

**Northwest Commission on
Colleges and Universities**



**WHITMAN
COLLEGE**

**Year Seven
Standard One:
Student Success and Institutional Mission
and Effectiveness**

February 16, 2024

Table of Contents

Institutional Overview	1
Preface	4
Brief update on Institutional Changes Since Year Six PRFR Report.....	4
Student Success and Institutional Mission and Effectiveness.....	6
Standard 1.A: Institutional Mission.....	6
Standard 1.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness	7
Standard 1.C: Student Learning.....	18
Standard 1.D: Student Achievement	38
Conclusion.....	47
Addenda.....	49
Response to any concerns (findings) raised in the peer-evaluation report of the Year Six, Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (PRFR)	49

Institutional Overview

Founded in 1882, Whitman College is a private, independent, co-educational, non-sectarian liberal arts undergraduate college with approximately 1,500 students. Whitman offers a rigorous curriculum that combines breadth and depth of knowledge across disciplines, and offers many opportunities for collaborative research among students and faculty.

Since the last accreditation process seven years ago, Whitman College has made very significant progress on all three identified core themes:

1. An accessible, diverse, and inclusive community;
2. A rigorous liberal arts education;
3. Support for life and learning beyond the classroom.

See [Exhibit 1.B.2.A Core Themes](#) for details of metrics and progress.

Importantly, as stated in the [Year Six PRFR report](#), Whitman is moving away from defining mission fulfillment through core themes and is shifting to defining mission fulfillment according to specific [high level objectives stemming from the mission](#) that are also informing current strategic planning efforts. While the core themes constructed in 2018 have been relevant and useful, particularly for accreditation efforts, as stated in Whitman's [Year Three self-evaluation](#), the core themes were not a topic of discussion during strategic planning deliberations among the Cabinet-level administration and the Board, nor were they part of strategic planning focus groups or discussions among faculty and staff on campus. Moreover, core themes were not an element of conversation and planning at the level of student learning outcome development at the course, program, or institutional level. In short, the core themes have not been a significant part of campus consciousness.

As the NWCCU has shifted away from core themes and as Whitman has embarked on a new phase of strategic planning, the college has used these opportunities to take its mission and translate it into new objectives and a draft plan for assessment. From mapping of student learning outcomes to hiring practices to budget decisions to ongoing strategic planning discussions, Whitman's mission remains very much a part of the campus consciousness and its demonstration of institutional effectiveness. Further explanation of the connection between the college's mission, high level objectives and assessment of these objectives can be found in the narrative for Standard 1.B.1 and in [Exhibit 1.B.1.A](#). This new framing of Whitman's mission fulfillment work informs both strategic planning and accreditation over the next five years, 2023-2028.

Over the past five years, Whitman has seen an overall upward trend in the number of applicants despite some disruptions during the pandemic. In 2022, there were a record 6,238 applicants and a growing number of students from historically-marginalized backgrounds. In fall 2023, Whitman's incoming class of new students arrived from one tribal nation, more than 43 states, one territory, and 42 countries. Currently, approximately one-third of students come from the state of Washington. The college is also seeing a growing number of international students,

comprising approximately 16% of the incoming class. Of this class, approximately 32% are students of color, 24% are first-generation college students, 56% are women, and 23% are eligible to receive a Pell Grant. Financial aid is offered to 91% of students and 62% graduate with no debt. Whitman is making strides toward the goal of meeting full demonstrated financial need, which was accomplished this year for students from the State of Washington. The most recent results for alumni one year out from graduation show 70% entering the job market or volunteering, 15% enrolling in graduate school, and 5% receiving a prestigious fellowship. More than half of graduates ultimately receive an advanced degree.

Whitman faculty are deeply committed to the teacher-scholar model. They are leading experts in their fields and bring their passion for research to the classroom to inspire and support students. Of the 204 Whitman faculty members, 86% are full-time faculty, 94% possess a PhD or terminal degree in their field, approximately half are women, and 15% are from traditionally underrepresented groups. Faculty teach a 3-2 course load, providing them the time to engage with students on an individual level while maintaining robust research agendas. Whitman provides faculty with resources to support their teaching and research, including regular sabbaticals, numerous grants, and, through the Center for Teaching and Learning, opportunities to create innovative curricula and develop inclusive pedagogical practices.

In 2022, [Dr. Sarah Bolton](#) was unanimously selected by the Whitman College Board of Trustees to be the college's 15th president. Before taking office at Whitman, Dr. Bolton served as president of the College of Wooster as well as Professor and Dean of the College of Williams College. Dr. Bolton is a physicist, professor, and administrator with more than 25 years of experience in higher education and a long-standing commitment to inclusive excellence and the liberal arts.

With President Bolton's arrival, the Whitman community has been collaborating closely to revise the college's strategic priorities, building on the tremendous progress Whitman has made in recent years and responding to the rapid changes in the world that students will enter after graduation. The ultimate goals of the strategic plan are to inspire talented and diverse students to come to Whitman; provide them with excellent opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive in an inclusive and welcoming environment; and help prepare them for a strong launch after graduation in order to pursue a life of purpose and impact.

The [strategic plan](#) was approved by the Board in June of 2023, and in the 2023-2024 academic year the President's Cabinet and Whitman community began work towards implementing its goals.

The college is primed for innovation after making critical decisions in 2021 as part of a financial sustainability review. This review was an anticipatory process, conducted across the college, to ensure that Whitman maintains its solid financial footing well into the future. This review redirected resources to account for enrollment shifts and demographic changes of high school-age students and freed up resources to invest in innovative programs both within the curriculum and within student life. Like nearly all colleges and universities, Whitman College is affected by the ongoing downward pressure on revenue and anticipates needing to continue to be attentive to

expenditures and efficiency. Overall, however, Whitman College continues to maintain a strong financial position.

Whitman College is situated on the traditional homelands of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla people. Over the last decade, the college has undertaken substantial collaborative work with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation through a Memorandum of Agreement which includes educational programs in local tribal history for all incoming students, a dedicated set of scholarships for tribal members, and growing curricular opportunities in indigenous studies. To support the work specified in the Memorandum of Agreement, President Bolton in her first year created a new role and appointed Jeanine Gordon as [Special Assistant to the President for Native American Outreach](#).

Preface

Brief update on Institutional Changes Since Year Six PRFR Report

Since the submission of its [Year Six PRFR report](#) to NWCCU on February 24, 2023, Whitman has undergone a number of institutional changes listed below:

Leadership

Jeff Hamrick, PhD was selected as Vice President for Finance and Administration. Jeff previously served as Vice Provost for Budget, Planning and Analytics and Senior Director of the Data Institute at the University of San Francisco. He also served as a member of the faculty at USF.

Hamrick earned a Bachelor of Arts in History, a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Financial Economics from Stetson University, where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and named a Goldwater Scholar. After completing his PhD at Boston University in 2009, Hamrick occupied a tenure-track appointment at Rhodes College. In 2012, he was recruited to the University of San Francisco to launch its innovative Master of Science in Data Science program. Hamrick is a CFA charter holder and a Chartered Financial Risk Manager. Hamrick also has experience in hedge fund management and consulting for financial services, B2B, B2C and software engineering firms.

Prior to his work with the Data Institute, Hamrick served for nearly eight years as the University of San Francisco's Vice Provost for Institutional Budget, Planning, and Analytics. In this role, he managed the institution's half-billion-dollar operating budget through its Office of Planning and Budget. Hamrick also managed the university's Office of Institutional Research and Analytics, its market research function, its portfolio of professional certificate programs and its network of branch campuses across the state of California. He served on the President's Cabinet and as a liaison between the Division of Academic Affairs and other vice-presidential divisions concerning matters related to budget, space and data. Additionally, Hamrick served as a resource to trustees on the institution's Finance Committee and its Physical Facilities and Master Plan Committee.

Maggie Eaheart was selected as Whitman's inaugural Chief of Staff. Eaheart previously served as Chief of Staff and Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives at Saint Xavier University in Chicago. Eaheart earned a Master of Arts degree in Religion/Religious Studies from Miami University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Language and Literature from Saint Xavier University.

As Chief of Staff at Whitman College, Eaheart holds primary responsibility for coordinating and supporting the work of the Board of Trustees. She is a strategic partner to President Bolton and others across campus, providing oversight and support on institutional planning, communication, policy development, community relations and problem resolution.

Elisabeth Mermann-Jozwiak, PhD was selected in January 2024 as Whitman's next Provost and Dean of the Faculty. She succeeds Alzada Tipton and will begin this position July 2024.

Mermann-Jozwiak earned her Master of Arts with majors in English and Theology and a minor in Education from the University of Cologne, Germany, and a PhD in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Mermann-Jozwiak's nearly 20 years of academic leadership experience include four years as the provost at Bucknell University and six years at Gonzaga University, where she served as the dean of the college of arts and sciences and interim academic vice president. Prior to that, Mermann-Jozwiak was a professor of English and an associate dean of the college of liberal arts at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi.

As Whitman's Provost and Dean of the Faculty, Mermann-Jozwiak will serve as a member of the President's cabinet and will oversee the development of the academic program, hiring and supporting faculty, and accreditation and assessment. She will also oversee the office of the registrar, library, off-campus studies, institutional research, athletics, and the Career and Community Engagement Center. She will also collaborate with the VP for Finance and Administration in overseeing the Office of Information Technology.

Drew Shoals '05 and **Elizabeth Obershaw** were appointed to the college's [Board of Trustees](#).

Dottie Metcalf-Lindenburger '97 has been recently appointed Vice-Chair of the [President's Advisory Board](#). The President's Advisory Board focuses on ensuring support for the strategic priorities of the college. Members include alumni and parents of students who serve both as advisors to the president and cabinet and as special ambassadors for the college, interfacing with students, alumni, friends of the college and prospective students.

In her capacity as Vice-Chair of the President's Advisory Board, Metcalf-Lindenburger also serves as a non-trustee board member.

Strategic Planning

During Fall 2023, Whitman moved forward with implementing its new strategic plan planning, gathering groups of students, staff, and faculty to make progress on its [six strategic themes](#). Relatedly, the college has launched the [Upward Together campaign](#), focused on six key priorities: access and affordability; academic excellence and distinction; vibrant campus community; advancing diversity, equity and inclusion; strong graduate launches for all students; and The Whitman Fund. While there is overlap between the six strategic planning themes and the six campaign priorities, the campaign is also focused on fundraising to assist students to come to Whitman and to support them, especially financially, during their time at the college.

Student Success and Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Standard 1.A: Institutional Mission

1.A.1: The institution's mission statement defines its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning and achievement.

Whitman College has a widely-published [mission statement](#) that defines its broad educational purposes and commitment to student learning and achievement:

Whitman College Mission Statement

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's mission statement articulates the type and quality of education students experience, the environment in which students learn and achieve, and the connection between their educational experience and their lives beyond their time on campus. The college's mission statement provides guidance for strategic planning, allocation of resources, and new initiatives. The mission statement is contained in numerous college documents that are accessible to incoming and interested students, faculty, staff, and alumni and is referenced in all college planning processes. Also, the overarching objectives that undergird the [current strategic plan](#) emerge directly from the college's mission and capture its broad educational purposes.

Standard 1.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

1.B.1: The institution demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

Whitman College demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. Aligned with its [mission](#), the college draws on multiple ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning processes to inform and refine effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning outcomes. This report focuses on strategic planning, assessment of student learning through general education and academic programs, assessment of student achievement, and assessment of student support services as the primary processes of evidencing and improving institutional effectiveness. The report also highlights a few major efforts as examples of how Whitman has used ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

Strategic Planning

The college's [strategic planning process](#), includes input and feedback from students, staff, faculty, and alumni to determine high-level objectives and priorities that derive from the mission, which are ultimately approved by Whitman's Board of Trustees.

The strategic plan is typically executed over a five to seven year period. Whitman's 2017 Strategic Plan identified [five top priorities](#), all of which connect to student learning, student achievement, and student support services.

From these, the President's Cabinet identified specific yearly priorities and action items, regarding student learning, achievement and support services, which were then implemented and executed via departments and units.

With the arrival of President Sarah Bolton in Fall of 2022, Whitman's 2017 strategic plan underwent a community-wide assessment during the 2022-2023 academic year that involved hundreds of faculty, staff, students, and trustees to determine accomplishments and opportunities for future work to advance the college's mission. During Fall 2022, the college held 6 open discussions with students, staff, and faculty to discuss possible new strategic priorities alongside a survey to gather feedback disseminated in November 2022. During Spring 2023, the college held 10 open discussions with students, staff, and faculty to discuss the draft strategic priorities alongside a survey to gather feedback disseminated in March 2023. The college also held 3 open discussions during Spring 2023 to discuss the emerging themes from these priorities. More information about this process and opportunities for input can be found [here](#).

To continue meeting its mission, the college has identified four high-level objectives and six strategic themes with areas for focused action as part of its [updated strategic plan](#) to be executed between 2023-2028. The President's Cabinet is currently working with these high-level objectives to determine primary metrics/indicators and target benchmarks to measure success

and mission fulfillment over a five-year period. In addition, working groups composed of students, staff, and faculty are currently working on the implementation of specific action items associated with strategic themes focused on student learning, student achievement, and student support services. Please see [Exhibit 1.B.1.A](#) for a visual that defines and connects the mission to high-level objectives and example metrics for assessment, and strategic themes.

Assessment of Student Learning: General Education and Academic Programs

Student learning is defined in accordance with the college's interpretation of its [mission](#). Ongoing and systematic assessment processes have the overarching goal of continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. These processes are detailed below:

Assessment of Student Learning - First Year Seminars

Assessment of student learning outcomes in the First Year Seminars takes place regularly. The Director of the First Year Seminars manages the assessment process which includes collection and analysis of assessment data, generating reports, and making recommendations to improve student learning based on assessment data (see [Exhibit 1.B.1.B](#) for a sample report submitted by the Director of the First Year Seminars)

Assessment of Student Learning - Writing

Incoming students are required to take a writing assessment prior to enrolling for their first semester. Students take this writing assessment during the summer and are placed in Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse (RWPD) 170: Language and Writing if they do not pass. Students are required to pass this course before graduating or complete the writing proficiency requirement through transfer or equivalency credit before graduating. Students who pass the writing assessment are deemed proficient and are not placed in RWPD 170. The assessment is administered and scored by faculty teaching Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse (RWPD) 170: Language and Writing.

Prior to Fall 2020, student writing for students enrolled in RWPD 170 was assessed with a comparison of pre- and post-course scores. Students took a writing assessment in the summer and were placed in RWPD 170 if they did not pass. Whitman repeated this writing assessment in December. [Exhibit 1.B.1.C](#) shows the average writing students who took RWPD 170 improved 5.4 points (from 9.4 to 14.8), while the average scores of those who did not take RWPD 170 improved 1.5 points (from 15.5 to 17.0).

With the implementation of the new First Year Seminar course in Fall 2020 and [re-envisioned student learning outcomes](#), this post-course writing assessment is no longer used as writing is no longer an explicitly assessed learning outcome of this course. In preparation for the 2024 writing assessment, the College is considering a follow-up sample assessment to evaluate the RWPD 170 program, and considering updating the descriptions under the categories and values of the rubric to reflect the updated assessment situation.

Assessment of General Education

Individual faculty assess and report on student learning outcomes for courses in the college's general education program. Faculty may choose which learning outcome to assess, the assessment mechanism, and benchmark for achievement. Based on this assessment, faculty are

also prompted to indicate any changes they intend to make to their courses to improve student learning. The Office of Institutional Research generates annual reports of assessment data for general education (see [Exhibit 1.B.1.D](#) for an example). The college's Assessment Committee reviews these reports to determine any improvements to the system of assessment. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs reports and discusses this data on an annual basis with faculty to gather input regarding improvements to the system of assessment as well as to solicit input regarding professional development opportunities to support ongoing assessment of student learning.

Assessment of Student Learning - Major Programs

Assessment of student learning outcomes in academic major programs takes place annually. Departments and programs develop a rotational three-year plan to assess all student learning outcomes within an academic major. Each year, departments and programs assess at least one student learning outcome associated with the senior assessment in the major. Departments identify communication of student learning outcome(s), methods of assessment, benchmarks for achievement, whether or not a department is considering changes to satisfying learning outcomes in the future, and curricular changes or innovations being considered.

The Office of Institutional Research generates annual reports of assessment data for academic departments and programs (see [Exhibit 1.B.1.E](#) for an example) These reports are discussed on an annual basis with the faculty to gather input regarding improvements to the system of assessment as well as to solicit input regarding professional development opportunities to support ongoing assessment of student learning. Departments and programs determine changes they would like to make to courses and student learning outcomes based on this assessment data.

In addition, all academic departments and programs undergo an external review, approximately every 7-10 years. The primary purpose of regularly scheduled external reviews is to understand, evaluate, and improve the educational quality of the college's academic departments and programs. Departments and programs compile a self-study focused on analysis, appraisal, and assessment of student learning outcomes, curriculum, governance, staffing, teaching, planning, and research/professional activity.

Assessment of Student Learning - Senior Surveys

Whitman participates in multiple senior surveys including [Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium \(HEDS\) Senior Survey](#), the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\) Senior Survey](#) and the [Higher Education Research Institute College Senior Survey \(HERI CSS\)](#). See Exhibits 1.B.1.F-1.B.1.J listed below for the college's summary reports of these senior surveys. While these assessments are indirect, the college relies on this data to improve student learning.

Assessment of Student Achievement

Whitman's Office of Institutional Research regularly tracks student retention and persistence. Specifically, the college tracks students who do and do not return from the first to third semester and from the first to fifth semester and compiles reports and modeling connecting retention and persistence data to a number of factors and variables such as reason for not returning and GPA by semester. These data are also disaggregated according to demographic categories including

race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, gender, first generation to attend college, and international student status to identify potential equity gaps in retention and persistence rates.

The college's First-Year Student Retention and Persistence Committee and a Retention and Persistence Committee for all students considers these reports to address specific areas of concern and potential interventions regarding retention and persistence. These committees and units across campus consider ways of proactively working with students to promote and improve retention and persistence. Examples include the Dean of Students office conducting targeted outreach to incoming students who may need additional supportive measures, identification of incoming first generation students to participate in the [Summer Fly-in Program](#), and support through required and ongoing check-in meetings with the Dean of Students office for students returning from a leave of absence. Longitudinal retention data regarding Summer Fly-in Program participants relative to non-participants is available in [Exhibit 1.B.1.K](#).

The college regularly tracks graduation rates at the four-year, five-year, and six-year mark and publishes this information in the [Whitman College Factbook](#).

In addition, the college annually surveys Whitman alumni who are one, five, and 10 years post-graduation. The Office of Institutional Research summarizes data on education after graduation, primary activity after graduation, impactful activities while in college, and responses to the Gallup-Purdue Big 6 elements of support and experiential learning. A [summary report](#) is widely published and available on the college's [website](#). This alumni survey shows that Whitman does well in providing the six experiences identified by the Gallup organization as leading to graduates thriving in their well-being and feeling more engaged in their work. Compared to the national data, significantly more Whitman alumni report they experienced all six during their undergraduate years.

Alumni surveys are used by individual units such as the Career and Community Engagement Center, the Office of Fellowships and Grants, and Pre-Health Advising Program to refine effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student achievement. The college also conducts [external reviews of academic departments](#) every ten years. These reviews include alumni surveys pertaining to post-graduation success. These reviews include alumni surveys pertaining to post-graduation success with questions that ask alumni about their primary activity, post-graduation (e.g. type of job, internship, research fellowship) as well as connections they make between their majors and their post-graduation life.

Assessment of Student Support Services

Assessment of student support services takes place at the unit level, with individual departments conducting their own assessments to inform learning support planning.

Whitman's Academic Resource Center, Intercultural Center, CARE Team, Health and Wellness Services, and other departments conduct assessments to refine effectiveness and improve student support. Exhibits 1.B.1.L-1.B.1.N provide examples of these kinds of assessments. Recently, [Keeling & Associates](#), a higher education consulting firm, conducted an assessment of the Division of Student Affairs and provided various recommendations, such as increased support for changing student health and wellness needs, for consideration. Please see [Exhibit 1.B.1.O](#) and [Exhibit 1.B.1.P](#) for more information.

Highlighted below are a number of significant examples that demonstrate how the college's planning processes and assessment have resulted in refining the college's effectiveness, assigning resources, and improvements in student learning and achievement. These examples align with core principles stated in the college's [mission](#).

“Rigorous liberal arts education of the highest quality” - Focus on Writing

Based on senior survey data where students self-reported lower rates of experiences with writing compared to peers at other institutions, Whitman faculty identified this gap as an area of improvement for student learning. During retreats about general education, faculty identified this gap as a priority. As a result, incoming students, beginning in 2017 were required to complete a writing assessment to determine whether or not further instruction in writing was necessary. A specific course, RWPD 170, was designed and implemented with additional institutional resources to ensure that all students met benchmarks for writing.

To further support rigor in writing, the college has instituted a specific focus on argumentative writing in the [second semester of the First Year Seminar program](#). The First Year Seminar program formally draws on the expertise of a faculty member who provides writing-specific training for this program and is compensated for this work.

Also, the college requires students to develop their writing practices beyond the First Year Seminars and RWPD 170 by requiring courses focused on development of writing practices through specific disciplinary areas of study.

