

Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education

Vocation across the Academy Grants

Awarded in June 2019 ☞ Funding for 2019–2022

Two years ago, **AdventHealth University** began a program of chaplain rounding for its graduate students, in order to enhance their capacity for caring and provide practical experience in spiritual care in the clinical environment. To expand this opportunity to its undergraduate students, the university is designing a virtual reality chaplain rounding experience. Students who participate in the program will be able to observe spiritual care being provided between hospital chaplains and standardized patients. Assessment of the grant project will consider how this virtual reality experience compares to face-to-face rounding in influencing students' perceptions.

Albion College will enhance its existing comprehensive career readiness and vocational discernment initiative through a series of annual workshops for faculty and advisors, a set of mentoring dinners with students and alumni, and training (including stipends) for a peer mentor program to support underrepresented and at-risk students. These programs are designed to allow the college to leverage its community's diversity, to strengthen a culture of community service and active citizenship, and to enable all students to reflect upon vocation and meaningful life work.

The Exploring Vocation program at **Azusa Pacific University** will support first and second year students who have not committed to a major. Exploring Vocation is a collaborative effort between the Academic Success Center, College of Liberal Arts and Science, First Year Seminar, and the Office of Education to Vocation. The program will develop vocation exploration activities for the first year seminar, provide academic success coaching for undeclared sophomores, host one chapel speaker per year who will focus on vocation, and provide an orientation to vocation for first year seminar instructors in order to enhance their capacity to advise for vocation.

Bellarmino University seeks to support and empower students to incorporate calling and purpose into their exploration of vocation, their decision-making, and success in their first destination beyond college. This project will include: 1) integration of activities related to calling and purpose into core courses and learning communities within the first-year experience; 2) integration of conversations about calling and purpose into required academic advising appointments; and 3) the creation and implementation of a sophomore year program that connects students majoring in arts and sciences to experiential learning in the Louisville community.

Finlandia University will launch a Center for Vocation and Career Development to support vocational discernment and professional development. It will also develop vocational discernment exercises that will bookend each student's college experience. The Center will introduce students to academic and career guidance early and consistently throughout their four years of study. It will coordinate existing career development activities, provide workshops, and

offer mentoring toward a career. This project aims to elevate the attention given to vocation and career discernment through training in appreciative advising.

Georgian Court University will undertake a multi-faceted project aimed at helping students prepare for meaningful engagement in shared civic life. Its guiding catalyst will be a retrieval of the theological notion of “person” as relational and integral to encouraging solidarity and responsibility for the common good. The NetVUE grant will support preparation and publication of common handbooks, enhance already existing service-learning programs, assist in training academic advisors, and provide speakers and support for Critical Concerns Week events.

Gustavus Adolphus College will build a new course to encourage vocational exploration and reflection across every student’s undergraduate career. This course will connect students’ curricular and co-curricular learning and create habits of vocational reflection and discernment. It will have four main components: an introduction to Lutheran concepts of vocation, a vocational storytelling workshop that brings sophomores together with alumni, an online reflection journal that helps students integrate their curricular and co-curricular experiences, and an intentional conversation about justice related to one of the college’s social justice lectures.

Hope College seeks to extend the reach of its vocation programming to underserved and underrepresented students, particularly in their sophomore and junior years. The college also seeks to provide opportunities to faculty in academic departments and divisions that do not currently have courses focused on vocation. The proposed initiatives include the development of vocational exploration and career transition courses across various academic divisions and departments, and the provision of experiential learning grants to fund underserved and underrepresented students in applied learning experiences.

Mount St. Mary's University (MD) will develop a four-year plan of vocational advising, and will educate and equip faculty to implement the plan effectively. Inquiry into vocation provides a fitting organizational theme for advising, which plays a vital role in cultivating a student’s place in the academic community. Faculty and academic support staff will engage in a series of workshops to develop common goals and a sequenced framework for advising for vocation.

Point Loma Nazarene University will build the capacity of faculty and staff to talk with students about their own vocational journeys. It will offer a series of workshops and reading groups to carry out this work. The grant will also support development of conversation prompts to be used during advising that will help students discern their callings, as well as a set of tools that will allow students to track their on-campus experiences, to reflect on them, and to present them to employers and others.

Presbyterian College will support reading and study groups within one of the college’s learning communities. In addition, these groups will undertake three career treks—visits to nearby cities to tour workplaces and engage with a variety of professionals. Project funds will be used to provide stipends for (previously unpaid) internships for students who would otherwise be unable to accept them. Funds will also provide for a series of professional development events for faculty and advisors to assist them as they seek to define and teach the concept vocation, and to bridge the divide between theory and practice.

Ursuline College currently promotes vocational exploration, but it does so only in isolated areas throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum. This project will help create an overarching framework and a common language for vocation across academic disciplines and throughout all student advising and mentoring. The grant will support the development of interdisciplinary curricular modules that will integrate consideration of meaning and purpose throughout the core curriculum and the majors. It will also support the design and implementation of a four-year plan for developmentally appropriate mentoring and advising of students at different points in their undergraduate careers.