

Ten seminaries given \$1.5 million to address topics in science

by [Sarah Pulliam Bailey](#) in the [November 12, 2014](#) issue

Responding to a real or perceived gap between science and faith, ten Christian U.S. seminaries will receive a combined \$1.5 million in grants to include science in their curricula, the American Association for the Advancement of Science announced October 8.

The John Templeton Foundation, which has funded various efforts to bridge science and faith, including giving \$3.75 million to AAAS for the project, will award grants ranging from \$90,000 to \$200,000.

“Many [religious leaders] don’t get a lot of science in their training and yet they become the authority figures that many people in society look up to for advice for all kinds of things, including issues related to science and technology,” said Jennifer Wiseman, director of the AAAS Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion.

The selected seminaries are:

Andover Newton Theological School (Newton Centre, Massachusetts)

Catholic University of America (Washington, D.C.)

Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, Georgia)

Concordia Seminary (St. Louis, Missouri)

Howard University’s School of Divinity (Washington, D.C.)

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (Pennsylvania)

Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara University (Berkeley, California)

Multnomah Biblical Seminary (Portland, Oregon)

Regent University School of Divinity (Virginia Beach, Virginia)

Wake Forest University School of Divinity (Winston-Salem, North Carolina)

The grants will cover faculty activities, events, science resources, guest speakers, and other related costs. Seminars may incorporate issues of modern technology, methods of science, or the history of science into courses seminary students already take, such as church history, ethics, pastoral counseling, or systematic theology.

“There are interesting intersections of all these types of courses with either modern science or the history of science or the philosophy of science that would be very useful for these students to become acquainted with,” Wiseman said.

A study released by AAAS earlier this year suggested potential conflict between religion and science. Twenty-two percent of scientists (and 20 percent of the general public) say religious people are hostile to science. On the flip side, 22 percent of the general population think scientists are hostile to religion, and of those who feel science and religion are in conflict, 52 percent sided with religion.

Yet those who are religious are often interested in learning how science can be used for the common good, Wiseman said.

“Having these conversations is important, but developing the platform and architecture for them is sometimes complicated,” Wiseman said. “Science can be unifying to many people in society, both people of faith and people who don’t share that faith. . . . Through what we’re learning in science, I think we can come together to use that knowledge for great good.” —Religion News Service

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