



**Peru State College**  
**Political Science 201**  
**American National Government**  
**Syllabus – Spring 2012**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor:** Dr. Sara B. Crook

**Office:** Jindra Fine Arts #140

**Office Hours:** MW 9:30 – 10:45 AM & 12:30-2 PM; TR 9:30-10:45 AM; F by appointment

**Office Telephone:** (402) 872-2279

**E-mail Address:** [scrook@peru.edu](mailto:scrook@peru.edu)

**Web Page:** [www.hpcnet.org/peru/schoolartsandsciences/history/crook](http://www.hpcnet.org/peru/schoolartsandsciences/history/crook)

**Course Meeting Times:** MW 11AM – 12:15 PM in Jindra Fine Arts 202

**Required Textbook:**

American Democracy Now by Harrison, Harris, Tolchin (Alternate Edition)

Assigned readings & *videos/DVDs*

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Description:** A thorough introduction to the U.S. political system, its institutions and processes. Topics will include the constitutional founding, federalism, political culture, Congress, the Presidency, judiciary, bureaucracy, public opinion and the media, the electoral process, and civil liberties.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

- A. Identify basic political institutions and issues.
- B. Take an active participation in the political process.
- C. Think in terms of political concepts, to recognize values, to exercise critical judgment, and to make political decisions.

At the beginning of the course, we will discuss how these objectives fit into the College's and School's mission and goals.

- Effective communication skills – PIP and class discussions
- Computer and information literacy – PIP and Blackboard
- Independent critical thought and intellectual capacity for change – PIP and class discussions
- Preparation to assume social and civic leadership roles – Civic letter, event attendance, class discussions
- The ability to pursue intellectually, ethically, aesthetically, and physically rewarding lives – class discussions

**Expectations and Instructional Approach:** Lecture, Discussion, Debate, Research, Power Point notes. **Bring your textbook to class** and be prepared to engage in a dialogue concerning the assigned readings. **Professional behavior is expected at all times in the classroom.**

**Assessment and Grading Criteria:**

**Political Individual Portfolio:**

Each student will select a current national politician to research for this class.

President Obama

VP Biden

Speaker of the House – John Boehner

Majority Leader of the Senate – Harry Reid

Any member of Congress

Any member of the President’s Cabinet

Any member of the White House staff with political standing (No cooks, schedulers, custodians, etc.!) )

Any ambassador to a foreign country

Any Director, Chair, etc. of a bureaucratic agency

Any member of the U.S. Supreme Court

This research should include the following: (Grading Rubric can be found at the end of syllabus)

**Cover Page** – Include political person’s name and position/title, your name, class name, instructor name, and date; it should look professional and may include an appropriate picture.

**Table of Contents** – Identify the page numbers/tabs of each of the following sections of your portfolio.

**News Articles with Bibliography**- (10) Each student shall compile a minimum of 10 articles from News Magazines (Time, Newsweek, Congressional Quarterly, Mother Jones, Sports Illustrated etc.) or newspapers (either hard copy or online). Students should seek articles from a variety of sources (note source and date of each article), and should seek opinions on all sides of the issue. Include at least one non-American source/viewpoint. Also indicate that the articles have been read through highlighting or margin notes. **Include a bibliography page identifying these articles and their source at the beginning of this section.**

**Book** - (1) Read one related book about the individual or the issues which their position addresses and write an annotated bibliography. Include all bibliographic information plus a paragraph outlining what you learned from this book – this is **not** a book summary. *The book must be approved, in advance by the instructor or no credit will be given.*

**Civic letter** - (1) Each student will prepare a 1 page letter to their political official detailing your informed opinion on their positions/ actions.

One excellent source for determining your politician’s positions is the Congressional Quarterly, available in the magazine section of the PSC Library. This letter should be a **professional presentation** of your views and therefore should make reference to information found in your

research. The letter **must be word processed**. In order to receive the **25 points you must**, after the letter is graded and suggestions are made, provide a clean copy of the letter and either include a fax number, addressed envelope (word-processed), or a copy of email sent. The purpose of this assignment is to serve the fulfillment of course objective #2: "To encourage students' active participation in the political process."

