

School of Arts & Science  
**Columba Cornerstone: Justice**  
COL 150  
Columba Cornerstone Course

### Course Description

The four-credit Columba Cornerstone Course introduces students to foundational ideas, perspectives, and techniques of inquiry that are essential to the college experience. The course emphasizes the diversity of the human experience, and focuses on the reading, writing, and thinking skills crucial to success both in college and beyond. All sections of the Columba Cornerstone incorporate instruction on six universal topics which have been designed to ground students in essential learning that supports the entirety of their Iona experience. These topics include: The Iona Story; Diversity; Information & Digital Literacy; The Learning e-Portfolio; Entrepreneurship & Innovation; and basic Financial Literacy.

### Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

*Upon successful completion of this course, students are expected to...*

Course SLO Narrative	Supports Core SLO (Narrative & #)	Method(s) of Course SLO Assessment
Students will be able to recognize injustices in the world and society around them.	#1 Through engagement with “big questions” grounded in the liberal arts, students will demonstrate knowledge of the meaning and complexities of the human experience and its relationship to the natural world.	Class Discussion, Project
Students will be able to consider and engage with different understandings of justice.	#3 Through a comprehensive curricular experience that emphasize the values of peace, justice, and service, as well as appreciation for human diversity, sustainability and civic engagement, students will demonstrate the ability to apply a global perspective and the principles of ethical reasoning.	Class Discussion, Tests
Students will be better at articulating their own thinking in writing and in speaking, as well as assessing their own views and the views of others in light of new information and	#2 Through immersion in a nurturing community dedicated to intellectual engagement, students will demonstrate the skills needed to thrive as citizens and perspective leaders in an ever-changing world. Such skills include: critical reading, critical analysis, critical thinking,	Project, Project Plan, Co-Curricular Activity Reports

disagreement. They will also develop important college skills, most centrally being in community with classmates and drawing on Iona College resources to enrich their learning experience.	problem-solving, quantitative literacy, and technological literacy.	
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### Required Texts/Source Materials

**All required readings, podcast episodes, and videos** will be posted or linked to in assigned order on the course Blackboard “Readings etc” page.

### Core Signature Assignment

The Core Signature Assignment for this course is your Project Plan. This assignment is assessed for Core SLO #1 (Engagement with Big Questions).

The assignment listed in this section must be uploaded to the Blackboard Organizations site for the specified SLO in order to receive a course grade.

NOTE: The Blackboard Organization site for your SLO is separate from the Blackboard Course site for your class. To find the Blackboard Organization site for your SLO, look for the box labeled “My Organizations” on the landing page when you log in to Blackboard. Your instructor will notify you when the Blackboard Organization site is available for uploading your CSA.

### Grading Criteria & Assessment Information

**Attendance and Participation:** In this class we will be aiming to develop critical and creative thinking skills and to build community with each other. We need each other to do these things! For that reason, it is essential to the success of this class that you are actively engaged in discussion.

**Assignments:** Assignments include readings, a project (with some self-assessment), project group work, and exams. See below for more detail about each.

**Readings:** All readings/listenings/etc must be completed before the day they are discussed in class (unless specified otherwise). If you have not completed the reading when class discussion begins, you should go back to it and complete the reading after class discussion.

**Co-Curricular Activities and Reports:** Everyone will also be required to participate in **two** extra-curricular activities during the semester (we will have two class cancellations to offset this time spent). You will submit a **plan** stating which events you are going to attend early in the semester. I have listed options for events on the syllabus, but you can also find more options here: <https://www.iona.edu/about/news-events/events.aspx>. During your chosen event, you should reflect on how it is relevant to at least one of the Cornerstone themes:

**The Iona Story**

**Diversity**

**Information & Digital Literacy**

## **Entrepreneurship & Innovation**

### **Basic Financial Literacy**

After attending each of your chosen events, you have two options for securing credit for it:

- 1.** Share your reflection verbally with the class on the class session after the event
- 2.** Send me an email with your reflection on the event

**Project and Project Plan:** Aside from in-class discussion, your project will be the main way for you to demonstrate your critical thinking skills for the course. Everyone will self-design a project engaging with topics raised in connection to our Cornerstone theme (Justice). This self-design will include a rubric for assessment. The rubric (along with an explanation of how your project demonstrates critical thinking) will be due partway through the semester, and the project itself will be due closer to the end of the semester.

