

# The Whitman Way

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## Welcome to Whitman

We are delighted that you will be joining the Whitman community. We've dedicated this section of the Student Handbook to introduce you to the campus culture. We hope to capture what makes Whitman unique: its students who care about each other as well as local and global issues. The college presents a variety of academic and social programs to introduce students and others in the community to new voices and experiences. We are sure that you will find a passion to pursue as you explore the opportunities available to you at Whitman. We look forward to welcoming you to our vibrant campus community. Although we don't expect you to memorize it, we would like to share our Mission Statement with you because it guides what we do.

*Whitman College is committed to providing an excellent, well-rounded liberal arts and sciences undergraduate education. It is an independent, nonsectarian, and residential college. Whitman offers an ideal setting for rigorous learning and scholarship, which encourages creativity, character, and responsibility.*

*Through the study of humanities, arts, and social and natural sciences, Whitman's students develop capacities to analyze, interpret, criticize, communicate, and engage. A concentration on basic disciplines, in combination with a supportive residential life program that encourages personal and social development, is intended to foster intellectual vitality, confidence, leadership, and the flexibility to succeed in a changing technological, multicultural world.*





## Academic Excellence

Whitman College is proud of its reputation of being intellectually challenging. Small, interactive classes allow you to learn by engaging in discussion with your peers and professors. You will find that your classmates become your friends, and your professors become your mentors. During your time at Whitman, you likely will have opportunities to conduct research with a professor, present your work at professional meetings and conferences, or co-author an article for an academic journal. We also will invite you to give a presentation to your peers and professors at the annual Whitman Undergraduate Conference, which is held on campus each April. Although we expect a great deal from our students, we also have well-established support systems to help all Whitman students succeed. Whitman was the first college to require students to complete an oral defense of their senior assessment — a tradition that continues today. We encourage you to take advantage of the variety of learning opportunities available to Whitman students.

## Learning through Diversity

Whitman defines diversity broadly, because we believe that we learn best by having the opportunity to reflect upon ideas that challenge our understanding of the world around us. The diversity of the Whitman mosaic enriches each student's learning experience, both in and out of the classroom.

*Diversity is fundamentally important to the character and mission of Whitman College. Diversity enriches our community and enhances intellectual and personal growth. We seek to provide a challenging liberal arts experience for our students*

*that prepares them for citizenship in the global community. By sustaining a diverse community, we strive to ensure that all individuals are valued and respected, and that intellectual and personal growth are enriched because of our differences.*

Not only is Whitman’s statement on diversity a public, written document, but it also guides our actions in providing academic and cocurricular activities. The faculty voted to broaden the general studies distribution areas by adding the Cultural Pluralism requirement whereby students choose two classes that present non-Western or marginalized voice. There are many interesting ways to fulfill your Cultural Pluralism distribution. For example, you can study the archeology of East Asia, investigate the role of women in antiquity, explore African American or Latin American history, or take Japanese. You can enhance your formal education by participating in discussions about diversity, joining a club, becoming involved with the Intercultural Center, or attending events at the Glover Alston Center. You might also decide that, like many other Whitman students, you would like to learn about other cultures by living and studying in another part of the world before graduating. At each turn in your college journey, we hope that you will seek out opportunities to broaden your own views, ideas, and experiences.

The local area and its rich history and culture enhance Whitman’s unique character. This region was originally home to the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla tribes, which have since formed the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. The Tamástslikt Cultural Institute, an interpretive center, is located nearby just east of Pendleton, Ore. Our area was named by the Walla Walla tribe. The name is well suited to the city since “Walla Walla” means “many waters.” The Snake and



Columbia rivers and many other streams wind through the valley and border Walla Walla County, including Mill Creek and the Walla Walla River.

Today Walla Walla is a city of just a little more than 31,000. The Walla Walla area is best known for its winter wheat, sweet onions, peas, asparagus, and wine grapes. Many Whitman students become so attached to the city, that they opt to work here in the summer, stay after graduation, or settle here years later. Whitman faculty and staff are residents of Walla Walla and, since you have decided to call Walla Walla home for a few years, we encourage you to explore ways to get involved and meet people in the community.

