

Our Mission

Whitworth College is a private, residential, liberal arts college affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Whitworth's mission is to provide its diverse student body an education of the mind and the heart, equipping its graduates to honor God, follow Christ, and serve humanity. This mission is carried out by a community of Christian scholars committed to excellent teaching and to the integration of faith and learning.

Our Heritage

In 1853, George Whitworth, a minister in the Ohio Valley, set off for the Western frontier to establish a college that would provide a "good English education and a thorough religious training." Of the 50 families who joined his mission trek to the Northwest, only Whitworth's made it to Oregon. It was 30 years before he was able to revive his dream of establishing a college.

In 1883, Whitworth founded Sumner Academy in a village of the same name in Washington Territory. Seven years later, the school was incorporated as Whitworth College. The catalog from that year further defined the vision: "It is intended to give both sexes a thorough course of education equal to that of our best Eastern colleges, guarding well the moral and religious life of the students, ever directing them in pursuit of that learning and culture of heart and mind that make the finished scholar. This institution is well fitted for this, being under the control and direction of the Presbyterian Church. While it is denominational, it does not aim to be sectarian, opening its doors to all lovers of truth and learning." In 1899, the college had outgrown the rural community of Sumner and moved to Tacoma. Fifteen years later, when Spokane developer Jay P. Graves offered land in his Country Homes Estates, Whitworth College moved once more. In September 1914, classes began in Spokane.

Years of uncertainty followed until President Ward Sullivan brought needed stability in the 1930s. He was succeeded in 1940 by Frank F. Warren, during whose 23-year presidency brought the college to its present-day size and scope. The Diamond Jubilee, celebrated in 1965 during the administration of Mark L. Koehler, gave rise to innovative programs — the 4-1-4 calendar, January Term and the Core curriculum.

Edward B. Lindaman, president during the '70s, was a futurist. His leadership team focused on new programs that gained national recognition. Lindaman's successors, Robert H. Mounce and Arthur

De Jong, added clarity of mission and an increase in international programs. In 1990, Whitworth marked its centennial year with a capital campaign that resulted in the construction of a greatly expanded and renovated library. President William P. Robinson, inaugurated in 1993, has taken steps toward broadening Whitworth's financial base and moving the college to national prominence.

Through the years, Whitworth has held steadily to the concept defined more than a century ago by its founder.