



Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Vocation Across the Academy Grants

Awarded in 2023 • Funding for 2023–2026

Alvernia University (PA) will expand existing career development strategies by initiating university-wide efforts to enhance vocational exploration through storytelling. Alvernia will enhance the vocational focus in the first-year experience, offer mini-grants for staff and faculty members to expand vocational experiences in their functional areas, and design a program for peer-to-peer vocational exploration. The project will broaden student engagement, particularly for students from historically underrepresented groups to better form graduates poised to make a living and make a life.

Berry College (GA) will implement a four-year developmental framework for students, designed to nurture a planning mindset and to gear students toward discovering vocational purpose. Of particular focus will be the design of an intentional second-year waypoint, during which students who are still undecided about their field of study (as well as those exploring specific academic paths) can start to define vocational purpose. This program seeks to guide students along a path on which they can envision their primary vocational and professional goals, navigate times of transition, and explore purpose through high-impact learning experiences.

Bethel University (MN) will embed vocational exploration, career preparation, and professional pathways into the academic curriculum. Through collaborative work among professors across academic disciplines and educators from several student life offices, vocational exploration programming will be connected and embedded in the student's academic experience. This project will support the design of templates for new assignments, vocational activities, internship protocols, and career-readiness content to ensure effective and consistent student formation practices related to vocation and calling.

Bluefield University (VA) will expand and strengthen its ongoing efforts for student vocational discernment and career development in two ways. First, through a relaunched general education curriculum tailored to the university's various colleges and divisions, students will encounter a

more comprehensive approach to understanding college life, future career pathways, and community engagement. Second, by expanding the use of CliftonStrengths as a foundational tool for advising and mentoring, students will grow in the dimensions of faith, vocation, and career discernment.

Central Methodist University (MO) will create and maintain a partnership with the Missouri Department of Corrections to engage incarcerated CMU students in career discernment, exploration, and preparation. A library of resources will be created and sustained to aid in career discernment for this unique population. A speaker series and several workshops will allow students to explore a variety of career possibilities. Mentoring and advising relationships with on-campus faculty members and graduates of the college will facilitate career preparation.

Lane College (TN) will expand the capacity of staff and faculty members to engage and guide students in vocational reflection and discernment by infusing existing career-related initiatives with new vocational reflection components and integrating that programming throughout the curriculum. This program will also enhance vocational formation by cultivating a cohort of student leaders with a deeper understanding of vocational discernment and a personal sense of purpose, enabling these leaders to have a positive peer-to-peer influence on their fellow undergraduates.

McDaniel College (MD) will cultivate a bi-directional relationship between vocational discernment and holistic wellness among undergraduate students. This program aspires to help students consider how their sense of well-being informs their discovery of who they want to be in the world. Through advising, curricular development, and new co-curricular activities, McDaniel will strengthen students' understanding of all dimensions of wellness and the integral role wellness plays in vocational exploration.

Muhlenberg College (PA) will develop an internship program that encourages humanities majors to begin credit-bearing internships supervised by humanities faculty members. Through the creation of a learning community (in partnership with career services staff), humanities faculty members will gain a better understanding of how internships function, recognize how humanities coursework provides a foundation for a wide variety of career and life goals, and learn how they might more directly articulate the career competencies that students gain in humanities courses.

Newman University (KS) will implement a new, university-wide vocation program, building on the professional development gained from a previous NetVUE grant award. Through this new program, staff and faculty members will participate in training events to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of vocation; they will also develop new ways of including attention to the concept of vocation in first-year courses and academic advising relationships. Participating staff and faculty members will earn an instructor/advisor badge which recognizes proficiency in educating for vocation.

Rivier University (NH) will create an immersive experience through which students will consider the nature of vocational discernment through the lens of local service in the area of community health work. In two courses in religious studies, students will develop a theological framework for vocational discernment in the context of selected readings and community outreach. These students will then develop an active and reflective understanding of community engagement and vocational discernment through a summer immersion program that includes thoughtful interaction with leaders from community agencies, faith-based organizations, and educational partners.

St. Olaf College (MN) will infuse vocational reflection and discernment into a new model of holistic advising, mentoring, and learning integration, which is intended to embrace the whole of the undergraduate experience. This project will develop and field-test a variety of approaches to fostering vocational reflection in first-year course assignments, co-curricular colloquia, and team-based advising. Participating staff and faculty members will find support in cohorts of practice, through which they will create and share resources for vocational reflection and receive professional development experiences for the purposes of their own vocational discernment.

Warren Wilson College (NC) will strengthen and amplify experiential learning across the curriculum and co-curriculum to yield enhanced vocational discernment as a key learning outcome, particularly in the context of the college's hallmark student work program. The project will provide campus educators with new knowledge, skills, and tools to design and better integrate experiential learning throughout the undergraduate experience, with the goal of yielding enhanced vocational discernment for every student.

Wingate University (NC) will develop a common language and shared tools to meet the diverse needs of students, faculty members, and staff as they strive to find or renew their calling. This will allow vocational discernment to be scalable across the university and applied through programs, workshops, and courses, such that it permeates the Wingate experience. Implementation will range from intensive and immersive experiences to simple tools to foster guided discussions, all of which will contribute to the broader vision of a purposeful life. Specific focus will be placed on the sophomore experience.

Wofford College (SC) will cultivate a shared understanding of vocation across campus and will increase capacity for mentorship among staff and faculty members. Activities in this project will include a cohort-based staff and faculty member learning initiative focused on mentoring and vocational discernment, a series of workshops to increase the collective understanding of vocation, and a mini-grant program to generate and extend conversations around the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation.