

Get to know Dr. Laine Scales, Baylor Master Teacher

SEPTEMBER 9, 2016 // POSTED IN [ACADEMICS](#), [HONORS](#)



In August, Baylor Interim President David Garland [announced three professors who have earned the designation of Master Teacher](#) – one of the highest honors given to Baylor faculty members. One of these new Master Teachers is [Dr. Laine Scales](#), a long-time Baylor social work and education professor and associate dean in the [Baylor Graduate School](#).

Being named a Master Teacher is no small feat. It requires proven knowledge and use of effective teaching methods, plus active advocacy for teaching and learning. On top of that, it's only awarded to professors who have been at Baylor for 10 years or more — a proven commitment to teaching excellence.

One look at Scales' teaching philosophy, and you'll see why she was a no-brainer for such an honor. She makes it a point to incorporate critical thinking and teach with an international perspective. That means that instead of regurgitating lessons from the professor's perspective, Scales' students debate among themselves, critique each other's work, and question established educational theories. "Sometimes students resist this responsibility in the classroom and beg in frustration, 'Just tell us the answers!'" she says. "However, I believe that helping students learn how to learn is the responsibility of a good teacher."

Outside the classroom, she's still focused on creating learning communities. As dean of the Graduate School, she loves mentoring and advising students — and she knows that means so much more than just telling them what classes to take. And to encourage even the professors to learn, she spearheaded a program of teaching circles within the School of Social Work, which led to the university-wide [Teaching Commons](#).

Scales came to Baylor in 1999, joining one of her own professors, the late [Dr. Diana Garland](#), in what is now the Garland School of Social Work. In 2008, she moved to Baylor's School of Education, where she teaches in the Ph.D. program in higher education and leadership studies.

"As a new faculty member, I got to know Baylor's Master Teachers like Bob Baird and Tom Hanks, who generously shared their wisdom and experience with novices like me," says Scales. "I grew to love being in the classroom with Baylor's curious and engaged learners, but I never dreamed I would be honored with an invitation to join the esteemed group of Master Teachers."

Sic 'em, Dr. Scales!