**Tests:** There will be three tests for the course. These will be very open-format and aimed at checking in with what you are learning continuously as we progress through the course.

**Grading Components:** Information about how final grades and paper grades are calculated as well as grading scales and points can be found in this section. Please note that generally speaking, **I do not use Blackboard Grades to calculate or share grades.** I will tell you how to find your grades on each assignment you complete. If you want to know how you are doing at class at each step of the way, I recommend storing these grades yourself as you receive them and using the percentages below to make your own estimates about how you need to perform on upcoming assignments. (If you're unsure how to do this, just ask! It's a good thing to learn!) Of course, you are also welcome to come to office hours or schedule a meeting with me to discuss your grade in more detail at any point.

#### **What Matters for Your Final Grade:**

Participation and Attendance (15%)

Co-Curricular Activities (10%)

Tests (45%; 15% each)

Project Plan\* (15%)

Project (15%)

\*Denotes Core Signature Assignment requiring e-Portfolio upload to SLO 1 and reflections

**Attendance/Participation grading:** If you attend all classes (remotely or in person), pay attention in class (not being distracted by your phone/laptop, etc.), engage actively in group activities, and share a question or a comment about weekly or every other week, you will receive an A on Attendance and Participation. If any of these factors is lacking (attendance is low, you are often distracted during class, you do not engage in group activities, or you rarely or never ask a question/make a comment), your Participation and Attendance grade will be lower. If you attend all but three classes and consistently pay attention and work cooperatively during class, you will receive at least a C on Participation and Attendance--but in order to earn above a passing grade, you will need to actively participate in our class discussions by sharing your confusions/ideas with the group. **If you are concerned about participating in class for any reason, please feel free to meet with me or email me so that we can work on a strategy to make it easier for you to join in!**

**Co-Curricular Activity grading:** If you complete both necessary co-curricular activities and share them either verbally with class or to me over email, you will receive at least a C on this portion of class. For a B or an A, you will also need to reflect on both activities (either in your report to class or your email to me) in a way that connects your experience to what we are learning in class, especially to at least one Cornerstone theme.

**Project Plan grading:** I will be grading your rubric and your explanation of it as though it were a paper. This means that I will be looking for clarity in your description of the project and a convincing argument as to how your project will help you engage in critical thinking about class topics.

**Project:** I will grade your project with the rubric you create for it!

**Grades will make use of the following scale:**

Letter Grade	Grade Point and Grade Scale	Description
A	4.00 93-100	<i>Outstanding.</i> Signifies the highest level of achievement in the subject and indicates an exceptional general competence, and exemplary comprehension and interpretation skills. Work is devoid of errors, and reflects a highly nuanced understanding of disciplinary concepts.
A-	3.67 90-92	<i>Excellent.</i> Signifies an advanced level of achievement approaching the highest category. Work contains a few minor errors, but reflects a mastery of disciplinary concepts.
B+	3.33 87-89	<i>Very Good.</i> Signifies a consistently high level of achievement and indicates that the course requirements have been fulfilled in an intelligent, superior manner. Work contains some minor errors, but reflects a near mastery of disciplinary concepts.
B	3.00 83-86	<i>Good.</i> Signifies a complex engagement with disciplinary content, and well-developed critical skills. Work contains several minor, but no significant errors.
B-	2.67 80-82	<i>Above Average.</i> Signifies a more than acceptable degree of disciplinary knowledge and skills. Work contains some significant and some minor errors.
C+	2.33 77-79	<i>Satisfactory.</i> Signifies consistent achievement of a quality that satisfies, and sometimes exceeds stated, basic requirements. Work contains significant errors and patterns of error, but reflects an acceptable degree of disciplinary knowledge and skills.
C	2.00 73-76	<i>Fair.</i> Signifies achievement of a quality that satisfies the stated, basic requirements of coursework, and a functional, though incomplete understanding of disciplinary concepts.
C-	1.67 70-72	<i>Poor.</i> Signifies a level of understanding below the basic level expected of students. Work contains many errors, including patterns of error, and reflects only partial understanding of disciplinary concepts.
D	1.00 60-69	<i>Minimal Passing.</i> Signifies a level of understanding well below the basic level expected of students. Work is consistently riddled with errors and patterns of error, and reflects only a minimal understanding of disciplinary concepts.

