

# Whitman College

Whitman students work theoretically and across disciplines, but they also get to put their knowledge to use in the field. It's a challenging and rewarding combination that blurs the lines between the classroom and the workplace, as well as between different areas of study.

Nearly all our students cite their close working relationships with professors as paramount to their success at Whitman. Our faculty members are passionate teacher-scholars known for their research and writing.

In addition to maintaining a faculty of the highest caliber, Whitman College is steadfastly committed to:

- fostering the intellectual depth and the breadth of knowledge essential for leadership;
- supporting mastery of critical thinking, writing, speaking, presentation and performance skills;
- integrating technology across the liberal arts curriculum;
- promoting a strong faculty-student collaborative research program;
- promoting a rich appreciation for diversity and tolerance and an understanding of other cultures; and
- encouraging a sense of community by offering a vibrant residential life program and extensive athletic, fitness and outdoor opportunities.

Whitman alumni include a Nobel Prize winner in physics; the Mars Rover lead engineer; a U.S. Supreme Court justice; an ambassador to Iraq and six other countries in the Middle East; a NASA astronaut; congressional and state representatives; leaders in law, government and the Foreign Service; respected scholars; CEOs of major corporations; renowned artists, entertainers and writers; prominent journalists; leading physicians and scientists; and thousands of active, responsible citizens who are contributing to their professions and their communities.

## The Mission of the College

This mission statement, approved by the Whitman College Board of Trustees, guides all programs of the college:

*Situated within the rich and complex landscape and history of the Walla Walla Valley, Whitman College provides a rigorous liberal arts education of the highest quality to passionate and engaged students from diverse backgrounds. Whitman students develop their intellectual and creative capacities in a supportive scholarly community that prioritizes student learning within and beyond our classrooms. We help each student translate their deep local, regional, and global experiences into ethical and meaningful lives of purpose.*

## Whitman College Diversity Statement

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core values at Whitman College. The college strives to have and support a student body, staff and faculty that represent the diversity of our world: gender identity, sexuality, race, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic class, disability, religion, spirituality and age cohort.

We seek to foster an inclusive learning environment in which members draw from different intellectual traditions to engage with and challenge one another through studied, thoughtful, and respectful dialogue and debate.

We aspire to become a place where all community members experience difference every day, where diversity is supported and woven throughout our cultural fabric: our values, our behavior, our culture. Our mission focuses on educating engaged students from diverse backgrounds and experiences in a college community where everyone can participate fully in the life of the college and experience a genuine sense of belonging.

Education is a common good that ultimately serves the entire society; therefore, access is a moral imperative. Diverse learning contexts are known to provide transformative educational experiences. An inclusive environment at Whitman that nurtures the development of the ability to work effectively across difference will prepare our students for life after Whitman. We believe that through an innovative rigorous liberal arts curriculum, we can educate all students and prepare them to serve in various fields and sectors and to contribute to a rapidly changing, multicultural and globalized world. Our graduates will be ready to work with others for the common good.

## **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 will be followed while exploring practical ways to promote an environmentally conscious campus. The college pledges to:

- reduce the amount of nonrecyclable materials, reuse materials when possible and utilize recycled materials;
- consider the eco-friendliest science and technology available to decrease our environmental impact;
- continue to build an energy-efficient campus in the 21st century;
- patronize companies that are active in their defense of the environment;
- encourage individuals' environmental accountability through programs of environmental education;
- consider environmentally friendly options when they exist and are practical when making decisions regarding developmental projects;
- further the use of reused materials, recyclable materials and the internet for campus communications;
- encourage and ask our food service to make environmentally friendly decisions when purchasing food and supplies, reducing waste and reusing materials;
- maintain campus grounds through the employment of bio-friendly substances and services; and
- strive to improve upon current practices so we may engage the trends of the industrial world with the natural environment.

## **The Faculty**

Whitman College's full-time faculty currently numbers 167. In addition to their dedication to teaching and advising, Whitman faculty members conduct an impressive amount of original research.

