

Frequently Asked Questions

from Parents of Whitman Seniors

Q: When is graduation?

A: Graduation will take place on Sunday, May 24th, 2009, at 11:00 am. We recommend that parents and families make hotel reservations early. Graduation is held outside of the Memorial Building facing Boyer Avenue. The college will put up bleachers for seating but it is wise to bring your own blankets, folding chairs, stadium cushions or whatever else you need to sit comfortably for three hours. Attendees generally start arriving between 9:30 and 10:00 am for seating. Lunch will be provided immediately following the ceremony.

Q: How long are the Commencement and Baccalaureate Ceremonies at Whitman?

A: Commencement generally lasts about 2 to 2.5 hours. Baccalaureate is usually about an hour.

Q: Who is speaking at Commencement this year?

A: Choosing the Commencement speaker is a fairly long process. We begin with a list of possibilities generated by the faculty and a student committee, which is then approved by the Board of Trustees. We then contact each nominee to check on their availability. We will have a speaker chosen by early spring.

Q: When will we have a list of graduation activities?

A: Continue to check <http://www.whitman.edu/commencement/> for updates on graduation activities. The Commencement ceremony takes place at 11:00 am in front of the Memorial Building (the rain location is Cordiner Hall). Various groups on campus organize activities and these generally start the Friday evening before Commencement.

Q: Will we receive a packet of graduation information?

A: There will be a website (see above) on graduation information for parents. In addition, we will hold a general meeting for all seniors in the spring to provide the necessary information regarding Commencement. The Registrar's office checks senior student records regularly to ensure seniors are on schedule to graduate. Students are also encouraged to visit the Registrar's office with any questions they may have regarding their record and credits.

Q: What happens if it rains the day of Commencement?

A: Only in extreme weather conditions will Commencement be moved inside. Each senior will be cleared by the Registrar to receive two rain tickets for Cordiner Hall upon completion of the senior class survey. Rain tickets will be available from Reid Campus Center mailboxes following Baccalaureate. In the unlikely event of an indoor ceremony Commencement will start at noon instead of 11:00 a.m. Overflow seating will be available in the Reid Campus Center, Maxey Auditorium, and Kimball Auditorium. In all

conditions, the ceremony will be webcast in the Reid Campus Center Ballroom and Kimball Auditorium for those who prefer to be inside.

Q: How do students get their caps and gowns?

A: Caps and gowns may be borrowed from the college free of charge. They are available in the basement of Cordiner Hall. Hours will be posted in the spring semester. Students should obtain their cap and gown early to avoid a "last minute" rush. They should be returned to the robe room in Cordiner Hall immediately following the ceremony. The robe room will also be open on Monday and Tuesday following commencement from 10:00 a.m. to noon. A \$75 replacement fee will be charged to the student's account if the cap and gown are not returned by 12:00 noon, Tuesday following Commencement. After Tuesday, caps and gowns may be returned to Judy in the Business Office (Memorial 217) from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Q: I tried to make reservations for graduation weekend but was told I couldn't do so until January 1st. Is there any way that I can get around this?

A: Some hotels in Walla Walla do make you wait until January 1st to make your reservations. There is a link to contact information for local accommodations on the parent's webpage <http://www.whitman.edu/parents> under "Visiting Whitman". We also recommend you confirm your reservations a few weeks in advance.

Q: How can we get graduation announcements?

A: For students who wish to purchase graduation announcements, they can do so from Royal T Inc. either online at www.royaltpapers.com or from a representative who will visit campus second semester. There are several packages available, ranging from \$63.90 for the smallest to \$106.90 for the largest. Whitman has worked with this company in the past and has always been pleased with their products.

Q: What is Whitman's graduation rate?

A: For the past several years Whitman has had a graduation rate of about 87% of entering students continuing to graduation within five years.

Q: How many students do you expect to graduate this year?

A: About three hundred and fifty.

Q: What do students need to know about the GREs?

A: The Career Center has information for students including prep books and study information. Some subject GRE exams are offered on campus; all GREs are offered in major cities, and they can usually be scheduled during school breaks. You can look online at the Career Center's website (http://www.whitman.edu/career_center/) or the GRE website for further information (<http://www.gre.org>). Students taking the GREs, MCATs, or LSATs should remember to have their results sent to Whitman as well as to graduate schools. Whitman will keep these results for as long as the individual may have need of them.

Q: How do seniors obtain transcripts once they leave Whitman?

A: The Registrar's office no longer charges a fee to process transcripts for alumni and students. Students can request them at any time but their signature is required. Requests must be made by fax or mail. Requests are processed as quickly as possible, usually within 24-48 hours. You can reach the Registrar's office at (509) 527-5983. The fax number is (509) 522-4431.

Q: What can the Career Center do for senior students?

A: Seniors are encouraged to come in and speak to one of the Career Center's full-time consultants. They can help with a variety of questions regarding graduate school applications, career planning, and resumes. In addition, the Career Center hosts workshops, a graduate school fair, and an etiquette dinner to help students plan and prepare for their careers. There is also a database of over 2,000 alumni who have volunteered to help current students by providing career advice, contacts, or even internships and job-shadowing opportunities. In addition, we want students to know that these services will still be available to them after graduation and for the rest of their lives. The Career Center is happy to help Whitman alumni whenever they may need advice on careers. They can be reached at (509) 527-5183.

Q: What does the Alumni Association do for graduates?

A: The Alumni Office offers a number of services both on and off campus. The basic goals of the Alumni Office are to promote Whitman College, provide continuing educational opportunities for alumni, recruit volunteers for the College, offer opportunities for alumni to connect with one another, and act as a liaison between alumni and the College. For more information, please visit <http://www.whitman.edu/alumni/>. To contact the Alumni Office by phone, call 1-800-835-9448 ext. 1.

Q: What does the Senior Class Committee do?

A: The goal of the class committees is to promote class unity. Some specific projects of the Senior Class Committee include the Senior T-shirts, class banner and the countdown to graduation parties. The Senior Class Committee also helps with alumni events and coordinated graduation announcement sales.

Q: What are the senior countdown parties about?

A: Each year, we schedule parties for students to get together and celebrate. They take place 200, 100, 75, 50, and 25 days before graduation. We try to plan a mixture of events that cater to a diverse class; for example, our events do not center around alcohol so that students who are under 21 can attend. In years past we have also participated in a number of volunteer service activities.

Q: What does the Senior Fund Committee do?

A: The Senior Fund Committee provides the senior class an opportunity to begin their own tradition of giving. The committee is lead by the Senior Fund Chairperson who is in charge of organizing the group and spearheading the campaign. Projects have included scholarships, internships, books for the library, funding for the KWCW radio station among others. Since 2008 the Senior Fund has worked to raise unrestricted funds for the College.