



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

Awarded in February 2025 • Funding for 2025–2027

AdventHealth University (FL) will build on a framework of transformation that weaves vocational exploration into the evolving institutional culture of whole-person education. The initiative will begin with intensive training for staff and faculty members, organized through communities of practice, to prepare mentors who embody and promote whole-person development. In the second year, these mentors will begin leading student groups through structured vocational exploration and personal formation, deepening AHU's institutional commitment to educating healthcare providers who practice with compassion and a whole-person orientation to care.

Albion College (MI) will undertake a program led by the Career and Internship Center to deepen vocational exploration through faculty development, student retreats, and community events. Key activities include workshops for faculty members to integrate vocation into coursework, expanding the reach of the institution's current vocation program through connection with experiential learning initiatives, and hosting on-campus student retreats that focus on vocational discernment. Additionally, vocation-centered discussion dinners will foster dialogue on meaningful work among students, staff, and faculty members.

Brevard College (NC) will build upon a recently launched program that integrates purpose discernment into the general education curriculum for all first-year students and a required major course for all second-year students. The grant will support collaboration between faculty members and staff members in student success to develop a comprehensive toolkit—featuring lesson plans, activities, readings, reading roadmaps, and student-centered media—to engage students in the process of discovering purpose. A speaker series and book circle will foster broader campus-wide dialogue on vocational reflection and the pursuit of meaningful purpose.

Carlow University (PA) will launch a weekend vocation retreat to complement existing workshops for second-year students. Held in the fall of sophomore year—when many are considering majors and life direction—the retreat will offer a supportive space for exploring personal hopes and uncertainties. Designed to deepen vocational reflection, it will help students consider both what they are called to do and who they are called to become. Promotion efforts will foster an inclusive campus culture of vocational inquiry, with particular outreach to students from historically resilient backgrounds.

Carson-Newman University (TN) will implement a program aimed at deepening first-year students' reflection on vocation and calling. Project leaders will develop a required general education course focused on vocational exploration and discovery. Training resources will be provided to instructors to ensure the successful launch and ongoing delivery of the course. Additionally, key university leaders will design activities that enhance vocational reflection and discernment and integrate them into ongoing curricular and co-curricular learning experiences for students across campus.

Concordia University Chicago (IL) will establish a comprehensive mentoring initiative to support faith-based discernment. This project will enhance collaboration between athletic and academic staff to help student-athletes recognize broader opportunities for personal and professional growth. Additionally, the program will include a community-engaged mentoring component, involving faculty members, advisors, career services staff, and community partners, designed to provide students with experiential learning opportunities to help students connect academic skills with community needs and career pathways.

The grant-supported vocation initiative at **Dillard University (LA)** seeks to deepen students' vocational and theological exploration, equipping them to lead purpose-driven lives. The program will embed vocational discernment modules into existing courses, establish forums for theological reflection rooted in community service, and provide training for faculty members to support students in aligning their academic paths with personal values and professional aspirations.

George Fox University (OR) will expand its mentorship program, which supports juniors and seniors in vocational exploration through personalized mentoring with industry professionals. The program will grow to include a wider range of academic disciplines, with new resources to help mentors facilitate meaningful conversations about vocation and calling. A training bootcamp will also prepare new program directors to implement the initiative in their departments, fostering a campus-wide culture of vocational reflection and discernment for the common good.

Grove City College (PA) will lead a two-year initiative exploring the dynamic relationship between the callings of faculty members and students. Central to this effort will be the creation of a new Center for Teaching and Learning, developed through a series of vocational

discernment opportunities. Key components include: (1) a kickoff retreat; (2) a faculty vocation fellows program focused on vocational reflection at various career stages; (3) faculty member development activities tailored to early-career, mid-career, and senior faculty members; and (4) a faculty learning community dedicated to the new first-year seminar.

Lewis University (IL) will expand its current programming with two initiatives to further integrate and sustain vocational inquiry across the curriculum and throughout the campus culture. The first involves establishing a campus vocation institute featuring a diverse faculty and staff cohort, a four-semester workshop series with keynote facilitators, and a curated curriculum, developing a campus-wide vocational integration plan. The second initiative is the publication of a third volume in a community-authored anthology on vocation, focused on the common good, to be used in the first-year seminar and other student experiences.

Manchester University (IN) will strengthen vocational exploration pathways by evaluating and refining existing programs and establishing a shared, campus-wide understanding of vocation. Grant-supported activities will include launching a peer mentoring program, promoting a credit-bearing workplace experience course, expanding and assessing the first-year success seminar curriculum, developing vocation-centered admissions materials, and providing vocational advising training for staff and faculty members.

The grant-funded program at **Merrimack College (MA)** is designed to evaluate, nurture, and strengthen current efforts to introduce first-year students to values-based pedagogy and the practice of discernment and reflection through the first-year seminar. It will provide support for faculty members expanding or adapting courses in their disciplines to align with the seminar's objectives, emphasize vocational discernment for the common good through a public lecture series, and create space for a faculty cohort dedicated to reflecting on vocation both personally and in their teaching.

Methodist University (NC) will build on existing co-curricular discernment efforts by introducing a vocation-focused component within its revised general education curriculum. The three-course sequence will guide students in exploring goals, interests, and community engagement. The initiative will support curriculum development through faculty fellowships, design resources, and digital tools, while enhancing student engagement through peer mentoring, student-produced media, and campus events—making vocational reflection a formative experience for all students.

