The changing face of campus life

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Chapter 10

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Martha Lou Scott and Frank Shushok Jr.

Excellence is sought through a variety of measures. That is why a university interested in strengthening its Christian identity and advancing into the top tier of American universities would place a strong emphasis on student-life programming, specifically the on-campus residential experience. For the Christian, community is not something created by human devices. Rather, community is accepted as a gift from God. As described by Julie Gorman, “Our role, like that of the Israeli crossing into the Promised Land, is the taking of the land by choosing to plant the soles of our feet on the ‘given ground’ to possess it.”¹ Invigorating student life programming, therefore, especially when conceptualized as choosing to plant the soles of our feet on given ground, is an important and fundamentally Christian endeavor. Unfortunately, Christian institutions—churches, universities, and others—frequently fail to facilitate a commitment to community.

Not surprisingly, what is good for the Christian university is often good for the secular university as well. Community gives people a sense of place, the gift of membership that nurtures belonging and a host of residual effects that all universities care about, such as higher retention rates, student satisfaction, and, most importantly, student learning. As M. Scott Peck notes, “The members [of community] feel they have been temporarily—at least partially—transported out of a mundane world of ordinary preoccupations.”² When Baylor benchmarked “aspirational peers,” largely non-sectarian tier-one universities, one thing was clear: these institutions fostered a strong sense of membership through student-life programming, and, most certainly, housed students on-campus for most of their collegiate careers. For Baylor to be tier one, student community-building was one of the paths to travel. To be a tier-one university while enhancing its Christian identity, strengthening community among students seemed non-negotiable.

Introduction

It’s not the same old dorm anymore! Or is it? Since its founding days in Independence, Texas, Baylor University has prioritized education for both males and females. Along with providing an excellent education, housing students was and continues to be a major concern at Baylor.

The beginnings were humble. In the early days of Anglo-American settlement in colonial Texas, under Mexican rule with its endorsement of Catholicism, Protestant families often gathered quietly in homes for worship. Out of religious practice arose other worthwhile enterprises, most notably, education. Before 1830, John P. Coles, from North Carolina, and his wife, Mary Eleanor Owen Coles, from Georgia, settled on rich bottom land along the Brazos River. A Baptist, Mary Coles was concerned about providing an education for her children—five daughters and one son. By 1835, Frances Trask, a native of
Massachusetts trained in education in New York, had organized a boarding school for the daughters of the Coles family and other pioneers. Miss Trask’s seminary for young pioneer ladies was the first boarding school in Texas, and it laid the foundation for what was to come.3

Frances Trask taught her seven boarders in what she described to her father as “a frame building, 15 x 20 feet in size with two glazed windows on one side and folding doors at each end. This was the school room, parlor, bed chamber, and hall.” The cost of attending the school was two dollars per week for board, which consisted of mostly cornbread and bacon, and six to ten dollars per course for tuition. (As a point of contrast, the cost of living in traditional freshman halls on the Baylor campus during the 2005–2006 academic year was $3,346; board was $3,139; and flat-rate tuition, $19,050.4) In 1839, Trask Seminary became the property of educator Henry F. Gillette, who renamed it Independence Female Academy. Over the next six years, the academy changed hands several times and operated under various teachers. Following the chartering of Baylor University on February 1, 1845, the founding trustees chose for its location the old Independence Academy, formerly Trask Seminary, and invited Gillette to return as the school’s first teacher. Enrollment grew from twenty-four young men and women on the first day of classes in May 1846 to seventy by the end of the session.5

Such success created an immediate need for additional faculty and student housing, and school officials responded. Records of the day indicate that within a year of Baylor’s opening, the trustees began exploring housing needs and discovered that “board can be obtained in private families at $8.00 per month, including lodging and washing.” In 1851, with the appointment of Baylor’s second president, Rufus C. Burleson, the university built separate residence and teaching facilities for its male students on nearby Allen Hill, about a half-mile from the original wooden academy building, where the girls remained.6

Thus, from its earliest days, Baylor University set in motion three practices that have continued throughout the institution’s history: (1) the university ensures that students have accessible housing; (2) men and women maintain separate housing accommodations; and (3) when resources are plentiful and planning is conducted, living and learning coexist.