## Things Whitties Do to Learn More about Themselves and Others

- Take advantage of opportunities to celebrate the diversity and talent of our campus community.
- Attend the Coalition against Homophobia ever-popular Drag Fest.
- Coordinate Whitstock (an all-day music festival) in the fall and the Imagine Celebration (a celebration of diversity) in the spring.
- Attend the annual International Banquet and Hui Aloha's Lu'au, which brings students, faculty, and staff together to enjoy delicious cuisine and learn about traditions.
- Attend Glover Alston Center events such as the Martin Luther King reception after the Walk for Peace.
- Go home with your roommate over Thanksgiving or Spring breaks.
- Visit each interest house over the course of the year.
- Join a pre-existing club or start a new one; use the Glover Alston Center as a meeting locale.
- Participate in fraternity and sorority rush events.
- Drop in on an Intercultural Center Café.
- Participate in Nourish to talk about spirituality or religion on campus with other students.
- Take the Critical and Alternative Voices general studies course that follows Encounters.
- Obtain summer internships at organizations such as Casa Latina, Asia Foundation, Karuk Tribe of CA, Dept. of Natural Resources/Fisheries, Civil Liberties Defense Center, and Refugee & Immigrant Health Promotion Program.

## Engaging Community

In college you gain independence, but by no means are you alone. In fact, when you arrive at Whitman you become part of a supportive community that cares about the well-being of each individual. As a member of a residential campus, you will have an opportunity to live, learn, work, and play with your friends and colleagues. You will know you are part of the Whitman community when you discuss the



meaning of life with a section mate until 2 a.m., when you return to the laundry room to find that you've been "laundry fairy-ed" (someone folded your dry clothes when he put his into the dryer), or when your professor stops to chat with you on Ankeny Field. You will quickly discover that you will take away from Whitman what you put into it. The relationships you build here will bolster you through your time at Whitman and beyond. Our shared experiences create a sense of community and connection. The strength of this connection is demonstrated when students meet at a professor's home in the spring for an Encounters class potluck, when seniors gather with their first-year section mates for a section reunion before graduation, and when alumni return not only for their five-year reunion, but also for their 50th.

It is up to you to create your own Whitman experience; here are a few ways students have contributed to the campus culture. The Interest House Community sponsors an annual block party with activities and music. The Stevens Gallery arranges shows featuring art by students, staff, and faculty. Whitman's a cappella groups — the T-tones, Schwa, and the Sirens of Swank perform regularly at campus events. Students pack the house when the college's Improv group, Varsity Nordic, puts on a show, and each spring Whitman students and faculty help put together the annual Renaissance Faire. Of course, your section mates and returning students also are likely to recruit you to participate on an intramural team or in the annual Whitman Choral Contest, which has been a tradition here for more than 80 years. You can learn how to get involved in most campus activities by attending the Student Activities Fair. We hope you'll join us for these celebrations and contribute your own enthusiasm and ideas.

## Globally Concerned

We hope that you will not only become an active participant of the Whitman and Walla Walla communities, but that you also will recognize your role as a global citizen. The choices you make can and do impact the environment and the lives of people around the world. In addition to engaging in studies that focus on global issues, you can learn more about life around the world by participating in events sponsored by the Global Awareness House, by becoming involved with the Intercultural Center, and by attending the lectures of Global Studies professors.

Whitman students care about social and environmental responsibility, so they make lifestyle choices that support their beliefs, and they participate in organizations and events that work toward social justice, human and animal rights, and environmental improvement. Approximately half of Whitman students take the Green Pledge and wear a green ribbon at graduation to indicate their commitment to consider the social and environmental impact of any job they pursue. Whitman's liberal arts education provides you with the skills to think critically to solve global problems in our interconnected world. As you explore the world beyond Whitman, not only will you develop an appreciation for the larger community, but also you will start to develop connections of your own. You can apply your interests, skills, and knowledge to projects that will both enhance your learning and help solve problems in the community.

