

University Achieves Tier-One Research Designation

HOW BAYLOR UNIVERSITY ACCELERATED ITS JOURNEY TO TIER-ONE RESEARCH (R1) STATUS

Baylor University President Linda A. Livingstone rejoiced when the 177-year-old Texas institution accomplished “what very few, if any, universities have achieved: maintaining our foundational Christian mission while reaching R1 status as a top-tier research university.” The story of how Baylor achieved R1 university designation by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education — and did so three years earlier than expected — is one of vision, collaboration, persistence, and innovation.

Approach

Baylor University selected Huron to assess and evaluate its research administration operations and implement a refined model for faculty service delivery to best enable service and growth to achieve its R1 aspirations. The assessment identified the need for the university to replace its legacy structure and processes with a new model that provides consistency and support across all units to further strategic growth goals for the future. Huron also supported Baylor leadership as the university identified potential gaps in support, clarified roles and responsibilities, and expanded new hiring guidelines.

This engagement allowed the team to take a step back and have intentional conversations with stakeholders to shape the office and create structure. Alignment was the key to growth in the research administration office and would not be possible without Baylor’s spirit of true collaboration and innovation.

— Kevin Chambliss, Vice Provost for Research at Baylor University

Concurrent with reshaping operations and faculty service delivery, [Huron supported the university’s implementation of Oracle Cloud technology](#) to further redesign research administration business processes to improve efficiency, transparency, accountability, and service levels.

The new operating model and technologies coincided with an uptick in remote work amid the pandemic, which enabled the organization to consider candidates with unique experience outside the local talent pool. The newly formed geographically diverse staff was even able to keep research administration processes running to support faculty and staff investigators during a statewide power outage affecting more than 4.5 million homes and businesses, including Baylor University and the surrounding Waco areas.

Results

The changes to Baylor University resulted in reshaping the research administration office and creating a support structure across campus to facilitate growth in proposal submissions and awards under management.

“This was not an off-the-shelf solution. Baylor University leadership were eager and willing to take recommendations and embrace true collaboration as a team.”

SUSAN STEARSMAN, ASSOCIATE VICE PROVOST FOR RESEARCH AT BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

The university procured a **\$43.4** million research grant for the Global Flourishing Study, the largest single-funded research project in Baylor history.

Four professors won highly competitive National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER grants, the most ever in a single year at Baylor.

Total research expenditures grew from **\$29.4** million to **\$47** million over four years while external research expenditures grew by **28%**.

Baylor increased the research dollars awarded from **\$11 million** to more than **\$27 million** over three years.

The university increased research doctorates awarded by **34%**.



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