Elevating the Value and Prominence of the Co-curricular Experience at Baylor

Baylor’s long history of nurturing men and women into noble and learned citizens is a tradition that practically ensures the appointment of leaders who value the university’s mission of preparing and educating “men and women for worldwide leadership and service.” There is little doubt that, as presidents of Baylor University, both Abner V. McCall (1961–81) and Herbert H. Reynolds (1981–95) were “student-centered,” with high ambitions for a distinctly Baylor educational experience. Many believe that the appointment of Robert B. Sloan Jr. as the university’s twelfth president in 1995 marked a substantial and fundamental shift, however, in the way Baylor structured and facilitated campus life. From the viewpoint of many observers, the September 21, 2001, adoption by the Board of Regents of Baylor 2012 signaled a shift in philosophy. Imperative II of the vision called for community excellence in these words: “New residences of a variety of styles and themes will be developed to increase the percentage of students living in residence halls. By 2012, over fifty percent of our undergraduate students will live in these vibrant communities, thereby creating a critical mass of campus community involved in a daily living and learning environment.”7 Along with approval of Baylor 2012 in 2001, with the unanimous support of the
Board of Regents, Baylor adopted living-learning communities and construction began on North Village, the first new residence hall built on the Baylor campus since 1967.8

An examination of Baylor history prior to the Sloan administration reveals two factors of particular importance for this discussion. The first is enrollment. From 1961, at the beginning of the McCall administration, to 1995, when Reynolds stepped down from the presidency to become chancellor, enrollment at Baylor increased by 135.28 percent, rising from 5,186 to 12,202. In 2005, enrollment stands at 13,799.9 During the early years of the McCall administration, the university required all female students under twenty-three years of age to live on campus in residence halls but permitted male students to live anywhere they desired after their freshman year. In the mid-1970s, Baylor set aside its housing requirements for women in response to both the virtual explosion in enrollment and the enforcement of Title IX, which required equal treatment of males and females.10

As it was in the early days of Baylor in Independence, the university met its unanticipated increased enrollment by turning to off-campus providers to help meet the housing demand. The decision that enrollment would not grow beyond a ceiling of around 7,000 made construction of additional residence halls unnecessary.11 Thus, during the McCall and Reynolds years, Baylor deemphasized the supposition that all university environmental experiences, especially the residential experience, should be viewed as part of the academic enterprise with the potential to transform students in fundamental ways—the very assumption that, from the viewpoint of the professionalized student affairs administrator, became unearthed by the adoption of Baylor 2012.

The second historical factor of importance to this discussion was a change in standards of professionalism within student-life work. The philosophical shift ushered in by Sloan mirrored a national trend in student life that began transitioning the work of student-affairs administrators from simply managing the affairs of students outside the classroom to what has been labeled the “co-curricular phase” of student-life administration. Graduate programs preparing student-life administrators began emphasizing the creation of well-designed co-curricular programs that focused on “student learning.” This contemporary philosophy admonishes student-life administrators to craft deliberate experiences that bring together the previously separated universes of academic affairs and student affairs. Providing high-quality educational experiences that promote learning has become fundamental to the field and purpose of student affairs work.12

As the co-curricular trend in student life administration gained ground nationally, glimpses of these experiences began to emerge at Baylor as early as the Reynolds era. The beginning of the Reynolds presidency in 1981 arguably embodied a student-life perspective that did not exist in the McCall administration of the previous twenty years. Following the Vietnam era, a different type of student arrived on campus, a student who was more politically active and more interested in services offered to students. Out-of-classroom student experiences could no longer be viewed as something to be managed, even when they were managed well. Student-life staffs and budgets were lean. A noteworthy example of the period is Baylor’s central office of student life, where three full-time staff members were expected to lead orientation programs and oversee all student organizations, in addition to all other responsibilities. Only two of the three individuals had training and experience in education; the third had been a librarian prior to becoming an assistant dean. With the increase in student expectations came gradual increases in personnel and financial resources. That staff of three has now grown to approximately two-dozen
individuals who provide the functions in the current administration. Most of these staff members hold a master’s degree in student-personnel services or a similar discipline.

Under the Reynolds administration, the residence halls, another example, were managed by graduate students, retirees, or individuals in a holding pattern on their way to law school or in a career transition. Student life emphasized offering needed services, caring for students, and developing the “whole student,” as evidenced by a common symbol of the 1980s to mid-1990s—the Welcome Week wheel. The Baylor of this time no doubt valued the outside-the-classroom student experience, but viewed it as secondary to the intellectual development taking place in the academic halls. Nevertheless, the university took steps to add student services such as orientation programs, to employ professional academic advisers, and to offer support programs for students who were at risk. One of the most noteworthy changes was the employment of a dean for student development. With each of these programs, the student-life staff grew. The student-life program began to evolve and, in the process, began to bridge the gap between classroom and co-curricular learning. Each step followed the national trend that increasingly viewed student life as parallel in value to formal classroom learning and fundamental to the overall education experience. The Sloan presidency has been even more deliberate in these efforts.

