

Singletary steps down as dean of Baylor social work school

September 25, 2025

Jon Singletary will cease to be dean of Baylor University's Diana R. Garland School of Social Work, effective Oct. 15.

In a Sept. 25 announcement to Baylor faculty and staff, Provost Nancy Brickhouse wrote Singletary notified her earlier in the week "of his decision to step down from his leadership role" in the Garland School.

"As many of you are aware, these are incredibly difficult times for professionals in the field of social work, and Jon felt the need to step away to take better care of himself, as well as to dedicate more time to his family," Brickhouse stated.

"Following a sabbatical, Jon intends to return to the faculty and focus on interdisciplinary research and approaches to tackling the growing crisis of mental health in our country."

Luci Ramos Hoppe, clinical associate professor and director of the undergraduate social work program, will serve as interim dean, Brickhouse said, noting she will announce a national search for Singleton's successor in late spring 2026.

Center of controversy over grant

While the provost's announcement makes no mention of it, controversy swirled around the Diana R. Garland School of Social Work this summer.

On June 30, the School of Social Work announced a \$643,401 grant awarded to Baylor's Center for Church and Community Impact. The grant

from the Eula Mae and John Baugh Foundation was to focus on the study of “disenfranchisement and exclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals and women” in churches.

On July 9, Baylor President Linda Livingstone issued a statement saying Singletary and principal investigator Gaynor Yancey “voluntarily offered to rescind their acceptance of this grant on behalf of the School of Social Work and return all associated funds to the Baugh Foundation.”

“We recognize that this situation has caused concern and confusion for many within the Baylor Family and among our broader community of churches, partner organizations, and supporters,” Livingstone stated.

“This has been a learning opportunity for many involved in this situation, and we aim to work alongside our college and school leaders, faculty, and research community, particularly during these challenging times for higher education.”

Served nine years as dean, one as interim dean



Dr. Jon Singletary

Singletary was named dean of the Garland School of Social Work in May

2016 after serving a year as interim dean.

He succeeded the school's founding dean and namesake, Diana R. Garland, who died in September 2015 of pancreatic cancer.

Singletery joined Baylor's School of Social Work faculty in 2003, serving as director of the Baylor Center for Family and Community Ministries from 2005 to 2011.

He was associate dean for baccalaureate studies from 2011 to 2014 and associate dean for graduate studies from 2014 to 2015.

Singletery has held the Diana R. Garland Endowed Chair in Child and Family Studies since 2010, conducting research on community, family and congregational life.

Before joining the Baylor faculty, he was pastor of Richmond Mennonite Fellowship in Richmond, Va.

He earned his undergraduate degree from Baylor, a Master of Social Work degree and Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Master of Divinity degree from the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond.