

History of Wake Forest University

Wake Forest Institute was founded in 1834 by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. The school opened its doors on February 3 with Samuel Wait as principal. Classes were first held in a farmhouse on the Calvin Jones plantation in Wake County, North Carolina, near which the village of Wake Forest later developed.

Rechartered in 1838 as Wake Forest College, Wake Forest is one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in the state. The School of Law was established in 1894, followed by a two-year medical school in 1902. Wake Forest was exclusively a college for men until World War II, when women were admitted for the first time.

In 1941, the medical school moved to Winston-Salem to become affiliated with North Carolina Baptist Hospital and was renamed the Bowman Gray School of Medicine. In 1946, the trustees of Wake Forest and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina accepted a proposal by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to relocate the College to Winston-Salem. The late Charles and Mary Reynolds Babcock donated much of the R.J. Reynolds family estate as the site for the campus and building funds were received from many sources. From 1952 to 1956, the first fourteen buildings were constructed in Georgian style on the new campus. The move to Winston-Salem took place in the summer of 1956; the original, or "old" campus, is now home to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Following the move, Wake Forest grew considerably in enrollment, programs, and stature and became a University in 1967. The School of Business Administration, first established in 1948, was named the Charles H. Babcock School of Business Administration in 1969 and admitted its first graduate students in 1971. In 1972, the school enrolled only graduate students and the name was changed to the Babcock Graduate School of Management; departments of business and accountancy and economics were established in the College. In 1980, the Department of Business and Accountancy was reconstituted as the School of Business and Accountancy; the name was changed to the Wayne Calloway School of Business and Accountancy in 1995. The Calloway and Babcock schools were integrated as the Wake Forest University Schools of Business in 2009, combining the faculties of the business schools to serve undergraduate and graduate students.

The Division of Graduate Studies, established in 1961, is now organized as the Graduate School and encompasses advanced work in the arts and sciences on both the Reynolda and Bowman Gray campuses. In 1997, the medical school was renamed the Wake Forest University School of Medicine; its campus is now known as the Bowman Gray Campus. The Divinity School was established in 1999.

Wake Forest honors its Baptist Heritage in word and deed. The University will fulfill the opportunities for service arising out of that heritage. Governance is now by an independent Board of Trustees; there are advisory boards of visitors for the College and each professional school.

Statement of Purpose

(As approved by the Board of Trustees – March 22, 2002)

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 heritage. 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 Wayne Calloway School of Business and Accountancy; the Graduate School; and four professional schools: the School of Law, the Wake Forest University School of Medicine, the Babcock Graduate School of Management and the Divinity School. It seeks to honor the ideals of liberal learning, which entail commitment to 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 using 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 in 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, as a 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 a 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, Wake Forest 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 an 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 both 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 it 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.

Chronological History of Wake Forest University

- 1834 Founded in Wake County, N.C., as Wake Forest Manual Labor Institute in cooperation with the N.C. Baptist Convention
- 1838 Named Wake Forest College
- 1894 School of Law established
- 1902 School of Medicine founded
- 1921 First Summer Session
- 1936 Approval of the School of Law by the American Bar Association

- 1941 Relocation of the School of Medicine to Winston-Salem and eventual change of name to Bowman Gray School of Medicine and association with the North Carolina Baptist Hospital
- 1942 Women admitted as undergraduate students
- 1948 School of Business Administration established
- 1956 Move to Winston-Salem in response to an endowment from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
- 1961 Division of Graduate Studies established
- 1967 Became Wake Forest University
- 1969 School of Business Administration renamed Charles H. Babcock School of Business Administration
- 1972 Charles H. Babcock Graduate School of Management enrolled first graduate students. Department of Business and Accountancy and a Department of Economics established in the College.
- 1980 Department of Business and Accountancy renamed School of Business and Accountancy
- 1986 Redefined the relationship with the N.C. Baptist State Convention
- 1995 School of Business and Accountancy changed name to Wayne Calloway School of Business and Accountancy
- 1997 Change of name to Wake Forest University School of Medicine
- 1999 Opening of the Wake Forest University Divinity School
- 2002 Incorporation of Wake Forest University Health Sciences

Accreditation

Wake Forest University is a Member of or Accredited by:

AACSB International – The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
 American Bar Association
 American Chemical Society
 American Council on Education
 Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant of the American Medical Association
 Association of American Colleges
 Association of American Law Schools
 Association of American Medical Colleges
 Association of Theological Schools
 Board of Law Examiners
 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
 Council of Graduate Schools
 Council of Southern Graduate Schools
 Council of the North Carolina State Bar
 Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association
 Liaison Committee on Medical Education of the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Colleges
 National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences
 National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
 National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
 North Carolina Association of Colleges and Universities
 North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
 North Carolina Conference of Graduate Schools
 North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
 Oak Ridge Associated Universities
 Section on Medical Schools of the American Medical Association
 Southern Universities Conference