A Shift in Hiring Student-Life Staff

In the 1960s, the student-life division was referred to as Student Affairs. The very name revealed a great deal about how the work was viewed. Serving as partners with faculty to enhance student learning was not the mandate of student-life staff, despite efforts that had begun during the McCall years when faculty contracts provided incentives for members of the faculty to partner with student-life personnel to advise student organizations. Staff members more likely viewed themselves in the way that student-life professionals had framed their work in 1916, when the first student-life graduate program was founded at Teachers College of Columbia University—that is, serving Baylor as student caretaker, guide, disciplinarian, and service provider.

One of the steps taken in the Reynolds years was to rename the division “Student Life” and elevate the senior student-personnel officer from the position of dean to that of vice president. As vice president, this individual sat at the same table as the academic vice president, a visual symbol of changing philosophy. A feeling of in loco parentis continued to exist on campus, but student-life staffers were better educated, though most frequently graduates of Baylor. Nevertheless, they were not necessarily professionalized—not part of a growing number of individuals educated in student-affairs graduate programs that emphasize academic community life. Such professionals frequently work at a variety of colleges and universities in preparation for a senior student-life position as a dean, director, or vice president. Baylor’s student-life administrators during the Reynolds era, by contrast, were more likely to represent what higher education professor Robert Birnbaum termed a “local,” an individual whose major commitments are on their campus. Locals frequently view themselves primarily as members of their institution rather than part of a larger profession. The university often considered hiring from within as helpful in preserving campus culture, retaining established traditions, and strengthening loyal relationships over time. The major drawbacks of this practice are the lack of exposure to professional growth and lack of awareness of national trends.
Measures to upgrade overall student life at Baylor became more pronounced during the Sloan presidency. According to Birnbaum, “cosmopolitans,” a term that defines the more common student-life administrator hired during the Sloan era, are generally more likely to do research, participate in a national dialogue about student life issues, and find at least a portion of their satisfaction and reward from participation in, and recognition from, peers in their profession.16

With the hiring of more cosmopolitan student-life administrators, significant shifts in philosophy and varying approaches to campus life became evident at Baylor. The selection of Eileen Hulme as vice president for student life in 2001 serves as a case in point regarding the obvious transition in thought and practice. Hulme, a 1982 Baylor alumna, had earned graduate degrees in student services at Azusa Pacific University and the University of Texas-Austin and had worked on multiple college campuses before returning to her alma mater. Upon her arrival at Baylor, Hulme charted a plan for reinventing residential life at Baylor. One of her first recommendations required national searches for the positions of director and dean. Another included the creation of a dean-level position (hired through a national search) to elicit outside thinking about campus housing. Hulme knew that the culture of living off campus beyond the freshman year had become an entrenched norm at Baylor. Reversing this trend would prove a difficult endeavor, particularly in light of Baylor’s dated facilities and restrictive rules, along with the presence of a healthy apartment environment adjacent to the campus.

**Reaching Back Forty Years—Returning Baylor to a Residential Campus**

Nowhere is there a more pronounced discontinuity over the past twenty years than in the area of campus life, in particular, residential living. As previously stated, until the mid-1970s, Baylor required women to live on campus unless they were twenty-three years of age, married, or living at home. Between 1970 and 1980, Baylor experienced a dramatic decade of growth; and the approximate 3,500 housing spaces for men and women became woefully inadequate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall Enrollment</th>
<th>Increase from Previous Year</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>7,051</td>
<td>611</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>7,607</td>
<td>556</td>
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<td>1973</td>
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<td>8,322</td>
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<td>8,628</td>
<td>306</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>9,095</td>
<td>467</td>
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</table>
Freshmen received assured priority in housing assignments; upper division students had to live elsewhere (mainly in apartments that sprang up within a one-mile radius around campus). Given the size of entering classes, maintaining high occupancies in residence halls was not an issue, particularly since parents desired that their students live on campus in supervised environments, and most students were under the false impression that they had to live on campus. Occupancy rates were typically over 100 percent on move-in day, so budget concerns were not an issue as long as this trend continued. The current emphasis at Baylor on increasing the percentage (and therefore number) of students living on campus represents a sharp departure from past practices.

