

## Pursuing Faculty Flourishing: Faculty Satisfaction Updates and COACHE 2024 Announcement

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

Much has changed at Baylor and in our world since you received the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey in February 2020. The survey, administered by the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) at Harvard University, invites faculty to assess areas of job satisfaction. 63% of Baylor faculty completed the survey, an incredible response that was 21.8% higher than peer institutions across the nation.

Thanks to your time and forthrightness, the survey highlighted areas of faculty life with high approval. Overall, Baylor faculty are more satisfied than their peers at other institutions, they express strong departmental affinity and care for colleagues and students, and they value Baylor's Christian mission.

The survey also identified opportunities for growth in four areas: *underrepresented minority (URM) faculty experiences, decision-making across all levels, barriers to interdisciplinary research and teaching, and mid-career uncertainty*. The Task Force on Faculty Satisfaction, joined by dedicated faculty working groups and the Office of the Provost has sought to enhance faculty experiences. Here are some updates on the University's responses to COACHE data:

- **Baylor is dedicated to attracting and retaining a diverse faculty body.** Baylor's most recent cohort of new faculty is its most diverse ever. The newly appointed Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Belonging, Dr. Stephen Reid, is working diligently to promote mentoring opportunities for URM faculty and initiate collaborations that will enhance faculty belonging and inclusion. Additional research to understand URM experiences will be conducted when COACHE resurveys Baylor faculty.
- **Baylor is invested in promoting and facilitating interdisciplinarity.** The provost Newsletter and school-level communication channels aim to disseminate, connect, and promote interdisciplinarity across campus. Discussions are underway about how to integrate interdisciplinary research into promotion guidelines and train department chairs to evaluate interdisciplinary work. The University centers and institutes, such as the Academy for Teaching and Learning and the Institute for Faith and Learning, continue to connect faculty across the disciplines in workshops and seminars and foster collaborative research and teaching.
- **Baylor is committed to clarifying and communicating decision-making processes.** Many governance concerns require university, unit, and departmental solutions. A comprehensive review of committee structures is working its way through the Faculty Senate. Academic units and departments are developing written bylaws and procedures for decision-making. Required training has been instituted for division directors and department chairs. The provost continues to confer with deans, chairs, and faculty members to see what changes in governance processes might promote faculty flourishing.

- **Baylor is invested in facilitating the development and advancement of mid-career faculty.** New procedures for promotion to the rank of Professor are being implemented across academic units. Scaffolded promotion processes that encourage associate professors to pursue promotion are included in requisite division director and chair training. The provost, along with the Faculty Senate, is weighing the possibility of promotion opportunities for Senior Lecturers. Additional training and mentoring opportunities have been instituted across administrative and academic units as well as Human Resources.

Understanding and improving the faculty experience requires your participation and creativity. The COACHE collaboration, like Baylor's commitment to excellence, is a continuous process. *In the spring of 2024, we will ask you once again to complete the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey.* Your input is critical for assessing how well University initiatives are enriching the faculty experience. We also anticipate new areas for growth in light of survey responses.

Your input will help Baylor enhance faculty satisfaction and retain devoted scholars and teachers. This survey is a major step in ensuring that all faculty experience Baylor University as a wonderful place to work.

If you have questions about the survey—either about the 2020 survey responses or the upcoming 2024 survey—please visit the Office of the Provost's COACHE webpage <https://www.baylor.edu/provost/coache/> or email us at [COACHE@baylor.edu](mailto:COACHE@baylor.edu)

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is a stylized, cursive 'J' followed by a flourish, representing Jason MacGregor. The second signature is a cursive 'L' followed by a flourish, representing Lenore Wright.

Jason MacGregor and Lenore Wright, Co-Chairs, Task Force on Faculty Job Satisfaction