

The Academic Bulletin

from the Office of the Provost of Calvin College

Friday, December 7, 2018

Assessment as Quality Assurance

Calvin has spent considerable effort on assessment activities this year, and it is safe to say that this focus has been met with varying levels of enthusiasm. Assessment takes significant time and coordination; it also is an important way to ensure and document the value of an education at an institution. My favorite definition of assessment comes from the Higher Learning Commission's receptionist, who was asked in an interview how she explains her job to her neighbors in downtown Chicago. She said, "Assessment is a quality assurance program designed for the protection of students."

As we prepare Calvin's interim report to the Higher Learning Commission, due June 2019, it is natural to focus on the one area that we have been asked to improve. An unfortunate side-effect of this is that we are tempted to forget to reflect on other areas (95% no less) where Calvin met or exceeded expectations. In 2014, Peer reviewers (faculty/staff of peer institutions who spent time evaluating Calvin) argued, and HLC leadership agreed, that Calvin possesses numerous strengths. They write that Calvin has a "holistic approach to Higher Education" and "is a mission-focused institution. The mission is a motivating force for virtually all aspects of the College, and it is widely publicized and well understood."

Other highlights from the 2014 review include:

- "Calvin demonstrates quality of instruction regardless of the delivery method."
- Even Calvin's cocurricular activities often "include reflective discussion about how the themes of a certain activity relate to a Reformed faith."
- "Community engagement is a normal part of life for most in the Calvin community."
- Calvin "demonstrates high commitment to service and engagement" and "has policies and processes in place to assure fair and ethical behavior by its constituencies."
- "Calvin has written extensively on academic freedom . . . [and] the community understands and practices academic freedom."
- Calvin's academic program "demonstrates support for intellectual inquiry and a campus climate conducive for broad and integrated learning."
- Calvin's "resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges."

As we wrap up a busy semester, it is good to remember that our efforts to live out our mission are appreciated by others. I am thankful to work at an institution guided by an important mission.

Laura DeHaan, dean for academic administration

Welcome New Staff

Joe Bae is a 2018 graduate of Calvin who studied digital communications (a fusion of computer science and communications). He grew up as a missionary kid in Indonesia and, more recently, in South Korea, where his father is now a minister. He loved his time at Calvin and jumped at the opportunity to work in the Registrar's Office.

Michaela Osborne joins the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship as a program coordinator. She was born and raised in Hudsonville. She studied business, with a concentration in marketing, at Calvin, and graduated in the spring of 2016. She comes from Macatawa Bank, where she spent her first two years as part of their retail management trainee program and then, later, as a relationship manager at a branch.

New Online IAPCHE Access

The International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE) quarterly newsletter will now be available online. Instead of sending a single print copy by postal mail with related delays, this new system will allow our faculty to read the quarterly newsletter as soon as it is published and whenever they choose. To access the newsletter, visit the [IAPACHE website](#); click on the News tab and then on the Contact Newsletter option. The credentials for Calvin faculty are

Email: InstitutionalMember@gmail.com

Password: PraiseGod2019

If you have questions about this change, please [email IAPCHE](#).

The Calvin Refugee and Immigration Collaborative

The Calvin Refugee and Immigration Collaborative sponsored by the Calvin Alumni Association and the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship has published a [website](#) with video resources for dialog about refugee and immigration issues.

McGregor Fellows Program 2019

The dean for faculty development solicits faculty project proposals for the summer 2019 McGregor Fellows Program. Faculty proposals are due January 30, 2019, and descriptions of approved projects will be made available to prospective student applicants by February 13, 2019. Details about the program—including application, program guidelines, and mentor/fellow expectations and responsibilities—are available [online](#).

Congratulations

Congratulations to Sam Smartt, who was named a finalist for the Arlin G. Meyer prize awarded by the Lilly Fellows Organization for his short documentary “[A Name That I Admire](#).”

From the Faculty Activity Reports

- **Geert Heetebrij** (Communication Arts and Sciences), “Israel Redux: The Image of Christ in the Gospel According to John (Part 1),” [Theopolis Institute](#), November 27, 2018.
- **Don Tellinghuisen** (Psychology), “Object-Related Sounds Processed Differently than Words during Visual Search” (poster presentation, Annual Meeting of the Psychonomic Society, New Orleans, LA, November 17, 2018).
- **Katherine van Liere** (History), “The Complutensian Polyglot Bible, the University of Alcalá and the Spanish Renaissance” (lecture, Texas Medieval Association Annual Conference, Lubbock, TX, October 25, 2018).

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

Coming Up on Campus (Check the [campus calendar](#) for a full list of events)

Monday, December 10

- Chapel. Carol-sing. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- History and Political Science lecture. Christian Peterson (Ferris State U), “The History and Evolution of the International Order since 1945.” 3:00 p.m., DeVos Communication Center 160
- CMS 151 poster session. 3:30 p.m., Hekman Library lobby

Wednesday–Friday, December 12–14, and Monday, December 17

- Final exams

Tuesday, December 18

- Final exams
- Faculty Senate meeting. 4:30 p.m., Hoogenboom 280

Thursday, December 20

- President’s open house for faculty and staff at DeWit Manor. *Optional* schedule (to minimize crowding):
Last names A–G: 2:00 p.m.
Last names R–Z: 3:00 p.m.
Last names H–Q: 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Monday, December 24–Tuesday, January 1, 2019

- Campus closed for Christmas break

Thursday, December 27

- Fall-semester grades due, 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 2

- Campus reopens

Thursday, January 3

- Interim term begins
- Chapel. Hymn-sing. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- January Series begins. 12:30 p.m., CFAC auditorium

Friday, January 4

- Chapel. Student worship team. 10:00 a.m., Chapel