



Cornell College

INT 111: How Do We Know What We Know?

Fall 2023

Information about your instructors

Common FYS Faculty: Michael Mosier
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Student Success Staff Mentor: Hannah Ganzel
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Class Meetings

Meeting Times: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 9-11 and 1-3; Wednesday 9-11:30
Exceptions:

The Final Exam is scheduled for the 4th Wednesday from 9-noon.

Please see the detailed course schedule for more specific details on meeting times and locations.

Course Description

This common first year seminar explores how we know what we know and the various ways and conventions by which we communicate knowledge. For example, how do we take in and evaluate information? How do our brains make deliberate and/or rapid decisions? How does our knowledge both individually and societally change over time? What does it mean to know something? How do we consider perspectives different from our own? Learning requires raising questions that stem from reasoning, curiosity, and empathy. Through questioning, we become informed citizens and scholars. Through careful reading, creative and critical thinking, speaking and writing, we will engage with a variety of texts from many genres and disciplinary perspectives. Your instructor will serve as a guide along this path by encouraging you to consider different perspectives on and ways of knowing as you start to identify areas for your own growth as a college student.

The student success component of your common First Year Seminar (FYS) extends beyond the first block, to encompass activities and response assignments throughout Blocks 1, 2, and 3. Topics and

discussions in the student success component will help you succeed in all college classes, not just the common FYS.

Common First Year Seminar Learning Outcomes

1. Students will encounter works from a variety of academic disciplines. (Knowledge)
2. Students will practice critical reading and thinking skills. (Knowledge, Inquiry)
3. Students will be introduced to key terms and concepts central to the essential abilities of writing, intercultural literacy, and quantitative reasoning, and to disciplinary/interdisciplinary explorations. (Knowledge, Intercultural Literacy)
4. Students will distinguish between opinion, reasoned judgment, and evidence to evaluate arguments and ideas. (Inquiry, Reasoning)
5. Students will be introduced to the importance of academic honesty and integrity. (Ethical Behavior, Inquiry)
6. Students will practice writing and revision to develop and communicate ideas. (Communication)
7. Students will practice oral communication by effectively preparing for and engaging in civil academic discussions. (Communication, Citizenship, Intercultural Literacy)

Student Success Component Learning Outcomes

- A. Students will become familiar with and use the academic, career, and co-curricular support services available on campus, including the Center for Teaching and Learning. (Vocation, Well Being)
- B. Students will develop strategies for effective time management. (Well Being)
- C. Students will be introduced to key terms and concepts central to civil discourse and intercultural literacy. (Communication, Intercultural Literacy)

Educational Priorities and Outcomes (EPOs) and Learning Objectives

This course supports Cornell College's Educational Priorities and Outcomes with an emphasis on Knowledge, Inquiry, Communication, Intercultural Literacy, and Well-Being.

For your reference, here is a list and brief description of all nine of Cornell's EPOs:

- **Knowledge:** *integrate and apply knowledge from a focused area of study as well as a broad general education which includes disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences.*
- **Inquiry:** *respond to the complexities of contemporary and enduring problems using information literacy tools, research skills, creative thinking, and analysis.*
- **Reasoning:** *evaluate evidence; interpret data; and use logical, mathematical, and statistical problem-solving tools.*
- **Communication:** *speak and write clearly, listen and read actively, and engage with others in productive dialogue.*
- **Intercultural Literacy:** *connect with diverse ideas and with people whose experiences differ from their own and that may be separated from them by time, space, or culture.*
- **Ethical Behavior:** *recognize personal, academic, and professional standards and act with integrity.*
- **Citizenship:** *collaborate with others and contribute in their communities and the larger world.*
- **Vocation:** *discover and prepare for the range of opportunities and challenges that await them beyond their college experience.*
- **Well-Being:** *respect the ways physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being may contribute to a balanced life.*

