

Helping Students Discover a Calling

Lee University
Center for Calling & Career
Debby White, Director

Your Mission Connection

- › Faith and Integrity
- › Whole Person Development
- › Life-long Learning
- › Life of Service, Servant Leadership
- › Bringing Wholeness to a Broken World
- › Reflective Judgment
- › Stewardship

Our Theological Connection

- › View of the individual
- › Perspective on advising
- › Perspective on strengths, gifts, talents

The Reality

- › Easier to change a major than drop a class.
- › Majors chosen for variety of reasons:
 - Parents
 - Pastors
 - High School teachers
 - Friends
 - Hot new field
 - Promise of job, good income
 - Curriculum is fast, easy to complete
 - Etc...

Our Questions

- › Where do students go to reflect on questions about choice of major, careers, calling?
- › Who is helping the students study themselves?
- › Does our Faith and Learning integration connect to our advising?
- › What structures and strategies do we need?

The Poiema Project

- › A theological exploration of vocation
Lee is one of 88 institutions to receive this grant.
- › Funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.
2003-2007 and 2008-2010.
- › Our guiding scripture: Eph. 2:10
"For we are God's *workmanship (poiema)*, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do."

From the Dean of the School of Religion

- ▶ "Instead of focusing on career preparation, colleges and universities need to offer students a discovery of personhood and calling....If we help students discover who they are, then they will be better prepared to know what they should do."

Cross, T. (2002). *Answering the Call in the Spirit*, pp. 13.

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A Definition of "Calling"

Cross, T. (2002). *Answering the Call in the Spirit*.

- ▶ The general call to everyone: relationship with God. God is more concerned about *who we are* than *what we do*.
- ▶ The specific call to the individual: whatever we do with our lives, we do in response to God's grace and gifts for God's glory.

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Other Reflections on Calling

- ▶ **Palmer** – Not a goal to be achieved, but a gift to be received.
- ▶ **Fowler** – The response of the total self to the address of God and to the calling to partnership.
- ▶ **Buechner** – The place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.
- ▶ **Sittser** – To use one's time, energy, and abilities to serve God in the world.

Center for Calling & Career

- ▶ Change academic program (major/minor)
- ▶ Explore fields of study
- ▶ Find a job on Lee Career Central
- ▶ Have a Strengths Talk
- ▶ Explore career interests
- ▶ Receive career counseling
- ▶ Review/Edit resume & cover letter
- ▶ Prepare for job interview

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Strengths Vocational Advisors

- ▶ Faculty who volunteer 1 hour per week to student advising in the CC&C.
- ▶ Listen, question, encourage, and guide students in self-discovery.
- ▶ Affirm the gifts, abilities, and strengths of each student – a "work of art" designed for God's glory.
- ▶ This is not course selection or recruitment for a particular major.

Lee's Curricular Support

- ▶ Freshmen Orientation course
- ▶ Religion Core classes
- ▶ Service Learning
- ▶ Global Perspectives
- ▶ Liberal Arts General Core