

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGES

ITEMS FOR CONSENT AGENDA

ACTION: **Approve Emeritus Status for Dr. Sara Crook (AP)**

Dr. Sara Crook, a faculty member from Peru State College who will retire in May 2022, has been nominated for emeritus faculty status upon the four required criteria for granting emeritus status, as outlined below:

1. Minimum of 15 years of full time employment is met through 38 years of teaching at Peru State College.
2. She earned the rank of full professor in 2002.
3. Evidence of exemplary performance in areas of teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and service is represented by her continued focus on engaging her students in authentic learning experiences. She served as a co-advisor to the Phi Alpha Theta honor society for students and professor of history and was founder and director of the Peru District History Day Contest. She serves as a Great Plains Fellow with a specialty in the U.S. Congress and Nebraska politics, and she organized the Unicameral Internship. She received the 2005 Barb Lewellen Award in recognition of her outstanding service to the student of Peru State and was also selected as the NSCS Teaching Excellence Award recipient in 2002.
4. Demonstrated leadership and collaboration through service and contribution beyond normal expectations is also reflected through her appointments by the Governor to the Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission and the Nebraska 150 Foundation, as well as serving as President of the Nebraska State Historical Society and Chair of the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission. Her leadership roles at the College include organizing and overseeing the Unicameral Internship and serving as Chair-Elect and Chair of Faculty Senate.

Chancellor Turman supports the nomination and PSC President Evans provided a letter of support for Dr. Crook's nomination. Both recommend that emeritus faculty status be granted.

The System Office and Peru State College recommend approval of the Emeritus Status for Dr. Sara Crook (AP).

ATTACHMENTS:

- PSC Crook Emeritus Status Nomination (PDF)



Emeritus Faculty Award

PERU STATE COLLEGE NOMINATION FORM

I wish to nominate the following individual for consideration for Emeritus Faculty status at Peru State College. I have provided a letter of support that addresses the criteria for the award and attached a copy of the individual's CV. This nomination will be shared with the person nominated.

Nominee Information

Name Dr. Sara Brandes Crook, Ph.D.
Address 6819 County Road R, Nebraska City, NE 68421
Telephone 402-253-6284

Nominee Criteria

- Served Peru State College for at least 15 years
- Held rank of full Professor
- Demonstrated exemplary performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and service throughout his/her tenure at the College
- Demonstrated leadership and collaboration

Primary Nominator Information

Name Dr. Kathi Nehls
Title Associate Professor of History
Address 116 Arbor View Dr. Nebraska City, NE
Telephone 405-922-7102

I affirm that I am not a relative, spouse, or significant other of the nominee.

Kathi Nehls Ph.D.
Signature of Nominator

03/01/2022
Date

Dr. Sara Brandes Crook
6919 R Road; Peru, NE 68421
(402) 253-6284 Cell
scrook@peru.edu

Teaching/Work Experience:

2002-present	Professor of Social Science; Peru State College
1997-2002	Associate Professor of Social Science; Peru State College
1998-2000	Interim Chair for Humanities Division; Peru State College
1993-1997	Assistant Professor of Social Science; Peru State College
1984-1993	Adjunct Faculty: Humanities & Education; PSC
1984-1985	Teaching Assistant: Department of Political Science; UNL
1983-1984	Research Assistant: Department of Political Science, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA
1982-1983	Research Assistant: Department of Political Science; UNL
1980-1981	News/Sports Director: KFTM/KBRU Radio Station, Fort Morgan, CO
1978-1980	Teacher and Coach: Brush CO High School,
1976-1978	Teacher and Coach: Madison Junior High; North Platte, NE

Awards and Honors

- NebraskaLand Foundation “Distinguished Nebraskalander” 2019
- Appointed by the Governor to serve on the Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission in 2008 – 2013; reappointed 2013-2019 and 2020-2026
- Appointed by the Governor to serve on the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission from 2014-2018; Elected Vice Chair 2014-2015; Elected Chair 2015-2018
- Requested to serve on the Nebraska 150 Committee and Executive Subcommittee (Preparations for the 150th Anniversary of Statehood); 2013-2019
- Elected Chair of the Humanities Nebraska Council (now Humanities Nebraska) Board; January 2012- January 2013
- Accepted into the National Parks Service’s “Network to Freedom” program for the portrayal of Barbara Kagey Mayhew Bradway “In the Footsteps of a Female Settler: The Winding Road to Statehood” in 2012 (A Nebraska Humanities Council Speaker Bureau Program) - present approximately 5 programs per year statewide
- Awarded the Nebraska State Historical Society’s “Addison E. Sheldon Award” for “significant achievement in the interpretation of and preservation of Nebraska history” in September 2009
- Awarded a research sabbatical for fall semester of 2005-2006 from Peru State College
- Barb Lewellen Award in recognition of outstanding service to the students of Peru State College; Spring 2005
- Lillian and George Schottenhamel Honors Chair of Humanities 2002-2004
- Nebraska Humanities Council Speakers’ Bureau presenter; selected October 2003
- Nebraska State College System 2002 Rebensdorf Teacher Excellence Award
- Peru State College 2002 Teacher Excellence Award
- Co-recipient of Nebraska Humanities Council (now Humanities Nebraska) Grants for

“Trails and Tales” interdisciplinary course of Nebraska history and literature that included a week-long tour of sites in Nebraska; 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2016; totaling \$71,500

- Co-recipient of Eisenhower Professional Development Grant; 2002; \$21,950
- Elected President of the Board of Trustees for the Nebraska State Historical Society; 2000 and 2001
- Elected Chair-Elect and Chair of Peru State College’s Faculty Senate; 2001-2003
- Rho State Scholarship Award Recipient for Delta Kappa Gamma; 1992
- P.E.O. Scholar Award Recipient; 1991

Membership in Professional Organizations:

- Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation – 2018 - present
- Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Center’s Board of Directors (Nebraska City) – 2012-present
- Nebraska Humanities Council (now Humanities Nebraska) Board of Directors 2007- 2014
- Nebraska State Historical Society - Life membership
- Nebraska Commission for “Help America Vote Act” 2002- 2017
- Nebraska State Preservation Board 2000-2001
- Nebraska State Historical Society’s Educators Advisory Council 1999 -2000
- Delta Kappa Gamma – 1986 – present;
- NEA, NSEA, PSCEA 1993-present
- Charter Board Member of Friends of Arbor Lodge 1999-2007
- Nelson Foundation Board Member 2001-present
- Nebraska City Historical Society 2002-present

PSC Contests/ Events Organized:

- Founder and Director of Peru District History Day Contest; 1985-2017
- Peru State College Committee for 150th Anniversary Celebration; 2012-2018
- Unicameral Internship; January 2003-present
- Nebraska “Trails and Tales Tour and Institute” Co-Director; 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2016
- Director of PSC Quiz Bowl; 1994-1995
- Clifford Harding Social Science Scholarships; 1995-present

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 14, 2022

Dr. Paul Turman, Chancellor
Nebraska State College System
1327 H Street, Suite 200
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Chancellor Turman:

It is with great delight that I write to endorse the nomination of Dr. Sara Crook for emerita status at Peru State College. That delight is tinged only by our sadness that she is retiring.

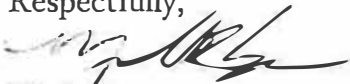
Dr. Crook has taught here for 37 years, teaching political science and history with a focus on Nebraska history, but she has meant much more than that to Peru State. She has been a leader on campus and in the community and has had a profound influence on the character and success of this College.

She began her career here as an adjunct faculty member in 1984, joining the full-time faculty ranks in 1993. She co-advises the Peru State chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the honor society for students and professors of history. She served on the College's Sesquicentennial Committee. A consistently popular instructor, she was the recipient of Peru State's Teaching Excellence Award in 2002.

Beyond our campus, she is actively involved with Humanities Nebraska. She has served as President of the Nebraska State Historical Society and Chair of the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission. She was appointed by Gov. Pete Ricketts to serve on the Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission, and she also served on the Executive Committee for the Nebraska 150 Foundation. She is listed as a Great Plains Fellow at the University of Nebraska Lincoln's Center for Great Plains Studies, with a specialty in the U.S. Congress and Nebraska politics. The list goes on!