Required Course Materials

- A computer with specifications required by Cornell's Information Technology department.
- Texts to be purchased: (*Make sure to get the specific versions listed, as indicated by the ISBN provided, so that we are all on the same page.*)
 - *The Transition to College Writing, 2nd edition*, by Keith Hjortshoj (ISBN: 9780312440824)
 - You will also use this text in your First Year Writing course, so be sure to keep it.
 - *Knocking on Heaven's Door: How Physics and Scientific Thinking Illuminate the Universe and the Modern World* by Lisa Randall (ISBN: 9780061723735)
 - *Fun Home*, by Alison Bechdel (ISBN: 9780618871711)
- All other required texts and readings are provided on Moodle, our Learning Management System

A Note on Course Content

You may find some of this course's content not only intellectually challenging (and even surprising), but also emotionally challenging. Divergent views, expressed respectfully, are important and welcomed. Please do not hesitate to talk with your professor, your mentor, and/or consider utilizing other support services (including the [Counseling Center](#), whose services include confidentiality), if you find yourself struggling.

Academic Support

Please contact your common FYS faculty, Student Success Staff Mentor, and academic advisor as soon as possible if you are having difficulty with the course or if a serious sickness/incident occurs during the block. Similarly, if you need to miss class, let your faculty or mentor know ahead of time (see below for attendance policy).

Staff members in the [Student Success Center](#) are also available to talk about academic concerns, study plans, finding your place at Cornell, or any questions you have. You can walk in to chat or contact a staff member directly to set up an appointment. Additionally, you can request a [Content Tutor](#).

We encourage you to use the resources of the Center for Teaching and Learning ([Consulting Librarians](#), [Quantitative Reasoning Studio Consultants](#), [Writing Studio Consultants](#), etc.)

Your Resident Assistant (RA) and Flock Leader can also provide support and advice regarding academic issues, time management, and life at Cornell more broadly.

If medical or psychological conditions arise during the block, please consult with your faculty member and/or with a medical or psychological health provider, *before* your progress in the course may become impeded. If such concerns make the completion of this course infeasible, you may petition for a health withdrawal (WH). Be aware that Cornell counselors and health professionals will not normally issue support for a WH unless you have consulted them at or near the onset of the problem.

It is our goal that you feel supported and able to share information related to your life experiences during classroom discussions, in your written work, and in any one-on-one meetings with us. You should also know that all Cornell College faculty and staff are mandatory reporters. This means that we will keep information you share with us private to the greatest extent possible. However, we are required to share information regarding sexual assault, abuse, criminal behavior, or about a student who may be a danger to themselves or to others. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially who is not a mandatory reporter, you can schedule an appointment with one of the counselors in the Ebersole Health and Wellbeing Center or contact the College Chaplain, Rev. Melea White, at mwhite@cornellcollege.edu.

In addition, there are many other ways that we and others can help directly and indirectly, but you have to let us know!

Course Communication

You are responsible for information and material that is posted on Moodle and/or that you receive to your Cornell email account. Please check your Cornell email account at least daily. The syllabus, selected readings/handouts, and other course materials will be posted on our Moodle page. Login at <http://moodle.cornellcollege.edu/>

Technology Policy

Cell phones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches, or other electronic devices should be used during class time only with your instructor's permission and only for class-related purposes. Most of us are not as good at multitasking as we think we are, and you need to stay focused on class activities to get the most out of class. We expect you to use these devices only for class-related purposes. If we believe that you are misusing technology, we will issue you a warning—repeated use may result in the loss of class participation points (see holistic rubric at the end of this syllabus). Instructors may ban electronic devices from class.

AI Policy¹

The beta release of Dall-E-Mini in July 2022 and ChatGPT in November 2022 are among many tools using artificial intelligence. There is a good possibility that using tools like these are going to become an important skill for the careers in the not distant future

(<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/jan/07/chatgpt-bot-excel-ai-chatbot-tech>).

In the meantime though, it's going to take a while for society to figure out when using these tools is/isn't acceptable.

