

NetVUE Grant – Purpose Through Practice

9. Faculty Mini-Grant Program – Faculty Mini-Grants support vocation-centered innovation projects that integrate faith, calling, discernment, purpose, service, and reflection into the educational experience.

Examples –

1. Course Redesign – Redesign courses in your major in to include a “vocation lens” that asks:

- How does this discipline contribute to human flourishing?
- What ethical responsibilities do accompany this profession?
- How might students use their gifts in service to others?
- How does faith inform professional practice?

Example: An accounting course includes case studies on stewardship, ethical leadership, and social responsibility.

a. Calling and Career Seminar – A first-year or capstone course exploring:

- Faith and work
- Personal strengths and giftedness
- Discernment practices
- Purpose and meaning
- Vocational decision-making

Example: Students develop a personal vocation statement and career action plan.

b. The “Purpose” Portfolio: Require students to maintain a longitudinal academic and spiritual portfolio that tracks their vocational reflections alongside their coursework.

c. Vocational Reflection Embedded in General Education: integrate structured reflection prompts into core curriculum courses.

2. Curricular Redesign & Teaching Innovation –

- **Signature Assignment Infusion** -Redesign an existing final project (or create a new signature assignment) to require students to evaluate a real-world problem through the lenses of their faith, personal values, and future vocational calling.
- **Discerning Modules in the Major** – Develop 2-3 week “reflection modules” embedded within core major courses. These modules guide

students to reflect on professional ethics, service, and the broader social impact of their chosen field.

- **Faith-Learning Integration Course Design:** Restructure a syllabus to explicitly connect foundational concepts in a specific discipline (e.g., Business, Nursing, Computer Science) with historical to theological perspectives on purpose and calling.
- **Creative and Interdisciplinary Initiatives: Design** interdisciplinary seminars that combine fields like religion, theology, and the natural sciences to explore ultimate questions of human purpose and environmental or social stewardship.
- **Service-Learning Partnerships:** Integrate community-based volunteer work or civic engagement into course requirements, followed by structured reflection that asks students to discern how their service aligns with their personal sense of calling and social responsibility.
- **Vocational Immersion Experiences:** Fund local “vision trips” or day-long site visits where students interview industry mentors, exploring how these professionals live out their faith and purpose in the marketplace.
- **Faith-Based Non-Profit Internships:** Develop an internship program with local faith-based organizations or community nonprofits. These can be paired with weekly or bi-weekly guided reflection exercises on justice, compassion, and vocational discernment.
- **“My Calling in Practice” Project:** Students interview professionals in their field about purpose in work; ethical challenges; faith integration; and service to the community.
- **Purpose-Oriented Problem-Solving Assignment:** Students identify a real community need and design solutions using disciplinary knowledge. Examples: Business students create nonprofit sustainability plans; Kinesiology students design accessibility solutions; Education students develop literacy initiatives.

3. Advising, Mentorship & Community Building

- a. **Peer-to-Peer Vocational Mentorship:** Create a program where upper-class students are trained to mentor incoming freshmen, building them through guided discussions on purpose, discernment, and adapting to campus life.
- b. **Faculty-Student Discernment Circles:** Establish departmental reading or discussion groups for faculty and students. Funds can cover books

and refreshments to foster informal, deep dialogue about how personal faith intersects with their academic disciplines.

- c. **Advising Reflection Workshops:** Develop advising initiative that prompt students to map out their values, skills, and passions. This ensures academic advising goes beyond checking degree requirements to actively discussion their post-graduation purpose.

4. Reflection Module Projects –

- a. **Short reflection activities incorporated into existing classes:**

- What gifts am I developing through this course?
- How might this knowledge serve others?
- Where do I experience joy and meaning in this work?
- What ethical questions arise in this discipline?

- b. **Discernment Journal Program** – Students maintain semester-long journals documenting: Personal growth, Faith development, Academic experiences; career exploration, service experiences.

- c. **Four-Year Reflection Framework:** Students create a digital portfolio throughout their academic journey containing reflection essays; service experiences; identity and leadership development; academic projects; faith and calling formation milestones; future vocational goals and contributions. Faculty provide guided prompts throughout teach term. The portfolio culminates in a senior presentation.

5. Experiential Learning Projects –

- a. **Vocation-Focused Internship Program** – Internships include: Faculty mentorship; Guided theological reflection; peer discussion groups; reflection papers connecting work, faith, and purpose. Students explore not only what they do but who they are becoming.
- b. **Community Immersion Experience** – Students spend time with local organizations addressing: Poverty, Healthcare access, Education, Environmental stewardship. Structured reflection helps students connect service experiences with vocation and faith.
- c. **Global Service and Calling Experience** – Study abroad or mission-based experiences focused on: Cross-cultural understanding; Service leadership; Faith formation; Discernment of future vocation.

6. Service-Learning Integration Projects

- a. **Discipline-Based Community Partnerships** – Courses partnered with community organizations. Reflection connects service to calling and civic responsibility. Examples:
 - Nursing students provide health education
 - Marketing students assist nonprofits
 - Environmental science students conduct sustainability assessments.
- b. **Community Impact Fellows Program** – Students complete year-long service projects while exploring: Leadership; Purpose; Faith commitments; Social responsibility. Students present lessons learned at an annual symposium.

7. Advising Initiatives –

- a. **Vocational Advising Model** – Academic advising expands beyond course selection to include:
 - Purpose exploration
 - Strengths assessment
 - Faith and work conversations
 - Life design planning
- b. **Calling Conversation Series** – Student meet each semester with advisors to discuss:
 - Emerging interests
 - Gifts and talents
 - Faith development
 - Career possibilities
 - Service opportunities
- c. **Life Design and Discernment Workshops** – Workshops teach students:
 - Decision-making frameworks
 - Discernment practices
 - Goal setting
 - Vocational exploration

8. Mentorship Programs

- a. **Faith and Profession Mentorship Network** – Students are paired with alumni mentors who discuss:
 - Career development
 - Faith integration
 - Ethical leadership
 - Purpose and meaning in work

- b. Vocational Discernment Cohorts** – Small group meet monthly with faculty and community leaders to explore:
 - Calling
 - Faith formation
 - Leadership
 - Service
- c. Intergenerational Wisdom Program** – Students engage with retirees, clergy, professionals, and community leaders to learn how vocation evolves throughout life.

9. Faith-Learning Integration Projects

- a. Theology of Work Initiative** – Faculty across disciplines collaborate to help students explore:
 - The meaning of work
 - Service to others
 - Human dignity
 - Stewardship
 - Faithful leadership
- b. Faith and Professional Ethics Program** – Students examine how faith traditions inform ethical decision-making in their professions.
- c. Faculty Learning Communities on Vocation** – Faculty redesign assignments and courses to include vocational reflection and faith-learning integration.

10. Creative and Interdisciplinary Initiatives

- a. Vocation Storytelling Project** – Based on journeys of calling and purpose, students create:
 - Podcasts
 - Short films
 - Digital stories
 - Oral histories
- b. Arts and Calling Exhibition** - Students express vocational themes, followed by reflective discussions through:
 - Visual art
 - Music
 - Theatre
 - Creative writing
- c. Purpose and Innovation Challenge** – Students will discuss purpose of
 - Faith

- Service
 - Leadership
 - Human flourishing
- d. **“What are You Called to Build”? Innovation Lab** – Students develop projects, businesses, ministries, or social enterprises that align personal gifts with community needs.
- e. **Senior Vocation Symposium** – Graduating students present how their education has shaped:
- Identity
 - Purpose
 - Faith
 - Service commitments
 - Professional aspirations