There are reasonable explanations for Baylor’s status as a commuter campus, but a return toward a more residential campus became noticeable in 2004, when the proportion of the student body living on campus increased to 35 percent, a level unattained since the mid-1970s, when the decline in the percentage of the student body calling residence halls home began. The chief impetus for this shift in practice was the creation of three “living-learning communities” and a new 600-bed upper division housing facility called the North Village Residential Community. These initiatives were preceded by a philosophical shift that from the previous notion that residence halls are only about utility, to a conviction that campus housing is also a learning environment with potential for enhancing the academic activities practiced in the classroom.

The most obvious symbol of a philosophical shift in thinking about residence halls at Baylor appeared in the language of Baylor 2012, wherein one guiding principle is to provide a place where learning and building community thrive. One prominent mechanism for nurturing this environment is student-life programming, especially in the residence halls. In fact, one of twelve major imperatives of the vision is to create a “truly residential campus,” including returning the percentage of students living on campus to at least 50 percent by 2012. Sloan told Baylor Magazine that “Fifty percent is just an initial goal. We’re working toward 75 percent.” In the same interview, Sloan identified the model of interest to Baylor as the approach to campus housing at the University of Notre Dame, which houses 90 percent of students all four years. Sloan emphasized that this practice “creates a completely different experience. People are loyal to Notre Dame to a fault, and it’s because they had a four-year experience in one place. But we don’t expect to be able to do that by warehousing people in Collins or Penland.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tr>
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<td>364</td>
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<td>1978</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<td>9,731</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>10,125</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Sources: Baylor University registrar reports, 1970–1980*
to a conviction that campus housing is also a learning environment with potential for enhancing the academic activities practiced in the classroom.

Mark B. Ryan, the author of *A Collegiate Way of Living*, explained such a shift in thinking about residence halls at Yale in a manner consistent, perhaps, with the one taking place at Baylor. He wrote,

In classical political philosophy, there is a fundamental distinction between associations organized for “mere life,” and those organized for the “good life.” “Mere life” refers to the provision of basic physical necessities, whereas “good life” implies the cultivation of virtue and human fulfillment—the full development of the talents and capacities of all individuals in the association. Essentially, that is the distinction between a dormitory and a residential college: a dormitory is organized to provide food and shelter; a college, to provide for the student’s intellectual, social, and personal development.19

The Sophomore Exodus from Baylor Campus Housing

After a day of moving students into the residence halls, students and parents receive a traditional welcome from the Baylor president. As one long-time student affairs staffer recollected, Reynolds frequently noted in his address that all parents and faculty should visit the residence halls at least once. His emphasis was on the word *once*, and his good-natured quip was a humorous attempt at describing Baylor residence halls as bastions of mystery primarily suitable only for the students who resided there. The former director of residence life recalled that Reynolds commented, “I visited [the residence halls] once and that was enough for me.” Reynolds’s view of residence halls was not unusual among university presidents, especially those heavily influenced by the German assumptions that guided the development of American higher education during the twentieth century. In their view, residence halls were not educational tools where faculty, staff, and students congregated to discuss the “collegiate way”; instead “dorms”—derived from the Latin root word *dormire*, meaning to sleep—were facilities that gave students a place to rest a tired body after rigorous classroom learning.

When McCall assumed the Baylor presidency in 1961, Baylor’s enrollment had exceeded five thousand students for the first time. McCall expressed concern that the supply of on-campus housing was unsatisfactory to meet the demand created by the burgeoning enrollment. As a result, McCall “acted vigorously to build a new residence hall,”20 resulting in the 1962 completion of a women’s dormitory originally named New Hall. In early 1966, McCall once again endorsed the addition of residential housing on campus, and by September an addition to New Hall (later named North and South Russell) opened for female students. This construction was the last student housing facility built at Baylor until the North Village Residential Community opened in the fall of 2004. By then, Baylor’s enrollment rested at just under fourteen thousand students. Perhaps the most plausible explanation for McCall’s lack of interest in additional residence halls from 1967 until he departed in 1981 was his belief that Baylor had reached its enrollment capacity. Just after the opening of South Russell, McCall noted that “Baylor University is now as big as we ought to get.” Further, McCall explained, “We have decided to limit our total enrollment to about 6,500 to 6,700 students; the reason is an economic matter. . . . We have our facilities and our faculty built to accommodate this number; so for financial reasons we will stay like this.”21

If the McCall policy assumed that Baylor had adequate housing facilities for enrollment needs, the Reynolds era represented a shift in strategy for dealing with both enrollment and campus housing. By the fall of 1991, ten years into the leadership of Reynolds, Baylor’s enrollment had climbed to almost twelve
thousand students without the addition of a single bed. Reynolds’s view of residence halls, hinted at during his annual presidential welcome to parents and students on move-in day, was even more obvious at other times. In 1984, Reynolds stated, “Baylor can’t afford to continue building dormitories. They are expensive, hard to maintain, and nowadays not particularly popular with students.”

