



Director of Debate/Forensics

Whitman College

Located in the historic community of Walla Walla in the scenic wine country of southeastern Washington, Whitman's beautiful tree-lined campus is home to an intellectually dynamic and diverse community of some 500 staff and faculty and 1,500 students. Ranked by U.S. News & Report among the top fifty liberal arts colleges in the country, Whitman is proud to count among its distinguished alumni the longest-serving justice in U.S. Supreme Court history, the first woman to serve as a law clerk for a Supreme Court justice, a U.S. ambassador, a nationally-acclaimed poet, the youngest astronaut in NASA's history, the Chief Engineer of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and Mars' Exploration, a former CEO of General Electric, a self-made billionaire, and a Nobel laureate in physics. With an endowment exceeding \$500 million, fiercely loyal alumni, exceptional students, and accomplished faculty and staff, Whitman College continues to build on its national reputation for academic excellence and leadership.

Background

Whitman has a storied history in Forensics, beginning in the 1890s with literary societies. Whitman College Speech and Debate Team was among the most successful collegiate forensics programs in the country, and offered comprehensive intramural and interscholastic competitive debating. Team members received academic credit for their work and focused on policy research assignments, parliamentary case writing, and current event research appropriate for individual events, including practice drills, strategy sessions, and practice debates.

Whitman's debate team traveled extensively to regional and national circuit tournaments and engaged with the highest quality competition. On campus, Whitman hosted the Dovell-Gose Oratory Contest and Intramural Debate Contest. At the interscholastic level, the Whitman Debate team competed in Policy Debate and Parliamentary debate, as well as individual speaking events.

Whitman's excellence in debate was reflected in hundreds of awards, consistent placement each year among the top national teams, including several national championships in parliamentary debate, and impressive showings in national policy debate competitions. Whitman debaters have advanced to elimination rounds at over 90% of the tournaments they have attended in the past twenty-one years. Following is a partial list of their most recent accomplishments:

Parliamentary Debate

- National champions four years in a row (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013), as well as in 2005.
- Over 100 debate and 30 speaking awards won during the 2011-12 season.
- In the finals at 2012 NPDA National Championship and 2011 NPTE National Championship.
- Five teams in elims at 2011 NPDA National Championship; 2nd place team at 2011 NPTE.

- Taken multiple first place, semi, quarter, and octa awards in the past five years.

Policy Debate

- 2012 CEDA National Champion Runner-up
- Three teams in elims at the 2010 CEDA Nationals; a 2010 First Round NDT Team.
- From 2005-2015, 9 teams in elims at NDT and 36 teams in elims at CEDA Nationals.
- From 2010-2015, in elims at Wake Forest, Georgia State, Kentucky, USC, CSU Fullerton, UC Berkeley, and Northwestern.

In 2015, Whitman College suspended its debate program in response to an investigation that confirmed a history of violations of team rules and college policies, and inappropriate behavior and misconduct at all levels of the program. After a two-year hiatus, Whitman College has now decided to re-instate the Debate Program, with a focus on parliamentary debate (only), effective fall of 2018. The College is conducting a national search for a new Director, who will be charged with hiring a new coach, recruiting debate students with generous scholarship support, and restoring the program's national stature.

This ambitious plan is aided by the Rhetoric Studies Department at Whitman, which offers a strong concentration of courses in political and legal rhetoric, social justice and activist advocacy, rhetorical theory and criticism, and public speaking.

Position Description

Whitman College seeks a Director of Debate/Forensics to lead its nationally-recognized Debate program within the context of a rigorous liberal arts experience. The program has been characterized historically by talented debaters, debate scholarships, seasoned coaches with significant debating experience, and strong institutional and alumni support. As a member of the College staff, the Director will report to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and will manage all aspects of the Debate program, including the following.

- Directing, coaching, and preparing the competitive speech and debate squad.
- Facilitating the acquisition of research material; advising on argumentation and case preparation, as well as speech preparation.
- Conducting practice and drill sessions.
- Booking tournament travel arrangements, including transportation, lodging, and meals.
- Traveling with teams to tournaments and related events; overseeing team interactions.
- Judging at evening and weekend tournaments.
- Potentially hosting public high school and college debate competitions on campus.
- Recruiting and developing student debaters of high potential.
- Recruiting and supervising debate coaches.
- Ensuring that all debate staff and team members serve as effective and responsible representatives and ambassadors of Whitman College.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will possess a Master's degree in Communications/Rhetoric/Argumentation; a Ph.D is preferred, with demonstrated commitment to private residential liberal arts education. Recent direct coaching and management experience in national level college forensics is required, with experience coaching parliamentary debate preferred. Experience as an exceptional college debater in either Policy or Parliamentary will be viewed favorably. Two years or more of instructional experience at the post-secondary level are expected. Familiarity with web-enhanced instructional tools and proficiency at the Microsoft Office suite of applications are essential.

Excellent interpersonal, public speaking, oral and written communication skills are required, as is sound judgment, poise, and integrity. The ability to effectively manage debate program staff and to work successfully with diverse constituencies, including alumni, faculty, staff, students, and volunteers, individually and in committees, is critical. Must be highly organized, able to think strategically, handle multiple tasks, prioritize work, meet deadlines, and lead programming in a professional and fiscally responsible manner.

To Apply

All application materials must be submitted electronically via the Whitman College Human Resources Web site at: <https://whitmanhr.simplehire.com/>. Candidates must provide a letter of application addressing qualifications for this position, a resume, and the names of three professional references with current phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Nominations of prospective candidates will be accepted by Dennis Hopwood, Director of Human Resources (hopwoodt@whitman.edu), who will contact nominees to solicit their candidacy. This position will remain open until filled. Review of applications will begin early January, 2018. The new Director is anticipated to start by July 2018.

Any questions about the Whitman Debate program and re-establishing it on campus can be directed to Daren Mooko, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students (mookod@whitman.edu).

Whitman College is building a diverse academic community and welcomes nominations of and applications from women, members of historically underrepresented minority groups, persons with disabilities, and others who would bring additional dimensions to the College's learning environment.