



BE PART OF THE SOLUTION.
STRATEGIC VISION
JULY 2023



BAKER SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Letter from Baker School Dean, Marianne Wanamaker

Leaders inspire others to work toward a shared vision. Throughout his career, Howard H. Baker Jr. modeled a vision of leadership and democracy that continues to inspire. It is his vision, one based on being an eloquent listener, thoughtful learner, and committed public servant, that serves as the foundation of the Howard H. Baker Jr. School of Public Policy and Public Affairs (Baker School) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The Baker School, the first of its kind at any public university in the state of Tennessee, envisions a state and country with thoughtful leadership, sound policy, and engaged citizens. As Baker urged, “if we are attuned to the system that can hear and understand what the people say, if we will give proper respect to the combined political genius of the American people, then we will make the right decisions.” There is a pressing national need for individuals committed to this vision of public service leadership and American democracy.

The core strategic vision of the Baker School is to be part of the solution. As the flagship land-grant institution in a state known for skilled political leadership, it is time for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville to intentionally produce leaders who will serve at the highest levels of local, state, and federal government. And in the next 10 years, **the Baker School will establish a national reputation for graduating skilled public problem solvers who are prepared to take leadership roles as public administrators, public servants, policy analysts, or candidates for public office.** To achieve this objective, the Baker School has created a strategic plan that identifies existing assets and opportunities, guiding investments of time and resources over the next decade.

The Baker School’s strategic plan articulates the following goals:

- #1 Dramatically expand the University’s capacity to produce the next generation of public servants who are grounded in the legacy of Howard Baker and prepared to be pragmatic public problem solvers.
- #2 Build a set of innovative, best-in-class programs to support public servants and public-facing professionals statewide at all stages of their career.
- #3 Fulfill the state of Tennessee’s bipartisan mandate for the *Institute of American Civics* to strengthen confidence in American democratic institutions and to renew the state’s civic health.
- #4 Respond to society’s most pressing public problems with high-quality research and public engagement.

Ongoing support of the University’s leadership in achieving the Baker School’s goals will be critical for success. The Baker School’s leadership team, faculty, and staff are poised and ready to work with University leadership, campus partners, and the state of Tennessee to deliver on the promise of the Baker School. Let’s get to work!

Sincerely,



Marianne Wanamaker
Dean, Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION.

Thoughtful Leadership. Engaged Citizens. Sound Policy.

Our Role

As the first school of its kind at any public university in the state of Tennessee, the Howard H. Baker Jr. School of Public Policy and Public Affairs (Baker School) is dedicated to continuing Senator Baker’s legacy by teaching students the value of being an eloquent listener, consummate learner, and courageous leader. Located at the entrance of the state’s flagship location in Knoxville, the Baker School is guided by the University of Tennessee’s land-grant mission of service to all Tennesseans and the campus vision of a world enriched by ideas, improved through action, and inspired by the Volunteer spirit of service and leadership.

In the next 10 years, the Baker School will establish a national reputation for graduating skilled public problem solvers who are prepared to take leadership roles as public administrators, public servants, policy analysts, or candidates for public office.

The role of the Baker School and the newly established *Institute of American Civics* is to be part of the solution. This includes delivering educational programming on the rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizenship; building foundational knowledge on the history of democratic thought and public service leadership; and empowering effective public problem solving through instruction in thinking analytically, communicating clearly, and negotiating effectively. For students, this learning will be affirmed in real-world experiences as they intern in roles facilitated by the Baker School as legislative aides, community organizers, policy analysts, and in various other capacities. Importantly, the reach of the Baker School will extend statewide in its efforts to foster civic knowledge, confidence, competence, and entrepreneurship— activities generously funded by the state’s General Assembly.

Our Values

The Baker School is committed to fostering an intellectually rich environment, where ideas are investigated with academic rigor, conventional wisdom is challenged, and diverse perspectives are encouraged. The Baker School highly values the democratic and academic traditions of freedom of thought and inquiry, providing a space for informed civil disagreement.