- Work created by AI tools may not be considered original work and, instead, considered automated plagiarism. It is derived from previously created texts from other sources that the models were trained on, yet doesn't cite sources.
- AI models have built-in biases (ie, they are trained on limited underlying sources; they reproduce, rather than challenge, errors in the sources)
- AI tools have limitations (ie, they lack critical thinking to evaluate and reflect on criteria; they lack abductive reasoning to make judgments with incomplete information at hand; they make up or use inaccurate information and may “hallucinate” sources that do not exist)

In this course, **all informal writing should be written without the use of AI**. The purpose of informal writing is to help you think through your ideas, connect with your lived experiences, and to figure out your thoughts and opinions. Using AI here subverts that process.

In your essay, **you may use AI** as part of your writing process to brainstorm and organize ideas or to check for spelling or grammar. However, the final product should be your own work reflecting your ideas. Furthermore, **if you use AI, be sure to cite it**. In this course, we'd like to see you cite it along with an annotation of how you used it. An example follows:

ChatGPT-3. (2023, January 10). "Write a syllabus policy about the academic integrity of students using ai-based tools." Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>

I wrote this text and then input it into ChatGPT with the following prompt: Review some text for grammar and spelling. The output found no spelling errors but is limited to US English spelling. The output also made three suggestions to revise sentences for conciseness. One suggestion made no sense, another messed up comma use but reduced some words that I adopted, and the last one I took on board (reduced repetition in the first sentence where I had referred to 'in the course' twice).

¹ Drafted with the assistance of Lance Eaton's Google Doc resource "Classroom Policies for Generative AI Tools", particularly #9 by Spencer Ross, #11 by Lis Horowitz and #19 by Kelly Matthews.

A final note: Other courses may have different AI policies, and it is important to be aware of the policy in each class.

Academic Honesty Expectations

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is their work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Catalogue, under the heading "Academic Honesty."

Accommodations

Cornell College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students should notify the Coordinator of Disability Services and their course instructor of any disability related accommodations within the first three days of the term for which the accommodations are required, due to the fast pace of the block format. For more information on the documentation required to establish the need for accommodations and the process of requesting the accommodations, see the Student Success Center website.

Grading Process and Criteria

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Class Engagement (10%)
Daily Responses (10%)
Scored Discussion (8%)
Quizzes (12%)
Final Exam (20%)
Paper (20%)
Student Success Component (20%)

For your final grade, we will use the following scale:

Percent	Letter Grade
93-100	A
90-92.99	A-
87-89.99	B+
83-86.99	B
80-82.99	B-
77-79.99	C+
73-76.99	C
70-72.99	C-
67-69.99	D+
63-66.99	D
60-62.99	D-
below 60	F

Note that faculty members are usually required to submit grades to the Registrar by noon on day 1 of the subsequent block (in some cases, such as Blocks 4 and 8, the schedule is adjusted). For this class, you can expect to see an in-progress ("midterm") grade on Self Service after Block 1, sometime during the week of Monday, September 25. This grade will then be adjusted after the end of Block 3 (once you've finished the Student Success component).

Assignments and Evaluation

Class Engagement (10%)

In-Class Engagement

It cannot be stressed enough that your engagement is critical to your success in this class. The reciprocity of your ideas with others' throughout the course provides the essential foundation from which we can all tackle complex ideas. Your engagement will be assessed holistically* according to the following criteria:

- **Active Listening:** This is a vital component to learning as well as an important facet of constructive dialogue. Active listening might include building on others' comments, summing up previous statements, being able to clarify previously mentioned ideas, and so on. Active listening also might include positive nonverbal communication while others are talking. Monopolizing and dominating the conversation is not considered high quality engagement. Additionally, distracting behaviors such as texting and side-talking are inappropriate.
- **Active Discussion:** Dialogue, written and verbal, is a key to our understanding of the material. We need to see and hear your ideas come up during our class conversations so as to assess what you understand and what you do not understand. If you struggle with speaking up, you may want to write down some questions or comments before class as an informal "script." With practice comes confidence.
- **Preparation:** For one, be on time (see attendance policy). Also, you *must* read the required materials prior to our class sessions in order to participate. Other indicators of preparation include submitting daily responses (which are graded separately but impact your overall class engagement), keeping well-organized notes on readings, preparing questions and comments on the text, participating in other assigned online activities, and having readings/notes available for reference.