Mount Mary University (WI) will embed vocational exploration across the undergraduate experience through a holistic advising model beginning in the first-year seminar. All incoming students will engage with vocation-focused curriculum and participate in an on-campus retreat to support reflection and discernment. Academic advisors and seminar instructors will meet

regularly to align advising with core curricular goals. This initiative seeks to equip students with lifelong skills for vocational reflection and for discerning purposeful paths toward flourishing.

North Central College (IL) has begun cultivating a campus culture that integrates vocational exploration and discernment alongside career readiness. Early efforts have included faculty formation, development of curricular and co-curricular programming, and strategic integration of vocational language across campus. Building on this foundation, a team of engaged faculty will collaborate with a diverse group of students to assess progress, gather feedback on the impact and reception of vocational initiatives, and design strategies to deepen programmatic connections and strengthen the campus-wide culture of vocation.

Point Loma Nazarene University (CA) will launch an initiative to integrate vocational reflection and discernment for all students across the undergraduate experience. By embedding vocation-related content into general education and major courses, the program will ensure sustained interdisciplinary engagement with questions of calling and purpose. The initiative will also pilot a partnership between faculty members and Career Services staff to incorporate career exploration into academic coursework.

Reinhardt University (GA) will form a joint staff and faculty member cohort to develop pedagogical and programmatic initiatives that promote equitable access to vocational discernment. Recognizing that not all students have had opportunities to engage in this work, the cohort will focus on inclusive design of learning experiences. Through sustained reflection and collaboration, members will create projects that foster meaningful vocational exploration for all students, particularly those historically underserved in such efforts.

Rochester Christian University (MI) offers a strong set of First Year Experience courses that engage students in vocational exploration. However, these courses—delivered across multiple departments—lack cohesion. This project will enable RCU to create an integrated, scaffolded vocational curriculum that uses shared language, coordinated coursework, and updated lecture content to reinforce key themes. In addition, Student Life programming will be aligned to extend vocational discernment into co-curricular experiences such as service learning, mentoring, and chapel.

Saint Anselm College (NH) will deepen its integration of vocational exploration through the development of a supplemental holistic advising model. Building on existing efforts within the First Year Experience, the next phase will assign each student a dedicated advisor who will support vocational reflection throughout the student's first two years. The college will provide targeted professional development to prepare faculty members and staff for this mentorship role and will establish a dedicated advising office to sustain and expand the program.

Samford University (AL) will encourage students to view study abroad not as separate from on-campus discussions of calling and purpose, but as a formative extension of these conversations. The university will develop a program to support students abroad in deepening vocational exploration and spiritual practices through reflective materials developed via an intentional, iterative process. The program will assess student attitudes toward vocation and faith to inform the creation of a guided journal and surveys, thereby enabling faculty to extend the university's formative mission into the study abroad experience.

Spelman College (GA) will enhance students' spiritual and leadership development through focused initiatives. Annual retreats will foster community, growth, and spiritual formation, while leadership retreats will emphasize self-care and leadership skills. Monthly workshops will offer spiritual growth and vocational discernment to the broader student body. A chapel speaker series featuring women preachers will encourage dialogue on ministry and leadership. Together, these efforts are designed to cultivate a vibrant spiritual community that empowers students toward deeper vocational development.

St. Edward's University (TX) will implement a multi-faceted initiative to integrate vocational education into the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences. Two faculty cohorts will engage in a day-long retreat and monthly sessions focused on vocation through the lens of the Holy Cross tradition, with attention to inclusive pedagogy. A mini-grant program will support the development of innovative course assignments and activities that embed vocational themes. Designed as a "train-the-trainer" model, the initiative will position participating faculty members to share their curricular innovations with colleagues across the university.

Taylor University (IN) will undertake a set of initiatives to develop a comprehensive institutional narrative of vocation, guiding its next phase of growth. Key efforts include revising a core Christian liberal arts course to emphasize vocational discernment, linking on-campus employment with professional skill development, and expanding experiential learning to deepen community engagement. The project aims to enrich student learning, support faculty development, and strengthen campus-community connections.

University of Northwestern – St. Paul (MN) has launched a new core curriculum and identified the need to further develop a shared institutional language of vocation, while at the same time deepening discipline-specific approaches to vocational and professional formation. This new initiative will build on the curriculum's emphasis on leadership development by enhancing vocational awareness during students' second and third years. Through a campus-wide mini-grant program, academic departments will design curricular and co-curricular strategies to strengthen student engagement with vocation in connection to their fields of study.

Valparaiso University (IN) will advance first-year experiential fieldwork programming in order to incorporate more thoroughly the exploration of vocation, leadership, and service. A working group comprising staff and faculty members will convene to develop a comprehensive resource toolkit designed for implementation and adaptation across curricular and co-curricular contexts, with particular emphasis on the newly redesigned first-year general education courses.

The College of Arts & Sciences at **Washington University in St. Louis (MO)** will expand its four-year advising model to support a campus-wide initiative focused on connecting a liberal arts education to students' sense of meaning and purpose. The grant will fund reflective training for advisors around vocation-related concepts, enhance the advising curriculum, and support the launch of a signature junior-year event designed to help students articulate the value of their academic experience in relation to life goals and vocational reflection.