“Engaged students from diverse backgrounds” and “Supportive Scholarly Community” - DEIA efforts regarding Whitman's curriculum

After the summer of 2020 and sparked by the protests over the killing of George Floyd, numerous departments convened to further their DEIA efforts within the curriculum. Whitman's [Center for Teaching and Learning Pedagogical Inquiry Grants](#), college [workshops on inclusive and anti-racist pedagogy](#), and a [speaker series](#) supported these efforts. Regarding campus climate, the NACCC student survey data (see [Exhibit 1.B.1.Q](#)) show that white students and students of color feel more supported in classrooms taught by faculty of color than white faculty.

Taken together, the data and efforts above have resulted in the following changes to improve student learning:

- Updating older categories in the [new general education program](#) that reflect these student interests, faculty priorities, institutional values, and commitments in our mission;
- Revisions to search guidelines for tenure-track positions that allow for checks in the search process to maintain the diversity within a candidate pool and to intervene when the diversity of a pool is insufficient;
- An [opportunity hire policy](#) that allows the college to recruit and appoint a faculty member for a tenure-track position without a national search, if the hire provides a special opportunity to meet student needs, particularly those of students who are least well served by faculty and curriculum as it is currently constituted (as of January 2024, the college has made one opportunity hire in the Classics department);

- A [faculty fellowship program](#) to diversify the college's faculty by hiring cohorts of four emerging scholars for a one-year fellowship position. The college anticipates hiring 1-4 faculty fellows during Spring 2024.

“Student learning within and beyond the classroom” and “translation of deep, local, regional, and global experiences” - Community-Engaged Learning and collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)

Under the leadership of Whitman's 14th president, Kathleen Murray, and Provost and Dean of the Faculty Alzada Tipton, Whitman has bolstered its efforts and resources to support and improve student learning beyond the classroom through a number of initiatives. Grounded in a recognition by Murray and Tipton that peer institutions were more involved in community-engaged learning alongside the “Celebrating our Location” Strategic Planning Priority from 2017, the college received [Mellon Foundation grants](#) to support this work at Whitman and with the schools in the Northwest 5 Consortium of small liberal arts colleges. One example of this support is a course co-taught by a Whitman faculty member and a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. This course in indigenous politics included students from CTUIR and Whitman and focused on bringing a tribal perspective to the COVID-19 pandemic. More information about this course can be found [here](#).

Also, the college maintains a membership in [Project Pericles](#), a consortium of colleges and universities that promotes civic engagement within higher education. One example of the benefits of this membership is the support of development of a course including community partners and students focused on incorporating civic engagement, advocacy, and community involvement on barriers to equitable access to education in Walla Walla. More information about this course can be found [here](#). Whitman also hosted the 2023 Project Pericles annual conference on campus.

Other key initiatives that evidence student learning within and beyond the classroom through local and regional experiences include ongoing collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR). The original 2017 Memorandum of Agreement, which was renewed in 2022, identifies collaboration and development of curriculum with a focus on Native American Studies and Native American education, recruitment and retention efforts at Whitman, as mutually beneficial to the college and CTUIR.

The following are key efforts and initiatives undertaken to uphold the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement:

- Establishment of the [Whitman College Advisory Council for CTUIR Collaboration \(WCACCC\)](#);
- Establishment of the [Šínáata Scholarship](#);
- Classes taught for Whitman students and CTUIR students at CTUIR - these classes are tuition-free for CTUIR students;
- Summer programs and classes taught by Whitman professors for CTUIR youth
- Faculty development around Native American studies and expanded opportunities for student learning with the [2022 Long Tent](#);
- [2023 Pášxapa Powwow](#)

- Establishment of a new position, [Special Assistant to the President for Native American Outreach](#)

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.B.1.A Mission, High Level Objectives, Strategic Themes, Example Metrics 2023-2028](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.B FYS 2021-2022 Annual Report](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.C Writing Evaluation Summary Fall 2018](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.D Distribution Assessment Summary 2022-23](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.E Department Assessment Summary 2022-23](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.F HEDS Senior Survey Summary Report 2021-11-29](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.G NSSE 2020 Student Learning Report](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.H NSSE Indicators Report 2020](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.I HERI CSS Summary Report 2022](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.J HERI CSS Summary 2022 - Academic Progress and Faculty Interaction](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.K Fly-In Students Retention and GPA](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.L LGBTQ+ Student Services 2022-2023 AY Report](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.M Religious and Spiritual Life 2023 Year End Report](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.N Health Center Assessment December 2023](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.O Keeling & Associates - Vibrant Community Initiative Summary](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.P Keeling & Associates Presentation](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.1.Q NACCC Summary Report Whitman College](#)

1.B.2: The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.

Whitman College sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.

Whitman's [mission statement](#) asserts that the 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."

From our 2018 Year One Self-Evaluation, Whitman reported its core themes as follows:

1. An accessible, diverse, and inclusive community;
2. A rigorous liberal arts education;
3. Support for life and learning beyond the classroom.

The above core themes emerged from NWCCU's recommendation from the college's last Year Seven Accreditation process. Specifically, NWCCU recommended that the college establish indicators of achievement that can more meaningfully inform core theme planning through collection of appropriately defined data. Subsequent to the college's Spring 2018 Ad Hoc Report, NWCCU confirmed fulfillment of this recommendation.

As with the 2018 and 2020 reports to NWCCU, Whitman currently defines mission fulfillment according to the afore-mentioned core themes. [Exhibit 1.B.2.A](#) details the on-going work from 2020 to define mission fulfillment according to articulated meaningful objectives, indicators and benchmarks. This core themes chart works from the same format the college has used in previous accreditation reports and highlights this work chronologically. Again, as stated in the Year Six PRFR report and this report's Institutional Overview, the college will move away from defining mission fulfillment through core themes to [high level objectives stemming from the mission](#) that are also informing current strategic planning efforts.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.B.2.A Core Themes](#)

1.B.3: The institution provides evidence that its planning process is inclusive and offers opportunities for comment by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

Whitman College's planning process is inclusive and offers opportunities for comment by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

The college engages in two primary institutional-level planning processes:

Strategic Planning

The college's strategic plan guides institutional planning. The college's [strategic planning steering committee](#) includes three students, two staff, three faculty leaders, the President's Cabinet and two representatives from the Board of Trustees. Board members are very engaged and part of all ongoing discussions, with the committee operating on a consensus model. The strategic planning process includes numerous opportunities for all campus constituents to [discuss and provide feedback on strategic priorities](#) and the entire campus community is made aware of participation opportunities and is kept informed with [periodic updates](#) that are made publicly available.

Currently, Whitman has determined four overarching objectives that stem from its mission. The President's Cabinet and the college's Assessment Committee are currently discussing indicators and benchmarks and tracked over a five-year period to demonstrate mission fulfillment. See the narrative for Standard 1.B.1 for more information.

Also, working groups of students, staff, and faculty have been tasked with developing areas of focused action connected to each strategic theme. This process includes multiple opportunities for comment and participation by appropriate constituencies. See [Exhibit 1.B.3.A](#) for an example of a working group progress report.

President's Budget Advisory Committee (PBAC)

Directly related to strategic planning, the President's Budget Advisory Committee advises the college in developing an annual operating budget that reflects the college's top priorities. PBAC consists of three members of the President's Cabinet (Vice President of Finance and Administration, Provost and Dean of the Faculty, Chair of the Faculty), as well as faculty, staff, and students, and is charged with giving feedback on yearly budget initiative proposals connected to the top priorities of the college. This committee also considers requests for funding new initiatives, and advises the President about tuition increases, financial aid strategies, and compensation increase pools and fringe benefits for faculty and staff. PBAC provides feedback on maintaining a balance between tuition affordability and providing the resources needed to sustain and to strengthen the college's programs and services.

Ultimately, the President, in consultation with the President's Cabinet, finalizes a budget to be proposed to the Board of Trustees. A summary of the final budget is shared with the Committee and then with the college community after Board of Trustees approval in February.

More information on the President's Budget Advisory Committee, including processes, timelines, and meeting materials can be found via the link above.

The college's institutional planning processes lead to improvements of institutional outcomes. Of particular significance, the college has adopted a new general education and first year seminar course, instituted a career coaching program for all incoming students, and has made significant progress in meeting 100% of students' demonstrated need. These and other examples can be found in [reports and progress summaries](#) from the college's 2018 Strategic Planning process demonstrate improvements in five top priority areas. The college's 2021 Financial Sustainability Review eliminated a three million dollar structural deficit.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.B.3.A Strong Launch Into Life After Whitman for All Students draft final report](#)

1.B.4: The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it considers such findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, planning, intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement of its goals.

Whitman continually monitors its internal and external environments to identify emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Internal and external environmental assessments occur at multiple levels across the institution.

Internally, through a number of processes, such as curricular review, department and program assessments, assessment of general education, proposals for faculty positions, senior surveys, and climate surveys, faculty and administrators address various trends that are shared and presented to stakeholders across the college.

Whitman also continuously monitors its external environment and emerging trends in a variety of ways including required [external reviews](#) of academic departments, programs, and offices every 10 years, as well as partnerships with outside experts such as [SimpsonScarborough](#) (2017), [Eduventures Research](#) (2018), [Art and Science Group LLC](#) (current), and [Keeling and Associates](#) (current), [Gardner Institute Academy of the First Year Experience](#) (current). With the exception of a pause during 2020-2021 during the height of COVID-19, the college works all the time with consultants to monitor the external environment.

The college considers recommendations and strategies from these experts to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise its mission, planning, intended outcomes of programs and services and indicators of achievement of its goals. For example, in 2017, the college worked with SimpsonScarborough to collect quantitative and qualitative data from prospective students, admitted students, admitted students who chose not to enroll, current students, recent alumni, parents and high school counselors to understand how these constituencies perceive Whitman. These findings were shared with campus stakeholders including faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees and Overseers. These findings informed emerging strategic priorities at the time and the strategic planning work that followed. Please see [Exhibit 1.B.4.A](#) and [Exhibit 1.B.4.B](#) for more information.

Similarly, during 2023-2024, the college has partnered with the Art and Science Group to help the college develop an institutional strategy that recognizes the college's strengths in connecting a rich liberal arts educational experience to pressing world issues. To date, this work has involved or will involve data collection with faculty, staff, and students (current, prospective, and withdrawn) with expected recommendations regarding institutional strategy and planning affecting the curricular, co-curricular and student life experiences, suggested adjustments to recruitment communications, and initiatives for improving retention rates and six-year graduation rates.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.B.4.A SimpsonScarborough WhitmanCollege_QualReport_final](#)

[Exhibit 1.B.4.B SimpsonScarborough WhitmanCollege_QuantReport_v23](#)

Standard 1.C: Student Learning

1.C.1: The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials and include designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

Whitman's curriculum for general education and academic majors is designed to provide students with appropriate content and rigor consistent with its [mission](#). All learning outcomes associated with Whitman's general education program, including writing proficiency requirement, the first-year experience, and distribution requirements are published in the [college catalog](#). Clearly identified student learning outcomes for academic majors that lead to collegiate-level degrees are also published in the college catalog.