**Interview** - (1) Each student will interview someone who has been important in their political socialization, i.e., parent, sibling, teacher, grandparent, mentor, etc. The student will submit a minimum of 5 questions (typed) regarding their politician. Documentation of the actual interview will also be required. No points will be awarded for this activity if documentation is not included.

**Political Cartoons** (2 or more)

Each student will include two political cartoons in relation to your political official from a published source. If no political cartoons dealing with your topic can be found, the student will design their own political cartoons.

#### **Attendance at Educational/Political Events:** (Select 3)

- Attend **at least** one civic/political meeting (city council, school board, county commissioners, district/county court, state legislature, etc.) – Attach agenda/documentation of attendance, etc. :
  - The Peru City Council meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7 PM
  - Although an actual meeting is preferred, there is one site for viewing a civic meeting on videotape via the web: <http://www.douglascounty-ne.gov/board-meetings/videos>
- Field Trip: EN Thompson Series as part of the “Making of the Great Plains 1862-2012” Conference on Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at the Lied Center in Lincoln to hear Donald Worster of KU lecture on “An Unquenchable Thirst: How the Great Plains Created a Water Abundance and Lost It”
- Other field trips as announced
- Black History Month speaker on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) at 11 AM in CATS Conference Room
- Guest Speakers at PSC (as announced in class)
- **Instructor - approved** videos: Examples: “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington,” “State of the Union,” “The Candidate,” “All The President’s Men,” “A Third Choice,” & “The Making of the Constitution” (all available in the PSC Library) – **maximum of one**
- Other events as announced in class or posted on the website

To document your attendance at these events you must write a brief, but **word-processed**, paper identifying the event and what you found to be the most interesting about the presentation. A form is provided on the last page of this syllabus. Please “cut and paste” and save on your computer to create your own document that you can complete as you attend your events. If you falsify information about attending any event for fulfillment of this requirement, you will automatically forfeit all fifty (50) points, regardless of the number of events you have already attended. This is **due no later than 5 PM on Wednesday, April**

**18, 2012** (Week before Dead Week). Late submissions will receive a 10 point automatic deduction for each weekday past the due date.

**Quizzes:** There are to be weekly quizzes over the assigned readings. These quizzes will be taken in class at the end of the class period on Thursday, unless otherwise noted in the syllabus. You will be allowed 15 minutes for each quiz. However, if you miss a quiz, only the best 10 scores of the 13 will count, with each quiz worth 10 points. Questions will be objective.

**Exams:** There will be three exams in class. Each exam will have a variety of question formats. Exams must be taken at the scheduled time unless **prior** arrangement is made with the instructor. For emergency conflicts please contact me via email.

**Grading Policy:**

Political Individual Portfolio (PIP)	100 points
Cover Page (5)	
Table of Contents (5)	
Annotated Book Bibliography (15)	
News Articles (25)	
Civic Letter (25) <b>Must be sent <u>after</u> grading!</b>	
Interview Questions/ Tape (15)	
Professional Presentation of written materials (10)	
Attendance at 3 Educational/ Political Events	50 points
(1=10 pts; 2= 25 pts; 3=50 pts)	
Quizzes (10 X 10)	100 points
First Exam	75 points
Second Exam	75 points
Final Comprehensive Exam	<u>100 points</u>
	500 points

**Grades will be posted on Blackboard**

**No Extra Credit is Available**

**Grading Scale:**

500-475 = A+	399-375 = C+	Below 300 = F
474-450 = A	374-350 = C	
449-425 = B+	349-325 = D+	
424-400 = B	324-300 = D	

**College's Incomplete Coursework Policy**

To designate a student's work in a course as incomplete at the end of a term, the instructor records the incomplete grade (I). Students may receive this grade only when serious illness, hardship, death in the immediate family, or military service during the semester in which they are registered prevents them from completing course requirements. In addition, to receive an incomplete, a student must have completed substantially all of the course's major requirements.

Unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, students must initiate requests for an incomplete by filling out an Incomplete Grade Completion Contract, which requires the signature of the student, instructor, and Dean. The Incomplete Grade Completion contract cites the reason(s) for the incomplete and details the specific obligations the student must meet to change the incomplete to a letter grade. The date by which the student agrees to complete required work must appear in the contract. The Dean, the instructor, and the student receive signed copies of the Incomplete Grade Completion Contract.

Even if the student does not attend Peru State College, all incomplete course work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester. Unless the appropriate Dean approves an extension and if the student does not fulfill contract obligations in the allotted time, the incomplete grade automatically becomes an F.

### **College's Academic Integrity Policy**

The College expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner that supports an honest assessment of student learning outcomes and the assignment of grades that appropriately reflect student performance. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to understand and comply with instructions regarding the completion of assignments, exams, and other academic activities. At a minimum, students should assume that at each assessment opportunity they are expected to do their own original academic work and/or clearly acknowledge in an appropriate fashion the intellectual work of others, when such contributions are allowed. Students helping others to circumvent honest assessments of learning outcomes, or who fail to report instances of academic dishonesty, are also subject to the sanctions defined in this policy.

Instances of academic dishonesty may be discovered in a variety of ways. Faculty members who assign written work ordinarily check citations for accuracy, run data base and online checks, and/or may simply recognize familiar passages that are not cited. They may observe students in the act of cheating or may become aware of instances of cheating from the statements of others. All persons who observe or otherwise know about instances of cheating are expected to report such instances to the proper instructor or Dean.

In order to promote academic integrity, the College subscribes to an electronic service to review papers for the appropriate citations and originality. Key elements of submitted papers are stored electronically in a limited access database and thus become a permanent part of the material to which future submissions are compared. Submission of an application and continued enrollment signifies your permission for this use of your written work.

Should an occurrence of academic misconduct occur, the faculty member may assign a failing grade for the assignment or a failing grade for the course. Each incident of academic misconduct should be reported to the Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA may suspend for two semesters students found to be responsible for multiple instances of academic dishonesty. The reason for the suspension will be noted on the student's transcript.

A faculty member need present only basic evidence of academic dishonesty. There is no requirement for proof of intent. Students are responsible for understanding these tenets of academic honesty and integrity. Students may appeal penalties for academic dishonesty using the process established for grades appeals.

### **Title IX Compliance Notice**

Peru State College is an equal opportunity institution. PSC does not discriminate against any student, employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in employment and education opportunities, including but not limited to admission decisions. The College has designated an individual to coordinate the College's nondiscrimination efforts to comply with regulations implementing Title VI, VII, IX, and Section 504. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies and practices may be directed to Eulanda Cade, Director of Human Resources, Title VI, VII, IX Compliance Coordinator, Peru State College, PO Box 10, Peru, NE 68421-0010, (402) 872-2230.

Students requesting reasonable accommodation and tutoring services should contact the Center for Achievement and Transition Services (CATS).

### **Tentative Course Schedule**

*Please check the Blackboard site for any announcements, updates, or changes to the syllabus. The instructor reserves the right to modify any aspect of the course syllabus or content. Any modifications will be communicated to the students in advance via Blackboard or e-mail.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Week One Jan. 9 & 11	Ch #1 –People, Politics, and Participation	<b>Quiz on Chapter #1</b> Political Quotations: Group Deciphering
Week Two Jan. 16 & 18	Ch #2 –The Constitution and the Constitution itself (pages 74-93) <b>Video:</b> “Amending the Constitution” (2002) on	<b>Quiz on Chapter #2 and video</b>  <b>Due Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> - (Wednesday) Selection of</b>

