The Division of Student Life is a dynamic and diverse student-centered unit that encompasses more than 200 professional staff across 14 areas of the university. We serve 20,000+ students from 100+ different countries and all 50 states, a community that represents a beautiful mosaic of ideas, experiences, cultures, and aspirations. In alignment with the University’s mission, the Division of Student Life seeks to enrich the Baylor experience through life-changing programs and services resulting in an integrated education known for virtuous leadership and service, Christian faith and community, and the holistic development of students. It is an exciting journey with no one student’s experiences being exactly like another’s. Therefore, our approach varies as we provide advice, counsel, encouragement, spiritual guidance, and a comprehensive set of services, programs, and experiences that help students learn, grow, and develop to their fullest potential.

2023–2024

This year marked a significant step toward enhancing the Baylor experience, underscoring our commitment to nurturing a thriving community where every student can flourish. Some of our efforts included successful transitions for our new mascots (Indy and Belle), the renovation and re-opening of Collins Hall, and launching a new Leadership Certificate focused on the virtues and leadership for the common good. We expanded Mental Health First Aid training and introduced resilience courses toward further supporting student care and well-being. Events like the inaugural Sic ‘Em Slam, interfaith chapel experiences, and civil discourse training deepened our intercultural engagement and unity. In addition to forming partnerships on campus, in our community, and nationally—resulting in our hosting of the National Day of Prayer—we have also enhanced our faith-based activities and service learning initiatives.

We again held to our four Divisional priorities, outlined below.

Divisional Priorities and Accomplishments:

1) Enhance the Residential Campus
   • Successfully transitioned our new Baylor mascots, Indy and Belle, to campus and into their new roles while celebrating and relocating Lady to a newly updated, off-campus retirement facility.
   • Completed our fifth residence hall renovation, Collins Hall, and reopened it in the fall receiving positive responses throughout the year by residents and alumni.
   • Started construction on the sixth residence hall renovation project, Alexander/Memorial Halls, while completing plans for the seventh, Allen/Dawson Halls, which construction began this summer.
   • Hosted a full slate of cherished Baylor traditions throughout the year showcasing the University and creating memories of a lifetime for tens of thousands of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests.
   • Launched a pilot of the Leadership Certificate Program grounded in the Leadership for the Common Good model and associated virtues. Working to scale the program to expose more students this coming year.

2) Strengthen Health and Well-Being of Students & Staff
   • Trained 168 faculty, staff, and students in Mental Health First Aid resulting in 26% of the departments on campus having at least one person who has gone through this training.
   • Provided health-related services (Counseling Services and Health Services) to 9,189 students this year for a total of over 27,000 appointments while also assisting 2,277 students through the Care Team and 665 through the BARC.
2023-2024 Divisional Priorities and Accomplishments, Continued:

• Launched a new resilience course that resulted in 84% of the students who completed the class indicating the course helped them become more resilient.
• Partnered with Human Resources to design and implement strategies to improve staff recruitment, retention, and sense of mental and spiritual well-being.

3) Increase the Care, Connection, and Community for an Increasingly Diverse Student Population

• Implemented Phase II of the Intercultural Engagement model by training 1,175 student leaders on its core concepts and developing an instrument, the Intercultural Readiness survey, to establish a baseline for future assessment.
• Effectively facilitated requests for expressive activities focused on violence in the Middle East and other issues of concern providing students with an avenue to voice their opinions in a safe and respectful way.
• Planned and implemented a civil discourse series (Bridgebuilding) to help students develop the skills needed to communicate effectively across differences and build mutual understanding around shared values and aspirations.
• Piloted an interfaith chapel experience for students of various faiths to explore spiritual themes and practices in the context of Baylor’s diverse Christian community.

4) Expand High-Impact Faith and Character Formative Experiences

• Provided 50-plus chapel offerings in both fall and spring semesters with over 80% of participants indicating chapel contributed positively to their spiritual formation.
• Hosted the National Collegiate Day of Prayer which brought together church leaders from across the community, was attended by 2,200 people in Waco Hall, and was simulcasted to 4,200 college campuses around the world.
• Realigned Spiritual Life staffing to bolster pastoral care serves for students resulting in resident chaplains conducting 2,568 pastoral conversations, 1,704 program sessions, and 252 crisis responses.
• Sent 23 Global Missions teams comprised of 267 students and 60 faculty/staff leaders to 14 countries worldwide.

New: Operational and Business Accomplishments

• Established the Student Life Business office and implemented the initial stages of the business transformation process.
• Worked with the Vice President of Student Life (VPSL) and Senior Leadership Team to conceptualize, gain approval, and secured $385K additional funding to implement salary and career ladder changes for existing Coordinator, Assistant Director, and Associate Director roles across the Division.
• Executed a Division-wide budget planning process, securing additional operating funds of $370K for high priority needs.
• Raised student employment minimum wage for the division to $8/hour and funded a 10 percent increase in all student employment budgets while gaining additional funds for New Student Programs summer wages and Chapel wages from Division reserves.
• Secured self-funding and approval for $850K worth of capital project improvements in the McLane Student Life Center (office expansion, back patio resurfacing, and pool deck refurbishment).