A major study program is a coherent array of courses designed to develop mastery of the basic ideas and skills in a particular field or area. Every candidate for a bachelor's degree must complete such a program. The major study may be an established departmental program, an established combined program or an individually planned major.

Additionally, some academic programs are based on national standards for a given field. For example, Whitman's Chemistry department is accredited by the American Chemical Society. Also, Economics and Biology have historically required a major field test as part of their senior assessment in the major.

Whitman does not provide certificates or credentials.

The college's current general education requirements are designed to provide students with breadth, depth, and synthesis of knowledge appropriate for a liberal arts education. Faculty teaching courses that count for general education assess [student learning outcomes](#) based on individually determined benchmarks. The Office of Institutional Research compiles assessment forms (see [Exhibit 1.C.1.A](#)) at the end of every academic year and provides an annual report (see [Exhibit 1.C.1.B](#)) which is discussed with faculty to improve the assessment process and make improvements on student learning outcomes.

Whitman's major programs are very similar to those of other nationally-recognized small liberal arts institutions. At the end of each academic year, [departments and programs assess student learning outcomes in the major](#), according to a department-generated assessment plan. Departments and programs use the results of their assessment to reflect and improve upon student learning outcomes in a variety of ways such as curricular changes and changes to senior requirements. The Office of Institutional Research compiles department and program assessment reports at the end of every academic year and provides an annual report which serves as a springboard for improvements to academic programs and institutional improvements.

In addition, processes external but related to departments, such as reviews by the Curriculum Committee (see page 47 of the [Faculty Code](#)) and [external reviews](#), serve as a way for academic

major programs to ensure appropriate content and rigor consistent with the mission of the college.

As a priority of Whitman’s 2017-2018 strategic plan, the college identified Innovating the Curriculum as one of five major priorities affirming its mission. In 2019, the college adopted a new [First Year Seminars](#) course requirement, which replaced the previous first-year experience, Encounters. Also, in 2022, after six years of reflection and research, the faculty passed a [new general education program](#), which will launch during the 2024-2025 academic year. The new general education program responds to a series of long-standing faculty concerns and reflects the needs and interests of current Whitman students at the same time that it ensures a breadth of coverage that complements major study and bolsters educational priorities. The General Studies Committee has drafted a five-year assessment plan for the new general education program and is discussing a pilot of the plan during the current academic year (see [Exhibit 1.C.1.C](#) for a sample assessment form). In addition, a new Curricular Vision Committee will begin its work in 2024 as part of the current strategic plan.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.C.1.A Distribution Assessment Blank Form 2023-24](#)

[Exhibit 1.C.1.B Distribution Assessment Summary 2022-23](#)

[Exhibit 1.C.1.C Distribution Assessment Blank Form 2024-25](#)

1.C.2: The institution awards credit, degrees, certificates, or credentials for programs that are based upon student learning and learning outcomes that offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.

Whitman College awards credit and degrees for programs based on student learning and learning outcomes that offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.

Student learning and learning outcomes for academic major programs are rigorously vetted to ensure appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning. The vetting process begins at the program level, advances to the division level, and then the Curriculum Committee for approval before going before the entire faculty for a vote. Importantly, establishment or changes to student learning outcomes must be vetted through the college's Assessment Committee for clarity and ability of outcomes to be assessed.

Academic programs are also required to annually assess [student learning outcomes](#) via the senior assessment in the major. Departments rely on this data to help them consistently determine whether their major programs offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning. Senior capstone experiences are also an opportunity for students to synthesize several classes in their major as well as an opportunity to assess student learning outcomes in the major.

Academic programs also undergo [external review](#) approximately every 10 years as a way of evaluating and improving upon the quality of their programs and student learning. The review process includes attention to appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning within academic programs and in relation to the student learning.

Information on college-wide graduation requirements, major-specific requirements, individual course requirements, prerequisites, and credit level is published annually in the [college catalog](#).

Whitman College does not offer certificates or credentials.

1.C.3: The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students.

Whitman College identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes for the college's general education program are made available to students via the [Distribution Requirements webpage](#) as well as the [college catalog](#).

Learning outcomes for the First Year Seminars are made available to students via the [First Year Seminars Learning Outcomes webpage](#), as well as the [college catalog](#).

Learning outcomes for academic major programs are made available to students via the [Department and Program Learning Goals webpage](#), as well as the [college catalog](#).

Faculty are expected to provide syllabi to students enrolled in their courses and to provide student learning outcomes, course goals and clear descriptions of student expectations.

Whitman College does not award certificates or credentials.

1.C.4: The institution's admission and completion or graduation requirements are clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible to students and the public.

The [college catalog](#), which is widely published, available via the college's website and is easily accessible to students and the public, contains clearly defined admission requirements. The catalog is revised and updated annually by each department of the college.

Additionally, the [Admission and Financial Aid section of the website](#) contains information regarding the application process and admission requirements, and also includes a list of frequently asked questions that clearly address common areas of confusion. This section of the website is audited annually to ensure up to date information.

The [college catalog](#) also contains clearly defined completion and graduation requirements.

The Registrar's Office widely publishes and makes available via the college's website a [Senior Handbook](#). This handbook provides seniors and the public information about a number of completion and graduation requirements including credit requirements, major and minor requirements, [application for degree candidacy](#), final grades, and required commencement activities.

Students and advisors are able to access an online Academic Evaluation to track graduation requirements.

During summer 2022, Whitman implemented Self-Service, which is a part of the Student Information System, Ellucian Colleague. Self-Service has an equivalent to the Academic Evaluation, now called My Progress, and a few added features that were previously unavailable to students. One new feature is the ability to plan their degree requirements by semester. Students can now select courses and plan requirements for their duration at Whitman. While they had the ability to review specific graduation requirements needed, they have not been able to plan the actual courses they wished to complete to earn their degree. This change is beneficial to students and academic advisors to ensure they are on track to graduate.

The Associate Registrar also reviews the academic evaluation/progress during the student's junior year to provide an overview of all outstanding requirements to each member of the junior class. The Associate Registrar also reviews seniors' records during break and provides a detailed email (see [Exhibit 1.C.4.A](#)) to each senior letting them know all outstanding requirements for graduation. The required Graduation Application assists the Associate Registrar with this task.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.C.4.A - Sample e-mail from Registrar](#)

1.C.5: The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs.

Whitman engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. On an annual basis, the college assesses student learning in its general education program, including the First Year Seminars and Writing Assessment, as well as student learning in its academic major programs.

For courses that count for general education, individual faculty are responsible for assessing and reporting on one student learning outcome per distribution area per course. Faculty may choose which learning outcome to assess, the assessment mechanism, and benchmark for achievement. As noted in Standard 1.B.1, the Office of Institutional Research generates annual reports of assessment data for general education. The college's Assessment Committee reviews these reports to determine any improvements to the system of assessment. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs reports and discusses this data on an annual basis with faculty to gather input regarding improvements to the system of assessment as well as to solicit input regarding professional development opportunities to support ongoing assessment of student learning.

Assessment of student learning outcomes in the First Year Seminars is the responsibility of individual faculty teaching in this program. The Director of the First Year Seminars manages the assessment process which includes collection and analysis of assessment data, generating reports, and making recommendations to improve student learning based on assessment data.

Incoming students are required to take a writing assessment prior to enrolling for their first semester. The assessment is administered and scored by faculty teaching Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse (RWPD) 170: Language and Writing. Students who do not earn a passing score on this assessment are required to pass RWPD 170 before graduating or complete the writing proficiency requirement through transfer or equivalency credit before graduating. Prior to Fall 2020, student writing for students enrolled in RWPD 170 was assessed with a comparison of pre- and post-course scores. With the implementation of the new First Year Seminar course in Fall 2020, this pre- and post-course assessment was put on hold. A new assessment plan for RWPD 170 is currently being developed.

Assessment of student learning outcomes in academic major programs is a primary responsibility of department chairs and program directors. Departments and programs develop a rotational three-year plan to assess all student learning outcomes. Every year, departments and programs assess at least one student learning outcome associated with the senior assessment in the major. The Office of Institutional Research generates annual reports of assessment data for academic departments and programs. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs reports and discusses this data on an annual basis with faculty to gather input regarding improvements to the system of assessment as well as to solicit input regarding professional development opportunities to support ongoing assessment of student learning.

The Center for Teaching and Learning and the Associate Dean for Faculty Development support assessment through programming and training offered to faculty on an annual basis.

Academic departments also undergo an [external review](#) approximately every 10 years. The primary purpose of external reviews is to understand, evaluate, and improve the educational quality of the College's academic departments and programs. Each external review includes an alumni survey of the last 10 years of graduates in that department. The survey includes a set of questions asking alumni to evaluate the extent to which the department was effective in achieving its learning goals.

Whitman also regularly surveys seniors and graduates about the quality of learning associated with specific intellectual skills such as writing, speaking, and working collaboratively. The college utilizes this data to consider and make improvements to student learning and instructional programs. Please refer to Exhibits provided in 1.B.1.

Whitman College affirms the central role of the faculty to establish curricula. Specifically, the college's [constitution](#) (Article V, Section 2) and the [Faculty Code](#) (Chapter I, Article VII, Section A) state, "The Faculty shall have the power to arrange courses of study, to take proper measures for the government and discipline of the students, and to suspend and expel offenders as may be deemed necessary." Additionally, the [college catalog](#) states, "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" (page 9).

The Whitman College [Faculty Handbook](#) recognizes the central role of faculty to assess student learning in its general faculty job description. Among the central duties associated with teaching, a faculty member will "Undertake assessment of individual courses and participate in the assessment of the department learning goals" (page 8).

Regarding Whitman's General Education Curricula and Program, the General Studies Committee, a faculty-led committee, is charged with supervising and administering the General Studies Program. This includes vetting of new general education courses, vetting substantive changes in existing courses, and making changes to rules and requirements of the General Studies program. For more information about the General Studies Committee, including membership, please refer to the [Faculty Code](#) (Chapter I, Article IX, Section 10).

The Curriculum Committee, a faculty-led committee, serves as a consultative body for the entire faculty in matters pertaining to the curriculum at the level of individual course and major proposals as well as the level of considering how various elements of the academic program fit within the overall curriculum of the college. This body reviews all proposals from departments and programs for changes in the curriculum, including adoption, deletion, and substantive alteration of courses, major programs, and minor programs. For more information about the Curriculum Committee, including membership please refer to the [Faculty Code](#) (Chapter I, Article IX, Section 20).

