

2011 Summer Seminars at Calvin College

Application Deadline is January 14, 2011. Application available at www.calvin.edu/scs.



Engaging the Text, Preaching the Word
July 18 – July 22, 2011, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. F. Dale Bruner, Fuller Theological Seminary and
Rev. Scott Hoezee, Calvin Theological Seminary

Pastors will re-discover the joy and excitement that comes from rigorous engagement with Scriptural texts. Biblical scholar Dale Bruner will help participants retrieve the tools of good textual work while Scott Hoezee, master preacher, will guide them in the practical experience of crafting sermons that are fresh, relevant, and rooted in God's word.

Applicants should be full-time parish pastors who are engaged regularly in the preaching of God's Word to a congregation.



Cognitive Science of Religion and Christianity
July 18 – August 5, 2011, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. Justin Barrett, University of Oxford

A seminar designed to equip participants to conduct research in cognitive science of religion, particularly as applied to Christianity, and so to catalyze scholarly engagement between the academic study of religion and Christian practices, beliefs and theology. The goal is to develop a community of scholars with the expertise to participate in cognitive studies of religion, critically respond to the implications of such studies, and facilitate productive, informed dialog among Christians and cognitive scientists.

We seek scholars at any stage of their post-doctoral career from any relevant disciplinary or interdisciplinary background including but not limited to: anthropology, archaeology, classics, history, philosophy, psychology, religious studies, and theology. Applicants should be committed to pursuing scholarly work in the area of cognitive science of religion that has particular bearing on issues related to Christianity such as the study of Christian belief, practice, and institutions; the evolution and spread of Christianity; and implications for Christian theology. Though we are principally targeting academics, ministers looking to productively engage the cognitive science of religion area are welcome to apply.



From Worldview to Worship: The Liturgical Turn in Cultural Theory
June 20 – July 8, 2011, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. James K.A. Smith, Calvin College

This seminar examines a new paradigm for the study of religion, one that focuses on liturgical practices broadly conceived, rather than on beliefs and doctrines. We will examine the significance of this liturgical turn for both scholarly fields (philosophy, religion, sociology) and Christian ministry (campus ministry, worship, youth ministry).

Participants will be a mix of scholars and reflective practitioners brought together to grapple with some of the primary texts behind the "turn to practice" in order to consider the implications of the liturgical turn for their area of research or practice. The seminar should particularly be of interest to scholars in sociology of religion, political science and political theory, philosophers of religion, and theologians working in liturgy theology and ethics. Practitioners could include pastors and worship leaders, campus ministers, even perhaps artists, writers, and journalists. Advanced PhD students are welcome to apply.



Reflective Pedagogy and Christian Practice
June 20 – July 1, 2011, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. David Smith, Calvin College

An exploration of recent work on Christian practices and its potential for illuminating the nature of Christian teaching and learning. The seminar will draw on published discussions from theology, sociology, ethics, education, and philosophy on the nature of social practice and Christian practice to frame critical questions and constructive strategies for shaping and articulating Christian pedagogy.

Applicants should possess or be near completion of a PhD, from all disciplines. Half of the participants will be those working in some area of practical theology. Applicants should be prepared to engage with philosophical, sociological and educational literature but need not be specialists in these areas. A strong interest in teaching, learning, and formation is essential. Applicants should have demonstrated ability to produce publishable work. The ideal participant will be committed to serious and systematic Christian reflection on pedagogy (the seminar is not for those who just want to pick up teaching tips.) and a potential contributor to the scholarship of teaching and learning. No more than three participants should be from the same institution.



Congregations and Social Change:
Adaptation and Innovation among Religious Communities
June 27 – July 22, 2011, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. Gerardo Marti, Davidson College

This seminar focuses on the ongoing changes and negotiations that religious congregations make in relation to the broader social world, engaging these issues in a historically sensitive way, informed by scholarship rooted in a sociological perspective. The seminar aims to expose Christian scholars to the most current thinking in sociology of religion that will further their ability for constructive analytic engagement with conversation partners within and without the Christian community.

This research seminar is most intended for current and recent doctoral students in fields related to religious and organizational studies (sociology, anthropology, history, ethnic studies, folklore, and others). The director also eagerly welcome humanities oriented scholars, theologically oriented participants from seminaries or divinity schools, and scholars working on their first or second books to mid-career scholars retooling with defined projects.



The Enlightenment and the Life of the Church:
Worship in the Age of Reason
July 11 – July 29, 2011, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. Bryan Spinks, Yale Divinity School

An investigation into the culture, intellectual ideas, and influence of the Enlightenment on Christian practices of devotional life and worship. Participants will examine primary texts as well as secondary sources spanning the 17th and 18th centuries as well as worship trends in the contemporary church in a postmodern, global culture.

This interdisciplinary seminar seeks participants from a variety of scholarly areas, including political, social and church history, philosophy, theology, musicology, and liturgy. Scholars of the enlightenment are particularly encouraged to apply, as are those who are engaged in better understanding post-modern liturgical and cultural trends. All applicants should have received their terminal degree.