

# News From the Core

January 2026

## Core Happenings: Looking Back / Looking Forward

This spring, the first cohort of students on the new Core will cross the graduation stage at commencement. These students began their time at SLU in Ignite Seminars and Cura Personalis 1 courses and are the first group to experience the Core curriculum in its entirety. As this inaugural Core cohort graduates, we asked several of our original Core Associate Directors and our graduating Undergraduate Core Fellows to share what the Core has meant to them over the years.



***Looking Back:* Nathaniel Rivers, Associate Director  
for Eloquentia Perfecta: Written and Visual Communication**

The first group of Associate Directors began their work in July 2020 to make the Core a reality for all SLU students. Throughout this spring semester, we are asking several of these Associate Directors to look back over their past two terms and to share insights about some of the challenges and successes they experienced while helping to build and establish a University-wide general education curriculum here at Saint Louis University.

As one of the original two Associate Directors for *Eloquentia Perfecta* (EP), Dr. Nathaniel Rivers, Professor in the English Department, has helped develop and grow the EP sequence of the Core into what it is today. One of the first challenges he encountered as Core Associate Director was how to unify four distinct modes of communication--written, oral, visual, and creative expression--under the umbrella of *Eloquentia Perfecta* while maintaining the distinctiveness of each individual component. This unification required Rivers and others to reframe how they conceptualized EP, noting that "it's less about all four things folding into one thing as it is finding ways all four of those things can talk about themselves in multiple ways."

Rivers says that much of his time as Associate Director of EP: Written and Visual Communication over the past six years has been spent talking with instructors about what it means to teach a writing intensive course. For Rivers, the Writing Intensive Core component asks instructors to think about how writing can *intensify* what students are already learning and to use class time to intentionally teach students how to develop these skills. By shifting the focus from content to process-based pedagogy, instructors can illuminate how writing is one mode of intensifying and deepening the ways they learn.

What will the future hold for EP? Rivers says he would love to see the Core include an *Eloquentia Perfecta-intensive* component, an advanced course that allows for in-depth study of any of the four modes of communication, not only writing. With this in mind, Rivers has begun to redesign the professional development training sessions for instructors teaching courses where students are asked to demonstrate their achievement of the University Core's SLO 4: *All SLU graduates will be able to communicate effectively in writing, speech, and visual media*. Ultimately, the hope is to view EP as the Jesuits did--that, through the virtue of communication, students will eagerly engage with and invest in their learning.



### ***Looking Forward: Lear Rose, Senior, Undergraduate Core Fellow***

Early on in its development, the Core invited undergraduates to join the work of curricular development and consciousness raising about the Core. These Undergraduate Core Fellows have a unique perspective on the shape and impact of the Core on students' intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual experience and growth. Throughout this spring semester, we are asking our graduating Core Fellows to look forward to how they believe the Core has uniquely prepared them for their next steps beyond the University.

Lear Rose, double major in Art History and Arts Administration, has been an Undergraduate Core Fellow for the past two years. In their video, Lear reflects on how the Core has afforded them exposure to multiple disciplines and extended learning beyond the classroom. Lear also shares how the Core has made them a stronger student and professional.

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**In the Core Classroom:  
Anselm Kiefer in Ignite**



What is a painting, and what makes a painting beautiful? Students in Dr. Loewe's Ignite Seminar "Art, the Image, and Beauty" read works by philosophers and artists such as Plato, Augustine, Leon Battista Alberti, and Leonardo da Vinci to explore these questions. As a faculty member in the Department of Philosophy, Dr. Loewe has long been interested in the relationship between art and philosophy and designed his course to offer students multiple philosophical approaches to questions such as: Can paintings represent what is not visible? How does painting differ from sculpture and other art forms? Is beauty connected to goodness? Students are encouraged to develop their own unique responses to these questions throughout the semester.

Not all learning in Dr. Loewe's Ignite Seminar takes place inside the classroom. Students had the opportunity to visit the Saint Louis Art Museum twice in the Fall 2025 semester. During their first visit, students explored the museum's permanent collection and selected an artwork that inspired them, which then became the focus of a group presentation. Then, on a cold November evening, the class returned to the museum for a second visit, this time participating in a guided tour of Anselm Kiefer's *Becoming the Sea* exhibition. Kiefer's larger-than-life paintings—created with striking materials such as gold leaf, lead, copper, and clay—invite students to grapple with complex themes and contemplate the messages the artist seeks to convey. Kiefer's work is one of several options students can choose from for their final essay, in which they interpret a piece of art that has inspired them to carefully reflect on and engage with who they are in light of some of art's, philosophy's, and life's most profound questions.

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**Open Call for New Associate Directors**

Now that the terms of our first cohort of Associate Directors are ending, the University Core is pleased to invite interested faculty and staff members to apply to serve as Associate Directors of the Core effective July 1, 2026. The five Associate Director positions open for applications are: Open Seminars; Cura Personalis and Reflection in Action; Ultimate Questions; Eloquentia Perfecta: Equity and Global Identities. Associate Directors serve three-year terms and are compensated with one course release or equivalent and a stipend for summer work. Position Descriptions and eligibility guidelines [are available here](#); the application deadline is January 19, 2026.

