Whitman College Review

Power and Privilege Symposium | Executive Summary

Review Committee Team

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Introduction

While the goals of the symposium were initially to address a 2006 event - during which two students wore 'black face'[1] - the intentions of the symposium have expanded to include conversations engaging a social justice education[2] praxis that can contribute to deepening the self-reflexive practices of Whitman community members. We believe the symposium strives to educate the community about the power structures prevailing around the world (including the college itself), questioning many of the paradigms which have socialized[3] the way community members engage each other. It is an aspiration for this symposium to be a brave space where members of the Whitman community can express their experiences on campus and in the world.[4] This is also a critical opportunity to mend tension in campus dynamics between students, faculty, staff, administrators, and - by extension - the Walla Walla community.

Additionally, given the current COVID-19 global pandemic necessitating limitations on both curricular and co-curricular activities, this provides the gift of time and space to think boldly and creatively about DEI work at Whitman. Even more, the sociopolitical climate urges innovative pedagogical practices to deepen learning and perspective-taking for students who are on and off campus.

Stakeholders of Whitman College have noticed, for some time, a misalignment between the origins of the event, and its iterations in years following. With the vision and goals of the symposium needing clear articulations, this review was conducted with an understanding that this symposium is a great benefit for the Whitman campus - particularly as a key tool for developing the leadership and voices of students.

Reconciliation

In a 2019 event surrounding the Power and Privilege symposium, there was a faculty meeting during which a student, a woman of color, was reprimanded. This event is remembered deeply by faculty members, students, and staff. Undoubtedly, this event has contributed to the tenuous relationships and mistrust between faculty, staff, and students.

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[1] Johnson, Sophie. "'Blackface' Incident Ignites Campus." *Whitman Wire*, 26 Oct. 2006, whitmanwire.com/news/2006/10/26/%E2%80%98blackface%E2%80%99-incident-ignites-campus/.

[2] Adams, Maurianne, et al. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. Routledge, 2016.

[3] Harro, Bobbie. "The Cycle of Socialization." *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, by Maurianne Adams et al., Routledge, 2016, pp. 45–52.

[4] Whitman College, Power and Privilege Symposium, External Review Self-Study, 2020, 3.

Summaries and Reflections

Summary of Student Focus Group and Survey Reflections

The Power and Privilege Symposium is a student-led initiative that is currently housed under The Associated Students of Whitman College (ASWC) leadership to ensure the symposium will take place annually and receive the appropriate financial support from ASWC. The current program model is organized and structured "for students by students." Some students articulated a disconnect among the student body, faculty and staff, sharing that their voices have not been heard. There is a desire to continue conversation beyond the day of the symposium and find ways to incorporate it into classroom discourse. Students expressed that, in many cases, faculty do not acknowledge the significance of cancelling classes to talk and process events from the symposium. Students noted they were not able to unpack more of the topics discussed at the symposium because they had to jump back into coursework, seeing it as "business as usual." To this, students shared that some faculty members will hold office hours during the same time as the symposium.

Summary of Staff Focus Group and Survey Reflections

Over the years of the symposium, staff have received mixed messaging from student organizers regarding their participation, resulting in a lack of clarity of how to best support the symposium. Some staff have served as a source of support for students while others would like to be more helpful but do not know how. Staff also highlighted a sometimes-tenuous relationship with student organizers, and some also wonder why alumni are still involved. Similar to students, in symposiums past, staff did not know there was a theme. Those that did know thought it was interesting, but not a throughline of the symposium. Some also suggested that the symposium should be more than one day.

Summary of Faculty Focus Group and Survey Reflections

Overwhelmingly, Faculty of Whitman College believe the symposium to be a curricular imperative for the comprehensive development of students. The tenure of faculty reflects different levels of knowledge of the event - some being here since the inception of the event, and others more novice. No matter their length of time, Faculty know that wide-spread student participation for the symposium is optimal, but has yet to be fully actualized (they have confirmed that a cross-section of group representation is waning). In addition, the last few years of the symposium have been "stale," as one faculty member put it. Other reflections noted during faculty conversations revealed a link between the symposium and the culture of the campus. As one faculty member stated "we have a problem with hearing on this campus. We also have a problem with lack of advocacy."

In regards to the execution of the event, faculty have found the connection between the theme and workshops to not always be clear, marketing and scheduling markers unclear, and varied suggestions for content. Faculty also expressed venue capacity concerns.

Summary of External Audience Focus Group Reflections

For the sake of this section, the phrase "external audience" refers to the Walla Walla community-at-large, as well as alumni of Whitman College. The Alumni focus group participation spanned recent graduates to those that were on campus prior to the establishment of the Power and Privilege symposium. Some Alumni expressed similar frustrations to those expressed by current students - that this event has become a "four-day weekend" - recounting the 2019 faculty meeting where the student was publicly yelled at. Many expressed that the labor falls on women-of-color, and that students should be compensated for their labor. Most alumni feel the symposium should continue, with one disagreeing.

Walla Walla has been experiencing its own growing edges - with the transition into a technology business town. With the backdrop of this more conservative town, Whitman College has become more "left-leaning in a right-leaning town," as described. This tension is felt most due to recent events concerning the anti-semtic implications of a tattoo of a Walla Walla police officer[5].

Strengths and Areas for Growth (SWOT Analysis)

The Power and Privilege Symposium places a lot of confidence in undergraduate students to plan and execute the event. The program is a thoughtful response to a specific incident, but lack of leadership development, clarity in campus structure, and a lived-feeling of the intentions of the program being felt in campus curricular, threaten its complete success. This program has great potential to contribute to the learning, leadership development, and community-building of this campus.

STRENGTHS *Strengths are distinctive and positive things about the experience.*	• Students are able to develop and present educational sessions on topics of interest that align with the themes of power and privilege. This has the potential to be positioned as a unique leadership development opportunity to both recruit students, and to support students' transition post-graduation. • Students involved are able to role model, witness, and experience active listening and perspective-sharing across differences. • Students are provided a large scale platform to discuss issues of equity and inclusion that involves all of the major internal and external constituents of the college. • Students are able to hone event planning, oral facilitation, and leadership development skills from serving on the executive leadership team.

[5] Malzewski, Abby. "Police Officer Nat Small's Tattoo Continues to Stir Controversy." *Whitman Wire*, 17 Sept. 2020, whitmanwire.com/news/2020/09/17/police-officer-nat-smalls-tattoo-continues-to-stir-controversy/.

	● Attendees are (re)introduced to an array of topical concepts and issues related to social justice. ● There is buy-in and support for the symposium across much of the Whitman community. ● The title allows for a variety of topics every year and numerous entry points. ● Increased participation from valued voices in academia/social justice (i.e. - Angela Davis). ● Attempts to fulfill institutional strategic initiatives for diversity and inclusion.
WEAKNESSES *Weaknesses represent problem areas that get in the way of success.*	● Student compensation has not aligned with the amount of labor produced by executive leadership. ● A lack of uniformity in hiring of the executive team. ● A lack of structural expertise and mentorship for session content development and execution. ● There is no clearly defined institutional ownership. ● A lack of trust between student organizers, staff and administration. ● Date and time of the symposium has conflicted with labs. ● Burden experienced by marginalized groups to lead all aspects of planning and execution. ● A need to implement a comprehensive training session(s) specifically for presenters that focuses on DEI. ● A lack of appropriate channels to share feedback. ● Lack of accessible locations to accommodate the audience and accessibility needs. ● The role of the ASWC diversity and inclusion committee and the symposium advisory board currently underutilized. ● First-year and sophomore students who are eager to join, but often adversely impacts academic performance. ● Pressure for this event to cover all facets around DEI. ● A lack of formal assessment tools to measure the impact and success of the program.
OPPORTUNITIES *An opportunity is something favorable that community members could leverage*	● Shared involvement from faculty, staff and students. ● Creating program tracks based on training and development needs of different constituencies. ● Faculty/staff members serve as abstract and session coaches for presentations and day-of event conflict. ● Providing crisis response services for day-of events.

