

Baylor Refuses Unethical Grant on Sex Research

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Ken Camp reported in the [*Baptist Standard*](#) (7-11-25) how over “60 Texas Baptist pastors endorsed” a letter supporting Baylor’s decision to return a \$644,000 grant from the Eula Mae and John Baugh Foundation to Baylor’s Center for Church Impact within Baylor’s Diana R. Garland School of Social Work. The intent of the grant was “Courage from the Margins” and sought to get Baylor to study “disenfranchisement and exclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals and women” in churches.



At the top of the list of pastors supporting Baylor was local Tyler County, Texas Pastor Jay Abernathy of First Baptist Woodville.

Such a study, I believe, could have alienated some churches and even sowed distrust or sparked division in some of the churches supporting Baylor and general historic Baptist ethics. Caring for a person of a different persuasion while disagreeing with that person’s ethics can easily be misconstrued as exclusion, marginalization, or flat out rejection, and we have seen how some have sought to construe that as hate, even implied to a degree in the Baugh statement below.

In a [public statement from Baylor](#) (7-9-25), Baylor President Linda Livingston said she and Provost Nancy Brickhouse supported the decision and “agree this is ... in the best interests of Baylor University.” Livingston referred to Baylor’s official long-time published “[Statement on Human Sexuality](#)”¹ that affirms its stand on “fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman as the biblical norm” and that Baylor will not endorse student groups that affirm a view contrary to that norm. Livingston affirmed that Baylor remains “committed to providing a loving and caring community for all – including our LGBTQIA+ students – because it is part and parcel of our University’s mission that calls us to educate our students within a caring Christian community.”

Livingston reinforced that “Baylor also continues to strongly uphold the principle of academic freedom.... We affirm the biblical understanding of human sexuality as a gift from God, expressed through purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman.”

The [Baugh Foundation posted a letter](#) (7-9-25²) noted how the Baugh trustees felt “deeply saddened” and challenged Baylor that the grant was “an opportunity to answer the Christian call to care for the marginalized.... Not all Baptist believers ... are aligned on every interpretation of scripture concerning women or LGBTQIA+ individuals, and

¹ “Baylor Statement of Human Sexuality” listed apparent revision dates as 11/18/02, 3/25/04, 1-29-09, and 10-2-09, essentially a 22-plus-year-old policy reflecting values dating back to Baylor’s charter in 1845.

² The Baugh letter had no date, but the PDF creation date was 7-9-25.

churches need evidence-based research.” Baugh’s letter went on at length to essentially challenge all of Baylor’s historic value of biblical principles hinting that Baylor was failing and even had “a duty to protect and uphold the integrity of scientific inquiry.”

[Baugh’s hostile letter](#), to be kind, seemed to want to force its values upon Baylor, even desiring to undermine the very purpose of “science” that the Baugh foundation portends (or pretends) to champion. I have never heard of such a wealthy foundation so angry at an institution for not taking its money, angrily alleging that Baylor pulled “the rug out from under its faculty after those researchers have already put the grueling work into securing funding ... is a chilling affront to the very concept of academic freedom.” That implies the foundation was not, in fact, after real research but had an agenda of altering Baylor itself, but Baylor’s leaders saw through that.

Ken Camp listed the Baptist pastors supporting Baylor with Abernathy leading, with former First Baptist Woodville Pastor Ross Shelton currently at First Baptist Church, Brenham, and included pastors from Abilene, Alvin, Amarillo, Arlington, Athens, Bandera, Bryan, Cedar Hill, Chappell Hill, Conroe, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Duncanville, El Paso, Henrietta, Houston, Kaufman, League City, Lewisville, Longview, Marble Falls, Midland, Muleshoe, Llano, League City, Pasadena, Pearland, Plano, Richardson, San Antonio, San Marcos, Stamford, Sugar Land, Sulphur Springs, The Woodlands, Waco, Wylie, and joining Texas were a few more pastors from Georgia and Louisiana. If time and research allowed, there would be thousands more Baptist and Christian and Catholic and Pentecostal pastors from Texas and from the rest of the U.S. supporting Baylor.

Links FYI:

Baptist Standard article (7-11-25): <https://baptiststandard.com/news/texas/baylor-grant-decision-draws-support-disappointment/>

Baylor President Linda Livingston letter (7-9-25): <https://president.web.baylor.edu/news/story/2025/addressing-recent-external-research-grant>

Baylor Statement on Human Sexuality (1st 11-18-2, most recent 10-2-9): <https://risk.web.baylor.edu/public/documents/statement-human-sexuality/view>

Baugh Foundation letter (7-9-25): <https://www.baughfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/Baugh-Foundation-Statement.pdf>

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