

**From:** [Provost](#)  
**To:** [Baylor Faculty All](#); [Baylor Staff](#)  
**Subject:** A Message from Dr. Nancy Brickhouse, Provost  
**Date:** Thursday, December 5, 2019 8:32:09 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Dear Colleagues,

As we near the end of the fall semester and look forward to congratulating another group of Baylor graduates at the December commencement exercises, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your commitment to our students and for your often selfless investment of time and energy in their education and to our institutional mission as a Christian research university.

Our students have entrusted their formation to us, and in response to this privilege we are always seeking to deepen our commitment to providing them with an education that not only equips them intellectually but also nurtures them socially, morally, and spiritually. A Baylor education is a holistic experience.

An outstanding undergraduate education has been a cornerstone of Baylor's mission since our founding, and under *Illuminate* we are deepening our commitment to this central aspect of our identity and daily lives. Indeed, "Transformational Undergraduate Education" is one of our strategic plan's four pillars. At Baylor, undergraduate students develop their leadership potential, explore their faith and beliefs, increase their desire for wisdom, and prepare for service in a diverse and interconnected global society.

### ***A Year of Achievement in Undergraduate Education***

During the past year, we have taken several significant steps in living out our commitment to Baylor's undergraduate students. Perhaps most significant, in terms of new initiatives, has been the implementation during this fall semester of the revised core curriculum in the College of Arts & Sciences — the end result of many months of deliberation and planning, including the overwhelming support of the Council of Chairs.

With more than half of all Baylor undergraduates pursuing one of the four degrees falling under the umbrella of this change, we are providing greater flexibility and facilitating a four-year graduation schedule for thousands of young men and women who have come to Baylor looking to gain a shared foundation of knowledge, essential skills and moral and intellectual virtues in an interdisciplinary environment. For the first time, we are offering a core curriculum that unites these four degree plans, no matter a student's major. As the first revision of our core curriculum in many years, this initiative has established a foundation for strong growth.

In addition, during the past year Andy Hogue, under the direction of Dean Lee Nordt has created the new Office of Engaged Learning that, while housed within the College of Arts & Sciences, serves students from across all our academic divisions. This Office serves as a central repository of programs through which faculty and staff can nurture students and link transformative academic studies to real-world opportunities as a celebration of the significance of a liberal arts education.

By integrating multiple programs into one coherent ecosystem, the Office of Engaged Learning is truly distinct in the landscape of higher education, providing students with access to unique educational experiences that include undergraduate research, internships, study abroad opportunities, informed civic engagement, and major fellowships and awards such as the Fulbright, Marshall, Truman, Gates Cambridge, Goldwater, Boren, and Rhodes.

### *Increasing Resources*

Baylor has distinguished itself for our increased recruitment of international students during a time when the number of such students has been steadily decreasing, sometimes dramatically, at other institutions. Baylor welcomed 938 international students from 83 countries to our degree and exchange programs this fall semester.

This success is the result of many people working together to create a welcoming, supportive environment. Jeff Hamilton and his colleagues in the Center for Global Engagement assist international students and scholars joining our academic community with the visa process, orientation, and integration into the University and life in the United States. By maintaining institutional agreements with partner institutions around the world, CGE has enhanced our reputation as a leader in international education.

Other efforts underway on our campus are designed to support the academic and professional success of all students. To draw attention to one such initiative, I will note our intention to add recitation sections in select courses that are characterized by large numbers of students and relatively high drop, fail, or withdrawal rates. As such, in addition to the academic support we have been providing through the Academic Support Programs (ASP) office on campus, we will be conducting a pilot of new recitation sections during the 2020-2021 academic year in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

For those unfamiliar with recitation classes, they are extension sections of introductory courses that meet during the evenings and are taught by doctoral students who provide personalized, interactive instruction that enhances what students learn in the lecture portion of the course during the day. We currently offer a few such classes, such as in support of precalculus. If successful, this pilot could be extended to other STEM departments, such as the Department of Biology and the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience.

After our students complete the requirements for their degrees, we naturally hope they will immediately go on to begin their professional careers or enter graduate study. In this light, we are continuously striving to enhance the career services available to our undergraduate and graduate students. The recently centralized Baylor University Career Center (BUCC) — located on the first floor of the Sid Richardson Building and with two additional offices in Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation and Rogers School of Engineering and Computer Science — provides career-related services for all Baylor students and functions as the epicenter for educating, advising, and connecting our students with job and internship opportunities as well as resources for professional development. Please encourage your students, at all stages of their time at Baylor, to take advantage of these resources.

President Livingstone and I thank you, again, for your dedicated service to Baylor University and our outstanding students. Each day, you serve as exemplars of our mission as a Christian research university and our commitment to taking a personal interest in the lives of the young men and women who have come to our campus for higher education, providing mentorship

both within and beyond the classroom. As we look toward even greater achievements in 2020, we celebrate your work and Baylor's commitment to an undergraduate education that transforms the lives of our students and truly prepares them for worldwide leadership and service.

Sincerely,

**Nancy Brickhouse, Ph.D.**

Provost

One Bear Place #97014

Waco, TX 76798-7014

t: (254) 710-3601

[baylor.edu/provost](http://baylor.edu/provost)

