

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.

The Division of Diversity & Inclusion

Mission:

The Division of Diversity and Inclusion helps to coordinate, cultivate, and contribute to institutional efforts to advance inclusive excellence at Whitman College. Guided by principles of cultural pluralism, cultural humility, and cultural wealth, the work of the Division is to enhance our collective awareness and capacity around issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism. Inclusive excellence is a shared responsibility of all members within our community and the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion (VPDI) serves as the senior inclusion administrator at the College. The VPDI provides vision and leadership in this domain, but the entire Whitman community is responsible for championing issues of inclusion and ensuring a sense of belonging for all faculty, staff, and students.

Vision:

- To have a campus community where inclusive excellence drives decision-making at all levels of the college, where those decisions are supported by culturally responsive policies and practices.
- To recruit, retain, and support a campus community that is committed to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracist practices.
- To cultivate partnerships regionally and nationally that support the shifting demographics of the campus community.

Principles:

Our principles of inclusive excellence provide a foundation for the community we are actively fostering. We recognize that our path towards inclusive excellence will require:

- Diversity without dominance
- Equity without benevolence
- Inclusion without othering
- Belonging without assimilation

Approach:

The work of the Division of Diversity and Inclusion is trifurcated operationally and exercises horizontal influence. Our trifurcated operational areas include: Identity and Belonging, Equity and Compliance, and Inclusive Excellence. The Identity and Belonging area includes several primarily student-facing units that contribute programmatically to the campus climate, facilitate the exploration and development of student identities, and provide support and services to marginalized and/or minoritized communities. This area includes the Intercultural Center, International Student and Scholar Services, LGBTQIA+ Student Services, as well as Religious and Spiritual Life, all of which collaboratively aid the entire Whitman student body in better understanding their relationships to systems of oppression and to each other by providing opportunities for community healing, connection, and liberation. The Equity and Compliance area is focused on coordinating institutional compliance with federal and state discrimination, harassment, and retaliation laws and related College policies, with an emphasis on those related to sexual and gender-based misconduct and other forms of identity-based harassment and discrimination. This area is

also involved in the response and resolution of bias incidents that may not have an identifiable respondent or constitute a violation of the law or College policy, but nonetheless impact our community. The Inclusive Excellence area is focused on the intra-Divisional horizontal influence work of diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism capacity building. This area involves the Division's work with student, staff, and faculty partners and collaborators across the College to revise policies, shift practices, and modify systems in an effort to infuse inclusive excellence principles through all aspects of institutional operations.

Intercultural Center

The Intercultural Center (IC) provides educational and experiential opportunities related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism. The IC works to proactively support students from marginalized backgrounds in navigating potential barriers to success by providing individualized guidance and pertinent resources. Our programming is created with and for students, and our goal is to nurture a welcoming environment where all students feel affirmed and valued.

International Student & Scholar Services

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) provides support to international students, scholars and staff. ISSS provides programs and services that help the international community acclimate to life in the U.S. and at Whitman College. ISSS is responsible for international student orientation, immigration services, and assists international students with securing health insurance, income tax filing, work authorizations, and processing other required documentation. ISSS collaborates with numerous campus departments to ensure appropriate and equitable services are available to the Whitman international student community.

LGBTQIA+ Student Services

LGBTQIA+ Student Services advocates for institutional change and contributes to efforts to develop more equitable and inclusive practices, policies, and procedures across the College in an effort to establish and sustain an environment at Whitman that affirms the unique and intersectional identities of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA) students, as well as those who identify with different and/or additional minoritized communities related to sex, sexualities, gender identities, or gender expressions. LGBTQIA+ Student Services provides programs and supports that contribute to the wellbeing and success of LGBTQIA+ students and aids the entire Whitman community in better understanding the lived experience of LGBTQIA+ individuals. LGBTQIA+ Student Services also advances the diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism (DEIA) values of the College and the Division of Diversity and Inclusion through a direct emphasis on the needs and concerns of LGBTQIA+ communities of color.

Religious and Spiritual Life

The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (RSL) supports students who wish to deepen or explore spirituality. RSL functions as a resource for established and emergent religious groups on campus and works to address the needs and enhance understanding and awareness of numerous religious traditions. RSL provides programming which explores the important relationship between faith and learning - the connection between mind and spirit. The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life is committed to supporting religious traditions and serves people of all faith traditions, and also welcomes those who are exploring spirituality but do not identify with any formal or specific religion.

Equity and Compliance

Whitman College strives to provide a safe environment in which students can pursue their education free from the detrimental effects of sexual misconduct, which includes sexual harassment and sexual assault. The Director of

Equity and Compliance/Title IX Coordinator is housed in the Division of Diversity and Inclusion. The individual in this role, interfaces with Human Resources, the Office of the Provost, Campus Security, Student Affairs and others across campus to prevent, investigate, and adjudicate violations of federal law related to identity-based discrimination and harm. In addition to ensuring institutional compliance with Title IX, the Director of Equity and Compliance/Title IX Coordinator develops, implements, updates and serves as principal coordinator of policies, procedures and programs related to Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and other related legislation.

Inclusive Excellence

An inclusive Whitman requires all of us. Through various committees, councils, consultations and consortiums, the Division of Diversity and Inclusion supports and engages the broader campus community in the creation of an environment where all feel welcomed and valued. The College Accessibility Committee, annual Community Learning Days, Power and Privilege Symposium, DEIA Dialogues, academic themes, student organizations, field trips, curricular and co-curricular content, Third Space Speakers, Tri-College and NW5C initiatives, Orientation, Summer Fly-In, interest hall communities and events, and many more activities contribute to the cultivation of an institutional climate that embraces, enacts, and acknowledges cultural pluralism, cultural humility, and cultural wealth in the interest of inclusive excellence.