



Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Professional Development Awards

Awarded in May 2021 • Funding for 2021–2022

Andrew College (GA) will frame a new conversation on campus related to life calling and vocation. The award will support two workshop series over the 2021–2022 academic year, designed to allow participants to reflect upon their own sense of vocation, to strengthen their capacity for mentoring, and to develop language that will help foster their students’ exploration of vocation. Each workshop series will conclude with a speaker event, and will enable faculty members and staff to articulate vocational discernment in a way that complements the overall mission of the college.

Bethel College (KS) will create reading groups of faculty members and staff, to meet during both the fall and spring semesters. Twenty-one individuals will be divided among three reading groups, to include those who are currently involved in vocation projects, those who have expressed interest in vocation, and those who are integral to the institution’s future vocation plans. Groups will commence at the beginning of each semester, and will conclude at the end of each semester with a workshop to develop plans for vocational discernment activities to be implemented in the classroom and in the cocurriculum. These reading groups will further the understanding of vocation among faculty members and staff; they will also enable Bethel College to adapt its approach to vocation to fit its evolving campus culture.

Carthage College (WI) will provide a series of retreats for a cohort of faculty members and staff in order to develop a more unified understanding of vocation and purpose. These events will also nurture inclusive, reflective practices that recognize the diversity of our human experiences and faith backgrounds. Retreats will be designed to strengthen participants’ capacity to mentor students and to connect this work to the reflection framework that will be implemented in the college’s revised general education curriculum. The award will also support development of a reflective practices toolkit to be used by faculty members and staff in advising, thereby supporting the college’s commitment to holistic student advising.

Centenary College of Louisiana will provide professional development for faculty members and staff in order to enhance their knowledge of, and skills in, integrating vocational reflection and discernment into student advising throughout the undergraduate years. The project will include extended introductory and culminating workshops for a cohort of 15 faculty members and staff, monthly brown bag seminars, and print and electronic resources. Participants will design and implement activities and resources that foster student vocational reflection and discernment. Assessment of the project will inform future advising philosophy, methods, and activities.

Cornerstone University (MI) will train new faculty members and staff as vocational exploration guides through two retreat experiences, a presentation by a guest speaker, conversation groups, and lunch workshops. Faculty members who have experience in vocational advising—gained in work supported by a previous NetVUE grant—will mentor new faculty members and academic staff. This train-the-trainer model will ensure access to institutional knowledge about vocational exploration, enhance new advisors' capacity to include vocational reflection activities in academic advising, and provide conversation groups to allow for participants' own reflection and discernment. As a result, faculty members and staff will provide students with a unified vocational exploration process and will grow as wise educators, trained mentors, interdisciplinary professionals, and compassionate leaders.

Franklin College (IN) will support a steering committee of eight faculty and staff members to guide a yearlong program that will be open to all interested employees. Participants will engage in a series of conversations sparked by a short virtual presentation prompt, anchoring themes related to vocational discernment and identity. Through this experience, faculty members and staff will articulate a renewed vision for their own vocation and place in the world. This renewed vision is intended to prepare them to guide students in their own vocational identity formation. This program will also be a catalyst for future vocational programming design at the institution, including a reconceptualization of academic advising practices.

Hollins University (VA) will develop a program, Partners in Purpose, to include nine monthly workshops for faculty members and staff (from September through May) and four monthly workshops for graduates (from February through May). These workshops will provide opportunities to learn about and develop advising and mentoring activities related to vocational exploration and discernment. The workshops will be combined with an online discussion board open to all participants, which will allow ongoing conversation and provide a place to capture important materials, stories, examples, and language that can be utilized with students.

LaGrange College (GA) will offer two professional development workshops for faculty members teaching in its first-year experience program. Workshops will be led by the first-year experience directors and will focus on developing curricular, cocurricular, and advising programs to provide vocational exploration and discernment opportunities to students in the required first-year experience courses. The fall first-year experience seminar, which includes a common reading about diversity and equity in and out of the workplace, will include activities

that help students establish independence, build community, and engage productively with campus support services. The spring first-year experience lab will introduce career development and will engage all facets of the institution—including athletics, spiritual life, and student life—in a campus-wide initiative committed to exploring how we all may best find our callings.