Believing that an active professional life supports enthusiasm in teaching and advising, the college encourages faculty members' scholarly work through a generous sabbatical program, the faculty scholarship fund and other resources. During recent years, Whitman faculty members have been recipients of awards such as the Graves Award in the Humanities and the Lynwood W. Swanson Promise Award for Scientific Research. Members of the faculty have garnered honors and fellowships from the Battelle Research Institute, National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Fulbright Program, Hughes Medical Institute, PEW Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and other organizations.

Faculty members, with the president and the provost/dean of the faculty, are responsible for basic academic policy and for the formulation of the curriculum. The faculty also has a responsibility for student life and welfare.

## **Penrose Library**

Penrose Library provides critical services, collections, and programs in support of the Whitman College mission and the needs of the college curriculum. The Library provides an exceptional space for learning, personal growth, and communication, while at the same time providing a variety of print and electronic resources and services that enable students to engage in intellectual exploration and creativity. The faculty relies on the Library to provide materials not only for their pedagogical needs but also to help advance their research agendas. These activities in turn feed

back into the classroom, providing a model for the student scholar at an institution that actively promotes undergraduate research.

Librarians at Penrose Library value an environment focused on teaching and learning. Instructional programming occurs at several different levels, all aimed at integrating life-long information literacy skills into a student's larger academic development. Librarians work collaboratively with faculty to prepare classroom presentations that facilitate a problem-based approach to instruction. The instructional program is fundamentally about "source literacy" to ensure that students have an understanding of the differences and the uses of primary and secondary sources. This approach provides the opportunity to move beyond simply reviewing secondary literature and into engaging in original research. Students are gradually learning how to construct "Research Questions" and integrate primary sources (both digital and analog) into their work. In essence, they begin to experience the complex and messy world of scholarship.

Beyond supplying rich and deep collections for research and learning needs, the Library offers physical and virtual spaces to meet the College's mission of graduating critical thinkers. Many of its resources are available in digital formats that are accessible anywhere students chose to study. The building provides a variety of spaces for learning opportunities including group study, quiet individual study and audio-visual support rooms. An informal environment is encouraged by providing appropriate furnishings that lead to collaborative, discussion-based learning. By focusing on the social as well as the intellectual needs of students, personal growth and social development are fostered in the Library – values which the College strives to instill in Whitman graduates.

## **College History and Background**

Whitman College traces its roots to the 1830s. In 1836, Marcus and Narcissa Whitman established a mission and a school near Walla Walla to teach the Cayuse Indians to read and write their native language. Later, the couple provided assistance to Oregon Trail travelers. However, the Whitmans were killed in 1847, and fellow missionary Rev. Cushing Eells resolved to establish a school in their honor. The Washington Territorial Legislature granted a charter to Whitman Seminary on Dec. 20, 1859. College courses were first offered at Whitman in 1882 and on Nov. 28, 1883, the legislature issued a new charter, changing the seminary into a four-year, degree-granting college.

The college has remained small in order to facilitate the close faculty-student interaction that is essential to exceptional higher education. In 1914, Whitman became the first college or university in the nation to require undergraduate students to complete comprehensive examinations in their major fields. The installation of a Phi Beta Kappa chapter in 1919, the first for any Northwest college, marked Whitman's growing reputation.

One of Whitman's most recognizable campus landmarks is the clock tower atop Memorial Building, which was constructed in 1899. Among recent construction projects are Stanton Hall and Cleveland Commons, the upgrade of the Sherwood Athletic Center and the Glover Alston Center, along with the renovation and expansion of Maxey Hall, Penrose Library, the Hall of Science and Harper Joy Theater. Newer buildings also include the Fouts Center for Visual Arts, the Baker Ferguson Fitness Center/Harvey Pool, the Welty Center (health and counseling services) and the Reid Campus Center.

The campus is one block from downtown Walla Walla, a city of 32,000 in southeastern Washington. The town's setting among golden wheat fields shadowed by the Blue Mountains provides countless opportunities for outdoor pursuits. Named one of the nation's top 25 "small town cultural treasures" and cited by *Sunset* magazine as having the best Main Street in the West, Walla Walla is known for its art galleries, symphony orchestra, community theater and premium wineries. Whitman sponsors dance groups, operas, musical soloists, film festivals and performances by the college's excellent music and theater departments. The college hosts nationally recognized lecturers in science, letters, politics, current history and other fields.