The Salesian Center at DeSales University exists to promote the interaction of faith and culture through academic initiatives that focus on the authentic integration of social concerns and Gospel values in the tradition of Christian Humanism.

The regular activities of the Salesian Center focus on three interrelated areas: educational initiatives that connect the Salesian tradition to developments in the modern world; dialogue opportunities to explore the impact of spirituality on issues in contemporary life; and partnership ventures with various sectors of the local community to forge a living link between faith and culture. The Center also sponsors special events each year and maintains an electronic library of various publications.

Educational Initiatives

The Faith & Reason Honors Program is a four-year course of study for scholarship students (45-60 in all), who take part in liberal arts seminars, share cultural experiences, and publish an integrating senior thesis.

The Ryan Leadership Institute is a selective two-year mentoring program that trains 15 students annually in interpersonal “life skills” and develops their executive leadership abilities within the context of Catholic spirituality and through service in campus organizations.

The Salesian Online program offers personal enrichment courses (non-credit) on various topics in Salesian Spirituality through web-based learning environments.

The Salesian Center directs an Inculturation Series for new employees that shares insights into the history, legacy, and mission of DeSales University.

The Salesian Center sponsors two annual Lecture Series: the Anthony Ruggiero lectures on Catholic Education (September) and the R. Wayne Kraft Memorial lectures on Christian Humanism (January). The Center also co-sponsors an annual Hesburgh Lecture with the University of Notre Dame alumni.

On the horizon ... The Salesian Center is seeking to establish a survey center that will focus on ethical issues in the public square. The purpose of this project will be to gauge public awareness, interest, and position on various issues that affect the common good at the local, regional, and national levels.

Dialogue Opportunities

The Bulldog Breakfast series offers a monthly meeting of student-athletes at DSU in which a guest speaker offers insightful career advice based on the integration of academics and athletics.

The Life Lessons series occasionally brings to campus an author or speaker to interact with students in a frank and honest discussion about personal issues of concern.

The Center Valley Forum is an occasional panel discussion in which guest experts dialogue with the campus community about ethical issues in the news.

The Lunch Bunch is a semester-long series for faculty/staff who read and discuss current best-selling books in the realm of faith and culture.

“Soundings” is an occasional event that features a theatrical production followed by discussion of its religious & artistic themes(s) with the actors/directors.
On the horizon ... The Salesian Center is introducing a Faith & Film series in which new movies are premiered and after which audience members engage in a discussion with one or more guest experts on the subject of the film.

Partnership Ventures

The FORUM FOR ETHICS IN THE WORKPLACE is a subsidiary, non-profit corporation of the University that provides opportunities for public discussion and action on ethical matters related to business. Its board of directors includes university faculty, church leaders, and corporate professionals.

The LEHIGH VALLEY COALITION ON BIOMEDICAL ETHICS considers clinical issues in the field, explores best courses of action, teaches current and future practitioners, and suggests cooperative institutional policies for the benefit of providing healthcare that is ultimately good for all citizens in the community.

On the horizon ... The Salesian Center is forming a working group of media professionals and scholars who will investigate, dialogue about, and promote ethical action in the use of modern means of social communication.

Special Events

HERITAGE WEEK is a series of events each January when the campus celebrates the legacy of St. Francis de Sales as bishop, doctor, lawyer, educator, and saint. Events include Mass, a forum on bioethics, a seminar on law and society, a town hall on social communications, and the Kraft Lecture on Christian Humanism.

The ST. JOHN PAUL II ARTS & CULTURE series each April celebrates the memory of the pope whose life and work inspired the creation of the Salesian Center. To-date the events have included a concert, dramatic performances, a poetry presentation, and an art exhibition.

Occasionally, the Center celebrates conducts PILGRIMAGES to sites in Europe connected to our Salesian history or creates other special events marking historical milestones in the Salesian tradition.

Electronic Archives

Each year the Salesian Center publishes “ON A SPIRITUAL NOTE,” a series of commentaries about each of the DSU theatre and dance productions on the main stage, which welcome more than 20,000 patrons annually.

The Salesian Center maintains a collection of SALESIAN STUDIES, in the form of lectures, papers and monographs and other publications, all publically available on the Center’s web site.