



DE VRIES INSTITUTE

FOR GLOBAL FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

an institute of Calvin University

Faith & Learning Collaboration Grants

Wise and meaningful integration of Christian faith with the work of higher education is often approached at the level of the individual faculty member. For example, Calvin University asks each faculty member to devote careful ongoing reflection to how Christian faith commitments shape their work in teaching, research, and service. This reflection is a significant criterion for decisions about reappointment and tenure.

At the same time, Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary are learning *communities*. The richness of individual faculty reflection upon faith and learning depends upon the health of ongoing conversation within the communities in which faculty find themselves. And decisions about faculty status are made in communal contexts—departments, committees, the board—which are webbed into the mission of the university (or seminary) as a whole. Moreover, the shaping role of Christian faith in the student experience depends not only upon choices that individual faculty members make in their courses, but also upon the decisions that departments and programs make as they shape institutional curriculum and culture. For these decisions to be good decisions requires ongoing, rigorous conversation within departments about faith and academic life.

In view of this *communal* dimension of faith/learning integration, the de Vries Institute for Global Faculty Development invites Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary departments, programs, committees, and ad hoc groups of faculty to consider applying for a **Faith & Learning Collaboration Grant**. These grants (\$7000 max) will provide resources to groups of faculty to encourage enriching ongoing conversation about Christian faith in relation to teaching, curricular matters, group culture, and research.

The spirit of this opportunity is something like this:

“This activity will help our school/department/program/research group/steering committee to have a conversation which is fundamental to our mission and well-being but which is often hard to organize or prioritize or fund or find time for.”

Examples of projects that could qualify for a grant include:

Project	Use of Funds
Two-day retreat for a department developing a new masters program to think carefully about the appropriate role of Christian faith in the new program	meals, refreshments, meeting room rental at PCC, reading materials, and a modest stipend for participants
Departmental reading group on a crucial recent book on Christian faith and their discipline	books, refreshments, and stipends for participants
Series of three extended working lunches in an early summer week for an intensive governance committee to review and revise its expectations related to faith integration	meals and stipends
Consultation between representatives of two closely affiliated departments (e.g., whose courses serve as cognates for one another's programs) to discuss ways to align their approaches to faith integration	resources for a meal or two, perhaps stipends for a more time-intensive consultation
Planning retreat for an interdisciplinary group of faculty who intend to apply for a major grant to fund a research project that intersects significantly with Christian faith (e.g., through CCCS internally or any number of external funding sources)	meals and stipends for a week of focused time in the summer
Workshop with an external consultant for a department working through a specific faith integration issue or hoping to learn (e.g.) more about a specific theological area	space, meals, and a reasonably-priced consultant
A department would like to do one of DVI's Reflecting Faith faculty development courses, either online over a few weeks with an in-person debrief over a meal, or in compressed one- or two-day workshop form led by DVI staff	Course fees, meals, participant stipends

Grant decision criteria include:

- A clear goal for the group activity.
 - This can be a very specific goal (e.g., “We will re-map the faith integration touchpoints that occur throughout our curriculum so that it can be included in our reaccreditation documentation”).

- Or it can be a more general goal (e.g., “We realized that we seldom have departmental conversations about how Christian faith relates to our work, so we want to reboot those conversations by reading this book together”).
- But there needs to be a goal.
- A persuasive case that the intended activity can be managed in the time allotted for it—and/or a specific plan for follow-up should the timeframe turn out to be insufficient. Any funds granted must be used by the end of the stated timeframe.
- Reasons to believe that this activity will nurture the long-term health of the faith and learning conversation for faculty (and thus also students).
- Evidence of commitment on the part of nearly all relevant stakeholders to participate in the collaboration.
- A realistic plan and budget for the collaborative activity.
- Some grant funds will be reserved for interdisciplinary proposals.

Many of the examples given on the previous page would naturally take place in the summer (when there is often time and greater schedule flexibility to gather people for sustained work). Since faculty salaries technically do not cover summer work, stipends are included in most of the examples.

- DVI’s current amount for stipends for summer work is \$200/person/full day. Larger amounts can be justified for leaders in cases where significant prep work is required. Please stay in the vicinity of these amounts for your budgets.
- In addition to days or weeks in the summer, we are also open to the possibility of time during the fall and spring semesters: evenings, Saturdays, or days within academic advising (for groups with less of an advising load who can afford to shift their advising to one of the two days). Stipends are also appropriate for these models.

None of us should live under the illusion that money (in the form of small stipends) creates time. Nevertheless, the provision of stipends is intended to honor the time, energy, and commitment required for a group to devote itself to this kind of conversation and collaboration. It is also intended to underscore the *importance* of this kind of work, which can easily feel like uncompensated “extra” but is in fact crucial for the long-term health, well-being, vitality, and fidelity of Calvin University and Calvin Seminary and the myriad groups and individuals that make these institutions what they are.

Decisions about grant applications will be made by a small committee that will include the de Vries Institute director, the dean for faculty development and research initiatives, and one member of the most recent 4th year Faith & Learning Fellowship group.

A brief report must be submitted upon completion of the activity.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. To apply, [click here](#)

If you have questions about the program or would like to discuss a prospective project, please contact de Vries Institute director, [Matt Lundberg](#).