Professors to Participate in Tradition and Innovation Summer Institute

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Two Sacred Heart University Catholic studies professors will participate in the Association for Core Texts and Courses (ACTC) Tradition and Innovation summer institute, studying the works of writers and philosophers from ancient Greece to the present. Professors Joe Nagy and Marie Hulme will immerse themselves in core texts and examine works on morality, politics and the human condition this June. Both Hulme and Nagy will attend seminars at the University of Chicago for a week and then head to Columbia University for a week, learning about various ways to teach the texts.

Scholars from both universities will lead the seminars, which aim to promote teaching core texts in seminar format, according to Nagy, who attended the institute two years ago when it took place at Yale University and Columbia. Participants come from colleges throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia, he said.

Hulme and Nagy are attending these seminars on behalf of the Catholic Studies Department, which has developed a new core course, “The Human Journey Seminars: Great Books in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.” Nagy served on the committee that designed the course and taught three pilot Catholic intellectual tradition courses this year. Starting in the fall, all Sacred Heart sophomores will take two seminars reading core texts from Plato, Augustine and Aquinas to Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day.

“One of the things I’m most looking forward to is immersing myself in the great books curriculum, consisting of works as diverse as Augustine, Dante and Nietzsche, in the company of other educators dedicated to examining the writers, philosophers and artists whose works have shaped the enduring ideas and questions of our lives,” said Hulme, who teaches English and Catholic Studies.

“Professor Hulme and I hope to develop strategies for faculty development and support for Sacred Heart’s new course,” Nagy said. Another goal of the institute is to teach participants close reading, to focus on key passages in depth and to engage in a dialogue with the text, he said.