Wake Forest University is characterized by its commitment to the liberal arts and professional education, its strong sense of community and engagement in society, and its encouragement of advancing the spirit of Pro Humanitate.

As an institution which respects free inquiry and expression, the University is known for upholding the teacher-scholar ideal; expecting exceptional teaching and outstanding research, scholarship and creativity; and promoting faculty interaction with students both in and out of the classroom that nurtures their intellectual and personal development.

Wake Forest University also welcomes the challenges of cultural diversity and pluralism in all its forms and is committed to addressing these challenges through the cultivation of diverse learning communities that reflect the world in which students and faculty live, work and lead.

Background

In 1834, Wake Forest Manual Labor Institute was founded by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Re-chartered 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 and was followed by a two-year medical school in 1902. Wake Forest was 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, 100 miles to the west. 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 14 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 Charles H. Babcock School of Business Administration, first established in 1948, admitted its first graduate students in 1971. In 1972, the school enrolled only graduate students and the name was changed to the Charles H. 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 Wayne Calloway School of Business and Accountancy. In 2009, the Wayne Calloway School of Business and Accountancy and the Charles H. Babcock Graduate School of Management officially merged under the name Wake Forest University Schools of Business, and in 2013, the name was changed to the Wake Forest University School of Business.

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 the Reynolda Campus, the Brookstown campus and the Wake Downtown campus.

In 1997, the medical school was renamed the Wake Forest University School of Medicine. The University in 2001 created a subsidiary entity, Wake Forest University Health Sciences, which operates the Medical School and is governed by a board of directors that includes in its membership University trustees and the Wake Forest University president. In 2016, the School of Medicine moved its medical education programs to Innovation Quarter in downtown Winston-Salem. In 2020, a health system integration arrangement was entered into with Charlotte-based Atrium Health, Inc. and plans were announced to add a second Medical School campus in Charlotte, which will welcome its first students in 2024.

The School of Divinity was established in 1999 and is located on the Reynolda Campus, and the School of Professional Studies was started in 2021 in Charlotte.

Governance

University governance is by an independent Board of Trustees; there are advisory boards of visitors for Wake Forest College, each professional school and Z. Smith Reynolds Library.

Campuses

The College, the School of Business, the School of Law, the Graduate School and the School of Divinity are located on the Reynolda Campus in northwest Winston-Salem. The Wake Forest School of Medicine is located in Innovation Quarter, four miles from the Reynolda Campus, in downtown Winston-Salem. The Brookstown Campus, also located in downtown Winston-Salem, houses select Graduate School programs. The Wake Forest University Charlotte Center, located in that city’s acclaimed uptown business district, is home to select graduate business programs and the newly-formed School of Professional Studies, established in 2021. The University also offers instruction regularly at Casa Artom in Venice, at Worrell House in London, at Flow House in Vienna, in Wake Washington on Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C., and in several other places around the world.

Academic Offerings

The College offers courses in more than 40 fields of study leading to the baccalaureate degree.

The School of Divinity offers the master of divinity degree and joint degree programs in law, education, counseling and sustainability in conjunction with other divisions of the University.

The Wake Forest School of Business offers a four-year bachelor of science degree, with majors in accountancy, business and enterprise management, finance, and mathematical business (offered jointly with the Department of Mathematics); and four graduate degree programs: master of science in accountancy (MSA), master of arts in management (MA), master of business administration (MBA), and master of science in business analytics (MSBA).

The School of Law offers the juris doctor, doctor of juridical science degree (SJD), master of studies in law degree (MSL), and master of laws in American law degrees. The school also offers joint JD programs with the School of Business, the School of Divinity and the Graduate School.

In addition to the doctor of medicine degree, the Wake Forest School of Medicine offers, through the Graduate School, programs leading to the master of science and doctor of philosophy degrees in biomedical
The University sciences. The School of Medicine and the School of Business offer a joint MD/MBA program.

The Graduate School confers the master of arts, master of arts in education, master of arts in liberal studies, and master of science degrees in the arts and sciences and the doctor of philosophy degree in biology, chemistry and physics. The Graduate School also offers an MFA in documentary film and dual degree programs with the School of Medicine and the School of Business. Additionally, the school also offers joint degree programs with the School of Law and the School of Divinity.

As the newest school at Wake Forest, the School of Professional Studies provides graduate degree and non-degree programs, including certificates and other credentials, focused on supporting today’s working professionals with the skills and knowledge to take their careers to the next level. It also offers custom educational programs to corporate partners to support talent development needs.

Equity in Athletics

The Higher Education Act requires that institutions of higher education make available by October 15 of each year a copy of the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act annual report to any student who requests one. Please contact the Athletic Department to request a copy of this document.