Lebanon Valley College (PA) will identify a cohort of nine faculty members and staff who are interested in developing the college's capacity for vocational formation. In a summer seminar, this cohort will assess current institutional capacities for developing students' career readiness, explore the concepts of vocation, reflect on its members' own vocations and capacities for mentoring students, and develop a common language for vocational development at the college. This group will seek to expand the current understanding of vocation to address broader concepts including meaning and purpose, well-being, flourishing, self-reflection, citizenship, relationship, belonging, and the necessary elements of a fulfilled life. This work will continue in a series of fall semester workshops to develop and implement a vocational vision, designed to contribute to the college's strategic planning efforts.

Lindsey Wilson College (KY) will pilot a series of initiatives to connect faculty members to the theme of vocational exploration. Through a series of speaker events, workshops, and a retreat, faculty members will consider the ways that their own vocations have evolved, as well as how they might help students engage in vocational discernment as emerging leaders. The project will also provide additional resources for students who are pursuing a call to lay or ordained ministry, as indicated in their choice of the Christian ministries major; workshops and speaker events will explore various aspects of ministry as they relate to vocational discernment for both students and faculty members. At the end of this project, potential areas of expansion to other departments will be explored.

Mars Hill University (NC) will support professional development of faculty and staff through exploration of concepts of both individual and collective calling, and how these relate to the university's institutional mission and identity, including its religious identity. Participants will engage in a series of events, including book discussion groups and workshops, in order to create a common vision, vocabulary, and approach to student development in relation to discernment of career and life goals. At the end of the academic year, a selected cohort of 15 faculty and staff members will participate in an overnight retreat, through which they will develop a strategic plan to turn the discussion outcomes into action.

Mitchell College (CT) will implement a professional development program for faculty members and staff that consists of a guest speaker series, guest panelists, small group workshops, and small group discussions conducted both in person and asynchronously on the college's learning management system. Through a selected text provided to faculty and staff, the common threads of diversity, inclusion, belonging, and intersectionality—as well as the impact of these elements on vocation—will be woven into the project. The project will conclude with an environmental scan of current practice related to student vocational reflection and discernment on Mitchell's

campus. This scan will help guide the institution's capacity to support and grow vocational exploration for its diverse student body.

Northwestern College (IA) will establish faculty learning communities to meet over the 2021–2022 academic year. The objective of these groups is to foster greater collaboration and mentoring skills among faculty members. Topics for the faculty learning communities include mentorship in scholarship for female faculty, a stronger integration of diversity and equity issues in cross-cultural engagement core courses, and the exploration of models that consider the competing calls of family obligations and an academic career among faculty members. These learning communities will provide faculty members with a deeper understanding of vocation. Faculty members will consider how they might inspire and mentor students to respond to multiple callings and build lives that display excellence in work and scholarship, deeper understandings of diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to work/life balance.

Oklahoma Christian University (OK) will develop a series of vocation-centered workshops for all faculty members and select staff, encouraging them to connect their academic disciplines and administrative work to the mission of God in the world. These workshops will first introduce a theology of work and then pose three questions: What did God create your discipline for? How has your discipline lived up to, or failed to live up to, God's intentions? and What are you doing as Christians to redeem your discipline to participate in God's purposes for the world? These questions will be introduced to each participant group, where they will be used to develop a document that articulates a God-given vocation for their academic disciplines and their work with students.

Otterbein University (OH) will begin conversations about vocation as a part of a new initiative, Every Student Will. This overarching program, which will be led by faculty members, focuses on assisting all students to develop a four-year academic and career plan. Faculty members will be selected to lead their colleagues through reading groups and retreats that focus on advising for vocation. The goal will be to transform the advising relationship from one focused on transactional academic progress to one that focuses on exploring vocation. Additionally, all instructors of the first-year seminar and senior-year experience courses will participate in a retreat to help them embed vocation exploration activities into the students' curricular experiences.

