

WORCESTER, MA (February 6, 2017) —Assumption College Associate Professor of Spanish Esteban Loustaunau, Ph.D., has been selected among a number of professors from throughout the country to participate in a Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) summer seminar on Teaching Vocational Exploration. The seminar will provide valuable information to enhance the College's Sophomore Initiative at Assumption (SOPHIA) Program.

Assumption's SOPHIA Program is designed to help students discover a deeper connection between their spiritual, personal and professional lives by combining residential, academic and travel opportunities under the guidance of four dedicated faculty mentors. SOPHIA strives to foster a culture of vocational exploration at Assumption College that will help students pursue productive lives of meaning. As director of SOPHIA, Professor Loustaunau teaches students and also assists faculty members who serve as small-group mentors to students in the program.

"I look forward to learning more about teaching purpose and vocation to train faculty and help build a stronger culture of vocation on campus," said Prof. Loustaunau. "My dream for the near future is to have each student at Assumption, whether they belong to SOPHIA or not, be exposed to questions on vocational exploration in at least one course during their four-year academic experience. This Teaching Vocational Exploration seminar would better prepare me to encourage and assist my colleagues to continue to develop and establish a culture of vocational exploration at Assumption College."

In nominating Professor Loustaunau for the grant, Assumption College Provost and Academic

Vice President Louise Carroll Keeley wrote, “Professor Loustaunau is a humanitarian who recognizes the dignity in every person, and challenges others to see it too, and he does this both through his thoughtfulness as a scholar, his pedagogy as a teacher, and his character as a man.”

Prof. Loustaunau will also use information derived from the seminar, which will take place this June in Chicago, to propose a new course at Assumption, *The World is Calling: Readings on Vocation Across Cultures* . This comparative literature course will introduce students to questions of life purpose and vocation by reading and analyzing works of art and literature from Latin America, Africa, and South Asia. Students will explore various interpretations of vocation as represented in works of art and literature from these three culturally diverse regions of the world.

Prof. Loustaunau holds a doctorate in Latin American Literatures and Cultures, a dual master’s degree in Modern Spanish and Latin American Literatures and Cultures, both from The Ohio State University. He earned a bachelor’s degree in Spanish from Carleton College where he spent a semester abroad in Spain. Prof. Loustaunau has served as the Director of the Latin American Studies Program and is an active participant in Assumption’s Community Service Learning Program.

NetVUE, the sponsoring organization of the seminar, describes itself as “a nationwide network of colleges and universities formed to enrich the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation among undergraduate students. This initiative is administered by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) with generous supported from Lilly Endowment Inc.”