Attached to the work of the Curriculum Committee, any changes or additions to student learning outcomes associated with a major program or concentration must go through the Assessment Committee to determine whether these can be assessed in a meaningful way. For more

information about the Curriculum Committee, including membership please refer to the [Faculty Code](#) (Chapter I, Article IX, Section 19).

Whitman offers support to individual faculty, academic departments, and cross-disciplinary teams of faculty and staff who seek to develop and innovate curricula, develop assessment of student learning and improve learning in individual courses and instructional programs. Further information on these grant opportunities and examples and reports of completed projects can be found on the [Center for Teaching and Learning Pedagogical Inquiry Grant program website](#). Applications for Pedagogical Inquiry Grants are vetted by the [Center for Teaching and Learning Steering Committee](#).

1.C.6: Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor level programs or within a General Education curriculum, institutional learning outcomes and/or core competencies. Examples of such learning outcomes and competencies include, but are not limited to, effective communication skills, global awareness, cultural sensitivity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and/or information literacy.

Consistent with its [mission](#), Whitman College establishes and assesses across its academic programs and within its general education program, institutional learning outcomes and core competencies it expects all students to achieve. The college's General Studies Program, including the First Year Seminars and the Writing Proficiency Requirement, emphasizes breadth and perspective, diversity of knowledge, interrelatedness of knowledge, and community of shared intellectual experience. In addition, the [distribution requirements](#) establish various institutional learning outcomes reflecting the college's mission to provide a "rigorous liberal arts education." These include effective written and oral communication skills, quantitative analysis, creative problem solving, interpretation of cultural difference, and engaging with ideas that expand one's cultural perspective.

Faculty, staff, and students actively participate in establishing and reviewing institutional learning outcomes associated with the college's general education program. More specifically, the General Studies Committee which includes faculty representatives across divisions, representatives from the Registrar's office, students, and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, is responsible for supervising and administering the General Studies program, which includes developing a process to establish and review the program's student learning outcomes. Changes to student learning outcomes are vetted through the college's Assessment Committee and Curriculum Committee and are finalized via an all-faculty vote.

Whitman's general education program serves as the foundation upon which students build further study and inquiry through an academic major. Academic major programs comprise a coherent array of courses designed to develop mastery of the basic ideas and skills in a particular field or area. Virtually all academic departments and majors contribute to the college's general education program in some form, either through courses that satisfy distribution requirements and/or contributions to the First Year Seminars. All academic major programs identify [student learning outcomes](#) expected of students who complete major requirements.

Regular and systematic assessment of general education student learning outcomes include assessment of the First Year Seminar program, assessment of writing proficiency (see [Exhibit 1.C.6.A](#)), and assessment of courses that count for distribution requirements. Departments and programs assess student learning outcomes for senior majors to determine competency and mastery. Exhibits pertaining to these assessments have been provided in 1.B.1 and 1.C.1.

To better reflect and respond to the needs and interests of Whitman students, the college will implement a new general education program beginning in Fall 2024. Initially developed through an all-faculty retreat and subsequent participation by a team of faculty and staff at an AAC&U General Education Institute, this program will provide a breadth of coverage that complements study in academic major programs, introduces students to a range of disciplinary approaches, and

reflects institutional values, bolsters educational priorities and is consistent with the college's mission. In addition, the General Studies Committee and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee have developed and finalized a five-year plan for assessment of student learning outcomes and plans to pilot the assessment mechanism during 2023-2024 academic year. A sample assessment form can be found in Standard 1.C.1.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.C.6.A - Writing Assessment Rubric](#)

1.C.7: The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning support-planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.

Whitman uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.

The college uses the results of its annual assessment of general education, including the First Year Seminars and writing proficiency, to improve student learning outcomes at the course and programmatic level and to inform professional development opportunities for instructors on such topics as assignment design, utilization of rubrics, and assessment of student learning outcomes. Departments and programs also use the results of their annual assessments to inform academic learning support-planning and practices to improve student learning outcomes.

Writing Assessment and RWPD 170/Writing Proficiency

Beginning in Summer 2017, Whitman's incoming students have taken a writing assessment to gauge their preparedness for college-level writing and identify what supports would be beneficial. Each assessment is rated anonymously on a six-category [rubric](#) by at least two experienced writing instructors. Students who earn a failing score of 58% or lower on this assessment and do not have either transfer course or standardized test equivalency credit are placed in RWPD 170, Language and Writing.

From 2017-2019, this assessment was conducted during orientation, with students completing a brief reading and written response in proctored classrooms. Despite changing the assessment's timing and structure to an online and earlier summer activity, as necessitated by the Covid pandemic in Summer 2020, student scores have remained statistically stable: since fall 2018, with the exception of fall 2021 (when the average score was 13.6), the average score for each year has ranged between 14.1 and 14.6, with an overall average score of 14.3. These changes have included sharing the evaluation rubric with students and widening the assessment time window to accommodate incoming students. Also stable has been data showing statistically significant improvement in the writing of students who take RWPD 170, collected from 2017-2020. Repeating the writing assessment at the end of the semester, students who took RWPD-170 improved, on average 4.5 points on the rubric, compared to an average improvement of 2.0 points for students who did not take RWPD-170.

In preparation for the 2024 writing assessment, the College is considering a follow-up sample assessment to evaluate the RWPD 170 program, and considering updating the descriptions under the categories and values of the rubric to reflect the updated assessment situation.

Academic Programs: Chemistry and Mathematics

As described in Whitman's [Year Three self-evaluation](#), in 2018 when the college initiated a systematic plan for all academic programs, Whitman's Chemistry department undertook a comprehensive assessment of student learning. While Chemistry has relatively few majors, the department teaches a significant number of students, with roughly 50% of each incoming class taking introductory general chemistry (CHEM 125 and 126).

For many years, a chemistry placement test was completely optional for incoming students. It was essentially meant to track students into either introductory general chemistry, or, for those who had had lots of high school chemistry and scored high on the placement test, into advanced

general chemistry (CHEM 140). This arrangement was satisfactory for a long time, but in recent years, the chemistry faculty began to notice that a subset of students consistently failed to thrive in general chemistry. Eager for clues as to why this was happening, they asked the office of Institutional Research to gather data on the math SAT scores of incoming students. Incoming students with low math SAT scores roughly correlated with low test scores and low grades in General Chemistry. The Chemistry department responded by changing the chemistry placement exam and making it required instead of optional.

Currently, a rigorous chemistry placement tool (CPT) that covers math skills, quantitative reasoning, and typical chemistry concepts in high school chemistry courses is in place. The purpose of CPT is to ensure that students can enroll in an introductory chemistry course (CHEM 111 + CHEM 125, only CHEM 125, or CHEM 140) that suits their level of preparation. The college first offered a problem-solving in chemistry (CHEM 111) in Fall 2017 for students who demonstrated the need for additional math and quantitative reasoning skills while taking general chemistry I (CHEM 125). Test scores have improved for students who have taken the supplementary course along with CHEM 125. Due to its benefits and student demand, as well as changes to the Gen Chem curriculum, the college began offering a second-semester problem-solving course in Chemistry (CHEM 112) in Spring 2023 along with CHEM 126.

As Whitman continues to diversify its student body, the college has seen an increasing number of students not ready for Calculus I—the lowest level of mathematics offered at the College. Some STEM-interested students were forced to take a pre-calculus course elsewhere before taking Calculus at Whitman. This curricular gap made it difficult for these students to complete a STEM major. The college learned of this problem by reviewing data from the admissions office about math-preparedness of matriculating students.

To respond to this issue, the math department faculty developed a co-requisite model calculus course with just-in-time pre-calculus instruction for these students. First offered in Fall 2022, data suggest that the new course is successful at taking less well-prepared math students and getting them ready for Calculus II at the cost of only one additional credit hour of work. At the conclusion of Calculus II, the initially under-prepared students that took the new course were indistinguishable from their Calculus-ready peers. As a side bonus, the course has been effective for students that have not taken a math course for several years. The college will continue to review persistence and achievement data for these students and will adjust the curriculum accordingly.

Academic Support Programs and Services

In addition, academic support programs and services conduct their own assessments to inform learning support planning and improve student learning outcomes.

[Academic Resource Center](#) (ARC)

The ARC provides the following services to support student success:

- **Peer tutoring**: Available to all Whitman students free of charge, peer tutoring occurs in a wide range of subjects. Students may request tutors for specific classes, or for “academic coaching” with topics such as time management and other academic skills that are not confined to a single course.

- [Disability Support Services \(DSS\)](#): To ensure equal access for students with disabilities, the ARC DSS specialist works with students to determine reasonable accommodations in classes and in all aspects of their college experience. ARC partners with faculty and offices across campus as needed. ARC provides testing scheduling and space for students who have accommodations for modified testing.
- [Academic coaching](#): ARC staff meet one-on-one with students to boost academic success through troubleshooting challenges and building academic skills. In addition, students on Academic Probation are required to work with the ARC through participation in one of two ARC-led workshops: Academic Skills or Thrive in Action. Students on Academic Warning have the option of joining these.

ARC staff also meet with students whose instructors have submitted Academic Concern Reports. These conversations with students may require only a single meeting to resolve the cause of the student's struggles, but the meetings may also lead to discovery of deeper academic or non-academic concerns. Therefore, a meeting may lead to establishing weekly academic coaching appointments or to referrals to seek accommodations, peer tutoring, Counseling, Student Health, or other services.

Assessment efforts in each of these areas is discussed below. The gist is that in the past, the small ARC staff worked to the extent of its capacity in order to meet student needs and daily demands. That left little time for formal or sustained assessment, although there were intermittent efforts.

Whitman has moved aggressively this year, matching strong institutional commitment with increased funding for ARC staffing, so that meaningful assessment work can begin. With the hiring of a Director of Academic Support Services at the beginning of FY 2023-2024, and a Testing & Tutoring Coordinator at the start of the fall 2023 semester, the ARC enhanced its capacity to establish and carry out assessment. Specifically, assessment work is highlighted in the new director's principal accountabilities and includes implementation of assessment of academic support services with a focus on reduction of equity gaps and improvement of services.

These goals include assessment of the ARC's alignment with its own stated mission as well as Academic Affairs staff core values, and institutional strategic planning priorities and themes. Unfortunately, enactment of those efforts was temporarily postponed by a family medical crisis for the ARC director that spanned late July through November, compounded by the medical leave of the ARC's Disability Support Services Specialist and the training of the new Testing & Tutoring Coordinator. Now with 2024 spring semester underway, assessment plans have been resumed with earnestness and energy.