Letter Grade	Grade Point and Grade Scale	Description
P		<i>Passing.</i> Signifies satisfactory completion of course requirements and the earning of credit without quality points.
U		<i>Unsatisfactory.</i> No quality points assigned.
F	0.00 0-59	<i>Failure.</i> Signifies failure to meet basic course requirements.
FA		<i>Failure - Excessive Absence.</i> Signifies dismissal from a course for unacceptable academic performance and absence from 20 percent or more of the scheduled class sessions. Requests for this grade are filed by the faculty member with the dean of the school in which the student is enrolled. This grade is computed as an “F” in the cumulative index.
I		<i>Incomplete:</i> If for serious reasons, students are unable to complete one or more requirements of a course, including the final examination, students may wish to apply for an “Incomplete.” Students must submit a written request for review and approval to the course instructor by the last day of classes. If the request is granted, the time for submitting outstanding work is extended until the date indicated in the academic calendar. The faculty member will notify the student of the missing assignment(s) and examinations with the option to give a due date before the one posted on the academic calendar. A faculty member also has the option to give an Incomplete to a student that has missed the final examination. Instructors are responsible to notify their academic dean of the granting of an Incomplete grade. In all cases of “Incomplete” grades if the course requirements are not met within the extended period of time, the final grade will be recorded at the discretion of the instructor. The deadline for submitting materials to the instructor is 6 weeks from the semester’s posted due date for grades.
W		<i>Withdrawal.</i> Signifies withdrawal from a course with permission of the Academic Advising Office or appropriate academic dean.
H		<i>Audit.</i> Signifies that a course was not taken for credit.
SP		<i>Satisfactory Progress.</i> Signifies that a course is not complete as of the end of the present semester, but is continuing.

### Double-Dip Policy:

Students may use up to 12 shared credits to complete a double major, second bachelor degree, secondary major, minor or dual degree. This is the maximum number of shared credits allowed by New York State unless otherwise specified as in select 5-year dual degree programs. Credits may not be shared within the 45 required credits of the college core curriculum. College core curriculum credits may be used to fulfill major or minor requirements, unless otherwise specified. No more than half the coursework toward any program of study (major or minor) may be fulfilled using shared credits. Departments may restrict shared credits within their majors and minors but must seek approval through undergraduate curriculum committees and governance process. No credits may ever be triple-counted among any combination of majors and/or minors.

### Late Work

Late work will be accepted, with a penalty of 3 points off of the grade per day it is late. I encourage you to ask for an extension ahead of time if you suspect you will not have work finished on time!

### Cheating and Plagiarism (Class Policy)

Cheating and plagiarism are subject to school-wide policy (see College Policies section for more information) in addition to in-class penalties. Plagiarism in this course will result in a zero on the assignment, although students will have the chance to resubmit in order to receive 55% instead of 0%. This is my policy because cheating and plagiarism especially interfere with your own learning in this class. By far the most important goal of this class is for you to develop, articulate, and critically assess your own thinking. Deriving your ideas directly from other people's ideas makes this impossible, and when you do it you are dismissing the greater potential of your own ideas. Do not do that to yourself. If you are worried about your ability to complete any assignment, you can contact me at any point for help. You are capable of completing these assignments with your own thinking, especially if you can master the skill of asking for help when you need it!

### Course Calendar:

#### Week 1 (Getting Started)

Tu 8/31

Reading due: None

Th 9/2

**Cancelled, Hurricane Ida**

Fr 9/3

**Cancelled, Hurricane Ida**

#### Week 2 (The Iona Story and Justice)

Tu 9/7

Reading (/Listening) due: Nadworny, How to Study

Th 9/9

Reading due: Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

Fr 9/10

Reading due: None (work on plans for co-curricular activities)

**LAST CHANCE TO ADD/DROP/SWAP IS FRIDAY 9/10**

#### Week 3 (Information and Digital Literacy and Justice)

Tu 9/14

Reading due: Rawls, A Theory of Justice

**Plan for Co-Curricular Activities due**

Th 9/16

Reading due: None

Watching in class: First half (up until 29:30 of) *The Difference Between Us* (from *Race: the Power of an Illusion*) [**Common Read**]

Fr 9/17

Reading due: None

Watching in class: Second half of *The Difference Between Us* (from *Race: the Power of an Illusion*) [**Common Read**]

