Project #	Faculty Name	Dept.	Project Title	Project Abstract
1	den Dulk, Kevin and VanHorn, Jason	Politics and Economics and Geology, Geography, and Environment	Restorative Justice for Returning Citizens: A Mapping Project	Men and women returning from prison have a range of immediate and long-term needs, from employment to housing. But the information about service providers who are friendly to returning citizens is often fragmented and difficult to find. The Henry Institute, in partnership with Calvin's Geography Department and with support from the Michigan Department of Corrections, is addressing that problem by mapping services at a county level in the state of Michigan.

So far we have gathered data on all counties in the state of Michigan. The map is publicly available at http://gis.calvin.edu/rc. Families, service providers, parole officers, government agencies, and returning citizens themselves are already actively using it. To our knowledge, the map is the first of its kind in Michigan, and perhaps nationwide.

The project is ongoing as we strengthen the quality the map to new counties and use the underlying data on providers to identify and explain service deserts. Student researchers gather data on services, help engage potential map users, refine the map interface, and use the underlying information from the map to enlarge our understanding of restorative justice and the challenges of re-entry. |
2	Du Mez, Kristin	Historical Studies	Live Laugh Love: A Cultural History of White Christian Womanhood	Stretching from the nineteenth-century to the present, this project examines the history of the religious culture and cultural products produced and consumed by white Christian women. Examining evangelicalism, Mormonism, and New Thought/positive thinking, the project not only illuminates the religious formation of millions of American women and examines its cultural and political implications, but also reconceptualizes how we understand the relationship between religion and culture, and how we conceptualize modern American religion.
3	Johnson, Kristine	English	The Writing Practices of Third Culture Kids	The goal of this project is to understand how Third Culture Kids negotiate academic writing during their undergraduate years in the United States. By describing the experiences and literacy practices of these students - a recognized but under-studied population in American higher education - this project contributes to conversations about writing pedagogy, translanguaging, and student success. After recruiting participants and conducting preliminary interviews, the researchers will use discourse-based interviews, a method that asks participants to submit written work to be interviewed by the researcher about that work. In a discourse-based interview, students are interviewed about the content and rhetorical strategies of papers they have written, with the goal of discovering the tacit knowledge students bring to writing tasks. The goal for the summer research period includes completing a full literature review, recruiting participants, conducting all background interviews, and planning for the future of the project.
4	Lim, Sung Soo	Politics and Economics	The Effects of Economic Growth on Subjective Wellbeing of the Poor	This projects examines the effect of economic growth on wellbeing of the poor in developing countries. In particular, this study investigates whether economic growth, as measured by the rate of increase in per capita income, is associated with marked improvements in the conditions of the poorer groups in society. Existing studies tend to focus more on material wellbeing. The relevant conditions, however, include many dimensions besides income: A proper evaluation would track a wide array of attainments and capabilities to determine how they are altered during the growth process. A growing body of literature suggests that economic growth does not necessarily benefit the poor. This project studies the effects of economic growth by focusing on the subjective wellbeing (such as happiness, aspirations, and optimism) of the poor in developing countries.

| 5 | Mattson, Craig and Lipsker, Abbie | Communication | Place-Based Higher Education Strategies and the Challenge of Non-English Undergraduate Adult Education | This application (a co-led project by Prof. Craig Mattson and Director of Continuing Studies Abbie Lipsker) builds on research conducted through the 49507 Initiative under Calvin University's Global Campus. The cross-divisional research team including faculty and staff conducted twelve different focus groups at four locations across the space of a year, asking community members from the 49507 zip code to relate (a) their aspirations for undergraduate educational opportunities, (b) the obstructions they faced in pursuing that education, and (c) their feelings about Calvin's provision of such educational offerings.

Coding performed by Dr. Hennie Schoon's social work students surfaced six major themes including contextualization, perceived benefits of higher education, ideal features for higher ed opportunities, future ambitions, support resources needed to complete credentials, and barriers to access and completion. Among the barriers surfaced, one of the most significant faced by citizens in the 49507 zip code pertained to language proficiency: in short, Spanish-speaking-only citizens communicated that, even when all other needs were provided for (transportation, child care, tuition, etc.), their efforts to pursue undergraduate education were obstructed by a lack of English proficiency. Based on these findings, researchers Abbie Lipsker (Director of Continuing Studies) and Craig Mattson (Arthur H. DeKruyter Chair of Faith & Communication) determined to strengthen and extend that research by sharing the consolidated findings from the focus groups as well as researching and sharing best practices for non-English undergraduate adult education in place-based community university engagement.

Their plan now is to write up these findings and practices in a peer-reviewed essay, which will offer guidance not only for Calvin's future place-based undergraduate offerings, but also similar offerings from other institutions of higher learning as well. They believe that such research would contribute to the scholarship on place-based engagement (which tends to be quiet about Spanish-only educational provision) and to the research around credit-bearing education and community engagement (which tends to be more focused on nonprofits, primary secondary education, and basic adult education, without sufficient attention for undergraduate institutions, let alone faith-based institutions). |
| 6 | Urban, David | English | John Milton and C. S. Lewis: Influence and Bibliography | I'm hoping a student can work alongside me on two related projects:

FIRST, to help me develop my book project, C. S. Lewis, Miltonist: The Influence of John Milton's "Paradise Lost" on Lewis's Creative and Apologetic Imagination.

