

ACCREDITATIONS AND HISTORY

Accreditations

Baylor University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees. Baylor University also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Baylor University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org (<http://www.sacscoc.org/>)).

History

The teaching of law at Baylor University began in 1849. The School of Law was formally organized in 1857 with a course of study leading to the bachelor of laws degree. The Law School had among its early teachers several eminent lawyers and jurists in the early history of Texas, among them R. E. B. Baylor, Abner S. Lipscomb, John Sayles, and Royal T. Wheeler, the first dean of the Law School. The Law School was closed in 1883, and its modern history stems from its reorganization and reopening in 1920 under the leadership of Dean Allen G. Flowers, who served as its dean from 1920-35.

The Law School has operated continuously since that date, except for the period 1943-46, when World War II interrupted its operation. It was led in the pre-war and post-war periods by Deans Thomas E. McDonald (1935-39), Abner E. Lipscomb (1940-41), and Leslie Jackson (1941-48).

Abner V. McCall was dean of the Law School from 1948 to 1959, and served as President of the University from 1961-1981. William J. Boswell followed McCall as dean, serving from 1959-65. Dean Angus S. McSwain joined the faculty in 1949 and served as dean from 1965-84. Dean McSwain then returned to full-time teaching and was succeeded by Charles W. Barrow, who was a Justice on the Texas Supreme Court at the time of his selection as dean. Dean Barrow served as dean from 1984 to 1991. Brad Toben was dean from 1991 to 2023.

Baylor is one of nine accredited law schools in Texas. The Law School was approved by the ABA in 1931 and became a member of the AALS in 1938. Although its graduates comprise less than ten percent of Texas lawyers, they have had and continue to have an important and disproportionately great impact on government, the judiciary, and the legal profession. Baylor Law School graduates include many current and former statewide officeholders in Texas, many past presidents of the State Bar of Texas, and judges serving at all levels of the state judiciary and on the federal bench. Additionally, two presidents of the ABA since 1970 have been Baylor graduates. One of these was the distinguished Watergate special prosecutor, the late Leon Jaworski. Also a Baylor Law School graduate, the late William Sessions was former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

More on the history of Baylor Law School can be found here (<https://www.baylor.edu/law/?id=930137>).