Peer Tutoring

Among its principal services, the ARC matches qualified peer tutors with students who request tutoring for individual courses and for academic skills coaching. Meeting this demand—finding and hiring tutors, matching tutors with students, and managing payroll—while fulfilling the ARC's other functions has stretched the ARC staff such that to this point there has not been consistent assessment of the quality or effectiveness of peer tutoring. There has not been sufficient staff to observe tutoring sessions, provide pedagogical training or skills development

to tutors, evaluate tutor performance, or analyze data to determine the impact of tutoring on student success.

With the Winter Break and spring 2024 semester, assessment planning will resume. ARC recognizes the need to plan and execute the following measures:

- Establish Student Learning Outcomes for peer tutoring.
- Develop additional training materials for tutors as well as materials for ongoing development.
- Design a realistic, sustainable plan for observing a cross-section of tutors and providing constructive feedback.
- Create a tutor evaluation form for students, and create a self-evaluation form for tutors. Work with Institutional Research to ensure that the questions enable us to develop direct and indirect measures of the effectiveness of peer tutoring. The ARC's Testing & Tutoring Coordinator has developed in consultation with Institutional Research evaluation forms for both tutors and tutees. These will be deployed and will give us baseline data and a basis for setting future goals.
- Gather baseline data on the impact of peer tutoring on retention, completion, progression, GPA, success, and graduation rates for tutees and for those who have worked as peer tutors. Then establish benchmarks and escalating goals.
- Once data begins to come in, disaggregate the data to determine whether ARC is delivering peer tutoring services equitably and inclusively, and whether the impact is equitable. Then establish benchmarks and escalating goals.
- Plan periodic surveys of graduates who have used or worked as peer tutors for their reflections on its impact on their educational and professional journeys.
- Determine from evaluation data whether there are pockets that are not requesting peer tutoring—such as particular academic departments, international students, student athletes, or racial, ethnic, gender or other demographic groups evident in disaggregation. Then develop outreach strategies.

Disability Support Services (DSS)

With Spring 2024, assessment plans for a comprehensive overview of disability support services are underway in consultation with Institutional Research. Equitable provision of services across all student groups and demographics will be a central focus as we seek to establish qualitative and quantitative baseline knowledge of how students are accessing and experiencing DSS.

Among other services, Whitman's DSS provides note takers for students with that approved accommodation. The Testing & Tutoring Coordinator has developed a [draft of an effectiveness survey](#) comparable to the form developed for tutors. This is a modest first step, but it does illustrate a commitment to launching a new era of assessment.

Academic Coaching

Peer tutors' academic coaching on academic skills (time management, exam preparation, etc.) will be assessed as part of tutor and tutee assessment. The ARC has not had the capacity to perform assessment of academic coaching by ARC staff in individual appointments with students.

However, the ARC has had some consistency issues with assessing the workshops it designs and leads that are required for students on Academic Probation (and available to students on Academic Warning Status). Students are asked to do a pre-workshop study skills self-assessment when they sign up, and then at the end of the course to perform another self-assessment. Although subjective, these results do provide a comparative sense of whether the students find the workshops beneficial, tracking their growth, stasis, or regression for each academic skill taught, and thereby giving us some information for making curricular changes to workshops. We have also done some recent semester-to-semester tracking.

Center for Writing and Speaking (COWS)

Students who work in the COWS have been through a semester-long two-credit course, RWPD 310 - Tutoring Writing, on the theory and practice of tutoring writing. After taking the course, they are eligible to apply for the position with two references from professors. COWS peer coaches meet with students one-on-one across disciplines and student standings, and the peer coaches themselves come from a variety of majors. Between January 2023-January 2024 COWS has seen 522 individual appointments, with 201 individual students. Many students come back regularly once they have come once. In the past five years, COWS has had 2941 appointments. According to reported data, approximately 70% of these appointments have been with first-year students. The majority of these appointments have been for writing help, but an increasing number have been for speaking/presentation preparation. For more information about COWS usage over between January 2018-January 2024, please see [Exhibit 1.C.7.A](#).

Additionally, in support of the First Year Seminar Program, COWS peer coaches have regular conversations with faculty teaching in this program to communicate what they are seeing in students who use COWS services to support writing in the FYS.

In support of seniors, the COWS offers between two to four thesis “bootcamps” a year (the Covid years adjusted this number), in which seniors participate in timed focused writing sessions and are offered tutor-support where needed. These “bootcamps” regularly fill up. COWS offers approximately 25 spaces, given the room size and always either fills every space (often with a waiting list) or comes very close to filling them all.

Students who come to the COWS for one-on-one consultations are sent a survey after each meeting. Only about 20% of surveys are filled. In this sample, approx. 75% rate the session “excellent,” and 20% rate it “very good.” 95% say they will return, and the other 5% say they might return. 95% also say they received the help they desired.

Following are some of the student survey comments:

“[Tutor] was great about asking me questions that helped me see where I had to articulate my arguments more clearly.”

“Always blown away by how helpful the COWS are! Even when I think I’m in good shape, they make my work better (not in an overly critical way, but just in a helpful way).”

“[Tutor] offered some very constructive advice to my group after my group went through our very long presentation. She was very patient and helpful.”

“I kinda thought that COWS wouldn't be of any help to me because no one has ever been able to give me understandable advice on how I can make my essay better, people talk in abstract terms which is a headache. [Tutor] was great with not being vague in what I need to do to make my essay better. Cheers guys, you've gained a customer or whatever I am.”

For more information about student survey comments between January 2018-January 2024, please see [Exhibit 1.C.7.B](#).

The COWS director regularly reads survey responses as well as the “client report forms” filled out by the peer coaches to see where interventions may be helpful. The director offers bi-weekly training to current student employees covering topics they have raised or that have been raised to her attention via this reporting system. This training as well as the prerequisite course ensure that students coming to the COWS are receiving the best, most current forms of tutoring. These regular meetings also provide professional development for the student coaches, who often use this experience as a reference when seeking employment or graduate school admission after college.

In addition to this regular review of the COWS, the director visits individual consultations to observe the student coaches in action and she facilitates peer review amongst current coaches. Furthermore, students in the prerequisite course also observe various sessions and write about them in reflection papers turned into the instructor, who is the director.

Though the director of the center is a scholar in rhetoric, she also conducts research in writing pedagogy and writing center practices. [One such piece](#), co-authored with another small liberal arts college writing center director, was based on surveys of student consultants concerning empathy in the center and their understandings of their roles as tutors. The training in the prerequisite course and the bi-weekly meetings have since been informed by this study. This article can provide more detailed qualitative data on the workings of the COWS and the training of the student consultants.

[STEM Hub](#)

The STEM Hub is used heavily by Whitman students as both an informal site to gather for studying, and for more formal activities scheduled by departments and STEM-oriented representatives in the [Career and Community Engagement Center](#). (CCEC). Informal observations of student/faculty participation in the activities hosted by the STEM Hub support the conclusion that this centrally-located, welcoming and accessible center is important for advancing inclusion and student success. Numerous departments use the STEM Hub for drop-in tutoring, office hours and review sessions. Specifically, Biology, Chemistry, Math and Physics departments use the Hub most heavily, by hosting multiple sessions each week. The Geology department also coordinates tutoring through the Hub.

In a recent informal survey of all faculty (see [Exhibit 1.C.7.C](#)), of the approximately 50% of faculty who responded, most reported that they have used the Hub in their work with students. Some individual faculty use the Hub for office hours or review sessions. Faculty have observed increased attendance and note that the location and centrality of the Hub has helped minimize

some of the barriers that can otherwise reduce student participation. All who responded to the survey identified at least one (and often all) of the Hub-sponsored events in the survey as important to the mission of increasing success and inclusion in STEM for students.

Anecdotal data from the college's CCEC STEM-focused career specialist whose office is located in the Hub are noteworthy in terms of drop-in appointments. Specifically, compared to when the specialist's office was located in the student campus center, the number of drop-ins rose from "4 over August 1-December 12, 2022 to 55 over August 1-December 12, 2023." These data seem to indicate that having a staff member stationed directly in the STEM Hub yields increased contact and support for students regarding advising, majors and academic planning.

[Penrose Library](#)

As detailed in the [Penrose Library Mission and Guiding Principles](#) and its [teaching philosophy](#) and [learning goals](#), the Instructional and Research Services department guides students through the research process, helping them develop critical thinking skills to conduct research, synthesize information, and communicate the results of intellectual inquiry through a teaching program integrated into classes; credit-bearing courses; and reference services.

These learning goals are based on Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education and are arranged to align with students' courses of study. With information literacy (IL) a requirement of the first-year seminar, Penrose librarians target a [subset of IL goals](#) most compatible with each semester's focus and collaborate with faculty on ways they can augment their assignments to insert IL components. Penrose has used a variety of methods, including surveys, email or meetings to gather feedback on and inform library instruction sessions.

Penrose Library also gathers feedback from its users by administering the MISO [Measuring Information Services Outcomes] survey. The [MISO Survey](#) is a web-based quantitative survey designed to measure how faculty, students, and staff view library and computing services in higher education conducted every 4 years. This analysis focuses on survey results from Whitman faculty, students, and staff. Results are also compared to the "MISO comparison group" (which is a subset of Whitman's self-defined 'panel of 19'). Findings from the survey ([2013](#), [2017](#)) help guide decision making and strategic planning for the library.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.C.7.A AppointmentStatisticsWC online 2018-2023](#)

[Exhibit 1.C.7.B SurveyStatistics WOnline 2018-2023](#)

[Exhibit 1.C.7.C STEM Hub Informal Survey of Faculty](#)

1.C.8: Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that such credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor and quality.

Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted by Whitman College according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. These policies, detailed below, are provided in the [college catalog](#), which is publicly available on the college website.

Whitman accepts credit that is academically oriented and within the liberal arts tradition from appropriately accredited two- and four-year collegiate institutions. A total of 70 credits of advanced standing (college-level) transferred from other regionally accredited collegiate institutions is the maximum non-Whitman work creditable toward a bachelor's degree. This includes credit allowed on the basis of scores earned on the Advanced Placement Test of the College Board, higher-level courses for the International Baccalaureate, GCE (Cambridge International) A-Level Exams, Running Start courses, participation in the Gateway Program with Walla Walla Community College or certain military service. Credit earned exclusively from two-year colleges is limited to 62 semester credits applicable toward a bachelor's degree. AP and IB courses and their Whitman equivalents are listed in the college catalog.

Up to 30 credits awarded from AP, IB, GCE (Cambridge International) A-Level exams may be applied toward the 124-credit degree requirements, but may not be used to satisfy Distribution Requirements. Running Start, College in the High School, or a similar program may be used to satisfy Distribution Requirements or general degree credits.

Whitman College does not accept or award credits for the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) general or subject examinations or DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST).

