



Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Program Development Grants

Awarded in February 2021 • Funding for 2021–2023

Avila University (MO) will explore and develop best practices for methods and learning outcomes, in order to engage students in its distinctive Catholic Intellectual and Social Tradition through in-person and remote vocational exploration models and approaches. Through its project, it will seek to discover and develop new vocational exploration models and methods in order to serve students more effectively, through both on-campus and remote engagement. These modules will be piloted in targeted academic programs across the curriculum. Course outcomes will be aligned with the vocational exploration models and approaches as they are developed.

Benedictine University (IL) will develop a first-year experience within its College of Liberal Arts, encouraging students to discern vocation through an intentional pedagogical sequence coordinated by the ten hallmarks of a Benedictine education. The program will consist of a three-course series for two semesters, and will include a meaningful service experience. Supported by pedagogical training and instructional assessment, all faculty members across each section and throughout the academic year will collaborate on purpose-driven readings, exercises, and assignments that address the criteria of each discipline, ensure continuity, and thereby allow students time and tools for vocational discovery. The students will create a personal mission statement that will evolve alongside their vocational journey throughout the program.

Bloomfield College (NJ) will develop and implement a 200-level course, Ignite Your Passion: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Vocational Exploration, in order to provide students with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the intellectual and theological dimensions of vocational exploration and thus allow them to create purposeful academic planning for a fulfilling career path. This course will encourage students to explore vocation with curiosity to determine how it differs from a career and to create a pathway through discernment of self, examination of experiences and passions, and the setting of goals. The course will marry academic knowledge to praxis in real-world scenarios, employing an exploration of hermeneutics in three parts: the hermeneutic of suspicion, the hermeneutic of knowledge, and the hermeneutic

of validation. The college will also provide a series of workshops and reading groups for faculty members and staff about the role of vocational exploration across institutional contexts, in order to ensure that it maintains a comprehensive and sustainable vocational program on campus following the end of the grant period.

Bryn Athyn College (PA) will expand its first- and second-year experience programming in a new program, Navigating a Useful Life, to provide intentional exploration opportunities that deepen student learning, engagement, and self-reflection. Students will explore two questions central to the first and second year: “Who am I?” and “How might I be called to live a useful life within my career or other vocational pathway?” By providing time for faculty members and staff to focus on program development, and through increased opportunities for collaboration among campus constituents, the grant will allow the college to pilot a new vocation course, a strengths-based mentoring program, and a sophomore vocational retreat.

Coe College (IA) will introduce a core of vocation-centered First Year Seminars within its existing program. Students will be invited to engage seriously with potential career and vocational paths during their sophomore year via participation in a variety of experiential opportunities and a sophomore retreat. Finally, staff and faculty members will be encouraged to further consider their own vocational stories and share them with students through a series of book studies, retreats, and videos.

Friends University (KS) will infuse, into its undergraduate curriculum, a faith-oriented vocational perspective on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The goal of the project is to equip students to discern an overarching vocational call to serve as agents of social change and reconciliation in the midst of their individual vocational journeys. The project will also focus on enhancing vocational discernment opportunities for students who are members of Black/Indigenous/People of Color groups, as well as those who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The project’s goals are closely aligned with the university’s Quaker heritage, Christian mission, and RISE values (Respect, Inclusion, Service, and Excellence).

Hampden-Sydney College (VA) will expand its new experiential learning program, which helps students connect course content to larger vocational issues beyond the classroom through active learning experiences, open-ended questions, and critical reflection. Faculty and staff members will attend training workshops to implement and support experiential learning courses. A group of faculty members will develop a collection of courses that accompany students’ internships to help the students reflect on the impact of those experiences for their broader life goals. Annual campus-wide reflection events will bring together program participants and experiential learning practitioners to exchange ideas and discuss ways to improve how these courses are taught. These activities will strengthen the college’s capacity to work with students beyond the parameters of a conventional classroom education and guide them to reflect on issues of value and purpose.

Kentucky Wesleyan College will deepen, expand, and strengthen existing programs already in place for students to help them prepare for success in life. Project activities will provide

enhanced programming within the freshman, sophomore, and junior year experience and Campus Ministries programs, to increase students' opportunities to identify and develop their personal strengths, values, and beliefs. It will also add meaning and purpose modules or components to the Freshman Seminar and select general education and major level courses. The project will provide faculty members with an opportunity to explore vocation and calling through Faculty Learning Communities and will allow them to develop expertise in integrating these topics into courses through faculty development workshops.

LeTourneau University (TX) will launch the Koinonia Institute in order to enhance the vocational exploration and discernment framework that it offers, through its theology and vocation core curriculum, to students from every academic discipline. The Koinonia Institute will orient faculty members, student life staff, and athletic coaches to the ways students are shaped to engage in vocational discernment, and empower them to align major-specific coursework, student life activities, and coaching with the core curricular program in which all students participate. The Koinonia Institute will span two academic years, bookended with two summer retreats. Theme-specific study groups that will meet eight times throughout the academic year between the two summer retreats.

Loyola University Maryland will refresh and enhance its current first-year seminar through a new project: Promoting First-Year Vocational Development through Messina. This project seeks to add to the repository of curated assignments and activities that promote students' vocational development that are broadly shared and used across the university's Messina program. It will also provide opportunities to enhance activities with digital media and will develop new digital media that highlight vocational exploration experiences in action. These will be available for staff development among Messina faculty members and administrators, as well as external audiences. Finally, the project will provide for the broad dissemination of these materials to encourage reuse of the modules within Messina, and to attract new faculty members to engage with the program.