SECOND, to work alongside me in assembling my annual comprehensive report of scholarship (articles, monographs, and collections of essays) written about the great English author John Milton (1608-74), in this case covering publications from the year 2023, for The Year's Work in English Studies (YWES), a journal published by Oxford University Press. I am an editor for YWES, and I am responsible for the annual review of Milton scholarship, which involves organizing, summarizing, and evaluating well over a hundred works of scholarship within a comprehensive review essay. |

| 7 | Yonker, Julie | Psychology | Support for the Informal Caregiver: The Role of Faith Communities | This is a community based participatory research project that will focus on two communities, 1) informal caregivers, and 2) the faith communities. We will interview a variety of faith communities and informal caregivers with the hopes of answering the following questions: What faith-based resources already exist for informal caregivers? Are there resources concerning the theology of informal caregiving, as there is for the theology of disability? What if any, training do faith community care teams have concerning support for informal caregivers? Are there nuances with respect to different faith traditions and responses to informal caregiving? This project is a sub-set of a larger project on informal caregiving. The student would be part of a team of faculty and students from nursing and public health.

Informal caregivers are becoming essential to the care of physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs of their care recipients. In the USA, the number of informal caregivers (often referred to as family caregivers) has risen significantly from 39.8 million adults caring for at least one other adult in 2015 to 47.9 million in 2020, with increases expected to continue (National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020). The Rosalyn Carter Institute for Caregivers claims that caregivers are on the frontlines of humanity. Rosalyn stated,"There are only four kinds of people in the world - those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers."

Few of these essential and unpaid informal health care providers are afforded training to deliver these vital services to their care recipient. Furthermore, there are limited resources available and minimal support offered from professional caregivers. There is a scarcity of research about the challenges of informal caregiving as well as how the medical community trains and/or interacts with informal caregivers. One hope is that the faith community could have stepped in to help fill some gaps of informal caregiver support, however, recent searching has found limited resources available (although there was a small upsurge in awareness during the height of the COVID pandemic).

Informal caregiving requires a biopsychosocial-spiritual sacrifice. From a biological standpoint, informal caregivers report physical problems, sleeplessness and poor eating habits attributed to their caregiving duties. From a psychological perspective, informal caregivers report depression and/or anxiety. From a social and spiritual perspective, informal caregivers are frequently isolated due to their health care duties. Their sense of not feeling "normal" is overwhelming, with a belief that no one could understand what they are going through. Humans are designed by God to live in community; we are relational beings. Yet the demands of caregiving can interrupt those larger social relationships. Informal caregivers' commitment, perseverance, and compassion for their care recipient is admirable, ye there is frequently little or no encouragement for the substantial life changes required to undertake such a health care burden.

The Good Samaritan could be classified as an informal caregiver. He unexpectedly saw a vital need and at great personal sacrifice, provided for that caregiving need when others would not. My vision for this project is to likewise offer compassion, mercy, and justice for the informal caregiver through the outcomes of this work. |
| 8. | Kuperus, Tracy | Politics & Economics | Kenya, Religion, and Democracy: Religion as a Pathway to Peace? | Kenya offers intriguing insights regarding the role that religion plays in the socio-political sphere. The number of religious adherents is high, religious experiences are varied, and the public spaces filled by religious organizations are innumerable (Gifford, 2009; Parsitau 2011). In particular, religious organizations comment on public policy regularly, and they have contributed, both negatively and positively, to the process of nation-building and democratization (Karanja 2008; Lonsdale 2009; Throup 2015). Religious organizations in Kenya have also been engaged in ameliorating or exacerbating ethnic and political conflict before, during, and after national elections (Mwaura and Martinon 2010; Tarus 2022).

This research project will build upon previous studies that have examined how religious organizations in Kenya have contributed to democratization and political stability. It will do so, first, by investigating the peace and security programs of a diverse range of religious organizations. Second, it will ascertain how average citizens view these efforts. Many studies have assessed the work of religious organizations from a top-down national perspective. Few have asked Kenyans their thoughts about the public role of religious organizations, let alone whether they think religious organizations help or hinder political stability.

The case selection for this research project includes five of the most well-known religious organizations â€" the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK), the Kenyan Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), the National Muslim Leaders Forum (NAMLEF), and the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya (IRCK). Three of the organizations are Christian, one is Muslim, and one is an inter-religious organization. Additionally, I will explore the work of a prominent faith-based, female-directed grassroots organization directed at peacemaking and governance accountability, namely, Hatua Trust. This project will interview elites in these organizations, but it will also tap into the thoughts Kenyan citizens have about them through focus groups and surveys.

Most of the research will occur when I travel to Kenya in 2024-2025. I will collaborate with Daystar University students and faculty and employ interviews, focus groups, and survey research. A Calvin student can help with the initial research needed to implement this research project. In sum, this research project will analyze the ongoing relevance of religious organizations in Kenya, and it will bring new insights to the scholarship on democratization, security, and religion and politics in Africa. |