To the greatest extent possible, the Registrar's Office ensures that all transfer and prior learning work is consistent with a liberal arts curriculum. It seeks to determine whether the proposed transfer credit is professionally or vocationally oriented, which would make it ineligible for transfer credit, by systematically examining the transfer students' official transcripts and by reviewing the sending institutions' course catalog descriptions available on the web and using TES database materials provided by College Source. Whenever sufficient uncertainty exists regarding the suitability of a particular transfer course, the Registrar forwards the relevant documentation to the appropriate academic department for its evaluation and recommendation.

Whitman College accepts transfer work on a course-by-course basis, and therefore participates in no articulation agreements. Transfer credit from the international study experiences of Whitman students is reviewed by the College's Off-Campus Studies Office, which works closely with the Off-Campus Studies Committee, a faculty steering committee, and the Registrar.

Off-Campus Studies staff guides students through the process for obtaining transfer credit from their intended OCS program. This is primarily through completion of the [Off-Campus Studies Course Approval Form](#), which is one part of the Whitman OCS Application. On the form applicants list the OCS/study abroad courses they intend to enroll in and obtain pre-approval from their major adviser for the transfer of major credit. The student's OCS adviser undertakes a final review to ensure that the student is taking courses that will be applicable to the Whitman degree and aid them in progress toward degree completion. The new [OCS Transfer Credit Database](#), launched in 2022, serves as a historic record of how OCS/study abroad courses have transferred to Whitman in the past. This tool helps students identify suitable transferable courses and gives faculty advisers a reference point about past transfer credit practices for OCS courses.

1.C.9: The institution's graduate programs are consistent with its mission, are in keeping with the expectation of its respective disciplines and professions, and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. The graduate programs differ from undergraduate programs by requiring, among other things, greater: depth of study; demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or relevant professional practice.

Whitman College does not offer graduate programs.

Standard 1.D: Student Achievement

1.D.1: Consistent with its mission, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational programs. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advice about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

Consistent with its mission, Whitman College recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational programs. Successful outcomes for Whitman graduates begin by recruiting students who will thrive at the College.

Whitman's Admissions Office works proactively throughout the year, and in close collaboration with other institutional units, to recruit students who will succeed in the rigorous academic atmosphere of Whitman, and who will contribute in positive ways to help build a vibrant community at the College and in the local community. For the entering Fall 2023 first-year class, the total number of applications was 6,140. Admission was offered to 3,047 first-year students of whom 446 matriculated.

Admitted students are selected on the basis of their high school academic record, including both the grades they earned and the rigor of the coursework they pursued, the quality of their writing, the depth and breadth of their co-curricular involvement, and how their personal qualities and character might impact the Whitman community. For detailed data about the profile of applicants, admits, and matriculants, plus detail regarding admit rate, yield, and financial aid, please see the [Whitman College Factbook](#).

Recruitment of new students to Whitman is multifaceted and, for many incoming students, is the result of multiple years of coordinated efforts primarily between the Office of Admission, the Office of Financial Aid, the Office of Communications. These offices work together to identify prospective students as early as 10th grade with interests that align with Whitman's offerings, communicate about Whitman's programs and distinctive characteristics via electronic and print messaging, and curate in-person connections through both visit programs on Whitman's campus and admission staff travel to regions of strategic importance to meet with students at their high schools, at college fairs, or individually.

Specific areas of recruitment focus include targeting geographic regions that send substantial numbers of students, partnerships with organizations and schools that serve first generation and low-income students, and innovative financial aid practices, most notably Whitman's Early Financial Aid Guarantee, which makes it possible for students to know exactly what their financial aid will be before they even submit an application for admission to Whitman.

The Office of Admission also partners with other departments at Whitman in the recruitment of new students. Specifically, by offering scholarships through Athletics, Music, Fine Arts, Theater and Dance, and Debate and Forensics, the college is able to directly connect with students and maintain regular and timely communication about academic requirements. In addition, the Office of Admission collaborates with faculty and staff to create visit experiences for prospective students that highlight Whitman's academic program and information about academic requirements.

Whitman orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advice about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies. Throughout the summer prior to their arrival on campus in the Fall semester, incoming students receive weekly emails designed to prepare them for their transition from high school to Whitman. The emails are staged to coordinate with pre-matriculation tasks such as activating their student account, preferencing First Year Seminar course topics, completing required placement tests, etc. Topics covered in these emails include academic etiquette, academic dishonesty, advising, registration, academic skill set development, student activities, and social development. In 2023, a weekly live video series was added to further prepare students and provide an opportunity to ask specific questions to key staff and faculty around topics which included advising and registration, residence life, writing in the first year, academic divisions, and co-curricular programming.

For detailed data about the profile of applicants, admits, and matriculants, plus detail regarding admit rate, yield, and financial aid, please see the [Whitman College Factbook](#).

Beginning in Summer 2020, Whitman has advised incoming students in the summer to orient them to academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies. Specifically, incoming students meet with an academic pre-major advisor to plan a course schedule and register for up to 14 credits before they arrive on campus in late August. Academic pre-major advisors continue to advise and mentor students, typically throughout their first and second year until the point when they declare a major and transition to working with an academic major advisor until graduation. The Registrar's office also provides a [Graduation Application form](#) to those students who apply to graduate.

Whitman's [Off-Campus Studies office](#) advises students by major to ensure that their plans to study abroad align with major requirements.

Also during the summer, the college provides a number of [online placement tests](#) to help incoming students determine appropriate levels of study in selected subjects including Mathematics, Chemistry, Foreign Languages and Literature, and Writing. Students also have the opportunity to attend summer sessions hosted by academic departments to learn about courses and requirements in an academic major program.

Specific to incoming international students, Whitman orients international students specifically to academic requirements that apply to immigration status maintenance.

Also, since 2015, the College has hosted an additional pre-orientation program for students who are Pell-eligible and/or the first in their families to attend college. The Admissions staff identify students who are identified as First Generation (FG) and/or Pell-eligible and invite these individuals to campus for a five-day intensive orientation program that familiarizes students with the liberal arts model, academic requirements and policies, and academic and other support services on campus.

During [New Student Orientation](#), which is required of all incoming students, students continue to learn about academic requirements, relevant academic policies and the liberal arts educational model. Students meet with their academic pre-major advisors during New Student Orientation to finalize their fall course schedule.

Feedback received through a [survey](#) is reviewed by the New Student Orientation implementation team and incorporated, when appropriate, into the next year's programming. Additionally, faculty and staff who take their own children to college elsewhere are invited to participate in focus groups in an effort to learn what other colleges and universities are doing to welcome new students. Some of the information shared through the focus groups has also been incorporated into New Student and New Family Orientation programs.

1.D.2: Consistent with its mission and in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).

Consistent with its [mission](#) and [strategic plan](#), Whitman College's Office of Institutional Research compiles and publishes an annual [Factbook](#). This resource is widely published and available publicly on the [college's website](#). The Factbook provides composite and disaggregated data on indicators of student achievement such as enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

Whitman completes the Common Data Set (CDS) annually, allowing the college to receive comparative data and participate in a data exchange with peer institutions. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is another source of important comparative data with peer institutions at the regional and national level regarding student achievement, retention and graduation rates in particular. See [Exhibit 1.D.2.A](#) for more information.

In addition, the college annually surveys Whitman alumni who are one, five, and 10 years post-graduation. The Office of Institutional Research summarizes data on education after graduation, primary activity after graduation, impactful activities while in college, and responses to the Gallup Big 6 elements of support and campus experiences. A [summary report](#) is widely published and available on the college's [website](#).

Whitman also disseminates these data and indicators to numerous individuals and units to identify opportunities for continuous improvement regarding student achievement and to eliminate barriers to academic excellence and success. Specifically, graduation and retention rates are shared directly with the President's Cabinet every June and September. The Office of Institutional Research also presents a detailed report on retention to a Retention Committee chaired by the Vice President for Student Affairs. This committee discusses retention by various demographic measures to determine necessary measures to address retention issues and equity gaps in retention.

Whitman administers a survey to seniors every spring semester, rotating three different instruments: the Senior Survey from the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Consortium, the College Senior Survey from the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). These surveys provide self-assessments of learning, measures of satisfaction, rates of participation in high-impact practices, and other important information from graduating seniors. Data from these assessments are used to address any equity gaps. Reports from senior and alumni surveys are sent directly to relevant members of the cabinet who use the information to make improvements in their areas and at the institutional level.

Reports on alumni achievement (graduate school attendance, etc.) that include disaggregated data and comparison data with peer institutions are generally shared on an ad hoc basis. These

data are requested by a variety of constituents, including staff in academic affairs and development. Please see [Exhibit 1.D.2.B](#) and [Exhibit 1.D.2.C](#) for sample reports.

Whitman's Board of Trustees consistently works with a dashboard of metrics which include composite and disaggregated data on student belonging and student achievement.

Every academic department external review includes a survey of the last 10 years of alumni who graduated with that major. Surveys ask direct questions about alumni outcomes and departmental learning goals. Results go directly to the department and are used in the external review process. Please refer to [Exhibit 1.D.2.D](#) and [Exhibit 1.D.2.E](#) for sample alumni surveys and results.

The college utilizes disaggregated data on indicators of student achievement to identify and address multiple factors to close equity gaps. Of note, the college has made extensive use of the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC) student data to understand how factors such as sense of belonging and encounters with racial stress may be related to racial equity gaps in student achievement. The college's use of NACCC data is described in Standard 1.D.4.

Relatedly, the college's Inclusive Excellence Council provides [campus-wide educational opportunities](#) on topics such as promoting student autonomy, understanding subtle acts of exclusion, and racial battle fatigue that may present as factors related to equity gaps in student achievement. The Inclusive Excellence Council also looks at campus climate and campus-wide data and is empowered to recommend strategies aimed at reducing equity gaps including those related to student achievement.

The college also maintains a membership in the [Liberal Arts Racial Equity Leadership Alliance](#) (LACRELA). LACRELA provides numerous educational opportunities to address factors such as utilization of campus climate data and understanding students' racialized classroom experiences that may relate to equity gaps in student achievement data. Participation in [LACRELA sessions](#) is open to the campus community.

Looking forward, the anticipated work connected to one of the college's strategic themes, *A Vibrant Campus Community*, aims to develop action items that may potentially yield closure in student achievement equity gaps. This work is particularly focused on student sense of belonging, opportunities for student thriving, enhanced opportunities for student engagement in co-curricular activities, and active support of wellness resources including those related to physical, spiritual, and culturally sensitive mental health.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.D.2.A IPEDS Comparative Graduation and Retention Rates 2023](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.2.B Alumni Graduate Degrees Report 2019](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.2.C Baccalaureate Origins of Doctoral Degrees Report 2020](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.2.D Anthropology Alumni Survey 2023](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.2.E Chemistry Alumni Survey Results Report 2022](#)

1.D.3: The institution's disaggregated indicators of student achievement should be widely published and available on the institution's website. Such disaggregated indicators should be aligned with meaningful, institutionally identified indicators benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions at the regional and national levels and be used for continuous improvement to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources.

