

Date: March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear colleagues,

There will be a lot of communication in the next few weeks about curriculum planning. But today we write to you as your faculty representatives to express our deep gratitude for the extraordinary work you are undertaking to reorganize your courses, learn new technology, attend to your students' questions and concerns, and help figure out how to meet the educational needs of our students during this unprecedented time. We are very aware that many of you are doing this work while also taking care of children at home, worrying about elderly and vulnerable family and friends, and trying to stay healthy yourselves, in a time of great uncertainty and anxiety.

Our impulse in moments of crises is to seek solace in company and community, which makes the imperative to individuate in this moment both necessary and particularly hard. If there is one lesson we are learning from being asked to practice "social distancing" is how real our hunger for sociability is, and how much we depend on each other to live, work, and thrive. We see all the ways that you are reaching out to each other and to your students, despite the hurdles this moment places upon us all, and we want you to know that we are always available to connect (via online means) any time you find yourself lonely, frustrated, or despairing. None of us expected to have to serve in our current roles in a moment like this and we are trying our best to anticipate and respond to your needs. Please forgive us our mistakes, and please reach out to us anytime with any questions or concerns.

Please see below the text of an email addressing the Whitman staff that we plan to send on behalf of the faculty.

With our appreciation,

Kurt, Shampa, and Rebecca

Dear members of the Whitman staff,

We write to you on behalf of the Whitman faculty to express our deep appreciation for the extraordinary work you are doing to support our students and faculty in these unprecedented times. Cleaning and sanitizing our work spaces and residential facilities, feeding and advising and counseling and providing library support to our students, providing administrative assistance to various offices, continuing grounds work, providing technology assistance, and supporting students on off-campus studies programs are only a few of the ways that you working harder and longer than many others on campus. We know that much of this work is invisible and occurs behind the scenes and yet, is absolutely critical to keep the college functioning. We are very aware that many of you are doing this work while also taking care of children at home, worrying about elderly and vulnerable family and friends, and trying to stay healthy yourselves, in a time of great uncertainty and anxiety. The Whitman faculty wants you to know how grateful we are for this work.

Thank-you, sincerely.

Shampa Biswas, Chairs of the Social Sciences

Rebecca Hanrahan, Chair of the Humanities and Fine Arts

Kurt Hoffman, Chair of Natural Sciences and Mathematics