

History of Wake Forest University

On February 3, 1834, the school was founded as Wake Forest Institute. Located in the town of Wake Forest, North Carolina, the school was rechartered as Wake Forest College in 1838. In 1894 the School of Law was established. The School of Medicine, founded 1902, offered a two-year medical program until 1941. In that year, the school moved from the town of Wake Forest to Winston-Salem and became associated with the North Carolina Baptist Hospital, and was named the Bowman Gray School of Medicine. This facility is located approximately four miles from the main campus. In 1942, Wake Forest admitted women as regular undergraduate students.

In 1946 the Trustees of Wake Forest College and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina accepted a proposal by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to relocate the College in Winston-Salem. The late Charles H. Babcock and his wife, the late Mary Reynolds Babcock, contributed a campus site, and building funds were received from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and other sources. In 1948 the College moved all operations. The old Wake Forest campus is now home to the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

A School of Business was established in 1948; in 1969, the undergraduate school was succeeded by the Department of Business and Accountancy (which was reconstituted as the School of Business and Accountancy in 1980, and renamed Wayne Calloway School of Business and Accountancy in 1995) and the Department of Economics in Wake Forest College. The Division of Graduate Studies (now the Graduate School) and Babcock Graduate School of Management were established in 1961 and 1969, respectively. In February 1996, the trustees approved the opening of a Divinity School. A full-time dean was hired in July 1996 with the first class enrolling in fall 1999. In October 1997, the Bowman Gray School of Medicine was renamed the Wake Forest University School of Medicine, while its campus is now known as the Bowman Gray Campus.

The Mission and Purpose of Wake Forest University

(As approved by the Board of Trustees – October 6, 2000)

Wake Forest is a university dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in the liberal arts and in graduate and professional education. Its distinctiveness in its pursuit of its mission derives from its private, co-educational, and residential character; its size and location; and its Baptist affiliation. Each of these factors constitutes a significant aspect of the unique character of the institution.

The University is now comprised of seven constituent parts: two undergraduate institutions, Wake Forest College and the School of Business and Accountancy; the Graduate School; and four professional schools: the School of Law, the School of Medicine, the Babcock Graduate School of Management and the School of Divinity. It seeks to honor the ideals of liberal learning, which entail commitment to the transmission of cultural heritages; teaching the modes of learning in the basic disciplines of human knowledge; developing critical appreciation of moral, aesthetic and religious values; advancing the frontiers of knowledge through in-depth study and research; and applying and utilizing knowledge in the service of humanity.

Wake Forest has been dedicated to the liberal arts for over a century and a half; this means education in the fundamental fields of human knowledge and achievement, as distinguished from education that is technical or narrowly vocational. It seeks to encourage habits of mind that ask "why," that evaluate evidence, that are open to new ideas, that attempt to understand and appreciate the perspectives of others that accept complexity and grapple with it, that admit error, and that pursue truth. Wake Forest College has by far the largest student body at the University, and its function is central to the University's larger life. The College and the Graduate School are most singularly focused on learning for its own sake; they, therefore, serve as exemplars of specific academic values in the life of the university.

Beginning as early as 1894, Wake Forest accepted an obligation to provide professional training in a number of fields, in complement to its primary mission of liberal arts education. This responsibility is fulfilled in the conviction that the humane values embodied in the liberal arts are also centrally relevant to the professions. Professional education at Wake Forest is characterized by commitment to ethical and other professional ideals that transcend technical skills. Like the Graduate School, the professional schools are dedicated to the advancement of learning in their fields. In addition, they are specifically committed to the application of knowledge to solving concrete problems of human beings. They are strengthened by values and goals which they share with the College and Graduate School, and the professional schools enhance the work of these schools and the University as a whole by serving as models of service to humanity.

Wake Forest was founded by private initiative, and ultimate decision-making authority lies in a privately appointed Board of Trustees rather than in a public body. Funded to a large extent from private sources of support, it is determined to chart its own course in the pursuit of its goals. As a co-educational institution, it seeks to "educate together" persons of both sexes and from a wide range of backgrounds --- racial, ethnic, religious, geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural. Its residential features are conducive to learning and the pursuit of a wide range of co-curricular activities. It has made a conscious choice to remain small in overall size; it takes pride in being able to function as a community rather than a conglomerate. Its location in the Piedmont area of North Carolina engenders an ethos that is distinctively Southern, and more specifically North Carolinian. As it seeks further to broaden its constituency and to receive national recognition, it is also finding ways to maintain the ethos associated with its regional roots.

Wake Forest is proud of its Baptist and Christian heritage. For more than a century and a half, it has provided the University's indispensable basis for its mission and purpose, enabling Wake Forest to educate thousands of ministers and laypeople for enlightened leadership in their churches and communities. Far from being exclusive and parochial, this religious tradition gives the University roots that ensure its lasting identity and branches that provide a supportive environment for a wide variety of faiths. The Baptist insistence on the separation of church and state and local autonomy has helped to protect the University from interference and domination by outside interests whether these be commercial, governmental, or ecclesiastical. The Baptist stress upon an uncoerced conscience in matters of religious belief has been translated into a concern for academic freedom. The Baptist emphasis upon revealed truth enables a strong religious critique of human reason, even as the claims of revelation are put under the scrutiny of reason. The character of intellectual life at Wake Forest

encourages open and frank dialogue and provides assurance that the University will be ecumenical and not provincial in scope, and that must encompass perspectives other than the Christian. Wake Forest thus seeks to maintain and invigorate what is noblest in its religious heritage.

Statement of Principle on Diversity

Wake Forest University is a community of men and women that seeks the enlightenment and freedom which come through diligent study and learning. Its higher goal, however, is to give life to the University motto "Pro Humanitate," as members translate a passion for knowledge into compassionate service.

The community shares a tradition that embraces freedom and integrity and acknowledges the worth of the individual. The heritage established by the school's founders and nurtured by succeeding generations, promotes a democratic spirit arising from open-mindedness and discourse.

Wake Forest fosters compassion and caring for others. Its collective strength and character are derived from the values and distinctive experiences of each individual; therefore, it affirms the richness of human intellect and culture and its contribution to knowledge, faith, reason, and dialogue. Furthermore, it strives toward a society in which good will, respect, and equality prevail. To that end, Wake Forest University rejects hatred and bigotry in any form and promotes justice, honor, and mutual trust.