

Subject: Update for Spring 2021 OCS Applicants

Dear Spring 2021 OCS applicants,

You are receiving this email because, according to our records in myOCS, you are applying for OCS for spring 2021 by our final deadline of September 10. In recent weeks the rapid spread of COVID19 in the US and in some other regions of the world have led us to be less optimistic about the possibility that Whitman students will be able to attend spring 2021 OCS programs. **While Whitman is not yet cancelling OCS for spring 2021, we are no longer encouraging students to complete applications for Spring 2021.**

If you are still eager to study off campus, we recommend that you consider the possibility of studying abroad in your senior year, which is possible in some majors. Please discuss how you might complete your senior capstone requirements and study away in the fall or spring of your senior year with your major adviser, if this is of interest to you.

If you decide to complete a Spring 2021 OCS application anyway, Whitman OCS will process it. But, to be on the safe side, we ask that you please plan to register for classes at Whitman in spring 2021 or have another plan B, if study away is not possible this spring.

Whitman plans to make a decision no later than early November about whether the college will affirm or cancel spring 2021 OCS approvals. The decision will rest primarily on the following factors:

- government guidance on health and safety related to travel and conditions in host countries from the US Dept of State, Centers for Disease Control and other sources
- the status of the OCS program itself and the mode of teaching offered
- the quality of the OCS experience overall in the face of COVID19 precautions in that destination
- barriers due to travel restrictions, ability to obtain a passport or visa, and/or mandatory quarantines upon arrival
- the quality of medical resources and medical infrastructure in the host country

We are sorry to bring you this disappointing news, but want you to have the information you need to make informed choices about your future semesters.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or Barbara Hoffman if you would like to discuss your individual situation.

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