



# Reynolds High School



*Building Relationships for Academic Success*

## **Course Title: Senior Inquiry**

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## **Course Objective**

Senior Inquiry is a dual-credit, year-long program offered in partnership with Portland State University and Reynolds School District. Its purpose is to deliver interdisciplinary college-level courses on site at the high school, preparing students for the unique demands and rewards of college coursework. Senior Inquiry is team-taught by high school and university faculty. Its courses are developed under the same award-winning general education guidelines as PSU's University Studies department and Freshman Inquiry program. For more information, go to the following web site: [www.pdx.edu/unst/senior-inquiry-high-school-program](http://www.pdx.edu/unst/senior-inquiry-high-school-program) or view the latest version of our [Senior Inquiry Handbook](#).

## **Theme**

A thematic approach is used in Senior Inquiry blending language arts, government, economics, and sociology to provide you a more robust experience akin to university-level work. Our theme for this year: **Power and**

## **Imagination**

"Once the imagination is unshackled, liberation is limitless." – Walidah Imarisha

"Imagination is more important than knowledge." —Albert Einstein

In this class, we will investigate the role of power and imagination in our everyday lives. What is power and how does it manifest in our personal lives and in our local and global communities? What is the nature of the imagination and what role does it play in the creation of personal and social power? Over the course of this academic year we will scrutinize instances of domination, resistance, and empowerment as represented in literature, the arts, social sciences, and technology. We will consider how these disciplines both form and are, in turn, shaped by public perception. We will analyze how power networks—political, economic, cultural—permeate our lives and shape our sense of individual and group identity. How are social roles, hierarchy, and authority communicated through signs, images, myths, and stories? Does the imagination help shape the ideals, values, and power relationships within society? Special attention will be paid to the role of media and technology in constructing and manipulating common images, defining ideas of the self, and reclaiming misrepresented identities.

To consider the questions raised in the previous paragraph, we will break down the year into four quarters and read a novel/text for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters and participate in literature circles for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters. Each novel/text will serve as an anchor from which we will explore Power and Imagination and analyze the ideas/themes raised in each novel/text through the lenses of language, government, economics, and sociology. An inquiry-based curriculum is fluid and therefore subject to change depending on where our learning takes us; we want to be open to exploring topics/content that pique you and your classmates' interest. Hence, it is with intent and purpose that a detailed assignment list is not provided in this syllabus.

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Quarter 1: <i>A Place to Stand</i></b><br>by Jimmy Santiago Baca | <b>Quarter 2: Literature Circles</b> |
| <b>Quarter 3: <i>Antigone</i></b><br>by Sophocles                   | <b>Quarter 4: Literature Circles</b> |

In addition to the novels and literature circles, students will also work with various texts/readings/videos that supplement each quarter; some of these are listed below:

- *Pedagogy of the Oppressed—Chapter 2 (banking model v. problem-posing model)*
- *Allegory of the Cave*
- *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas*
- *Selected poems*
- *The Truth About Stories*
- *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution*; Center for Civic Education
- *The Sum of Us*
- *Runaway Inequality*
- *My-Grown-Up-Life Project*
- *Additional texts depending on student feedback*

### **ePortfolio and undergraduate research experience**

Students engage in a year-long process around ePortfolios and an original research project, both considered high impact practices by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. In their ePortfolio students engage in reflection about the connections between their lived experience, their coursework and their learning outside of class. ePortfolios help with building and showcasing academic identity and articulation of skill mastery.

Their research projects are scaffolded over the course of the year with fundamentals and gathering sources in the fall, collecting data in the winter and analysis in the spring. Students also reflect and build a component of their ePortfolio around their research projects.

### **Portland State University Studies Goals:**

The ePortfolio will be set up to provide evidence of engagement with the following goals:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Inquiry &amp; Critical Thinking</b><br>Students will learn various modes of inquiry through interdisciplinary curricula--problem-posing, investigating, conceptualizing--in order to become active, self-motivated, and empowered learners. | <b>Communication</b><br>Students will enhance their capacity to communicate in various ways---writing, graphics, numeracy, and other visual and oral means---to collaborate effectively with others in group work, and to be competent in appropriate communication technologies. |
| <b>Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice</b><br>Students will explore and analyze identity, power relationships, and social justice in historical contexts and contemporary settings from multiple perspectives.                               | <b>Ethics, Agency and Community</b><br>Students will examine values, theories and practices that inform their actions, and reflect on how personal choices and group decisions impact local and global communities.   |