The Baker School also recognizes the need for systemic approaches to understanding the complexities of public problems and has intentionally created an interdisciplinary environment to allow knowledge from various fields to be synthesized. To best serve as a nexus between academic research and practical problem-solving, the Baker School is committed to providing research and educational opportunities in and about the real world. The Baker School is energized by work that goes far beyond the boundaries of campus, understanding that research must inform, and be informed by, the very real challenges facing communities, the state, and the nation. Finally, the Baker School asks its leadership, faculty, staff, and students to be individuals of integrity, courage, and service. Regardless of status, the Baker School expects all of its members and affiliates to be intellectually curious, community-minded, and committed to excellence.

Our Goals

NEXT GENERATION OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

Dramatically expand the University’s capacity to produce the next generation of public servants who are grounded in the legacy of Howard Baker and prepared to be pragmatic public problem solvers.

INNOVATIVE AND BEST-IN-CLASS PROGRAMS

Build a set of innovative, best-in-class programs to support public servants and public-facing professionals statewide at all stages of their career.

TENNESSEE’S CIVIC HEALTH

Fulfill the state of Tennessee’s bipartisan mandate for the *Institute of American Civics* to strengthen confidence in American democratic institutions and renew the state’s civic health.

RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT TO ADDRESS PUBLIC PROBLEMS

Respond to society’s most pressing public problems with high-quality research and public engagement.

NEXT GENERATION OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

Dramatically expand the University's capacity to produce the next generation of public servants who are grounded in the legacy of Howard Baker and prepared to be pragmatic public problem solvers.

Our Objectives

Recruit and retain the brightest minds across Tennessee and beyond, energizing them with the spirit of public service and the opportunity to engage in rewarding careers in public problem solving.

- Create strong partnerships with the secondary educational system and other educational institutions to communicate opportunities available at the Baker School.
- Develop targeted marketing strategies for high school students, recent college graduates, and mid-career professionals, including current local and state officials as well as military personnel.
- Provide professional advising services to ensure students are on track to complete degree requirements and receive the necessary support to be successful.
- Foster a robust and engaging academic community and cultivate cohort experiences.

Build and expand high-quality programs by creating and supporting enriched curricular and co-curricular programming, including signature degrees.

- Design intensive and unique internship experiences for students to gain real-world experience in applying their knowledge in meaningful settings.
- Enable concentrations that include classes from across campus, allowing students greater latitude to craft their educational experience to meet their professional objectives.

Through the *Institute of American Civics*, teach students to address public problems by embracing the intellectual diversity and acting with confidence in democratic institutions.

- Create opportunities for students to successfully explore differing perspectives— equipping them with negotiating strategies and challenging them to find common ground with those with whom they disagree.
- Invite high-profile guests to speak about their own experiences and asking them to act as mentors.
- Expose students to the workings of democratic institutions at the local, state, and federal level, encouraging them to attend public meetings and hearings, among other activities.

Increase the placement of students in high-profile positions of public service and community leadership.

- Facilitate ongoing dialogue with employers in the public and private sectors to refine the curriculum to meet workforce needs, identify areas of unmet demand, and coordinate on the training and placement of graduates.
- Host an annual career fair with potential employers and provide ongoing workshops on professional development.

Our Metrics

- √ Maintain year-over-year increases in students majoring in public affairs, public policy, or public administration.
- √ Reach a total enrollment level of 100 graduate students and 150 undergraduate students in five years.
- √ Reach a 95% retention rate of enrolled students.
- √ Reach a 25% conversion of undergraduates into graduate students using the 4+1 model.

- √ Maintain industry standard of 95% placement for graduate students.
- √ Meet goal of 85% placement within six months in a graduate program or full-time employment for undergraduate students.

INNOVATIVE AND BEST-IN-CLASS PROGRAMS

Build a set of innovative, best-in-class programs to support public servants and public-facing professionals statewide at all stages of their career.

Our Objectives

Embrace online education to provide high-quality training for public executives and adult learners.