Dr. Crook's nomination for emerita status has received support from Vice President for Academic Affairs Tim Borchers as well as from Dean Paul Hinrichs. I enthusiastically recommend that the Nebraska State College System Board of Trustees grant emerita status to Dr. Sara Crook, in recognition of her decades of impressive and meaningful contributions to Peru State College and our students.

Respectfully,



Michael Evans
President

March 1, 2022

Dear Drs. Evans and Borchers,

I am writing to nominate Dr. Sara B. Crook for Emerita status on her retirement after thirty-eight years of outstanding teaching, scholarship, and service to the Peru State College campus, surrounding communities, and the state of Nebraska. No one is more deserving of this honor.

Dr. Crook joined the faculty of Peru State College in 1984 as an adjunct faculty member while completing her doctoral work at the University of Nebraska. After earning her doctorate she was promoted to Assistant Professor of Social Science 1993, Associate Professor of Social Science in 1997, and has been a full Professor since 2002. She has published in major journals in Political Science including the *American Political Science Review*, the *British Journal of Political Science*, and the *American Journal of Political Science*. She has maintained professional memberships in numerous organizations, among which, the Nebraska Historical Society Foundation, Nebraska State Historical Society, Nebraska State Preservation Board, Nebraska State Historical Society's Educators Advisory Council, and the Nebraska City Historical Society.

Dr. Crook has held numerous statewide leadership, board, and trustee positions. She was appointed by the governor multiple times to serve, and continues to serve, on the Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission. In another gubernatorial appointment, Dr. Crook was elected to preside first as vice-chair and later as chair of the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission. She was also elected President of the Board of Trustees for the Nebraska State Historical Society and worked on the Nebraska 150 Committee in preparation for the 150th anniversary of Nebraska statehood. She also continues to serve on the board of directors for the Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Center.

Recognition of Dr. Crook's assiduous work and contributions to Nebraska's civic life and promotion of the humanities have also been numerous and varied. The awards and recognition she has earned over the years include "Distinguished Nebrasklander" by the Nebraskaland Foundation in 2019. She was a recipient of the Addison E. Sheldon Award for "significant achievement in the interpretation and preservation of Nebraska history," and received the National Parks Services "Network to Freedom" Award for her portrayals of Barbara Kagy Mayhew Bradway. She held the Lillian and George Schottenhamel honors Chair of Humanities from 2002-2004 and was honored as the Nebraska Humanities Speaker's Bureau Presenter in 2003. She received the Barb Lewellen Award in recognition of outstanding service to the students of Peru State College and was chosen for both the Nebraska State College System's and Peru State College's Teacher Excellence Award in 2002.

As an outstanding teacher, who taught first by example, Dr. Crook's impact on Peru State College students cannot be overstated. In addition to lectures, students in her classroom engage in real-life projects that have included the placement of state historical markers and researching and writing nominations for potential candidates to the Nebraska Hall of Fame. She took students on annual trips to the Unicameral, where they sat in on legislative sessions, and attended a variety of senate and committee hearings. They didn't just learn about how government works from their textbooks, they watched it in action. Students researched issues of their choosing and wrote to their legislators. They attended city council meetings and engaged in voter registration campaigns. In support of local humanities, freshman student assignments included visits to at least three local museums or attendance at three humanities or civic events both on and off campus.

Dr. Crook was a huge advocate of student travel to places near and far. She has taken students to Washington, D.C., Boston, Philadelphia, across Nebraska, and through the Deep South. She has encouraged students to present their scholarship at state, regional, and national professional

conferences. While there, students also visited local sites of historical import and enjoyed cultural activities. I have traveled with her when, as she drove a van full of students, she regaled them with tales of other trips she has taken, stories from history, and life lessons learned. In their own words, edited here for brevity, are some comments from current students and alumni of the Social Science program:

“I loved having Dr. Crook as a professor because she cared and had high expectations. She not only pushed us to do our best but reached out to make sure we achieved what she saw in us.”

"Dr. Crook truly is a once-in-a-generation educator . . . I owe her a great debt for everything I have learned from her . . . words simply cannot fully express the deep impact she had on my time at Peru State."