## Differentiation

The differentiation strategies used in this course are based on evidence received through multiple forms of pre, ongoing, and formative assessments such as:

- \*Flexible grouping
- \*Independent Projects/Research
- \*Student-Centered Curriculum
- \*Peer Mentoring
- \*Structured Academic Controversy (civic dialogue)
- \*Tiered Assignments
- \*Open-ended Tasks
- \*Pre-instruction Assessment
- \*Questioning Techniques
- \*Literature Circles
- \*Students as teachers/producers
- \*Student Self-Assessment/Rubrics

## Guiding Principles for This Class

Raider POWER + 3 Guiding Principles for the Space:

1. Come to class: On-time and on-task
2. Do your work: Participation, engagement in the space, bring your best and leave the rest.
3. Be cool: Respect the space, yourself in the space, and the others in our learning community.  
We must build this together in a way that supports and lifts each other up.

## Grading Policy

The grading scale for this class is based on the proficiency model. The grading breakdown and scale is:

|                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4=Exceptional                     | 3.5-4.0=A                     |
| 3=Meets Standard                  | 3.0-3.49=B                    |
| 2=Not Yet Standard                | 2.0-2.99=C                    |
| 1=Lacks Evidence of Understanding | *Minimum Passing Grade is a C |

## Attendance and Lateness

Perfect attendance is always the goal. We define perfect attendance as being on time and fully engaged during the entire class session. If you are late, please enter quietly, check the agenda, and acclimate yourself to the classroom. We will record your tardiness.

## Electronic Devices

There are 168 hours in each week; that's about 10,080 minutes. We are together for roughly 500 of those minutes; that's about 5% of the total number of minutes per week. Trust us, we think technology and cell phones are AWESOME, but we will act as if they don't exist during the little more than 8 hours that we spend together each week. You are focusing on YOU and YOUR CRITICAL INQUIRY during this time. It's only about 5% of your week. That call, text, tweet, snapchat, or notification? Save it for the other 95% of your life. To put it plainly, cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted in class without prior arrangements. If you are expecting crucial information during class time, then please let us know **BEFORE** class begins so we can create a non-disruptive plan for you to receive it.

## **Bathroom and Hall Passes**

\*If you must use the bathroom or travel through the halls you need your student planner which will act as your hall pass. Please make sure it is not during the first and last 10 minutes of class and not during a time when someone else is speaking.

\*Please keep your bathroom time to under 5 minutes; only one student at a time to the bathroom.

## **Late Work**

You are expected to complete work in a timely manner, in line with the exit criteria, and to turn that work in. Submitting work when it is due is the only way to get timely feedback.

Based on what we have learned over the last two years, we offer the following late policy:

**“On time” means on the due date:** Only work turned in on time is eligible for full credit; if you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from turning in your assignment by the due date, then you need to communicate that with your instructors.

**“Late Work” means turned in a week (7 days) after the due date:** Late work maximum grade is a C and there will be no feedback.

**No work is accepted after two weeks.**

\*Obviously if there are emergencies, we will work with you **if you communicate with us.**

**Assignments must be completed by quarter’s end to receive credit.**

## **Digital Classroom/Technology**

You will have access to a Dell laptop/tablet during both class periods---the computer lab has come to us! Hence, we will do a lot of our work using various Web 2.0 tools. Additionally, Canvas will be used as a platform to submit work, get assignments, review key ideas, collaborate, access library resources, and communicate with each other (this platform is run through PSU). This allows for deeper inquiry into the material we will study which will be used to create your electronic portfolios. You will set up and manage your own ePortfolio using PebblePad. **For your teachers to have access to the assignments you turn in, we ask that you use your PSU email google drive to construct documents, slideshows, etc.**

## **Platforms and platform literacy**

We live in a digital age and that means a lack of fluency with technology can act as a barrier. To that end one of the goals in this class is to help you develop platform literacy skills (the ability to move between different digital technologies).

## **Homework**

You will not get busy work in class or to take home. Any work done at home will be a continuation of work begun in class. You will have the tools that you need to be successful with any work done at home. You are responsible for completing all assignments that are given to you in class.

Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_