#### Week 4 (Diversity and Justice)

Tu 9/21

Reading due: Nozick, Entitlement Theory

(Option for Co-Curricular Event: 12pm in Mulcahy Gym, **Br. Cornelia Lecture: Solidarity with Those Made Poor**, Stephen Casey)

Th 9/23

Reading due: Treur, Return the National Parks to the Tribes

Fr 9/24

Reading due: None (Review)

#### Week 5

Tu 9/28

Reading due: None

##### **Test 1**

(Option for Co-Curricular Event: 12pm in Spellman Hall 213, **How to Adult: Surviving on a Budget**, with the CEO Student Club)

Th 9/30

Reading due: Gorham, The Social Psychology of Stereotypes [**Common Read**]

Fr 10/1

Reading due: None (Gorham discussion continued)

#### Week 6

Tu 10/5

Reading due: None

Watching in class: First half (up until 28:52) of *The Story We Tell* (from *Race: the Power of an Illusion*)

Th 10/7

Reading due: Mills, Ideal Theory as Ideology

**Advising Center Visit**

Fr 10/8

Reading due: None (Mills cont'd.)

### Week 7

Tu 10/12

Reading due: None

Watching in class: Second half of *The Story We Tell* (from *Race: the Power of an Illusion*)

Th 10/14

Reading due: Bell, The Unintended Lessons in Brown v Board of Education

Fr 10/15

Reading due: Hannah-Jones, Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City

### **Project Plan due**

### **PROGRESS REPORTS FOR CLASS AVAILABLE**

(Option for Co-Curricular Event: 12pm in Spellman Hall 213, **Empathy Mapping Workshop**)

### Week 8

Tu 10/19

Reading due: None (Hannah-Jones cont'd.)

W 10/20 (Option for Co-Curricular Event: 12:30-1:30pm in Spellman Hall 213, **Designing Your Life**, Heather Golden)

Th 10/21

Reading/Listening due: Episode 512 of *This American Life*: House Rules [**Common Read**]

Fr 10/22

Reading due: DiAngelo, White Fragility [**Common Read**]

### Week 9 (Basic Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, and Justice)

(Option for Co-Curricular Event/s: **Week of the Peacemaker**, this year's theme is: Dialogue and Polarization)

Tu 10/26

Reading due: None (continuing DiAngelo)

Th 10/28

Reading due: Financial Literacy Key Terms

Working on Budget Project in class

Fr 10/29

Reading due: None

Discuss Budget Results



### Week 10

Tu 11/2

**Meetings about Projects (you will get attendance credit for this day of class as long as you attend your Project Meeting with me this week: we won't meet today as a group)**

Th 11/4

Reading due: None (Review)

Fr 11/5

Reading due: None

**Test 2**

### Week 11

Tu 11/9

Reading due: Tirado, *Hand to Mouth* Ch.8

**Visit from Registrar (about Degree-Audit program)**

Th 11/11

**Veterans' Day, No class!**

Fr 11/12

Reading due: Desmond, Americans Want to Believe that Jobs are the Solution to Poverty

### Week 12

Tu 11/16

Reading due: None

Watching in class: First half (up until 29:00) of *The House We Live In* (from *Race: the Power of an Illusion*)

**Classes run on a Thursday schedule (no difference for our class)**

Th 11/18

Reading due: None

Watching in class: Second half of *The House We Live In* (from *Race: the Power of an Illusion*)

Fr 11/19

Reading due: None

**LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A "W" IS FRIDAY 11/19**

### Week 13

Tu 11/23

Reading due: (read what you can: I know I was late in posting it!) Coates, The Case for Reparations

Th 11/25

**Thanksgiving, No class!**

Fr 11/26

**Thanksgiving, No class!**

[Week 14](#)

Tu 11/30

Reading due: Tirado, *Hand to Mouth*, Ch.9

[\(Back to the Iona Story and Justice\)](#)

Th 12/2

Reading due: Yanikoski, *Uncomfortable Truths*

Fr 12/3

**No class:** Co-curricular Activity offset day! (Take the time to finish up your Project!)

**Project due**

[Week 15](#)

Tu 12/7

Reading due: TBD

Th 12/9

Reading due: TBD

Fr 12/10

Reading due: None

[Final, Test 3: Wednesday 12/15, 1pm-3:10pm](#)

**FINAL GRADES IN: WEDNESDAY 12/22**