to benefit learning on campus, as well as furtherance of diversity, equity and inclusion goals.	● Continue creating an annual executive report for transition and archiving purposes. ● Creating and implementing a formalized process to support ADA accommodation needs of attendees. ● Replicate appropriate characteristics from the Whitman Undergraduate Research Conference for the Power and Privilege Symposium. ● Create a more clearer defined connection between The Power and Privilege and *Continuing the Conversation.* Also, implementing a web page for *Continuing the Conversation* outlining its intended outcomes and how it supports the efforts of P+P. ● Formalized follow-up discussion and programming after the symposium. ● Implementing a formalized transition process from old leadership to new. ● Invited sessions for Walla Walla organizations and businesses. ● Add a faculty advisor to the planning committee. Offer a course release or compensation. ● Establish a campus-wide commitment to attending the keynote session and educational sessions. ● Create defined roles (e.g. ushers at keynote, community lunch hosts, etc.) for influential student subcultures (e.g. Greek Life and athletics). ● Create a pre-symposium session that equips attendees on community expectations for engagement (active listening activities, dialogue vs. debate). ● Establish a 1-2 credit, yearlong course for student-leaders who serve on the planning committee. ● Debriefing sessions or follow-up dialogues. ● Remote learning opportunities for students off campus or engaged in study abroad opportunities. Offer asynchronous and synchronous access to symposium content. ● Update learning outcomes to align with the strategic initiatives. ● Shift learning outcomes language from the cultivation of "safe space" to a "brave space".
THREATS *Threats are those things that could have a*	● Student burnout and increased sense of apathy for systemic change. ● Faculty vote on whether or not to suspend classes for the symposium every three years. A failed vote may articulate a lack of confidence in student-leaders and supporting faculty member

negative impact on the experience.	organizers. Additionally, it may communicate a lack of interest in the topics of power and privilege and plans to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion. ● Oral history of controversy between student-committees. ● Increased faculty and staff involvement may be considered negative. ● If Power and Privilege is shifted to be housed in another location of campus will this signal a more direct involvement from the college and in turn negatively impact funding from current sources such as ASWC? Will the essence and ethos of the program and brand become tainted amongst the student body if it is no longer "for students by students"? ● Campus Climate reflections on the tensions between staff and faculty, as well as students and administrators (overall sense of mistrust).

Symposium Changes-to-Date

During the 2019-20 academic year, direct and intentional advising from the Intercultural Center along with additional interim measures were implemented to better maximize the executive leadership and symposium potential for future years. Much of this can be found in the symposium reflection[6]. There are some notable systemic modifications implemented worth highlighting.

Internal and External Structural Changes

After recognizing some critical gaps existed with regards to advising, a dual advising model was created and implemented featuring co-advisors- a staff advisor from Student Activities with staff co-advisor from Diversity and Inclusion.

Restructuring the Executive Leadership Board

To better distribute responsibilities across the leadership, an expansion of two program directors and two operations directors were implemented, rather than one per role in previous years.

Key Hiring Process Changes

To better formalize the hiring process, a shift occurred with the selection of Power and Privilege directors, to reflect more in-line with best practices for equitable hiring. Also, the executive director and

[6] College, Whitman. "Building Bridges Not Walls, Power and Privilege Symposium Reflection." *Whitman College*, 2020, www.whitman.edu/documents/Newsroom/News/Power%20and%20Privilege%202020%20Pamphlet.pdf.

marketing director were hired at the same time to encourage partnership and collaboration as these are the only roles on the team that do not have co-directors.

Compensation Changes

As noted previously, there has been ongoing discourse from executive leadership to be better compensated for labor. The 2019 symposium is where much of the frustration concerning appropriate compensation and labor distribution came to the forefront. As a result, there has been increases in all executive team stipends, even in some cases stipends, having doubled from the previous amount in 2019.

Orientation and Training

To better orient and onboard new executive leadership, an orientation for executive and marketing director was created that included the development of purpose, goals, and objectives for The Power and Privilege 2020-2021 academic year. A separate orientation was developed for programming and operations directors. To better foster cohesion amongst the team, a Power and Privilege executive team retreat was created, as well as ongoing executive team DEI and leadership training.

More Intentional Staff Support

To better support the efforts of the Power and Privilege organizers, an advisory board was implemented featuring critical offices and staff members within the Whitman community. The advisory staff committee dedicated to the success of Power and Privilege as a full-campus event features key functional areas such as facilities, events & conferences, student activities, intercultural center, ASWC, and security.