SLU's Core is overseen by a team of six Associate Directors, each in charge of leading the vision and development of their distinct Core area. Associate Directors serve three-year terms that are renewable once. The Core's first team of Associate Directors was appointed in July 2020, immediately after the university-wide ratification of our new common Core curriculum. Over the past six years and in collaboration with the Director and Assistant Director of the Core and the UUCC, this inaugural team has carefully and successfully led the vision for and development of their unique Core areas. You can learn more about the [Core's current leadership structure here](#).

For this new application cycle, the Core has reimagined and combined two Associate Director positions. The Associate Director: Open Seminars position guides synthetic vision for and oversight of SLU's Ignite Seminar and Collaborative Inquiry requirements; and the Associate Director: Eloquentia Perfecta position guides synthetic vision for and oversight of the four interconnected areas of SLU's Eloquentia Perfecta sequence (Written Communication, Visual Communication, Oral Communication, and Creative Expression). The three remaining open positions remain as originally configured in 2020.

For queries or clarifications, please contact Dr. Ellen Crowell, Director of the University Core at [ellen.crowell@slu.edu](mailto:ellen.crowell@slu.edu)

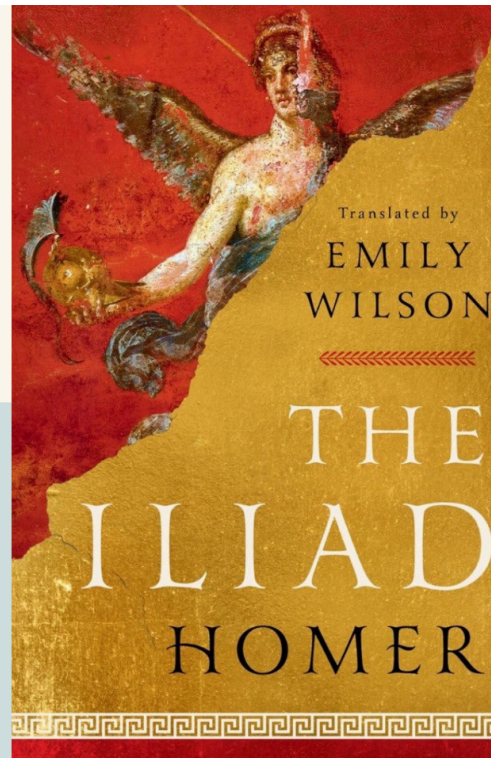
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## Upcoming Events and Deadlines

# Translating the Violence of the Iliad

A Talk by Dr. Emily Wilson

How do translators convey the features of Homer that modern readers may find surprising or even incomprehensible? This talk explores the theme of violence and force within the Iliad and the gulf between its modern reception and ancient principles.



February 10, 2026

4:30 P.M. Cook Hall Auditorium

Book Signing & Reception to Follow

For more information, please email

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A Confluence: The  
Interdisciplinary  
Humanities Event



In February 2026, Confluence: The Interdisciplinary Humanities in collaboration with the University Core and the Collaborative for Humanistic Inquiry will bring acclaimed scholar and translator Dr. Emily Wilson (U Penn) to campus to discuss her 2024 translation of Homer's *Iliad*. Her talk, entitled "Translating the Violence of the *Iliad*," asks how translators can convey the features of Homer's writing that modern readers may find surprising or even incomprehensible. In particular, it explores the gulf between ancient poetic principles and the modern reception of themes such as violence and force present within the book.

Featured events include a faculty lunch workshop and a public lecture. The faculty lunch will be held on February 10 at 12:30pm to discuss a reading from

her new translation of the *Illiad* with a specific focus on how to teach the text in an undergraduate setting. Attendees will receive a copy of her new translation of the *Illiad*. **Seating is limited to 20 so please RSVP [via this Google Form](#).**

The second event is a public lecture entitled "Translating the Violence of the *Illiad*" also on February 10 at 4:30pm in Cook Auditorium, with a book signing and reception to follow. All are welcome! To help the event organizers get an accurate sense of numbers, [registration for this lecture](#) is appreciated but not required.

## Upcoming Events and Deadlines

**January 19**

**Priority** deadline (extended) for new Ignite Seminar proposals for AY26-27, [Ignite Proposal link here](#)

**January 19**

Ignite [Teaching Preferences form](#) due for instructors planning to teach in AY26-27

**January 19**

Applications for open Associate Director positions due; see descriptions / guidelines for applying [here](#)

**January 27**

Core Brown Bag, 12:00 - 1:00 pm  
Verhaegen Hall, Room 219

**February 24**

Core Coffee, 8:30 - 9:30 am  
Verhaegen Hall, Room 219

[Full List of Core Events](#)



Questions? Email [core@slu.edu](mailto:core@slu.edu)

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