



October 2022

## Whitman College Chapter of the American Association of University Professors Statement on Affordable Housing for Whitman Faculty

(for public circulation)

In the past decade, the price of housing in Walla Walla has skyrocketed upwards; by contrast, faculty salaries have not. Housing is already a serious issue for hiring and retention, and as Walla Walla becomes ever more a wine tourism town, the housing challenges confronting faculty are likely to grow even worse.

***Therefore, the WCAAUP calls for the immediate creation of a new benefits program that directly addresses the housing crisis.***

The WCAAUP believes that a new program must include, but not necessarily be limited to, support for home purchases. As noted, this is vital for faculty recruitment and retention. As well, and relatedly, support for home purchases promises to center the “equity” component of Whitman’s stated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism.

Home ownership is a primary source of wealth accumulation in the United States and also a site of generational wealth transfers. It is also a key channel for the reproduction of racial and class inequalities in society and in the Whitman community. Many faculty of color and first-generation faculty lack the resources to thrive in Walla Walla, including the resources to purchase a home. If they cannot thrive, they are unlikely to remain as Whitman faculty.

Other colleges already provide such assistance to their faculty, and we can learn from their experience (the links are to implemented housing programs):

- 1) [Pomona College](#) 2) [Univ. of Colorado](#) 3) [Mt. Holyoke College](#) 4) [Univ. of Portland](#)
- 5) [Williams College](#) 6) [Santa Clara University](#) 7) [Wesleyan University](#) 8) [Swarthmore College](#)
- 9) [Kenyon College](#) 10) [Simon Fraser University](#)

### **The WCAAUP believes that any new program at Whitman should:**

- \* Be guided by a serious commitment to equity**
- \* Not come at the expense of other benefit programs**
- \* Be viewed as a necessary investment in the future of the college as opposed to simply a new “cost”**

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