Session Selection

To better strengthen the program, and reduce any potential perceptions of unfairness, a Power and Privilege blind sessions selection process was instituted.

Ultimately, these key changes will help guide the pivoting direction of Power and Privilege moving forward while continuing to address additional needs, issues, and goals of the program.

Summary of Structural Recommendations

Recommendations	Relevant Theoretical Frameworks and Academic Resources	Best Practices/ Exemplar Programs
Assessment	● Boud, D. & Falchikov, N. (Eds.) (2007). Rethinking assessment in	● Create a comprehensive assessment and research plan for the symposium

	higher education: Learning for the longer term. New York, NY: Routledge. ● Boud, D., & Molloy, E. (2013). Rethinking models of feedback for learning: The challenge of design. Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education. 38(6), 698-712.	experience. Examples of data needed: # of sessions, # of attendees, demographic information of attendees, direct measures (likert scales, semantic differentials, etc.), pre and post reflections from attendees as well as student-leader organizers, open text box responses. ● Implement post-workshop sessions for participants to complete immediately following the workshop. ● Pre-survey to arrange which sessions participants will attend (names assigned to each room will support crowd overflow). ● QR link code for surveys.
Continue the Dialogue After Power and Privilege Symposium	● Chickering's Theory of Identity Development (1969) ● Kolb Theory of Experiential Learning (1984) ● Developing Cross-Cultural Competency (1989) ● Social Change Leadership Model (1996)	● Sustained Dialogue[7] strives to bridge social divides through providing community members a platform to dialogue about their experiences and identities. ● Denison University's Listening for a Change Program[8] ● Establish Continuing Conversations as a fixed co-curricular program
Community Guidelines for Engagement for Power and Privilege	● Biren (Ratnesh) A. Nagda, Ximena Zúñiga Fostering Meaningful Racial Engagement Through Intergroup Dialogues (2003) ● Ground Rules + Tools Facilitating Productive Discussions National Center for Atmospheric Research[9]	● After the keynote address, and prior to breakout sessions, it will be critical to establish community guidelines for attendees (engaging in active reflective listening, expectations for engagement and participation such as dialogue vs. debate, using 'I' statements, what to do if triggered at any point, making clear the appropriate mental health resources available on site, who to contact for additional accommodation needs).

[7] LaForce Baker, Denison University, et al. "SDI |." *SDI Home Comments*, sustaineddialogue.org/.

[8] https://prezi.com/brgzxvsr-dpl/listening-for-a-change/

[9] "UCAR." *University Corporation for Atmospheric Research*, www.ucar.edu/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/community-resources/ground-rules-tools.

Create a DEI Peer Educators Program	• Alimo, Craig; Kelly, Robert; Clark, Christine (2002). "Diversity initiatives in higher education: intergroup dialogue program student outcomes and implications for campus radical climate: a case study". Multicultural Education.
	• Beale, R. , Thompson, M. , and Chesler, M. "Training Peer Facilitators for Intergroup Dialogue Leadership." In Schoem, D. , and Hurtado, S. (eds.), Intergroup Dialogue: Deliberative Democracy in School, College, Community and Workplace (2001)
		• Create a peer education program, tailored for Whitman Students that focuses educating students on issues of DEI, power and privilege and social justice.
		  ○ The Peer Educators should establish key partnerships with various student stakeholders within the student body RAs, (affinity groups, athletes, social influencers, Greek Letter Organizations etc.).
		  ○ The Peer Educator cohort should be trained under the IGD framework and also undergo ongoing continued learning opportunities.
		• NASPA Certified Peer Educators [10]
		• Claremont McKenna College's CARE Center Fellow Program[11]

Proposed student leadership structure for P+P Executive Leadership	• The Arbinger Institute, The Arbinger Institute. Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Incorporated, 2018. • Bridglall, Beatrice. "Mentoring and Its Role In Scholarly Development." From Oppression to Grace: Women of Color and Their Dilemmas in the Academy, by Theodorea Regina Berry and Nathalie D. Mizelle, Stylus Pub., 2006, pp. 89–105.	• 2 Co-chairs (to replace the one executive director) • Marketing Committee (3-4 members) • 2 Operations Leads (to replace the one operations director) • To replace program directors: Program Managers (2 per session; est. 10 program managers total) • 2-4 Coaches/Consultants (non-students - members of the Whitman community or outside hires that specialize in organizing, anti-oppressive dialogue, inclusive leadership development) • 2 Financial Officers • 2 Campus Advisors

[10] "Certified Peer Educator (CPE) Training." *Home*, www.naspa.org/project/certified-peer-educator-cpe-training.

