

# The Academic Bulletin

from the Office of the Provost of Calvin College  
Friday, September 4, 2009

## *From the Provost*

---

Was there ever a time when the beginning of a college school year was launched in peace and quiet, with mutual anticipation by students and faculty that the tranquil ivory tower would provide a leisurely setting for focused study, unhurried conversation, passionate but ultimately disinterested exchanges, and long afternoons of quiet writing?

If there ever was such a time, that time is surely gone. But perhaps it is, after all, more appropriate to launch a school year in the midst of swirling issues, internal and external conditions that mandate engagement and that have real consequences. We are educating students for the messiness of life. We have the privilege and responsibility—and sometimes the heavy burden—of mentoring students and each other into ways of engaging ideas and discoveries and conversations that have both immediate and long-term impact. No wonder we are so passionate about what we do.

This year multiple issues will demand our engagement:

- The economic situation continues to have profound impact on enrollment, investments, contributions, and therefore on current programming and future planning. We all will be involved in finding ways to move forward with fewer students and fewer resources.
- The health care debates raging across the country offer us plenty of opportunity for speaking, not only as Christians concerned about human health, dignity, and healing, but as people interested in care-filled rhetoric, careful thinking, and care of neighbor. How the country manages this issue, both the process and the outcome, will have significant outcomes for all.
- Environmental sustainability remains a priority issue for the college and the country. Watch for some second-semester programming about an important issue both locally and globally.
- The task force on the Reformed identity of the college expects to report this year. How do we at Calvin College define ourselves? How do we strengthen the confessional qualities that have made this such a dynamic place and yet be open to new possibilities for our future?
- The recent events around the Board of Trustees memo on homosexuality have both internal and external stakeholders watching to see if we can use this situation to talk respectfully with each other—and our constituency—about sexuality and sexual orientation, about academic freedom and the responsibilities of a Christian college, and about how Christian communities make decisions together. We have disagreements even among ourselves about how these issues should be addressed, so let's talk about them.
- As always, there are numerous stories of individual and family challenges that remind us to be careful of each other and prayerful as the school year begins.

These are only some of the things that will demand our attention and active engagement. They are all important. Many more challenges will emerge. Our willingness to take all of these ideas, needs, people, and issues seriously is what makes this a good—though often challenging—place to be. Thank you for being here, at Calvin College, at the launch of a new academic year.

## ***Opening Convocation***

---

Opening Convocation will be Tuesday, September 8, at 9:50 a.m. Members of the faculty are requested to wear full regalia for this event; if you do not have robe, hood, and hat, please contact Campus Events at x6-6280. Other questions can be directed to Donna Anema (x6-6103) or Jeff Stob (x6-6281). Visit <http://www.calvin.edu/convocation> for more information.

## ***Resources for Teaching and Learning***

---

*Today's Campus* ([www.todayscampus.com/articles/load.aspx?art=1542](http://www.todayscampus.com/articles/load.aspx?art=1542)) is a new, free, online magazine about the “industry” of higher education, sponsored by college financial aid providers. The magazine recently provided a listing of twenty-eight higher education organizations, including groups such as CIC (Council for Independent Colleges and Universities), the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the National Teaching and Learning Forum, and many others. Perusing these sites would give anyone a good introduction to the business of higher education.

## ***Call for Papers***

---

In the context of the 500th anniversary of John Calvin’s birth there has been much reflection upon the historical, cultural, and theological significance of Calvinism. With this reflection as a backdrop, Dordt College will hold a conference April 8–10, 2010, that seeks to address the pressing issues facing the Christian community living in the 21st century. More specifically, this conference will explore how Calvinism provides an important paradigm for a Christian engagement of such issues.

Papers are invited from across the disciplines that provide a Calvinist/neo-Calvinist engagement of the significant issues, movements, or systems of thought facing the Christian community or the broader culture at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We invite papers that address topics within specific disciplines, as well as papers dealing with broad cultural issues that cross the disciplines. Paper proposals of 1–2 pages that include 150-word abstracts should be sent by e-mail to [jlief@dordt.edu](mailto:jlief@dordt.edu) no later than October 15, 2009. Notification of acceptance will be made by December 15, 2009. Additional information is available at [www.dordt.edu/andreascenter](http://www.dordt.edu/andreascenter).

## ***2010–2011 Sabbatical and CRF Applications***

---

Applications for sabbaticals and CRFs are due September 20, 2009.

- Details about the sabbatical program and the application form are at [www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/scholars/research/sabbaticals/sab.htm](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/scholars/research/sabbaticals/sab.htm).
- Details about the CRF program and the application form are at [www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/scholars/research/crfs/crf.htm](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/scholars/research/crfs/crf.htm).

## ***Diversity Conference***

---

“Diversity: Pedagogy and Scholarship Across the Disciplines,” a conference sponsored by the West Michigan College and University Presidents’ Compact Committee (WMPCC), will be held at Calvin College on September 24–25, 2009. Dr. Christine Clark, vice president of inclusion and equity as well as faculty for curriculum development at UNLV, will be the keynote speaker on Friday, and four Calvin faculty will be presenting. This conference will be appropriate for faculty who are interested in incorporating diversity issues in their courses; it will also be appropriate for academic administrators.

Registration information is available at [WestMichiganPCC.org](http://WestMichiganPCC.org); individuals interested in attending should contact Michelle Loyd-Paige for sponsorship opportunities.

## ***Teaching Fellowships***

---

NEH Teaching Development Fellowships support faculty pursuing research aimed specifically at improving their undergraduate teaching. Projects must improve an existing undergraduate course that has been taught in at least three different terms and will continue to be taught. The research project must be closely related to the applicant's core interests as an interpreter of the humanities and may involve engaging with fundamental texts or sources, exploring related subjects or academic disciplines, or cultivating neglected areas of learning. The project must be directed primarily toward course improvement, not scholarly publication.

The fellowships are three to five months and carry stipends of \$4,200 per month. Fellows may carry up to a half-time teaching load while on tenure of the fellowship. Recipients may begin their award as early as June 1, 2010, and as late as March 1, 2011. Deadline to submit an application via grants.gov is October 1, 2009.

For more information, visit [www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/TD\\_Fellowships.html](http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/TD_Fellowships.html). Please contact the grants office at grants@calvin.edu if you are interested in applying.

## ***Funding Proposals Requested***

---

The Kuyers Institute governing board will hold its first meeting of the year in late September / early October. Colleagues who wish to submit funding proposals for projects concerned with Christian teaching and learning should do so by September 23. Communication with the institute director, David Smith, before finalizing a proposal (or just to discuss an initial idea) is strongly advised. For more information, write to kuyers@calvin.edu.

## ***Next Week on Campus***

---

### Monday, September 7

- Labor Day: campus closed

### Tuesday, September 8

- Opening Convocation Ceremony, 9:50 a.m., Van Noord Arena—faculty attend in full regalia
- Convocation Cookout, 11:00 a.m., Commons lawn

### Thursday, September 10

- Engineering Seminar, 3:30 p.m., Science Building 110