As president, Reynolds understood the impact on campus life of the transition from housing most students on campus during the 1960s to housing only one in three by the mid-1980s. It appears, however, that Reynolds held to a belief that the most financially prudent and culturally relevant approach was to house students on campus for the first year, a time when students would experience the “important sense of one-ness, a sense of identity of community here, where an individual can sense that cohesiveness [found in residence halls].” Although Reynolds acknowledged the value of residence halls in creating a cohesive student culture, all his comments about on-campus housing suggest that he believed that the expense of constructing and maintaining these facilities outweighed their benefit, and the availability and proximity of off-campus housing made them unnecessary. The end result was the establishment of a housing policy that encouraged a first-year living experience on campus followed by an off-campus experience for the remainder of a student’s undergraduate career.

**Residence Living and Its Value to Education**

Former Duke University president Nannerl O. Keohane recently wrote, “Some of the most formative moments in a liberal education occur outside the classroom. A residential campus provides multiple encounters with other students and faculty members in extracurricular activities, sports and volunteer service. Bringing together seekers of knowledge across the generations, the campus is a uniquely powerful setting for such structured yet serendipitous exploration.” Baylor’s residential system, despite the university’s desire to provide a transforming liberal education on the model of institutions such as Duke, had not created a campus ethos that encouraged a residential system with such lofty aims. Faculty rarely darkened the doorstep of a residence hall, and when doing so, it was more likely to move a son or daughter into the “dorms” to begin a Baylor education.

Keohane, however, alludes not just to housing students, but to what happens when a high number and significant proportion of students reside on campus. The result is an increased likelihood of “chance encounters”— unplanned interactions, conversations, and meetings that take place within and among the faculty, students, and staff. Many institutions have embraced this belief, including the most prestigious American colleges and universities. Harvard University professor Richard Light underscored this commentary in his book, *Making the Most of College*. Light’s research confronted him with a somewhat anticipated finding: residential living arrangements are crucial to the student experience largely because of what he termed the “remarkable amount of learning that occurs in residential interactions.” Perhaps Light is reiterating what John Henry Newman articulated in the nineteenth century in his seminal work *The Idea of a University*. Newman posited, “When a multitude of young men, keen, open-hearted, sympathetic, and observant, as young men are, come together and freely mix with each other, they are sure to learn from one another, even if there be no one to teach them; the conversation of all is a series of lectures to each, and they gain for themselves new ideas and views, fresh matter of thought, and distinct principles for judging and acting, day by day.”

Like Baylor, Yale University strayed from the tradition of residential living as an essential component to student learning. Today, Yale has developed a comprehensive and nationally acclaimed system of
residential colleges that most observers assume has been part of its educational practice since its founding. The truth is that the first of Yale’s seven residential colleges appeared in 1933, more than two hundred years after the university’s founding. Mark Ryan explained Yale’s shift in this way:

The tradition of liberal learning has always viewed higher education as more than training for the market place, and the residential principle assumes that it’s more than training of intellect. A university exists to promote conversation between generations, among teachers, and among students. Residential colleges form communities within the university, where generations come together, where teachers of various disciplines converse with one another, and above all, where students freely mix with and learn from one another, over time—sharing their experiences, explaining their interests, inspiring one another with their enthusiasms.27

Yale, like many other colleges and universities, however, also acknowledged that strong residential life programs have a variety of less esoteric benefits. A host of recent studies assert that residential campuses boost retention, produce more enthusiastic and connected alumni, afford admissions counselors an important marketing advantage, and enhance student satisfaction. In one of the most widely known and admired studies of college experience, Alexander W. Astin used longitudinal studies to examine student outcomes. In his book, What Matters in College, Astin recounted that students who live on campus for at least one year are 43 percent more likely to finish college than those who never live on campus. Furthermore, they are more likely to obtain higher grade point averages and report more interpersonal contacts with faculty and peers.28 Additional studies by a variety of researchers further illustrate the success of students who reside on campus for multiple years, especially when participating in environments commonly called living-learning centers.29