[11] "CARE Center Fellow Job Description and Application." *Cmc.edu*, www.cmc.edu/care-center/care-center-fellow-job-description-and-application.

Training and Development for Members of the Whitman College Community	● Chickering's Theory of Identity Development (1969) ● Kolb Theory of Experiential Learning (1984) ● Developing Cross-Cultural Competency (1989) ● Social Change Leadership Model (1996) ● Florian, L. (2015). Conceptualizing Inclusive Pedagogy: The Inclusive Pedagogical Approach in Action. Inclusive Pedagogy Across the Curriculum, 7, 11-24. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479- ● Spratt, J., & Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive Pedagogy: From learning to action. Supporting each individual in the context of everybody. Teaching and Teacher Education, 49, 89-96. ● Sample: Syracuse University BOLD leadership development program[12]	● Create a 1-2 credit course for students who have an interest in power and privilege, as well as those students who are interested in serving on the planning committee as a prerequisite. Topics of interest: resume development, social justice career panel, trauma informed facilitator training, event planning, etc. ● Offer professional development sessions for faculty and staff members through the Center for Teaching and Learning Services at Whitman College. Topics of interest: ways to decolonize the syllabus, implicit bias, etc.
Buy-In and Involvement	● Distributive Justice (1996, 2017)	● Encourage/increase involvement for faculty, staff (hourly and professional) and students by creating program tracks based on training and development needs of different constituencies. Having representation on the advisory board can ideally capture the needs of each group but also create clear expectations for each group with regards to support and participation.
Budget	● Barr, M. & McClellan, G. (2018). Budgets and Financial Management in Higher Education.	● Review the current budget and establish new lines based on market value for keynote speakers, catering costs and other necessary expenditures. There should be a firm commitment from funders of Power and Privilege not to fluctuate based on changes to the program.

[12]"BOLD." *Syracuse University*, studentactivities.syr.edu/leadership/BOLD.html.

Institutional Housing of the Symposium	• Cuyjet, Michael J., Ed.; Howard-Hamilton, Mary F., Ed.; Cooper, Diane L., Ed. (2011) Multiculturalism on Campus: Theory, Models, and Practices for Understanding Diversity and Creating Inclusion 2nd Edition • Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, H. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. New Directions for Student Services	• The program experience needs to reside in the Division of Diversity and Inclusion. Dependable financial support, as well as theoretical expertise are needed to properly frame the program experience and ensure that its outcomes align with other diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives on campus. • Creating a campus wide steering committee to assist the efforts of student organizers. Key members should include but not limited to (Committee of Division Chairs or Provost Office, Intercultural Center, Office of Events, Institutional Research, Human Resources, Office of Diversity of Inclusion, Dean of Students). Also consider adding a faculty member from manifesta.
Establishing Synergy for Power and Privilege	• Cuyjet, Michael J., Ed.; Howard-Hamilton, Mary F., Ed.; Cooper, Diane L., Ed. (2011) Multiculturalism on Campus: Theory, Models, and Practices for Understanding Diversity and Creating Inclusion 2nd Edition • Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, H. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. New Directions for Student Services • Chen, A. (2017) Addressing Diversity on College Campuses: Changing Expectations and Practices in Instructional Leadership	• Develop a Power and Privilege Series that intentionally connects and bolsters the Intercultural Center current events and training offerings to Power and Privilege. • A weekly or biweekly digital newsletter to showcase events across campus that focus on DEI. • Claremont McKenna College Real Talk Series[13] , a discussion-based program that covers topical issues arising from current events that intersect with DEI and Social Justice.

[13]"Events and Programs." *Cmc.edu*, www.cmc.edu/care-center/events-and-programs.