the hooding

ceremony during Commencement. Participants may be invited to attend a retreat on vocation and calling at Laity Lodge co-sponsored by the Baylor Institute for Faith and Learning.

- IABCU-affiliated colleges and universities may wish to invite the BCU Scholars to visit their campuses for a tour and conversations with faculty, students, and administrators.

Eligible Baylor Ph.D. Programs: Biology, Biomedical Studies, Chemistry, Ecological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Educational Psychology, Education-Curriculum and Teaching, English, Exercise, Nutrition, and Preventive Health, Geology, History, Information Systems, Mathematics, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, Politics and Society, Sociology, Statistics.

Eligible Masters Program: Masters of Fine Arts.

For more information contact Laine Scales, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Professional Development, at Baylor University <laine_scales@baylor.edu>.



Ken Starr, President of Baylor University, (left), discusses the Baptist College and University Scholars Program with participants Chelsea Ruiz (center) and Kimberly Williams Bodenhamer, following a report on the program during the annual IABCU business meeting this June in Abilene, Texas. Ruiz earned her undergraduate degree from Mary Hardin-Baylor and is currently a doctoral candidate in Baylor's Chemistry Department. Bodenhamer is a 2008 graduate of Hardin-Simmons University. She earned a master's degree from Duke in 2010 and is currently in Baylor's doctoral program in Religion.