- Develop learner-centered online curriculum using emerging multimedia tools that allow access to educational opportunities from any location.
- Craft impactful short-courses and certificate programs in partnership with major public and private sector employers on areas of emerging need and areas of existing Baker School and University expertise.

Develop a 95-county strategy to reach adult-learners across the state of Tennessee.

- Partner with the *Institute for Public Service* and *UT Extension* to identify opportunities for collaboration on delivering curriculum and programming to all 95-counties.
- Offer ongoing programming throughout the state in the form of workshops, conferences, and other modalities to allow widespread attendance.

Utilize a network of campus and other partners to facilitate a rich and dynamic interdisciplinary environment for professional development.

- Provide public servants and public-facing professionals interdisciplinary programming to expand their knowledge and skills, advance their careers, and enhance their ability to contribute to the success of their respective organizations.
- Leverage the convening power of the Baker School and expertise of campus faculty to deliver timely and necessary information on problems of public importance, focusing on the School's expertise in Energy Policy, National Security Policy, and Public Administration.

Our Metrics

- ✓ Top-quality curriculum with consistently high-ratings in course evaluations.
- ✓ Excess demand for online and continuing educational opportunities.
- ✓ Geographic distribution of participants in programming.

“Public service
is among the
highest callings
open to
members of
human
society.”
~ Howard
Baker

TENNESSEE'S CIVIC HEALTH

Fulfill the state of Tennessee's bipartisan mandate for the *Institute of American Civics* to strengthen confidence in American democratic institutions and renew the state's civic health.

Our Objectives

Engage every UT student in *Institute of American Civics* curriculum and programs, strengthening their civic knowledge and grounding them in civic values, no matter their course of study.

- Offer courses on the rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizenship, as well as on the history of democratic thought and public service leadership— applying for the inclusion of these courses into the Vol Core curriculum when appropriate.
- Lead University efforts surrounding Vols Vote, Constitution Day, and Listen, Learn, Lead Week— empowering students to engage in civic activities on campus.
- Organize campus-wide competitive fellows and internship opportunities, including the Washington Fellows, Japanese Fellows, Baker Experience Internships, and other programming with civic engagement at its core.

Encourage a broader statewide appreciation of the importance of the need for civic knowledge and skills in and out of the workplace, thereby raising demand for civics education among the state's K-12 and higher education graduates.

- Design transportable and scalable, high-quality public programming that can be delivered statewide including events such as “Constitutional Conversations” and the “Civics Book Club.”
- Create partnerships throughout the state of Tennessee to connect to new audiences through digital media, such as the *You Might Be Right* podcast and the *Baker's American* documentary.
- Highlight nearby history, enriching Tennessee's historic landmarks with nuanced public knowledge on the role of the Tennessee at key points in American history.

Use public and private sector relationships to reach citizens in all locations and at all stages of life.

- Deliver opportunities for K-12 educators, and other public sector employees, to learn about best practices in the area of civic education.
- Offer the private sector programming for employees to learn about citizenship, democracy, and effective public engagement— strengthening their ability to be positive contributors to their workplaces and communities.
- Engage other networks, including non-profit and faith-based organizations, to reach citizens with civic engagement programming.
- Partner with other institutions of higher education to build civic skills, deepen civic knowledge, and inspire civic engagement among college students statewide and the public at-large.

Our Metrics

- ✓ Top-quality programming with consistently high-ratings in participant evaluations.
- ✓ Improved civic literacy among participants.
- ✓ Excess demand for programming.
- ✓ Geographic distribution of participants in programming.

RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT TO ADDRESS PUBLIC PROBLEMS

Respond to society's most pressing public problems with high-quality research and public engagement.

Our Objectives

Engage with stakeholders statewide, nationally, and internationally to deliberate on and find solutions to issues of public concern.

- Build relationships that will elevate campus experts to trusted voices, increasing requests for insights, including official public testimony, from local, state, and national public officials.
- Work with the University's *Office of Communication and Marketing* to ensure that experts have media training and are featured in major local, state, and national news outlets.
- Provide robust fora for stakeholders to meet and discuss public problems with interdisciplinary campus experts.