Changing Times, Changing Philosophies

To remain relevant, universities, especially their student-life programs and services, must grow with students. Therefore, a discussion about changes in campus life must explore student needs. Students of the 1960s came to university campuses following rules, even rules such as those at Baylor forbidding women to wear slacks at any time on campus, requiring women to receive “pants permission” when leaving or returning to campus (a part of this policy included wearing a coat so no one would realize slacks were being worn), and forbidding hair curlers in the dining halls. Labeled “Boomers,” this generation of students, born between 1943 and 1960, arrived on college campuses believing the world revolved around them.30 By the late 1960s, students were demanding involvement in policy making and the relaxation of campus regulations. Socially conscious, Boomer students utilized a consensual approach, strove to go the extra mile, and were self-indulgent.31

The 1970s unfolded at Baylor to bring permission for women to wear “nice pants suits,” the inclusion of females in the formerly all-male yell leader squad, allowance for anyone who wanted to live off campus, colonization of national social organizations on campus, and extension of privileges to students to enter and leave residence halls past a security monitor after curfew each evening. By the Reynolds inauguration in 1981, most students on campus were considered traditional students; that is, their ages were between seventeen and twenty-two years and most had never been married. Of particular note is the fact that having a majority of traditional-age students is one of the few characteristics of Baylor that has remained consistent between 1960 and the present.
Students of the 1980s and 1990s, called “Xers,” were born into the Thirteenth Generation (often referred to as Generation X) between 1961 and 1981. Products of their times, they attempted to right the problems of the generation that preceded them. Xers were latch-key kids who sought personal growth and development, respected individuals more than titles, had multiple skills, and challenged authority. In the transition years of the mid-1990s, a new generation of students, referred to as the “Millennials,” began to arrive on campus. With them came new expectations, so once again the university adapted to meet the demands of the time. Millennials witnessed the killings at Columbine High School, drive-by shootings, and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Sheltered by parents who worry about their children’s safety, this generation views their parents as a vital part of their lives and involves them in every major decision they make. They are also quite bright. Early in their lives, they learned how to follow rules. They are serious about their studies because they want to be the best, to make the best grade, to succeed in life. In general, Millennial students are less cynical and more idealistic, diverse, comfortable with spirituality, and oriented toward social causes; and they display high levels of trust and optimism. They began informal education programs earlier than their predecessors because their parents wanted them “to get ahead” in order to be selected for the best schools and the best jobs. This generation of students is less likely to engage in untoward behavior; in fact, journalist David Brooks uses the term “compelled by the Knightly Spirit” in describing Millennials. In addition, technology inundates their lives. From their elementary school years, they have had consistent exposure to computers, and now high speed wireless systems, laptops, cell phones, text messaging, and instant communication are integral parts of their daily existence.

Millennials came to campuses sheltered, confident, team-orientated, conventional, pressured, and achievement-driven. Their basic needs included privacy, technology, security, and a sense of purpose. Research noted how team oriented this group of students is, indicating that Millennials prefer to participate in activities as a group rather than as individuals or in pairs. A residence hall in which one merely slept was no longer adequate, so universities developed living-learning communities to meet the current needs of their students. The attraction of living-learning communities helped solidify applicants’ decisions about where they would continue their education. Campuses interested in attracting the best and the brightest made the investment in living-learning communities, realizing the wave of the future dictated that their student life programs change to meet the needs of students. As a faith-based institution, Baylor was driven by the very nature of students as social beings. Perceiving God as relational, and human beings as made in His image, living-learning communities were understood to be places for socialization and relationship. As David Hoekema noted in Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of “In Loco Parentis,” “The university can and should seek to create a campus atmosphere characterized by respect, openness, and mutual recognition of both rights and responsibilities.”

John Wesley Lowery found that millennial students seek communities that offer student life programs that provide for security, team building, challenging environments, and opportunities for service. While earlier student generations had limited access to transportation off-campus and therefore stayed on campus and shared common experiences with one another, Millennials were freed by their access to transportation. Earlier, too, the enforcement of campus policies actually helped create communities. For Baylor women students, particularly, rules locked the outside doors of their residence halls at curfew and official bed checks ensured that everyone was in her place. (The director called the parents when an occupant failed to report in on time.) After curfew, men students were left to join one another in their selected activities. Title
IX, with its emphasis on equal treatment of the sexes, changed the way business was conducted at Baylor and other colleges and universities across the United States.