“Dr. Crook was one of the best professors I ever had . . . she is the best of the best of the best . . . truly an amazing person.

“Dr. Crook is a dedicated and outstanding educator, historian, and leader, someone whom I attempt to emulate every day in my own life and classroom.”

Dr. Crook has also amassed a long record of service to Peru State College, some of which is pathbreaking. In the Social Science department, Dr. Crook founded and was the first director of the Peru District History Day Contest, a position she held for thirty-three years. Across campus she has served on every standing committee on multiple occasions, numerous ad hoc and search committees for administrators and faculty, and as faculty senate chair. As a faculty advisor she has been the backbone of the Social Science Club and the campus chapter of Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society. Dr. Crook also presided as faculty advisor to the student senate for twelve years. Her service to Peru State Students is also reflected in the words of her colleagues, again edited for brevity:

"The mark of difference-making teacher who makes an impact at Peru State College is the teacher who clearly understands that "teaching" does not start and stop at the threshold of the classroom door but instead extends itself well beyond that threshold each and every day via meaningful connections, life-changing relationships, and exemplary enhancement of the 'lived experience' of the mission of PSC within the student, colleagues, campus, community, and beyond. Dr. Crook is the embodiment of this kind of 'teaching' and represents what is the very best about Peru State College."

“ Dr. Crook was a colleague, mentor, and friend during my time at PSC. She always led by example with professionalism, skills, and determination that few others could rival . . . Dr. Crook is one of the greats, who built the social science program into what it is today.”

“In addition to being role model in the classroom, Dr. Crook is a role model for all faculty members – especially female faculty members. She is an exemplar of professionalism and integrity. Her mentorship of young faculty throughout her tenure at Peru State College has been invaluable in the creation of a cadre of outstanding teachers and outstanding faculty members. Dr. Crook is the embodiment of what a faculty member at a small, liberal arts college should be.”

“Dr. Crook was a wonderful colleague. She was completely reliable, energetic and always interested in new activities to interest Peru's history students. Under her direction, History Day became a flourishing regional event drawing hundreds of high school students to the campus”

Dr. Crook is more than deserving of this honor. I am personally grateful for her guidance and mentoring as I began my academic career. She is deserving of every superlative noted above and has been a treasured asset to the Peru State College campus community, to her colleagues, and above all, to the thousands of students whose lives have been enriched by her teaching, mentoring, and guidance for the last thirty-eight years.

Sincerely,



Kathi Nehls

Associate Professor of History

Dr. Paul Hinrichs
Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences
Peru State College
Peru, NE 68421

February 2022

Dear Dr. Evans and Dr. Borchers,

Dr. Sara Crook has proudly and commendably served the college these past 38 years. I wholeheartedly recommend her for emeritus status as she retires from her Professor of Political Science position at the end of this school year.

Sara has demonstrated collegiality through her mentorship of junior faculty and when she works with others on her various endeavors. When on committees, she is supportive of others' ideas and opinions. She has held governor-appointed positions on the Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission and the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission. She once served as interim Chair of the Division of Humanities for PSC. Her talents bring faculty, staff, students, and alumni closer together, fostering the community that a small college provides.

Dr. Crook has a broad range of research interests. Sara has published several articles in various political science journals. She is an active member of numerous councils and societies; Nebraska Historical Society Foundation, Nebraska Historical Society, Nebraska State Preservation Board, to name a few. She was recently awarded the "Distinguished Nebraskalander" by the Nebraskaland Foundation. Her broad interests give her a keen way to connect to any individual in a room.

Sara has always kept student learning and engagement foremost in her actions throughout her tenure. She is a strong advocate for students and student organizations. For many years she served as faculty advisor to the Student Senate. She helped establish a Unicameral internship position for students in the Social Sciences. Dr. Crook took the spirit of engagement to a new level by taking students to Washington D.C., across the region with her Trails and Tails course, and recently on a civil rights tour of the South. When Sara announced her retirement, every member of her department expressed gratitude for the guidance that she had provided during their time at the college. Sara will be missed. As an emeriti faculty member, Sara will continue to support and actively contribute toward the mission and purposes of Peru State College. I strongly support her nomination for emeriti status.

Sincerely,



Paul Hinrichs