Update from the President

Dear members of the Whitman Community,

Last weekend I sent a message expressing my outrage and deep sense of sadness over the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. You can read that message here.

Following that message, I put together a special task force, chaired by Thomas Witherspoon, our Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, that will continue and amplify our work to make Whitman an even more inclusive and equitable community, where every member can share a sense of belonging. If you have ideas you would like to share with Thomas and the group, you can email Thomas at withertl@whitman.edu.

We will continue to share our plans for the assembly of the task force, plans for additional action steps as well as outcomes as we move this important work forward.

Kathy Murray

Coronavirus Update: Planning for an In-Person Fall Semester

The coronavirus task force is planning for an in-person fall semester in a manner that is safe for students, faculty and staff. To achieve this, there are some of the policies, procedures, practices and procurement being worked on to address a number of critical safety issues:

- Testing schedule: should be implemented on fall classrooms and be fast and easily accessible. All spaces on campus will be being evaluated as feasible locations to accommodate these needs, as are creative and flexible scheduling solutions. Technology is also being considered to extend in-person learning to online spaces as needed given physical constraints.
- Multidisciplinary services: will be evaluated and refined to accommodate safety and social distancing.
- Face coverings: will have two forms of reduced density/occupancy, We are working on multiple approaches to temperature checks. C Dormitories will be required indoors of all students, faculty and staff while they are in residence. They may be removed if an individual is in a private office/lab or well-isolated individual workspace, or in their dorm room in the case of students. Outdoors, masks will be required when in areas where social distancing is not possible (hallways, etc.).

Travel options: are being investigated. We hope to be able to test all members of the community when we return to campus. We are currently evaluating potential partners to help us manage this initial testing process, as well as testing of symptomatic members of the Whitman community.

Symptom checking: will be required daily, likely through self-reporting. We are working on multiple approaches to temperature checks. Contact tracing will be managed through a smartphone app. We are working through technical, privacy, and security issues and plan to have a selection in the next week or so.

Testing schedule: will likely be managed in part through a smartphone app. There will be two forms of reduced density/occupancy, we are working on multiple approaches.

Asymptomatic testing will be required daily, likely through self-reporting. We are working on multiple approaches to temperature checks. Contact tracing will be managed through a smartphone app. We are working through technical, privacy, and security issues and plan to have a selection in the next week or so.

Coronavirus News

The Whitman College Budget Overview Webinar will be held on Thursday, June 11 at 4 p.m. The webinar will include an introduction to the college budget for faculty and staff, as well as an update from our Chief Financial Officer Peter Harvey.

Announcements

Whitman Coronavirus Stories Quick Response Form

Would you like to contribute to Whitman’s Coronavirus Archive, but are short on time? Fill out the quick response form! You can submit as much or as little as you wish. All questions are optional, so you can pick and choose which prompts to respond to.

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Parting Shot

A piece from Texas Franco’s senior thesis project is among those featured in “Intertext,” a virtual exhibit hosted by the Sheehan Gallery for Whitman’s 15 inaugural relief efforts.

“Whitman Today” is produced by the Office of Communications and is emailed weekly to Whitman College staff, faculty and students. Articles are also posted in Pacific Union Times. Previous newsletters can be found on the Whitman Today archive website.

To submit items, email whitmantoday@whitman.edu. The deadline for submissions is 12 p.m. Friday for the following week’s newsletter.