Student Development Theory and First Steps toward a New Baylor Residential Ethos

It is easy to point out changes Baylor has made to meet the changing needs of the students who study here. A review of student development theory facilitates understanding of the changes and their timing. Many observers consider student development theory to be in its infancy. After all, it was not until 1969 that Arthur Chickering set forth in his landmark study of undergraduates his theory of the seven vectors of student development. Expanding on Erik Erikson’s theory on identity and intimacy, Chickering suggested that the establishment of identity is the central developmental issue during the college years. Development does not occur at the same pace for every student, but each student transitions through the vectors in the same sequencing. Chickering and his colleague Linda Reisser posited that educational environments exert a powerful influence that helps students move through the seven vectors of development. The vectors begin with developing competence and move through managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. Complexity increases with each level.

In the face of compelling evidence that residential campuses, especially when led well, advance not only important learning aspirations but more practical financial goals as well, the first step for Baylor was turning the image of campus housing at the university on its head. Within six months of the appointment of a new dean to facilitate Baylor’s aspiration of creating a “truly residential campus,” a number of changes took place, most notably a name change. In January 2002, the Office of Residence Life was formally renamed Campus Living and Learning. The move articulated a visible symbol of the unit’s intention to transition Baylor housing from “sleep-and-eat dorms” to “live-and-learn residence halls.” Reconceptualizing the former student “wing ding” or resident-advisor position into the new “community leader” role not only brought better compensation but also a new emphasis on leading a community by mentoring students and fostering a learning environment in the residence halls rather than simply keeping the peace and enforcing policies. If students respected by peers not only lived on campus but led in community formation, the thinking went, then encouraging upper-class students to “sign on” for continued campus housing was more plausible. In 2001, 100 students applied to become one of 88 resident advisors; in the following years, as many as 350 students competed for these coveted positions.

In the years 2001 to 2004, Baylor undertook a number of initiatives to foster faculty interaction with students in its residence halls and, more importantly, to bring a more academically minded focus into the campus living corridors. Student staff chose “faculty partners” who adopted a floor of residential students and engaged them informally. One faculty partner, Distinguished Professor of Engineering and Associate Dean for Research in the School of Engineering and Computer Science, Walter Bradley, became so enamored with the residential environment that he and his wife volunteered as Baylor’s first “faculty member in residence” when the North Village opened its doors in 2004. Shortly thereafter, a second faculty member-in-residence was announced.

Living-Learning Centers Create Academic Living Environment
One of the most notable programmatic shifts in residential living at Baylor has been the creation of living-learning centers where students reside together around an academic identity, theoretically over several years, with a direct connection to a Baylor academic unit. The School of Engineering and Computer Science was the first unit to embrace the concept. In this instance, the school’s physical proximity to the new North Village made for an ideal partnership with student life administrators. Participating students take at least one common course each semester in their residence hall, participate in group projects, and build an intimate academic support network designed to enhance academic success, increase retention, and recruit the best and brightest engineering and computer science students to Baylor. Two faculty members and a professional staff member employed by the School of Engineering and Computer Science have offices on site with the residence hall director and staff in support of student residents.

At a time when the opening of the North Village Residential Community threatened to draw returning students away from other areas of campus, particularly the upper-division favorites such Alexander and Memorial Halls, Baylor solidified another academic partnership with the Honors College. Honors College faculty members worked with Campus Living and Learning staff to create a multidisciplinary, academically oriented living environment. Throughout the process, recommendations arose for programmatic and structural changes, including the renovation of former sorority space into two classrooms, a library common room, and four faculty offices. The Honors College appointed the first Honors College Living-Learning Center program director, who later decided to join Walter Bradley as Baylor’s second faculty member-in-residence. Even before the opening of the Honors College Living-Learning Center, a waiting list developed, and so approximately fifty students accepted housing in adjacent buildings. Classes are taught on-site each day in two classrooms in the residence hall.

The opening of the North Village Residential Community provided the most substantial evidence of the reversal of Baylor’s position on campus housing—to the tune of $33 million. Encompassing three residential buildings, a community center, classroom, faculty offices, and six hundred beds, the North Village demonstrated that the philosophical shift was more than an idea. Students select from nine floor plans with amenities that rival any off-campus apartment. Moreover, the environment is wrought with intricacies suggesting that creating learning environments was just as important as housing more students. Students participated in every aspect of the design process. From transom art glass representing the four Gospels; to pendant lights, original paintings, and a stone fireplace in the community center representing the seasons of life as conveyed in Ecclesiastes 3:1; to a “spiritual walkway” directing human traffic with student-selected scriptures representing God’s love for people and community. The North Village is like no other residence hall on campus. Students responded by reserving all spaces in the facility ten months prior to its opening, with hundreds more adding their names to a waiting list.

