Whitman College prides itself on offering an educational experience that is highly responsive to individual student needs, inclinations, and ambitions. But the conditions of the COVID-19 global pandemic require a shift in our priorities. Our policies — and our actions — must be governed by a public health perspective, focused on the well-being and safety of the community as a whole (students, faculty and staff) rather than on individual preference.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that we all share in the responsibility for keeping our community safe. When we speak of “community,” we refer to the Whitman community at large and we also realize that we are a part of the broader community in the Walla Walla Valley. Our actions or inactions do not only therefore affect us at Whitman, but other members of the community who call Walla Walla home. The intention is to minimize transmission, community spread and the possibility of conditions where Whitman would no longer be able to continue with its educational mission. We also want to avoid overwhelming the health care system in Walla Walla, which has a single hospital. This is why we believe a shared set of commitments to community well-being is imperative. We are calling it a “community pledge” because we want to emphasize a shared responsibility and commitment of ALL members of the Whitman community: faculty, staff and students, no matter where they currently live.

If we are to meet our goal of providing an educational experience for as many students as possible as safely as possible, we will all be required to adjust how we conduct ourselves in community. Whether online or in very limited in-person conditions, in order to reduce the risk to those in close proximity to us and the surrounding communities, students, staff and faculty must commit to following federal, state, and local public health guidelines as well as Whitman College’s expectations for conduct both on and off campus as outlined in this community pledge. Many of you are in states other than Washington and we expect you to follow the guidelines of the state or country you are in. The shared responsibility of community wellbeing applies wherever you may be residing. That is our expectation.

Please read the following agreement carefully. By signing this document, you are agreeing to abide by the terms of this community pledge.

Whitman’s plans for the upcoming academic year are subject to change. The college reserves the right to update its plans and the terms of this community pledge to reflect such changes, which may be informed by public health guidance and governmental regulation. We encourage students to closely follow information distributed by the college throughout the year. Our instruction in the fall will be primarily remote and therefore we expect that our students will not be on campus in residential settings, except for a small number who have been granted special permission because of unique circumstances.
As a Whitman student, staff or faculty member, regardless of location or plans to be on campus, I will:

- Complete online training and electronically sign this pledge by August 23, 2020 (link will be sent August 20, 2020).
- Follow federal, state, and local guidelines regarding health and safety for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic.

If I am travelling to Walla Walla from outside the county or my home in an adjacent county, I will:

- Monitor my health for COVID-related symptoms prior to arrival.
- Delay plans to arrive at Whitman if I am feeling ill or have signs of illness. I will wait until fully recovered before traveling to campus.
- Follow the instructions of college personnel concerning any required quarantine.

As a student planning to spend any time on campus, whether in residence or not, I will:

- Make every effort to comply with the immunization requirements and recommendations set by the State of Washington and the college.

As a student, faculty or staff member, if I plan to be on campus and access any Whitman building during the course of the semester, I will:

- Wear face covering (masks) in all college facilities and while on college grounds (other than in my private work space or in my residence hall room).
- Physically distance, maintaining at least six feet of separation between myself and others at all times.
- Be tested for the virus that causes COVID-19 during the college's campus-wide testing happening August 19 through August 22, or as soon as possible thereafter following my arrival in Walla Walla, and before entering any campus buildings other than my campus residence. This applies even if I have been on campus all summer.
- Participate in periodic testing and monitoring as required by the college.
- Monitor my health and complete a daily wellness check as directed by the college, and be prepared to show evidence of daily completion whenever asked by a college official.
- Install Everbridge, the college's app for contact tracing, on my smartphone per the college's instructions. If I do not have a compatible device or am unwilling to use my personal smartphone for contact tracing, I will request paper logs from my resident director (for students in residence) or the COVID captain for the building where I work, and turn in a paper record of my close contacts each week while I am on campus.
- For students, contact the Welty Health Center immediately to seek an evaluation or arrange for testing when I experience symptoms that suggest COVID-19. For faculty and staff, follow the testing and quarantine guidance of human resources and your supervisor.
- Comply with any request to quarantine or isolate made by the Welty Health Center or local public health officials, and be available daily for a clinician to check on my health status via secure email, phone, or both.
- As needed, cooperate with contact tracing inquiries within 24 hours by, among other things, responding to texts and calls from contact tracers and answering all questions about my contacts honestly and completely.
- In your off-campus home, follow Washington state guidelines regarding in-person gatherings for all individuals who do not share your residence (including out of town guests, family members, romantic partners, etc.). Students living on campus should not have any guests in their residence hall.
- In all situations, including as a member or leader of a student organization, comply with the federal, state, and local guidelines regarding in-person gatherings.
- Adhere to other health and safety practices recommended or required by the college, such as frequent hand-washing.
- In accordance with Washington State’s Safe Start Plan, limit non-essential travel outside of the county whenever possible while we are in Phase II (later phases may allow fewer restrictions):
  - Seek approval for all college-sponsored travel outside of Walla Walla County with one’s respective cabinet officer (for employees) or the Dean of Students (for students).
  - Strictly limit personal travel for leisure or recreation (for example, visiting friends/family, sightseeing, short trips to the Tri-Cities, Seattle, Portland) beyond Whitman College.
  - Consult with the Welty Health Center (for students) or Human Resources (for employees) about possible quarantine or testing requirements before coming back to campus following travel.
  - Seek reasonable accommodations from the Access and Disability Support Services (for students) or Human Resources (for employees) if I am unable to follow the college’s expectations. If my requested accommodation(s) cannot be approved, I will follow the college’s expectations or I will continue to study or work remotely.

Accountability and Responsibility

I understand that to protect the community and myself, I must abide by the rules reflected in this community pledge, as they may be modified by the college from time to time. I understand that major violations of the community pledge, including those related to testing, quarantining, isolating, hosting unpermitted visitors in residences and hosting prohibited in-person gatherings may result in disciplinary action. In addition, I understand that repeated infractions related to wearing face coverings or physically distancing also may result in further disciplinary action. Violations of the community pledge will be adjudicated through Whitman College’s established disciplinary processes, as prescribed by the student handbook, staff handbook, and faculty code.

By signing this community pledge, I agree to abide by these rules and regulations, wherever I may be geographically. I also acknowledge that Whitman College alone cannot eliminate the risk of illness during a global pandemic, and that this must be a community effort.

Adapted from Princeton University