

Internships

Westmont College

Learning Outcome

Graduates will develop a sense of Christian vocation that informs career and lifestyle goals, and that is based on recognition of their own gifts and faith convictions.

The **BENCHMARK** is a documented change in the student's written reflection of Christian vocation.

Assessment Strategies & Data

Baseline evidence taken at the beginning of the term is compared to both written and oral evidence at the middle and end of the term.

Evidences include:

▪ **Free-write definition of vocation**– Baseline response on first day of class

▪ **Learning Plan**– Formation of learning objective that specifically focused on vocation

▪ **Outlines and Essays**

1. Mid-term presentation based on reading
2. Commentary in journals
3. Commentary in the final portfolio

▪ **Students' course evaluations** – Response to questions at semester's end:

1. Has your idea of Christian calling/vocation changed? Explain.
2. Has your understanding of Christian calling/vocation affected your internship? Explain.

Results & Interpretation

What does it all mean?

At the beginning of the semester, the students' ideas about *Christian vocation* generally centered around a *job*.

The vast majority of students came to a new and significant understanding of Christian vocation over the course of the semester.

End of the semester evidence showed:

- A broader definition of the concept
- A more personalized understanding of the concept

Evolved concepts could be characterized by several themes.

- ❖ **Vocation is God-centered rather than me-centered**
- ❖ **Vocation is other- or, neighbor-centered**
- ❖ **Vocation is all-encompassing rather than specific**
- ❖ **Vocation is an ongoing process**

What Students Say . . .

"This semester I have learned that vocation is more than merely a job, it really is a way of life. I have discovered that calling has many implications. It affects my professional life, my personal life and my spiritual life . . ."

Casey, District Attorney's Office, Fall Semester

"It has been interesting to address this topic in class as it is something that I have wrestled with since I was a little girl . . . I am more focused on what is true and eternal rather than the circumstances of what I will do 'when I grow up' . . ."

Despite my deep longing to find meaning in everything I do, I am convinced that I no longer need to search for my purpose in life, because my purpose is His purpose. I was created and exist to know and love Him, my life is not my own . . ."

Chris, Direct Relief International, Fall 06

Workplace Practice



Intern Maria gives instructions in the creation of piñatas at the InterAmerican University Studies Institute

Next Steps

- Discuss vocation objective at mid-semester individual meetings as a built-in check.
- Change vocation objective to provide motivation.
- Implement one of the following to motivate assigned reading:
 1. A brief quiz covering the assigned reading at the beginning of class
 2. Assign students to formulate several questions for each presenter
- Continue practice of inviting alumni to speak about Christian vocation
- Include a vocation question on attendees' evaluation form at final event.
- Return free-writes to students at end of semester to provide personal basis for comparison .
- Meet with other faculty who oversee a practicum seminar to share best practices