Marywood University (PA) will implement an Integrative Core Curriculum Fellows Program as part of its new core curriculum. Faculty fellows will provide leadership and peer training on reflective, metacognitive, and integrative pedagogy to faculty teaching the first-year Archway courses and the upper-level Pathways courses. In doing so, the new core curriculum will present opportunities for faculty members and students to deepen their understanding of vocation in a more intentional, interdisciplinary, and scaffolded way. The NetVUE Program Development Grant will support the work of the faculty fellows as they equip over 100 core faculty members with the knowledge, support, and materials to develop reflective activities and opportunities for students, as they begin to discern their life's purpose and their impact on those around them.

Notre Dame of Maryland University will further integrate service into its First Year Seminar course in order to foster a lifelong commitment to service among its students. In conjunction with its career center, a concentrated team of First Year Seminar faculty members will update the curriculum to emphasize writing skills, financial literacy, and critical thinking, so that students

will gain a deeper understanding of a liberal arts education through exposure to a variety of different disciplines and develop a sense of the student services available to them throughout their years at the university.

Pacific Lutheran University (WA) will draw upon the successful elements of existing vocation-related programs to create the Wild Hope Vocation Institute. This institute, with modules developed for the university's learning management system, will assist faculty members and staff in their intentional efforts to infuse vocation into their courses, their mentoring work with students, and their own discernment of their calling to teach. The objective is to engage and equip faculty members and staff for meaningful conversations with students and peers related to vocational reflection and discernment. Funded activities will include curriculum and content development (focusing on introductory, student success, and capstone courses); research and finalization of delivery modalities; and pilot and assessment of the institute's initial programming.

Roanoke College (VA) will further develop its co-curricular program to equip and empower faculty to guide students in each department to explore and examine what it might look like to live a life with purpose. The project will combine Lutheran liberal arts wisdom on vocation with the diverse disciplines and experiences of faculty, staff, and students, in order to create a distinctive and inclusive experience for all students as they seek to lead lives that matter. The project will attend to each department's unique approach to vocational discernment, while drawing the whole community into an exploration and celebration a life lived "on purpose." This deeper and wider vision will create campus-wide opportunities for the community to engage vocation as a critical aspect of whole-person education in the 21st century.

Saint Vincent College (PA) will develop three seminar courses introducing its students to the concepts of listening, learning, and loving, which will help prepare them to pursue their vocations as human beings with unique callings. Students will take these three interdisciplinary seminars, each tied to one of these concepts, at different stages during their college years. The goal of this effort is to help them reflect more deeply upon the academic knowledge they have acquired in core courses and to integrate it with the information and skills they are developing in their major programs. These new courses are tied into the college's recently adopted common core, guided by the longstanding principles of the Catholic, Benedictine, and liberal arts educational traditions. The college will host faculty workshops that will provide a unique opportunity to collaboratively develop these new seminar courses, in order to facilitate enhanced student reflection upon vocation.

Simpson College (IA) will engage all new students in vocational discernment activities by creating a vocational discernment toolbox to enhance its first-year experience seminar and its 100-level courses. The program will include faculty and peer mentor development, ensuring that all those involved in the first-year experience have the skills to engage students in purposeful reflection on vocation. A core group of five faculty leaders will create the initial toolbox activities and train others as to their use. In addition, grant funds will support a two-day

professional development retreat for faculty and a one-day professional development retreat for peer mentors. These activities will create a strong foundation for continued guided vocational discernment throughout the students' educational experience.

St. Norbert College (WI) will develop a cohort program of Scholars for Engaged Vocation, in order to connect the work of vocation exploration with curricular and co-curricular service learning. This pathway through college offers cohorts of students the opportunity to integrate their commitment to the common good with a deep sense of purpose, while also equipping faculty and staff across campus to support this integration. Students who complete the pathway will be able to articulate a future commitment to community engagement that works for justice and is rooted in their understanding and experience of vocation. Development opportunities for faculty and staff members will foster an expanded understanding of vocation that allows them to better equip students to connect service and justice with a sense of meaning and purpose. The impact of these opportunities will reach well beyond the students within the cohorts.

The University of Scranton (PA) will expand the opportunity for its students to reflect on vocation throughout all four years of their undergraduate experience. This reflection will be initiated with students in the required First Year Seminar (FYS) in the form of a "letter to my future self," to be composed and revised during the incoming freshman class's first term. The project will sponsor a workshop to introduce this new feature to all FYS faculty, draw up a plan for its institution, and form, train, and provide a modest stipend for a select subgroup of faculty and staff. This group will follow up with any students who wish to continue to consider their callings in subsequent academic terms by revisiting their initial letter and participating in other vocation-oriented activities.

Viterbo University (WI) will create the Footsteps Program to provide intentional integration of vocational development within curricular and co-curricular experiences across four different dimensions of student life: academic affairs, career services, campus ministry, and student affairs. The primary focus of the Footsteps Program is to form and develop students' sense of vocational purpose, while remaining grounded in Viterbo's mission to prepare students for "faithful service and ethical leadership," and the Franciscan concept of "calling" as a life that generates action. Central to the grant's implementation will be vocational training opportunities for faculty members and staff through on-campus retreats, the development of a vocational language integration plan and digital learning materials, and the integration of vocation language into courses, student affairs, and career services programming.