Meet the Graduates

At a recent Faculty Senate meeting, one of the palimpsests passed was a longish document that completed a far-reaching revision of Calvin’s Graduate Studies in Education program. The document, like all of its ilk, was not great beach reading. But the tables, course numbers, and SLOs offer a fogged window through which to glimpse a more human reality: a volatile state and national context with rapidly shifting accreditation demands and professional requirements; weakened public trust in the academy as a body capable of growing professional skills; and educators from schools around the country and across the world, grappling with questions about how we teach and learn and eager to apply their understanding in their schools and classrooms.

The formal descriptions of the new graduate education curriculum are in the Senate records (put them in your Goodreads queue?). But they are a small part of the story. Here is what I wish people knew beyond the formalities.

The list begins modestly: I wish everyone knew that we have a graduate program in education. We have had one for several decades, yet I still meet people connected to the college who don’t know, and I still catch conversations that proceed as if we were an undergraduate institution only.

A little more ambitious: I wish everyone knew that our program is accessible, affordable, and dynamic. I regularly run into folk who did not check out our program because they knew that Calvin is expensive, or whose spouse’s aunt said the schedule made courses hard to access ten years ago. In fact, Calvin’s GSE program is one of the most affordable in the state; and with evening and online courses, rolling enrollment, and five specialist concentrations (including a new inclusive-education concentration), it is both flexible and accessible. The revision includes new opportunities for students to pursue their own questions. Tell your friends. And your spouse’s aunt.

Most ambitious: I wish you could have coffee with our students and find out about their labors and dreams. You would meet students from Michigan, Mexico, and Mongolia; from Indonesia, Indiana, and Iran; from South Korea, Canada and California; from Honduras, India, Sierra Leone, and more. You would find them serving a wide range of Christian and public schools. You would find them grappling with questions about how Western models of the “integration of faith and learning” apply in Asia, or about how giving more space for narrative transforms social science curricula, or about how to lead schools in ways that enable teachers and students to flourish, or about how a certain intervention helps or hinders a marginalized student, or . . .

The current environment is challenging for graduate education programs. Sustaining a vibrant program is not easy. The recent program revisions are our latest effort to keep adapting, moving forward, and serving the growth of professional educators. Please pray for the program and mention it to teachers you know.

David Smith
director of graduate studies in education
director of the Kuyers Institute for Christian Teaching and Learning

From the Faculty Activity Reports

- Matt Halteman (Philosophy), “Philosophy as Therapy for Conflicted Carnivores” (invited symposium, American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting, Chicago, IL, March 4, 2016).

Be sure to fill out your Faculty Activity Reports regularly. If you have questions, see the FAQ page.

Note: FEN activities are now called Intercultural Competency Professional Development Activities. Beginning April 1, 2016, such activities will be in a new system—not as FARs. A link is coming soon.

**Coming Up on Campus**

**Monday, April 18**
- Chapel. Kate Kooyman. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Asian Studies lecture. Jana Fadness, “A Citizen of the World: The Value of Learning Other Languages and Living in Other Cultures.” 3:30 p.m., CFAC 255
- Nagel Institute lecture. Edison Kalengyo (Uganda Christian U), “Celebrating the Lord’s Supper in Africa: Overcoming Current Challenges.” 4:00 p.m., Meeter Center lecture hall
- Nagel Institute lecture. Bernard Boyo (Daystar U), “Politics in Africa: A Theological Reflection.” 7:00 p.m., Meeter Center lecture hall

**Tuesday, April 19**
- Chapel. “How Should Christians Think about the Political Process.” 10:00 a.m., Chapel

**Wednesday, April 20**
- Chapel. Sounds of Gospel Worship. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Brown bag session led by Linda Naranjo-Huebl. “Transgender and Intersex.” 12:00 noon, Spoelhof Center 382
- Henry Institute lecture. Bryan McGraw (Wheaton) and Darren Walhof (GVSU), “Upcoming Challenges for the Next President: Religious Freedom.” 3:30 p.m., DeVos Communications Center lobby

**Thursday, April 21**
- Chapel. Jazz Prayers with Calvin Jazz Combo. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Chemistry seminar. Research student presentations. 11:30 a.m., Science Building 010

**Friday, April 22**
- Chapel. Sounds of African Worship. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Biology seminar. Garret Crow, Dave Warners, and research students, “Contribution toward a Reassessment of the Flora of Grand Rapids Region after 100+ Years of Growth and Development.” 1:30 p.m., Science Building 010
- GEO event. Randy Van Dragt and Jeanette Henderson, “30 Years of the Ecosystem Preserve at Calvin College.” 3:30 p.m., Bunker Interpretive Center