**For Every Entry There Is an Exit: Sometimes an Unexpected Exit**

While the late McCall and Reynolds era operated by the approach that Baylor should seek to maintain its housing inventory well rather than build, the Sloan era constructed six hundred new beds and hailed plans to increase occupancy by another twelve hundred students. During this time, however, especially in the last five years of the Sloan administration, Baylor decreased budget allocations for maintaining its aging residence hall facilities. Even as a new $33 million residential village arose on campus, the university’s older residential facilities faced neglect. Plans set forth for the renovation of older residential facilities had failed to reach fruition by the writing of this chapter. To achieve the ambitious goal of Baylor 2012 to
create a truly residential campus, the strategies of both Reynolds (allocating money to maintain) and Sloan (allocating money to build) must coexist. Like most successful learning delivery systems, using residence halls to advance learning, although highly effective, is expensive.

Yet another unforeseen financial constraint bears its imprint on the accomplishment of Imperative II of Baylor 2012. While working to expand its on-campus housing capacity, Baylor simultaneously invested in the purchase of a number of properties adjacent to the campus, most frequently apartment complexes. An independent business managed these Baylor-owned properties that fed operational revenue into the university through student rentals. The success of the university’s on-campus housing initiative, boasting over 1,100 upper-division students by 2004, however, came at the cost of an unexpected revenue shortfall from the declining occupancy of its off-campus and independently-managed apartments. In short, Baylor is in competition with itself.

Conclusion

“The community of learning . . . that exists on campus is unique in American society,” claimed Hoekema. An effective student life program provides nurturing environments that encourage individuals to grow and reflect.

As much as one might like to think that there has been radical progress from the past, the concept of a place of learning that includes facilities in which students live, learn, and develop under the direction of older adults appears to be a great deal like Miss Trask’s boarding school. Perhaps like Yale in the 1930s, Baylor is returning to a residential model with the same values as the Trask era. The most noticeable difference between the 1830s and today seems to be who provides the direction. Rather than faculty members, individuals professionally trained in student services now perform these co-curricular duties. If Campus Living and Learning has its way, however, one will find more and more faculty members returning to the residential corridors as well.

In the fall of 2004, the Board of Regents and the university Faculty Senate renewed their support for Baylor 2012. On January 21, 2005, Robert B. Sloan Jr. announced that on June 1 he would step down as the twelfth president of Baylor and move into the position of chancellor. For Baylor and any other university that desires to attract a new generation of students to campus and to university-operated housing facilities, change is a constant challenge. The current particular challenge is one of ensuring plentiful resources and planning in order for living and learning to coexist.*

* * * *

In all aspects of Baylor’s recent transition there have been constituencies of people who love the university and have much invested in its image and ongoing success. This is true, of course, for more than 100,000 living graduates and the Alumni Association that represents them. As with other Baylor constituencies, there has been deep division among the alumni over the changes wrought by the vision. The next chapter traces the troubled and sometimes painful relationship between the Alumni Association and the university as Baylor 2012 began. Eds.
Notes


4 Baylor University, Admissions Services, Costs for 2005–2006, 


Vicki Marsh Kabat, “Imparative II: Creating a Truly Residential Campus,” Baylor Magazine 1, no. 2 (September/October 2002): 17. Penland Hall, with a capacity of 542 men, opened in 1960, the year before McCall became president. During McCall’s presidency, North Russell, with a capacity of 485, opened in 1963; and South Russell, with a capacity of 287, opened in 1967.

Mark B. Ryan, A Collegiate Way of Living: Residential Colleges and a Yale Education (New Haven, Conn.: John Edwards College, Yale University, 2001), 11.


Ibid., 13.


Ryan, Collegiate Way of Living, 23.


Howe and Strauss, 13th Gen., 42.

DeLuca and Dietz, “Managing Boomers, Xers, and Millennials.”


David A. Hoekema, Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of “In Loco Parentis” (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1994), 129.

John Wesley Lowery, “The Millennials Come to Campus,” About Campus 6, no. 3 (July/August, 2001), 1–32.

Susan R. Komives and Dudley Woodard Jr., Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession, 4th ed. (San


40 Komives and Woodard, *Student Services*, 181, 182.

41 Chickering and Reisser, *Education and Identity*, 44.


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