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Core Initiatives



"Wicked Problems in Our Classrooms" Dr. Paul Hanstedt and SLO 2 Assessment

This February, the Core hosted guest speaker Dr. Paul Hanstedt, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Innovation at the University of Minnesota, Rochester. Dr. Hanstedt is a national leader in teaching and learning innovation and is the author of numerous books, including *General Education Essentials: A Guide for College Faculty* (2012) and *Creating Wicked Students: Designing Courses for a Complex World* (2018). He specializes in innovative curricular design and assessment of general education.

Dr. Hanstedt's visit began with a lecture which invited faculty from across the university to consider how they might design Collaborative Inquiry courses around "wicked problems"--complex problems that have no ready answer--so that students can develop "wicked competencies." For Hanstedt, "wicked competencies" is another term for the essential skills today's students need to prepare them for the world beyond the university, such as being open to new challenges, learning to draw from multiple areas of study, and becoming comfortable with failure so that they can try again. Dr. Hanstedt also led a lunch workshop that engaged faculty in conversation around how they design assignments and assessments that help students collaboratively integrate prior knowledge and skills to propose innovative solutions to complex problems.

Dr. Hanstedt's visit coincides with this year's assessment of Core Learning Outcome 2: *All SLU graduates will be able to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines to address complex questions.* You can view [the recording of Dr. Hanstedt's lecture here.](#)

Teaching or interested in teaching a Collaborative Inquiry course? Check out the [Collaborative Inquiry pages](#) on the Core Instructor Resources site.

In The Core Classroom





Art and Archeology: Experimental Collaborative Inquiry Courses Take Shape

Many SLU faculty members have already begun designing Collaborative Inquiry courses around "wicked problems," including faculty who this year are teaching Experimental Collaborative Inquiry courses. This opportunity allows instructors to design a course around an innovative idea and teach that course up to twice before submitting it for permanent designation as a Collaborative Inquiry course in the Core.

This spring, Lucy Cashion, Associate Professor of Theater in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts, is teaching her Experimental Collaborative Inquiry course entitled "Collaboration and Interdisciplinary Artistic Creation" for the first time. Her course is centered on enduring questions which students grapple with through three collaborative projects: a radio play, a short film, and a final performance. In addition to these three larger projects, Professor Cashion gives her students multiple low-stakes assignments throughout the semester that encourage them to exchange ideas and take conceptual risks. These assignments afford students opportunities to hone their skills of communication, collaboration, empathy, and self-reflection.

Associate Professor of History, Tom Finan, has also developed an Experimental Collaborative Inquiry course. In his class, "Medieval Archaeology," Finan asks students to imagine that SLU's North campus is actually a medieval village in order to transport them from modern day to medieval times. Students must collaborate on two field projects in which they act as quasi-consultants to the bishop of a medieval cathedral (College Church) and as clients of the Lord of the

Manor (Cupples House). The class also conducts an archeological dig to deepen their understanding of people in relation to place to perhaps reach different conclusions about the past than established knowledge would suggest.

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

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

Mar. 28

Core Reengagement Workshop, 2:30-4:00, Des Peres Hall, Room 109

[Register here](#) by March 7

Apr. 11

Core Reengagement Workshop, 2:30-4:00, Des Peres Hall, Room 109

[Register here](#) by March 7

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

[View email in browser](#)

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