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## Core Initiatives



## **Ignite Ambassadors Program**

This spring, the Core is partnering with SLU's Office of Admissions on a new initiative for prospective students. The Ignite Ambassadors Program brings together 25 Ignite faculty and staff members from across the University who share the distinction of having been nominated by their students for the Ignite Instructor of the Year Award. These Ambassadors will be among the first faculty to meet prospective students when they visit SLU and will play a critical role in SLU's efforts to recruit and retain engaged undergraduates to our programs.

The Ignite Ambassadors program asks faculty to design and deliver a simulated Ignite Seminar class session for visiting high school students from across the country. The sessions will model student-centered pedagogy, with seminar-style discussions and engaging activities that introduce prospective students to what makes teaching and learning at SLU unique. Additionally, the simulated classes will be designed to foster a sense of belonging among students so they might better envision themselves at SLU. By the end of the semester, Ignite Ambassadors will have delivered over 45 class sessions for over 300 prospective undergraduates. The Core is grateful for all of our 2025 Ignite Ambassadors for helping us launch this new way of introducing prospective students to SLU's distinctive mission and identity.

# **In The Core Classroom**



## Core Curricular Innovations in STEM Courses

Each year, Core Curricular Innovation Fellows design courses that target areas of curricular need in the Core. This year, the Core invited Fellows to integrate one or more of the Equity and Global Identities attribute requirements into STEM courses.

One of our 2024-2025 Core Fellows is Sara Drenkhahn-Weinaug, Assistant Professor of Chemistry. As a STEM faculty member, she is continually thinking about innovative approaches in the science classroom. However, she chose to redesign the course "Chemistry and the Environment" to focus not only on science but also on how environmental systems and green living are globally connected. This class invites students to consider the diverse ways in which the environment impacts their lives and how environmental actions of other nations impact us in the United States. Additionally, Dr. Drenkhahn-Weinaug has developed a two-week immersion trip to Germany and Switzerland that invites students to experience how other countries approach sustainable living. This experience, which fulfills the Core requirements of Cura Personalis 2 and Reflection in Action, will first be offered in May 2026 and will be open to all students.

Dr. Kristin Keller, Assistant Professor of Nursing, applied to be a Core Fellow because she wanted to develop a course similar to one she participated in as an undergraduate nursing student. Her new course, "The HIV/AIDS Epidemic: History, Epidemiology, and Nursing Care," satisfies the Dignity, Ethics, and a Just Society Core requirement. This course will invite students from any major to consider the experience of living with HIV/AIDS and how societal stigma complicates navigating healthcare systems. Guest speakers will share their experiences of living

with HIV/AIDS, illuminating structural and implicit biases that exist in society today. Dr. Keller also plans for students to volunteer on World AIDS Day to apply their learning. By examining patient care through the lens of Dignity, Ethics, and a Just Society, students in Dr. Keller's nursing class will learn to think critically about improving care for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Interested in designing a course for the Core? Check out our [Core Instructor Resources site](#) for more information.

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## Upcoming Events and Deadlines

SLU's Undergraduate Core presents:



### Wicked Problems in our Classrooms: Using Complexity to Leverage Deeper Learning

**Dr. Paul Hanstedt, Univ. of Minnesota, Rochester**  
Author of *Creating Wicked Students* (2018) and *General Education Essentials* (2012)

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 20 @ 4:30 PM**  
**PIUS 010**

For more information, please email [core@slu.edu](mailto:core@slu.edu)

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### Feb. 20

Paul Hanstedt Lecture, 4:30 pm -6:00 pm, Pius Library, Room 010

### Feb. 21

Paul Hanstedt Lunch, 11:30 pm -1:00 pm, Verhaegen Hall, Room 219

[Click here to register](#) by Monday, February 17.

### **Mar. 3**

Mid-semester Brown Bag Event, 11:30-1:00 pm, Pius Library, Room 010

### **Apr. 15**

Collaborative Inquiry Coffee, 9:00 - 10:00 am, Verhaegen Hall, Room 219

### **Apr. 15**

Cura Personalis Instructor Coffee, 9:00 - 10:00 am, BSC, Room 254

### **Apr. 16**

Ignite Instructor Coffee, 9:00 - 10:00 am, DuBourg Hall, Room 404

### **May 6**

Ignite Workshop #1: Madrid, 16:00-18:00, Zoom link forthcoming

### **May 9**

Ignite Lunch Workshop #1: St. Louis, 12:00 - 4:00 pm, Pius, Room 010

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[View email in browser](#)

University Undergraduate Core

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