Whitman College's Office of Institutional Research compiles and publishes an annual [Factbook](#). This resource is widely published and available publicly on the [college's website](#). The Factbook provides composite and disaggregated data on indicators of student achievement such as enrollment, retention and graduation rates.

In addition, the college annually surveys Whitman alumni who are one, five, and 10 years post-graduation. The Office of Institutional Research summarizes data on education after graduation, primary activity after graduation, impactful activities while in college, and responses to the Gallup Big 6 elements of support and campus experiences. A [summary report](#) is widely published and available on the college's [website](#).

Disaggregated indicators, including retention and persistence data, senior survey data, and academic success data are consistently benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions at the regional and national levels. Whitman consistently benchmarks against indicators for a Panel of 13 peer institutions and six Northwest Liberal Arts Colleges (see [Exhibit 1.D.3.A](#) and [Exhibit 1.D.3.B](#)).

Whitman's guiding principle in consulting disaggregated data is to address equity gaps and to ensure that underrepresented or under-resourced students experience the same kind of success, persistence, opportunity, and sense of community and belonging that other students do. This principle underpins planning, decision-making, and allocation of resources in all regards, as evidenced in institutional work regarding access and affordability (see [Exhibit 1.D.3.C](#)). Some examples of planning and decision-making that have led to allocation of resources to address equity gaps include:

- ongoing support for [Whitman's Summer Fly-in program](#), which aims to provide academic and social support to first-generation and Pell-eligible students to positively affect retention and graduation rates;
- increasing need-based financial aid to make Whitman more accessible to students with financial need;
- reducing and eliminating gaps between college-based aid and expected family financial contribution
- hiring in areas such as the Academic Resource Center, the Division of Diversity and Inclusion, and Student Health and Wellness;
- adding to the curriculum and graduation expectations for students such as required successful completion of Chemistry 111 and demonstrated writing proficiency via writing assessment or completion of RWPD 170;
- enhancing professional development opportunities on universal design, inclusive pedagogy, and programming on teaching and learning post-COVID;

- partnering with the [Posse Foundation](#) to bring ten students from Chicago to Whitman each year;
- participating in the [Consortium for Faculty Diversity](#)

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.D.3.A Comparative Graduation and Retention Rates Sept 2023](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.3.B Baccalaureate Origins of Doctoral Degrees Report 2020](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.3.C Progress Report-Access and Affordability](#)

1.D.4: The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.

Whitman College's Office of Institutional Research uses unit-record level student data to calculate overall retention and graduation rates, as well as disaggregated retention and graduation rates by major demographic groups. The processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators are included in reports generated by the Office of Institutional Research and explained in presentations to campus stakeholders.

These calculations are presented to various campus stakeholders including the Board of Trustees, the President's Cabinet, faculty leadership, specialized working groups and committees, and departments and units to identify and mitigate gaps in achievement and equity.

In addition, composite and disaggregated student achievement data are regularly presented to the Board of Trustees to inform Board-level considerations such as strategic planning and budgetary decisions (see [Exhibit 1.D.4.A](#) and [Exhibit 1.D.4.B](#)). For example, recent budgetary decisions based on disaggregated student achievement data have included hiring additional staff in the Counseling Center, Wellness Center and Academic Resource Center.

Whitman makes extensive use of disaggregated student achievement data for ongoing planning, decision making, and resource allocation. Every semester, the Office of Institutional Research presents overall and disaggregated retention and graduation data to the college's Retention Working Group to aid in planning and resource allocation considerations.

Regarding disaggregated retention data, there is evidence that demonstrates that students of color do not persist at the same levels as white students (see [Exhibit 1.D.4.C](#)). Connected to this, the NACCC student data from 2021 indicate that students of color report lower levels of mattering, affirmation, and sense of belonging (see [Exhibit 1.D.4.D](#)). Based on this data, the Division of Diversity and Inclusion has implemented strategies and is allocating resources to mitigate these gaps in achievement and equity. For example, the Division of Diversity and Inclusion assists staff and faculty departments in developing unit-specific DEIA education plans to advance inclusive excellence. Similar to an equity scorecard, the DEIA Maturity Matrix is a custom tool based on the NACCC, utilizing specific pillars of inquiry (e.g. Racial Learning and Literacy, Cross-Racial Engagement, Mattering and Affirmation) to gauge racial climate. Please refer to the [Division of Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report](#) for more information.

While the college regularly communicates indicators of student achievement to faculty, one recent example illustrates utilization of student achievement data resulting in a specific policy change to mitigate perceived equity gaps in receipt of honors in major study and Latin honors. [Exhibit 1.D.4.E](#) provides disaggregated data from 2018-2023 that shows White students are more likely to earn honors in major study and Latin honors compared to other race/ethnicity groups. In addition, First Generation students are less likely to earn honors in major study and Latin honors than students who are not first generation. As one way of addressing these equity gaps, the faculty recently passed a motion (see [Exhibit 1.D.4.F](#)) to remove an overall cumulative GPA requirement from the requirements for honors in major study because of an observation that

students from less well-resourced high schools might struggle in their first year at Whitman and then proceed to do very well. However, the initial struggle would prevent GPAs from being high enough to qualify for honors in the major, even though thesis and other work in the major may very well exceed requirements for honors.

The college's work to mitigate and eliminate equity gaps in achievement is ongoing.

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit 1.D.4.A Whitman Experience Metrics October 2022](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.4.B October 2023 Board Meeting Retention Data Final](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.4.C Detailed Retention Rate Report 2023FA](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.4.D May 20 NACCC Findings Summary](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.4.E Honors in Major Study and Latin Honors by Demographics 2018-2023
Graduates](#)

[Exhibit 1.D.4.F Motion to Amend the Faculty Code 8-26-2023](#)

Conclusion

Whitman is proud of the progress made over the last seven years toward the goals articulated in 2017-2018. Through focused effort, Whitman has become significantly more diverse in every regard and has raised funds that have allowed a dramatic increase in access and affordability for students across the socioeconomic spectrum. Important work to create a genuinely inclusive and welcoming campus, where students have equitable experiences and outcomes, is well underway across the College, with strong strategic leadership. The college regularly assesses the places where it is not yet meeting the goal of inclusive excellence, and is enacting interventions to create equity in an ongoing way - from the Summer Fly-In Program to assessment and tailored education in racial equity practices in each administrative area to Community Learning Days to new approaches to supporting neurodiverse students and campus ADA compliance. Fundraising to meet the full demonstrated financial need of every student from Washington state is complete, and work to extend that promise to all students is part of the current campaign, which is expected to conclude in 2026.

There is more work to do to close equity gaps, and the college will continue to build on best practices to do so. Whitman has added new surveys such as the NACCC and HEDS diversity survey, in order to learn more about the experiences of underrepresented students, as well as focusing in more depth on disaggregated data in its longstanding studies of retention and student success. While the college has enacted multiple learning and professional development opportunities such as speakers, workshop facilitators and training to help faculty and staff develop more tools to close equity gaps, Whitman invites the NWCCU to share their sense of best practices in this area.

The college has evolved its curriculum significantly in the last seven years, and has been very attentive to best practices, equity, and clear learning outcomes in doing so. The new General Studies requirements are a great example of this good work - advancing not just what students learn, but also how they learn. As these new requirements go into effect next year, the college looks forward to having the strong foundation of a program designed around learning goals to enable us to assess effectiveness and make improvements for students. Whitman is similarly committed to assessment of the relatively new First Year Seminar program, and to ongoing assessment of learning the major, especially as it undertakes consideration of updated capstone requirements. The college has developed a number of new majors and programs to meet student needs and interests and anticipates further curricular innovation in the coming year as data from current studies of prospective and current students is brought together to inform new academic directions.

The work to support life and learning beyond the classroom has grown by leaps and bounds over the last seven years. All students now have a career coach from the beginning of their first year at the college, and as this program completes its fourth year in 2025, the college will be able to begin assessing its impact in preparing students for strong post-graduate outcomes. Two significant Mellon grants have bolstered community-engaged learning and research for many students, faculty, and staff. Whitman has added multiple experiential opportunities for students - from expanded civic engagement and research to college-funded internships. In the next few years, the college will look to expand these opportunities so that every student has the promise of a significant experiential engagement opportunity that aligns with their interests.

Whitman College is grateful for the engagement of NWCCU over the past seven years. NWCCU has been an excellent partner as the college defined its key goals and determined the best ways to understand both progress and opportunities for improvement. Whitman looks forward to the conversation with the evaluation team April 15-17, 2024 and to continuing to make the college an even stronger place for students to learn and grow in the years to come.

Addenda

Response to any concerns (findings) raised in the peer-evaluation report of the Year Six, Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (PRFR)

1. Standard 2.G.2: Compliant; “Exclusively having the catalog in pdf form is limiting, especially for browsing through relevant information. The college also reports that it will use Clean Catalog to create future catalogs digitally.”

Response: The college has published [Clean Catalog](#), which is now available for the 2023-2024 academic year.

2. Standard 2.G.3: Compliant; “It was not clear whether there were degrees with licensure offered at Whitman.”

Response: Changes to the Career and Professions section in the college catalog have been made, specifying that Whitman does not offer degrees with licensure.

3. Standard 2.G.5: Needs Improvement; “Whitman reports a cohort default rate for the five years prior to COVID ranging from 0%-1.4% in their report but I could not find it on their financial aid website.”

Response: The cohort default rate has been published on the Whitman website [here](#) and will be updated annually to include several years for comparison purposes.

4. Standard 2.G.6: Needs Improvement; “There needs to be more information on the plans for monitoring the efficacy of advising going forward and the policies and procedures for advisors. Careful monitoring of advising and changes in advising is important.

Response: During Fall 2023, the Academic Advising Committee convened to formulate a mission statement, student learning outcomes, expectations for advisors, and an assessment plan for formal academic advising (pre-major and major). The faculty voted to endorse the mission statement and student learning outcomes, which will be placed in the college catalog and communicated through the college’s website. Professional development policies and procedures and a systematic plan to assess the advising program will be in place by the time of the NWCCU’s site visit during April 2024.

5. Standard 2.G.7: Needs Improvement; “Section 2.G.7 is missing from the report.”

Response: Whitman does not offer distance education. The college apologizes for inadvertently omitting this standard and includes the following:

Standard 2.G.7: The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students, including those enrolled in distance education courses and programs, to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and

credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

Not applicable: Whitman College does not offer distance education courses and programs.