Pfeiffer University (NC) will provide vocational discernment training for academic leaders, faculty members, and professional staff in order to build engagement around Steven Garber's concept of "common grace for the common good." The objective of supported activities is to develop a shared vision that incorporates vocational discernment into mentoring, advising, and support for students. The project will start with an institution-wide training to take place during the fall 2021 conference, continue with a fall 2021 retreat, and conclude with a spring 2022 retreat. Activities will include book groups and a series of learning chats for select groups throughout the academic year, using a train-the-trainer format to ensure sustainability.

Samford University (AL) will create opportunities for faculty members to engage in discussions focused on vocation and calling. New and experienced faculty members will participate in cohorts with shared readings that explore vocation and calling. In addition, all new faculty members will be invited to attend a two-day retreat, at which they will examine what it means to carry out their calling in the context of a university with a Christian mission. To prepare for the retreat, participants will consider shared readings meant to guide them through the process of thinking about and writing their own vocational stories. During the retreat, they will share their experiences and develop a plan for using what they have learned to foster conversations with students around the idea of vocation and calling.

Stonehill College (MA) will expand its campus conversation about vocation through support for a cohort of ten faculty members who will think together about how best to link social justice advocacy and vocational discernment. Participants will be chosen from among faculty members who are already actively engaged in teaching, mentoring, and working with students on justice-focused community-based learning projects. Through a series of workshops and a retreat, the group will consider how best to help students connect social justice to vocational discernment. At the project's conclusion, participants will facilitate a session at the college's Academic Development Day, a professional development opportunity in which faculty members pause the semester's activities to reflect on teaching and learning.

Union College (KY) will convene a cohort of 15 faculty members and staff to develop activities designed to mentor students for vocation. Cohort members will learn about practices that foster mindfulness and interiority, considering how these practices, in addition to reducing anxiety and helping students navigate the challenges of adulthood with equanimity, might be used to invite students to vocational reflection and discernment. Cohort participants will also view materials from the National Career Development Association 2021 virtual conference in order to learn about the career construction model, which relates career development to vocation and meaning-making. Participants will then lead their colleagues in discerning how best to use these models to incorporate vocational reflection into both the curriculum and cocurricular activities.

University of Saint Francis (IN) will offer a series designed to encourage faculty members and staff to integrate a theological understanding of vocation into advising and mentoring conversations with students. The process will begin with a keynote event in which a speaker will address the theme of vocation as a lifelong personal and professional journey. The keynote speaker will also lead a half-day workshop for participants, who will then be organized into reading groups that focus on a common text. The objective of these groups is to develop a common vocabulary of vocation, as well as a training program focusing on advising strategies for faculty members and staff advisors—guiding students to recognize their calling to a life purpose that contributes to the common good, achieved through their God-given gifts and their undergraduate experience.

University of Northwestern–St. Paul (MN) will deliver a vocational awareness training seminar to a group of approximately 40 faculty members, staff, and administrators. This seminar

is meant to develop a common language around vocation to be used in two new core curriculum courses that integrate vocational awareness, spiritual formation, and intercultural competence into students' development as emerging leaders. This project will support training of select faculty members and staff to administer three vocation-related assessments. It also will equip participants with a deeper understanding of the needs of "Acts Six" scholars, BIPOC, and first-generation students, so that these students can be provided with appropriate resources relating to vocational reflection and discernment.

Wittenberg University (OH) will train faculty members to help students make connections between the classroom and life outside the classroom. Through a workshop and mini-grants, faculty members will have an opportunity to learn how to facilitate student efforts to forge connections among the various building blocks of their undergraduate education: majors, minors, the general education curriculum, and cocurricular experiences. Faculty members will attend a three-day workshop on vocation and then develop new courses, revise existing courses, or create new experiential learning opportunities. Through the workshop, faculty members will be encouraged to find opportunities (both inside and outside the classroom) to spotlight vocation. Possible approaches may include inviting graduates to return to campus for a discussion; redesigning an assignment to align with workplace genres and expectations; or creating a trip, project, or other activity that illustrates what is possible for students in their lives beyond the university.