Ultimately, the assessment of your level of engagement is based on the preponderance of evidence displayed in class - not your intentions. Please note that poor performance on engagement will likely result in poor performance on all other components of the class. (*see holistic participation rubric at the end of the syllabus)

Attendance

Your presence is essential to your overall learning and engagement with the course. We all benefit from your contributions. While there are legitimate reasons to miss a class (such as serious illness, official athletic competition absence, or emergency situation), barring such circumstances, in-person attendance at every class session is required and quality engagement during class is expected. If you are not able to attend class in-person (for any reason), you must be in touch with your professor as soon as possible--ideally prior to the start of the class--to discuss alternative ways to make up for your absence. Not attending class in person, failing to contact your faculty member to make alternative arrangements to make up for your absence, and not following through with such arrangements may drop your "midterm" grade as much

as 1/3 of a grade (i.e. "B" to "B-") per incident. Missing more than fifteen minutes of any class session may be considered an absence.

Recommended Activities

We encourage you to use the Writing and Quantitative Reasoning Studios and to attend the various optional FYS study and support events. While not taking advantage of these opportunities will not lower your engagement grade, participating may improve your engagement grade.

Daily Responses (10%)

Every day you will be writing brief responses (200-300 words) on the readings and course topics. You will post these responses on Moodle. Daily responses provide the opportunity for you to engage actively with the course material through critical analysis, reflecting on the personal relevance or application of this material, and then solidifying your thoughts through informal writing. These responses will help you to prepare for daily class activities and class discussion.

- Responses are due by **7:00 am**.
- Responses will be evaluated for completion and relevance to the prompt as "credit" or "no credit."
- You cannot make up a missed or late response but your instructor will drop one daily response grade over the course of the block without penalty.

Scored Discussion (8%)

We will hold a formal culminating discussion seminar during which you will be assessed on your ability to engage with the assigned text through dialogue with your peers. Your verbal participation, civil discourse, reference to specific passages in the text, and construction of critical questions and responses are all components of this evaluation. The formal Scored Discussion will be held during the final week of class.

- You must do the required preparation (reading, construction of questions, and/or development of key themes and ideas to raise) in order to participate and earn points for the discussion.
- If you are late or absent to the discussion:
 - <15 minutes: Scored Discussion grade is reduced by a letter grade.
 - >15 minutes: You may not participate and you will not earn credit for this assignment.

Quizzes and Exam (32%)

The quizzes and the final exam are designed to assess your learning of key terms and concepts during and at the end of the course. We will discuss in class various ways to prepare for exams and to adjust your study practices to incorporate these techniques.

Quizzes (12%)

Graded quizzes will occur each Friday (3 in total). Quiz questions will be pulled from the guiding question exercises from the prior Friday-Thursday.

Final Cumulative Exam (20%)

The final exam will take place on Wednesday, September 21st. It is designed to take 2.5 hours to complete, but all students will be given 3 hours to complete. This cumulative exam will cover material addressed in course texts, activities, lectures, class discussion, and in-class and out of class assignments and activities throughout the course. As you study, please pay particular attention to the Guiding Questions, Terms, and Concepts document and the QR Handbook. If you arrive at the exam late, you must finish the exam by designated stop time.

Essay (20%)

You will write an essay related to “how you know what you know” exploring shifts in and/or the implications of your perspectives. This paper will be staged to support your development of college-level writing. This writing process will include either a paper proposal or a rough draft, an exchange of ideas with peers in class, feedback from your professor, and the development of a revision plan. Specific guidance on this paper will be provided in class.

- If you submit a paper proposal or a draft late, you risk not receiving feedback and this will affect the quality of your final paper.
- Late submission (i.e. any time after the stated due date and time) of the final essay will be penalized $\frac{1}{3}$ of a letter grade per 12 hours. For example, an essay that earns a “B” if submitted on time would earn a “B-” if submitted up to 12 hours late and a “C+” if submitted between 12 and 24 hours late. No late essays will be accepted after the 4th Wednesday, at 5 pm.
- You must submit the correct document in the correct file format and specifications as designated by the professor. It is your responsibility to *verify* that your document appears as it should according to the assignment specifications. The late penalty applies if there are any format or specification errors (e.g., blank documents, corrupted text, etc.).