## Things Whitties Do to Learn More about the World beyond Whitman

- Join the Peace Corps.
- Explore the option to spend a semester or year abroad at the office for off-campus studies.
- Volunteer to fight AIDS in South Africa or at a temporary medical clinic in Ecuador.
- Promote renewable wind energy in the Northwest.
- Research and teach around the world on Fulbright fellowships.
- Organize a conference on clean water technology in rural India.
- Create opportunities for social interaction for the elderly.
- Host a youth empowerment workshop in Sierra Leone.
- Launch a cooperative grocery store.
- Find local volunteer and service opportunities.
- Build Habitat for Humanity homes.
- Volunteer in the Walla Walla community by mentoring local youth.
- Attend Grandmothers' Roundtable discussions.
- Attend the annual Global Studies Symposium.
- Invite a professor from global studies to have dinner or dessert with your section.
- Visit the language lab in Olin.
- Watch the evening news from another country in Penrose Library.
- Apply to live in the global studies house.

- Sign up for an O'Donnell Visiting Professor's workshop or seminar.
- Participate in an alternative spring break trip to work on disaster relief in New Orleans, in Seattle with the hungry/homeless, or in Portland with sustainable building.
- Obtain summer internships at organizations such as Earthjustice, Global Volunteer Network/Kenya, World Affairs Council, U.S. Dept. of State/Japan and World Affairs Council.



## Environmental Principles

Recognizing the impact Whitman College has on the environment and the leadership role Whitman College plays as an institution of higher learning, the college affirms the following environmental principles and standards, which shall be consulted to explore the practical ways Whitman College can promote an environmentally conscious campus.

- To reduce nonrecyclable materials used; to reuse whatever materials may be reused, and to utilize recycled materials whenever possible.
- To consider the eco-friendliest science and technology available to decrease our environmental impact.
- To continue to build an energy-efficient campus in the 21st century.
- To patronize companies that are active in their defense of the environment from further degradation.



- To encourage individuals' environmental accountability through programs of environmental education.
- To consider environmentally friendly options when they exist and are practical in decisions regarding developmental projects.
- To further the use of reused materials, recyclable materials, and the Internet in campus communications.
- To encourage and request food service to make environmentally friendly decisions in purchasing food and supplies, reducing waste, and reusing materials.
- To maintain campus grounds through the employment of bio-friendly substances and services.
- To strive to improve upon current practices so we may harmonize the trends of the industrial world with the natural environment.

## Things Whitties Do to Be Socially and Environmentally Responsible

- Stay within their semester paper and printing credit.
- Do full loads of laundry and use an environmentally friendly detergent.
- Keep a bin for recyclables next to the garbage can.
- Take the five-minute shower challenge.
- Study in the library in the evenings because the lights are on there anyway.
- Explore living in environmentally themed housing such as the Outhouse or Tamarac.
- Use USB keys and Net Files rather than CDs.
- Use the compost bins at the Organic Garden.
- Read e-reserves or CLEo articles online.
- Three-hole-punch paper that's been used on one side and put it in a three-ring binder to use as notebook paper or use the Campus Greens' notebooks.
- Use "Track Changes" instead of printing drafts (and print drafts on paper that's been used on one side when we truly need to print).
- Turn out the lights and turn off the music when you leave your rooms.
- Celebrate Earth Day on Ankeny Field.
- Use nondisposable cups, plates, and silverware when eating in the Reid Campus Center or in the dining halls.
- Volunteer in the Organic Garden and participate in stream restoration projects.
- Join or create clubs that promote environmentalism and/or social justice (such as the Campus Greens, the Conservation and Recycling Committee, the Paper Campaign, Action for Animals, Action Against Hate, Direct Action, and the Fair Trade Club).
- Shop at thrift stores, a co-op, or other local businesses.
- Explore the Farmers' Market.
- Provide environmental education and outdoor activities for at-risk youth.
- Follow Leave No Trace principles while exploring the wilderness.
- Take only what you need, reuse what you have, and recycle when you're done.



