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Thu, Jan 28, 2021 at 9:57 AM

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Financial Sustainability Review Update

As you may recall, the Financial Sustainability Review (FSR) began in November with several working groups. As outlined by President Murray, the FSR goals are to:

- Reduce overall spending by approximately \$3.5 million for fiscal 2022 budget year, including a clear plan to achieve a 10:1 ratio of students to teachers (assuming enrollment of 1,500);
- Identify solutions for more efficient management of resources throughout the college;
- Develop and support programs (curricular and co-curricular) that build enrollment and revenue;
- Develop and support programs that reinforce Whitman's liberal arts mission and are connected to our strategic priorities.

The following is a process update for each working group.

Academic Working Group

The academic group is charged with looking at the whole of the academic sector of the college, including programs and departments, as well as scholarship and professional development opportunities for faculty. The committee has looked at different potential models for a competitive sabbatical program and the costs and savings associated with each of these. These conversations look not only at what

we can offer and afford, but also the programs of our comparison and aspirational schools. We have also looked at faculty professional development accounts and start-up funds, and what potential models (with costs and savings) we might adopt. We have looked at possibilities for both faculty reductions and program eliminations. Differing models have been evaluated in terms of cost-savings, with an eye towards maintaining the depth and integrity of our academic programs.

Administrative Units Work Group

This work group is tasked with reviewing the following areas: Admissions, Alumni Relations, Business Office, Communications, Development, Facilities Service, Financial Aid Office, Fringe Benefits, Human Resources, Technology Services, professional development funding for staff and overall staffing levels.

Beginning in November, the committee focused on building awareness and understanding of the key drivers of costs and revenue. There were several presentations (including benchmark and comparison data) from program areas, and the committee sought feedback from all staff via a brief survey in December. AUWG then reviewed and developed a list that represented potential areas of opportunity. Combined with the data from the presentations, a list of 128 possible opportunities was compiled. The group used a series of discussions and quantitative scoring of the items toward narrowing the list of opportunities to about 30 impactful recommendations.

Student Support Working Group

This working group is divided into five smaller subcommittees for in-depth consideration of individual departments and programs:

- Outdoor Program and Athletics
- Dean of Students Staff, Professional Development Funding for Staff, Student Engagement Center and Intercultural Center
- Library/Off-Campus Studies
- Residence Life and Bookstore
- Health Center and Counselling Center

Subcommittees completed a review of their respective areas in response to a common set of guiding questions. The subcommittees have shared their reviews with the larger group. The whole committee has gathered and shared an initial list of ideas for cost savings, efficiencies, and revenue generating ideas.

On Feb. 1, committees will submit draft reports of their ideas to President Murray, who will share them with the community for input. Following consideration of the community's input, committees will submit final reports to President Murray on Mar. 1.

Announcements

QUARANTINATION PHOTO CONTEST SPRING 2021

Quarantination Photo Contest

Show us a slice of your Whittie life during quarantine for a chance to win some Whitman swag. Creativity is welcome!

Send your submissions to photocontest@whitman.edu by Jan. 30 and include your name, class year and IG handle (optional). We'll be posting top submissions throughout the contest on the Whitman College Instagram so stay connected that way and follow the hashtags #wcphotocontest and #whittielife.

Visit the [Spring Orientation webpage](#) for more info on the contest rules.

Opt-in to Receive Electronic W-2

New Internal Revenue Service regulations mean it is now possible to receive your 2020 W-2 statement online through myWhitman. Federal law requires us to furnish a paper statement by default, so you will need to opt in if you prefer online access.

To opt-in to electronic delivery of your W-2, log in to [myWhitman](#) and click on your primary tab (Student, Faculty, Staff). Select "Online W-2 consent," review the consent statement, and make your selection.

W-2 Forms for 2020 will be available, either electronically or in paper format, based on your selection, by Feb. 1. You will receive an email when your 2020 W-2 is completed and available.

Contractor on Campus

Today and tomorrow Ferraro Excavation will be on campus to repair two service covers. Please use caution if moving through the impacted areas:

1. Between HJT and Sherwood Center (caution tape around it already).
2. Between Library and Memorial (by the banana plant).

Noteworthy

Parker and Alumni Paper Published

Associate Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies Tim Parker, along with several Whitman alumni, has published a [paper](#) demonstrating striking differences in demography between populations of bluebunch wheatgrass on north facing slopes and those on hotter, drier, south-facing slopes at Whitman's Wallula Gap Biological Station. This work shows how topographic position can influence the susceptibility of plant populations to climate change, and in particular raises concerns about the long-term persistence on south-facing slopes of one of the most important plants in the Columbia Basin. This paper was the result of a decade of collaboration between Professor Parker and Whitman biology students, and a more recent collaboration with Professor Bob Shriver of the University of Nevada, Reno.

Whitman Receives Mellon Grant for PNW Just Futures Institute

Whitman is the Washington State participant in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) Just Futures Institute, a transformational regional platform for racial and climate justice recently [awarded a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#). Eunice Blavascunas, associate professor of anthropology and environmental studies, Phil Brick, Semester in the West director, and Stan Thayne, lecturer in anthropology, environmental studies and religion, are developing the innovative, field-based course Whitman will offer in 2022 and 2023 exploring the intersections of the literal wildfires and the metaphorical fires of social unrest burning throughout the region. Other institutions in the PNW Just Futures Institute are the University of Oregon and the University of Idaho.

Submit News of a Personal or Professional Achievement

Happening Today

4 p.m.

Unity Week: Pause

You are invited to Pause, a 20 minute gathering for quiet reflection, centering practice, and community. We will take time to breathe, listen to a poem, and share in each other's company.

7 p.m.

Research Opportunities with Seattle Children's Hospital Info Session

Hear from Ashley Gevaart-Durkin '08 and program manager Christina Riley about research opportunities, the Underrepresented Minority Students in Research Internship Program and NIH Diversity Supplement Connections Program.

[Whitman Events Calendar](#)

Have a virtual event you'd like to share with campus? Email the details to whitmantoday@whitman.edu.

"Whitman Today" is produced by the Office of Communications and is emailed Monday-Friday to Whitman College staff, faculty and students. All times are listed in Pacific Standard Time.

Submissions are welcome! If you have a professional or personal accomplishment to celebrate, an event to publicize or other content to share with the Whitman community, email whitmantoday@whitman.edu. Submissions should be 125 words or less. The deadline for submissions is noon for the following day's newsletter, though submissions may be held for a later date according to space and editorial needs.

Previous issues of Whitman Today are [archived on our website](#).