Build research capacity to support public policy and decision making in areas of high importance for the state of Tennessee and the country.

- Elevate existing work of the *Energy, Transportation, & Environment* and *National Security & Foreign Affairs* programs, through the creation of research centers.
- Build capacity for the establishment of a research center in the area of Economic & Community Development.
- Work with the University's *Office of Research, Innovation, and Economic Development* to coordinate on programming and research support staff investments.

Embrace the interdisciplinary nature of public policy by deepening collaboration with other academic units on campus in pursuit of new research opportunities and new academic programs.

- Work with other academic departments and research centers to coordinate degree concentrations and to design certificate and short-course programming for public servants and other professionals.

- Continue the success of joint-appointment strategies by pursuing shared appointments of Baker School faculty when appropriate.
- Increase the visibility and competitiveness of the Baker Experts program.

Amplify the policy-relevance of faculty research in other academic units on campus by providing mechanisms to engage with policymakers.

- Provide ongoing training focused on translating academic research into policy insights.
- Create partnerships with other schools of public policy and think-tanks, building on the success of the relationship with the *Bipartisan Policy Center*.
- Develop a Washington Scholars program for faculty, providing them an opportunity to spend a semester in Washington, DC working with a federal agency, congressional committee, or research organization.

Our Metrics

- ✓ Named and endowed research centers with ongoing affiliations with other nationally-recognized partners.
- ✓ Grant funding success, including maintaining 70% award rate of sponsored project proposals; 15% salary recoveries of every faculty member; and increasing the financial size and interdisciplinary scope of proposals.
- ✓ Faculty serving as state, national, and discipline-wide leaders on executive committees of major associations, editors of major journals, speakers at keynote events, and as trusted voices on the state and national stage.
- ✓ Faculty consistently publishing research in top peer-reviewed and other competitive outlets.
- ✓ Faculty promoted on time with exemplary records.

Our Timeline

2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026

Next Generation of Public Servants			
Build Co-Curricular Capacity	X		
Launch Branding and Recruitment Efforts	X		
Partnership Development with the Public and Private Sector	X		
1 st Graduate Cohort Admitted into MPPA Degree Program (Class of 2025)	X		
1 st Freshman Cohort of Undergraduate Students in Public Affairs (Class of 2028)		X	
1 st Graduate Cohort Admitted into MPA/MPP Degree Programs (Class of 2026)		X	
Host Freshman and Sophomore Classes in Public Affairs (Classes of 2028, 2029)			X
1 st Commencement of Graduate Students with MPA/MPP Degrees (Class of 2025)			X
Innovative and Best-in-Class Programs			
Launch Executive Education Programs (non-degree) in Energy Policy	X		
Launch Masters in Public Administration (MPA) Degree, in person and online		X	
Launch Masters in Public Policy (MPP) Degree, in person only		X	
Introduce NEW Energy Policy Certificate		X	
Introduce NEW National Security Policy Certificate		X	
Launch Online Masters in Public Policy (MPP) program			X
Introduce NEW Ag Policy Certificate			X
Introduce NEW Environmental Policy Certificate			X
Launch Governors' Academy for Senior State Executives (Potential)			X
Tennessee's Civic Health			
Onboard <i>Institute of American Civics</i> Director and Faculty	X		
Launch Campus Recruitment Effort for Student Programs	X		
Launch Undergraduate Civics Minor and/or Certificate		X	
Introduce Graduate-Level Coursework		X	
Launch Statewide Student Engagement Programs		X	
Initiate Civics Programming for Tennessee Workplaces		X	
Launch Undergraduate Major			X
Research and Engagement to Address Public Problems			
Launch Renamed Centers and Expand Research Capacity	X		
Launch NEW Public Lecture Strategy	X		
Expand Baker Experts Program	X		
Launch NEW Center in Economic & Community Development		X	