Here is an important piece of practical advice: We expect you to backup all of your work to your Cornell H drive and/or Google drive. “I lost the file” and “My computer hard drive got corrupted” will not be accepted as excuses for missing work. Nor will “my computer isn’t working” — if your files are backed up, you may use another computer to access your documents.

Student Success Activities (20%)

The student success component of this class occurs during the first three blocks and includes (in summary):

- Attendance and participation in student success class meetings and activities
- Meet individually with Student Success Staff Mentor once a block
- Completion of 1-2 student success assignments per block (5 total)
- Completion of a reflection writing assignment after each block (3 total)

Student Success assignments will be evaluated by your Student Success Staff Mentor. You and your academic advisor will be informed of your preliminary in-progress grade (“midterm” grade in Self Service) after the end of Block 1 (which will not include Student Success component attendance, participation, assignments) and you will receive your final comprehensive grade at the end of Block 3. More details on the specific Student Success assignments are available elsewhere.

Holistic Rubric for Class Participation

Score	Description
Outstanding A+ 100%	You come to class prepared, contribute readily to the conversation but you don't dominate it. You make thoughtful contributions that advance the conversation, show interest in and respect for others' views, and participate actively in small groups as well as larger class discussions. You're always here and on time. It's evident you've engaged with the assigned readings. You may have even read beyond the required texts.
Excellent A 95% A- 90%	You make thoughtful contributions that advance the conversation (when called upon) and contribute occasionally without prompting. You come to class prepared, show interest in and respect for others' views, and participate actively in small groups. This score may also be appropriate to an active participant whose contributions are less developed or cogent than those in the Outstanding category but still advance the conversation. You may have an absence (planned in advance and/or excused) or you may be a minute or two late a couple of times (you come in unobtrusively).
Good B+ 89% B 85% B- 80%	You come to class prepared, but might not voluntarily contribute to discussions and/or you give abbreviated answers when called upon. You appear to show interest in the discussion, listen attentively, participate in small groups, and perhaps take good notes. On occasion you may come to class late/unprepared but are otherwise Outstanding or Excellent. OR, you participate in discussion, but in a slightly problematic way. For example you may occasionally dominate discussions, make rambling or tangential contributions, or bluff when underprepared.
Fair C+ 79% C 75% C- 70%	You do not voluntarily contribute to discussions and/or you offer only minimal answers when called upon. You may show interest in the discussion and/or occasionally listen attentively. You may come to class late/unprepared a few times but you may behave as Outstanding or Excellent when present and prepared. OR, you participate in discussion, but in a problematic way. For example you may often dominate discussions, make rambling or tangential contributions, continually interrupt with digressive questions, or bluff your answers frequently (revealing your lack of preparedness). If you are in this category, it's likely affecting your coursework elsewhere.
Needs Improvement D+ 69% D 65% D- 60%	You are often unprepared. You seem to be on the margins of the class and sometimes this has a negative effect on the participation of others (for instance, when behavior is distracting and/or reticent). It's not clear that you are "here" even when you are here. You may nod off from time to time. If you are in this category it would be a good idea to meet with me.
Unsatisfactory F 0%	You regularly come to class late or unprepared. You have a negative effect on the participation of others. You may be actually disruptive, radiating negative energy via hostile or bored body language, or some of your behaviors are overtly rude (sleeping, side-talking, or other distractions). If you are in this category, we <i>will</i> be meeting to discuss strategies to improve your engagement.

This is adapted from John C. Bean and Dean Peterson, "Grading Classroom Participation" (1998).

- Preparation might be measured by brief in-class writing assignments including daily guiding question exercises, by completion of out-of-class responses or other homework, or by evidence from direct questioning.
- All aspects of this rubric have an effect on the quality of each of the assignments in this class.
- Attendance contributes to your participation and is thus linked to class engagement and participation. See Attendance Policy earlier in this syllabus.