



Whitman Today

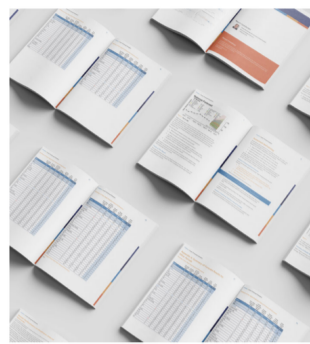
Friday, October 2, 2020

Just the Facts: Alum Creates No-Spin COVID-19 Data Center

Steve McConnell

Covid 19 Books & Articles Projects Work With Me Media Kit Get in Touch

Covid-19 Spin-Free Data Center



You Have a Right to Spin-Free Data on Covid-19

There is no shortage of data on Covid-19. But what's presented is often spin first, data second. This is not useful any time, and it's especially frustrating during a pandemic, when the stakes are so high.

For the data most relevant to you, do you know how well your state is doing in the fight against Covid-19? States vary significantly both in the data they are providing to their residents and in how clearly they are presenting that data.

I believe that you have a right to know — in terms you can understand — how well your state is doing in the fight against Covid-19. You have a right to know how your country is doing, too.

This site provides US national data, state data for every state, state scorecards, forecasts, forecast evaluations, and other data on the pandemic.

Amid a global pandemic, Steve McConnell '85, a software engineer and data scientist, was frustrated with his inability to understand what was going on. He encountered what he saw as biased and unreliable data.

"All of the reporting seemed to be based on the spin first and facts second—or not at all. I couldn't understand what was happening, so I started to look at primary data," McConnell said. That's a lifelong habit he credits to his Whitman education and the importance his professors and courses placed on primary sources.

[Read more about the development of this COVID-19 data center.](#)

Announcements



Help the Alumni Office Recognize Alumni Volunteers

Does your department use volunteers to help run events, network with students, or teach a thing or two? Please let us know when your department works with alumni (in any capacity) so we can acknowledge those alumni who continue to give their time to the Whitman community. To report your volunteers' good works, please complete [this form](#).

Register Now for Harper Joy Theater Intensive Workshop

Registration is now open for a two-weekend intensive, guest artist Gleason Bauer will lead Whitman students through the philosophy and methodology of Moment Work. Using "Concord Floral," the play by Jordan Tannahill, participants will explore how this script and any narrative presentation might be explored and enhanced by Virtual Moment Work. Sessions are 5-9 p.m. on Oct. 3, 4, 10 and 11.

Whitman Votes: a Brief Look at Voting History

The United States has a long history of not granting the right to vote to all its citizens.

Since the founding of this nation, the words from the United States Constitution "all men are created equal" were disingenuous, as these words did not pass the recognition of equality to non-white men.

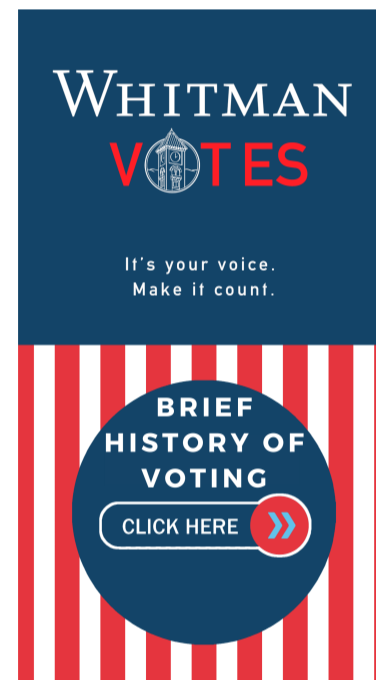
For the first 150 years of this nation, only white-landowning-men could vote. After a decades-long fight the women's suffrage movement won the right to vote for white women. It wasn't until after another 50 years of fighting, activism and sacrifice that Black people were successful in fighting for their right to vote.

However, racist restrictions were imposed upon them to exercise this right. Black people were required to take written and oral exams, to bring documentation, pay a tax, would often still be turned away at the voting booths, and would face rampant voter intimidation.

Even today, there are still several populations of disenfranchised people who pay taxes but do not have the right to vote, especially non-white folks.

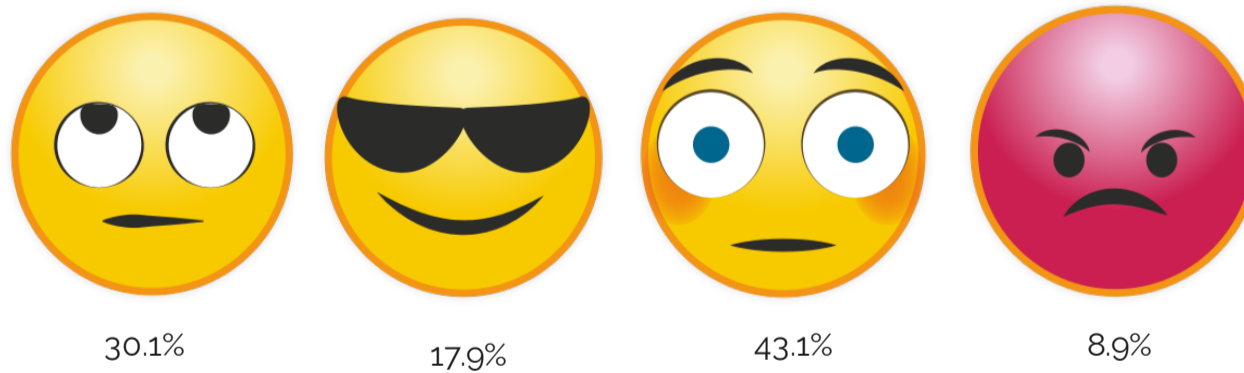
How democratic is our republic when a large portion of our fellow citizens and neighbors go unrepresented in our elections?

It is an individual and collective responsibility to be part of the fight to make our country more democratic. We must listen, act, give our time and resources, and at the minimum vote and help others do the same.



Question of the Week: Answer Edition

On Monday, we asked how you are feeling one month into the fall semester, and it's clear that no matter how brave a face we try to put forward, the vast majority of us are struggling.



But none of us are alone in this difficult time, and the Whitman community continues to develop the relationships and resources that will create in us deeper resiliency, courage and hope.

Self Care Resources

Academic Resources

Employee Resources

Happening This Weekend

TODAY

all day

[October Break](#)

There will be no classes Thursday and Friday this week. Whitman offices will be open and staff will be working regular business hours.

SATURDAY, OCT. 3

1 p.m.

[Swords and Martial Tradition Webinar](#)

A presentation and discussion co-sponsored by the Fencing Club and the Martial Arts Club on swords, martial arts and the importance of context.

[More Upcoming Events](#)

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 Daylight 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.