	PSC library reserve; <u>worksheet</u> on Blackboard	<b>PIP Topic</b>
Week Three Jan 23 & 25	Ch #3-Federalism	<b>Quiz on Chapter #3</b>  <b>1<sup>st</sup> Exam–Wednesday, Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> covering Chapters #1-3 and video</b>
Week Four Jan. 30 & Feb. 1	Ch #4 & # 5 Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	<b>Quiz on Chapters #4 &amp; #5</b>
Week Five Feb. 6 & 8	Ch #6 Political Socialization and Public Opinion  DVD: “Mandate: President and the People” on PSC library reserve; <u>worksheet</u> on Blackboard	<b>Quiz on Chapter #6 &amp; DVD</b>  <b>Due Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) PIP book selection</b>
Week Six Feb. 13 & 15	Ch#7-Interest Groups	<b>Quiz on Chapter #7</b>
Week Seven Feb. 20 & 22	Ch #8-Political Parties	<b>Quiz on Chapter #8</b>
Week Eight Feb. 27 & 29 <b>No class on Feb. 29<sup>th</sup> PSC District History Day Contest</b>	Ch #9-Elections, Campaigns, and Voting  DVD: “Primaries: Defining the Battle in New Hampshire” (23”); <u>worksheet</u> on Blackboard	<b>Quiz on Chapter #9 &amp; DVD – on Monday! Feb. 27th</b>
Midterm Break=March 5-9, 2012		
Weeks Nine March 12 & 14	Ch #10 –The Media	<b>Quiz on Chapter #10</b>  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Exam–Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> on Chapters #4-#10 and DVDs</b>

		<b>Watch “Meet the Press” on NBC at 9 AM on Sunday March 18, 2012 (or videotape/ TiVo and watch at your convenience).</b>
Weeks Ten & Eleven & March 19 & 21 March 26 & 28	Ch #11-Congress <u>Additional Readings:</u> “A Bulwark Against Faction; James Madison’s Case for Term Limits” <u>and</u> “Congressional Term Limits: Restricting Choice” by Hibbing - on Blackboard “Course Documents”	<b><u>Quiz on Chapter #11 and additional readings</u></b>
Week Twelve April 2 & 4	Ch#12-The Presidency <u>Additional Readings:</u> Becshloss - NewsWeek article and Becshloss - NE Humanities Council article	<b><u>Quiz on Chapter #12 and additional readings</u></b>
Week Thirteen April 11 No Classes Monday, April 9 (Spring Break)	Ch #13-The Bureaucracy	<b><u>Quiz on Chapter #13 on Tuesday, Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup></u></b>  <b>Due – PIP –Wednesday April 11, 2012</b>
Weeks Fourteen & Fifteen April 16 & 18 April 23 & 25	Ch #14-The Judiciary	<b><u>Quiz on Chapter #14</u></b>  <b>*Due: Completed Event Attendance Form on April 18, 2012 (Wednesday)</b>
Finals Week		<b><u>Sharing of Political Individual Portfolio information</u></b>  <b>Comprehensive Final Exam on Thursday, May 3, 2012 at 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM</b>

**American National Government: Political Individual Portfolio Grading Rubric**  
**Psci 201; Dr. Crook** Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_/100

- \_\_\_\_\_/5 **Cover Page;** person's name & position/title, your name, class name & number, instructor's name, and date; appropriate picture may be included.
- \_\_\_\_\_/5 **Table of Contents;** Use tabs or page numbers
- \_\_\_\_\_/25 **News Articles with Bibliography-** (10) Each student shall compile a minimum of 10 articles from News Magazines (Time, Newsweek, Congressional Quarterly, Mother Jones, Sports Illustrated etc.) or newspapers (either hard copy or online). Students should seek articles from a variety of sources (note source and date of each article), and should seek opinions on all sides of the issue. Include at least one non-American source/viewpoint. Also indicate that the articles have been read through highlighting or margin notes. **Include a bibliography page identifying these articles and their source at the beginning of this section.**
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- \_\_\_\_\_/5 **Political Cartoons** (2 or more) Each student will include two political cartoons in relation to your political official from a published source. If no political cartoons dealing with your topic can be found, the student will design their own political cartoons.
- \_\_\_\_\_/10 **Professional Presentation of written material**
- \_\_\_\_\_-/10 points per day (M-F) for late submission
- \_\_\_\_\_/100 Total Points



**Event Attendance Summary Sheet**  
**Psci 201; American National Government**  
**Dr. Crook; Spring 2012**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ / **50 points**

*At least one event must be attendance at a civic/political meeting.*

First Event/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis:

Second Event/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis:

Third Event/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis: