Background

Westmont conducted a trial survey of selected members of the senior class of 2004 to assess the effectiveness of the college in implementing its six Student Learning Standards. The Senior Survey was conducted again in 2005, following the same procedures. This report gives readers a glimpse both of the process and some of the findings and insights that emerged from student interview response forms, faculty and staff comments on the interviews, and departmental reflections.

Report Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Project and Participants</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report Summary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Orientation Standard</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical-Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Standard</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement Standard</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written and Oral Communication Standard</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Technology Standard</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Interview Department Reflections: Humanities</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Interview Department Reflections: Natural and Behavioral Sciences</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Interview Department Reflections: Social Sciences</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Interview Department Reflections: Student Life and Affiliated Areas</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Interview Process

Every full-time faculty member and Student Life professional was asked to select one senior student who was willing to complete a survey and take part in a one-hour interview. Before the interview, students were given the May 2002 Student Learning Standards to read. For each standard, they were asked to do the following:
• Mark on a scale from 1-10 the extent to which they had met the standard when they enrolled at Westmont, with 1 indicating the standard was met to a very limited extent, and 10 indicating that the standard was met to a very great extent.
• Mark on a scale from 1-10 the extent to which they met the standard now.
• Identify courses or experiences that were particularly influential in helping them develop in the outcomes described in each standard.
• Make pertinent comments regarding the standard.

After completing the survey form, the senior met individually with a faculty or staff interviewer. The interviewer reviewed with the student his or her responses, seeking elaboration where appropriate.

Each interviewer was asked to fill out a one-page report, containing insights gained through the interview process, with recommended actions for their department, student life, or the college as a whole.

Every department was asked to devote one departmental meeting to discussing the results of the interviews. These reflections were to be written up on a departmental summary form, including insights gained through discussion, and what specific actions they needed to take to improve students’ development in the standards.

The Participants

In 2005, 65 seniors were selected and interviewed by faculty and staff. Of these, 43 were female, 21 male. Their overall GPA was 3.54; the average GPA for their class was 3.26. All of Westmont's majors were represented in the sample, with the following distribution:

**Humanities Division**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number of students interviewed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern Languages</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious Studies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theatre Arts</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
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**Natural and Behavioral Sciences Division**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number of students interviewed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics/Computer Science</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Sciences Division

Major | Number of students interviewed
--- | ---
Communication | 3
Education | 3
Economics/Business | 3
History | 2
Kinesiology | 5
Political Science | 4
Sociology/Anthropology | 7
Total | 27

Fifty-six full-time professors, 7 members of the Student Life staff, and one Library staff member conducted the interviews.

The following departments turned in reports from their meeting devoted to assessing the interviews: Education, English, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology/Anthropology, and Student Life.

Summary

Seniors were quite positive in their evaluation of Westmont's performance regarding three of the Learning Standards: Christian Orientation, Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Active, and Societal/Intellectual Engagement. Mixed testimonies, both positive and negative, were more common in response to the Diversity, Written & Oral Communication, and Research and Technology standards. Yet when asked to rank on a numerical scale (1-10) where they rated in each standard when they arrived at Westmont, and where they were now, the mean difference was about the same for all the learning standards. Almost all students reported improvement in all the standards.

- **Christian Orientation** 3.3
- **Critical Thinking/Interdisciplinary** 3.9
- **Diversity** 3.3
- **Societal & Intellectual Engagement** 3.4
- **Written & Oral Communication** 3.5
- **Research & Technology** 3.2

Students ascribed these gains to a wide spectrum of curricular and extra-curricular experiences at Westmont. Off-campus programs, mission projects, and student ministries were mentioned repeatedly as some of the most important influences on student development in the following: Critical Thinking/Interdisciplinary, Diversity and Active Societal/Intellectual Engagement Standards.
In contrast, actual class work—assignments, types of assessment, forms of pedagogy, interaction with faculty—was deemed most significant in gains in the following standards: Christian Orientation, Written and Oral Communication and Research and Technology.

Many seniors expressed appreciation for the Standards and wished they had been made more aware of them before the last semester of their senior year.

**Implications of the Study**

Highlighting the most common themes distilled from student comments, faculty/staff reflections, and departmental discussions, the following recommendations are made for action within the broader Westmont community:

**Provide more opportunities for faculty and staff to discuss with students where they are going after they leave Westmont.** Many seniors were anxious about the next step after graduation. They regretted not having guidance or discussions with faculty and staff about how to transition from college to "the real world." Some departments stated that they could be more intentional about providing opportunities for discussion of career options in their majors, either in senior seminars, or as special events.

**Oral communication skills need to be emphasized throughout the curriculum.** Students repeatedly cited lack of opportunity to express themselves orally in classes. We need to incorporate these opportunities into our pedagogy. More oral exams, required public speaking courses, and better and more frequent class discussion were suggested by both students and faculty.

**Students need to be asked to do more research and be given guidance in going beyond Google for sources.** Many students reported having little required of them in this area. Familiarity with the library and its resources should be a priority. More assignments that require research, including research papers and group projects, could contribute to this goal.

**We need to explore ways in which technology and its uses can be better integrated into our curriculum.** Students consistently reported little development in this area as a result of courses, unless they took classes specifically related to technology. One idea was to require all students to take an introductory computer science course. Another request was to have workshops available for students who are, in the words of one senior, "not computer jocks."

**The learning standards remain one of the College’s best kept secrets from students.** Faculty need to consider the value of using the standards in their classes as educative tools. The standards can provide meaning and rationale for a wide range of student assignments that might otherwise be perceived as little more than busy-work. Since many seniors express concerns about readiness for employment and career, students who understand their education within the framework of the learning standards may better appreciate that their liberal arts education also has utilitarian value.
CHRISTIAN ORIENTATION STANDARD

We want students to be informed about the Christian faith, and we desire that their lives be characterized by practices, affections, and virtues that grow out of a life of Christian faith. In keeping with that faith, we are committed to pursuing these goals in a spirit of hospitality and invitation, rather than in a spirit of coercion, manipulation, or intimidation.

Knowledge. Students will be familiar with scripture, biblical scholarship, Christian doctrine, church history, and world religions as they relate to the subject matter of each course. They will be familiar with the ways in which Christian faith and subject matter challenge and inform each other. Students will be familiar with a variety of devotional resources growing out of the concerns of a discipline in particular or the concerns of thoughtfully educated Christians, in general.

Practices. Students will cultivate habits of integrity, self-reflection, church involvement, justice, peacemaking, service, and stewardship.

Affections. Students will recognize ways in which the subject matter increases their sensitivity to, and enriches their enjoyment of God and other people. Students will consider how the subject matter of their courses invites them to modify their "habitual objects of attention." (Philippians 4:8).

Virtues. As opportunities present themselves, both inside and outside the classroom, students will practice courage, self-control, prudence, faith, hope, and love.

Summary

In response to the Christian Orientation Standard, most students articulated ways in which they grew in knowledge of the Bible, Christian history, and doctrine while at Westmont. Several students agreed that all or most of their courses at Westmont demonstrated the integration of Christian faith and the disciplines. Senior seminars were particularly important in this regard.

A few respondents said they were more faithful in practicing spiritual disciplines such as prayer and scripture reading. However, church involvement and attendance was rarely mentioned in relation to this standard. Faith practice was usually reported in connection with Westmont programs, such as mission trips or the Urban Program.

As for the affections, several students said their Christian liberal arts education helped them develop a more mature personal faith in God. However, one student said his time at Westmont actually deadened his faith. Another confessed she had lost her passion for Christ at the same time her faith was strengthened (see full comment under faculty insights below).
Not surprisingly, Religious Studies courses were most helpful in seniors' progress in this standard. Westmont's chapel program had a significant impact as well. Also important were relationships outside the classroom with faculty and staff, and modeling by faculty and staff of faith and learning integration.

**Self-Reported Numerical Assessment: Christian Orientation**

- When students entered Westmont: 5.0 (mean)
- Spring 2005: 8.3 (mean)
- Difference: 3.3 (mean)

**Representative Student Comments**

- Student has learned to appreciate the Christian community, the writings of Christians across the centuries . . . Catholic and Orthodox . . . not just early church and now.
- Though Westmont has many opportunities inside and outside the classroom in this area . . . I think more interaction in the classroom and outside would be great!
- In World Christianity we were challenged to understand why people interpreted the Bible differently and this caused us all to thoughtfully question our own beliefs.

**Representative Student Comments Recorded by Interviewers**

- Student is frustrated with the evangelical culture's assumption that "Jesus is my buddy."
- In the History of World Christianity, the facts were presented with a connection to the heart.
- Philosophy class was a perfect model of faith and learning integration, something rarely achieved.

**Faculty/Staff Insights**

- The character of our students needs improvement.
- She knows more, practices less (church going in particular). Faith is stronger, passion is weaker. Compared her relationship with God to a troubled marriage.
- For two years in a row the first thing out of students' mouths has been the objection that the use of a numerical scale for faith is an insult to the intelligence of students who have received a Christian liberal arts education.
- Realizing the importance of professor modeling--how we talk about our faith, our work, our values, does get noticed.
- Student expressed concern that some professors are still struggling with their own faith, and transfer this troubled spirit to their students.
- At times, the in-class integration of faith into learning seemed forced, thus fake, and overdone. Perhaps the habit of having devotionals to begin every class should be
reconsidered. If they were given less frequently and more naturally, they would have more impact, seem more real.

- Given the centrality of this standard to Westmont's mission, it is important to make sure that all faculty embrace and/or are prepared to embody this standard.
- The Christian Doctrine course would be more useful as a junior/senior year course.

**Faculty/Staff Recommendations**

- Faculty need to continue to talk about our lives, as well as our work. Students are looking for patterns for living.
- Examine courses for faith-learning components.
- Ditch the numerical ranking for the Christian Orientation Standard on the Student Interview Form.
- Devotionals should help students consider a wide range of possible languages for devotion.

**Courses Cited**

**Applied Studies:**
- Introduction to Leadership (6)
- Internships (1)

**Art:**
- History of Western Art I & II (1)
- Theory and Criticism (1)
- Art and Christian Worship (1)

**Chemistry:**
- Analytical lab (1)
- Senior Seminar (1)

**Communication Studies:**
- Organizational Communication (2)

**Economics/Business:**
- Economics courses (1)
- Senior Seminar (1)

**English:**
- Ethnicity and Race in American Literature (1)
- Women Writers (1)
- World Literature (1)
- Milton (1)

**History:**
- History of World Civilization I & II (1)

**Music:**
- Music in the Worshipping Church (1)

**Philosophy:**
- Philosophy courses (5)
- Contemporary Moral Problems (2)
- Ethics (2)
- Philosophical Theology (2)
- Epistemology and Theory of Knowledge (1)
- Philosophy of Language (1)
- Philosophy of Religion (1)

**Physics:**
- Astronomy (1)

**Political Science:**
- Classical Political Theory (1)

**Religious Studies:**
- Christian Doctrine (16)
- Old Testament (15)
- New Testament (15)
- History of World Christianity (15)
- Apologetics (3)
- Theological Interpretation (3)
- World Religions (2)
- Doctrine of God (1)
- Contemporary World Theologies (1)

**Sociology/Anthropology:**
- Sociology/Anthropology courses (1)

**Spanish:**
- Spanish courses (1)

**Theatre Arts:**
- Theater courses (1)

**Other:**
- Professors (5)
- Panel discussion (3)
Off-Campus Programs Cited

- San Francisco Urban (3)
- Costa Rica (1)
- Europe (1)
- Thailand (1)

Non-Academic Programs Cited

- Chapel (16)
- Campus pastor (5)
- Friendships (5)
- Living in the dorm (4)
- R.A. experience (2)
- Participation in student government (2)
- Mission programs
  - Spring Break in the City (1)
  - Potters Clay (1)
  - Emmaus Road (1)
- Student clubs (1)
CRITICAL-INTERDISCIPLINARY THINKING STANDARD

Students are versatile thinkers, able to use appropriately the tools provided by different disciplinary methodologies and to understand that each discipline implies a particular epistemological orientation. Critical interdisciplinary thinking requires students to combine a variety of discipline-specific reasoning abilities in attempts to solve problems or answer questions. It also requires them to have the ability to frame appropriate questions, to think abstractly; to test definitions of key terms and categories of analysis, and to examine one's own assumptions.

**General skills.** Students are capable of exercising general critical thinking skills.

**Range of disciplines.** Students are capable of critical thinking in a wide range of disciplines.

**Complex problem solving.** Students are capable of complex problem solving involving more than one form of critical thinking.

**Collaborating.** Students are capable of collaborating with people in other fields in order to solve problems and make decisions.

**Limits.** Students recognize the limits of critical thinking in the search for truth and wise behavior.

**Appropriate attitudes.** Students are able to think critically with the appropriate attitudes (e.g., humility, charity).

**Summary**

Almost all students easily and enthusiastically articulated the ways they grew in this area of the standard. Students emphatically recognized the importance of critical thinking, though some were troubled by an inability to apply these skills in a practical way, i.e., "in the real world." Many students appreciated the way interdisciplinary thinking and critical thinking skills are built in to the Westmont curriculum.

The standard was addressed in General Education courses as well as those required by students' majors. Senior seminars and other upper-division major courses were frequently mentioned as contributing to students' mastery of these skills. In addition to specific courses, curriculum design (labs, seminars), forms of assessment (essays, oral exams), and pedagogy (small-group projects) were often mentioned. Collaborative activities such as group projects and small-group discussions were particularly helpful. Seminar formats in which faculty challenged students to tackle both sides of an issue were also instrumental.
Courses cited for this standard were more evenly spread across the disciplines than for the Christian Orientation Standard. There was, however, a significant concentration of citations in History and Political Science classes.

Also important for interdisciplinary thinking were team-taught classes, such as History of Western Civilization (history/philosophy) and the California Experience (history/political science). Seniors were also enthusiastic about the way in which off-campus programs fostered interdisciplinary thinking.

**Self-Reported Numerical Assessment: Critical-Interdisciplinary Thinking**

- When students entered Westmont 4.5 (mean)
- Spring 2005 8.4 (mean)
- Difference 3.9 (mean)

**Representative Student Observations**

- My modes of processing information have changed significantly. I used to think in very black and white terms and now things are more gray . . . and this is a good thing.
- I've noticed the wonderful way in which subjects connect between classes in different disciplines. I'll encounter something--an idea, a piece of art, a poem--in one discipline and then learn about it in an entirely different (yet compatible) way in another. It's been one of my favorite parts of the learning process at Westmont.
- All my classes have employed interdisciplinary assignments, helping me see how all depend on each other.

**Representative Student Comments Recorded by Interviewers**

- Student realized there were limits to critical thinking; for instance, you could both prove and disprove God. And how far is too far in interpreting Scripture?
- Student wished that were more discussions as part of a class, so she could be forced to think on her own. In classes where this happened--such as Arab/Israeli Conflict--she researched a different position from her own, had to think on her feet, thus learning how to discuss.

**Courses Cited**

**Applied Studies:**
- Leadership (1)

**Art:**
- Theory and Criticism (3)
- History of Western Art (2)
- Art & Christian Worship (1)

**Biology**

**Chemistry:**
- Chemistry courses (1)

**Communication Studies:**
- Messages, Meanings (2)
- Interpersonal Communication (2)
• Theories of Rhetoric (2)
• Organizational Communication (1)

Economics/Business:
• Economics courses (1)

Education:
• Education courses (1)

English:
• English courses (7)

History:
• History of Western Civilization (3)
• Arab/Israeli Conflict (3)
• History courses (2)
• California Experience (1)
• Russian History (1)

Kinesiology:
• Biomechanics (1)
• Cardiopulmonary (1)
• Pedagogy (1)
• Senior Seminar (1)

Mathematics:
• Statistics (1)
• Upper division courses (1)

Philosophy:
• Philosophical Perspectives (2)
• Critical Reasoning and Logic (2)
• Contemporary Moral Problems (1)
• Philosophy of Religion (1).

Political Science:
• Political Science courses (6)
• American Political Experience (1)

• Classical Political Systems (1)
• Constitutional Law (1)
• International Relations (1)
• Third World Development (1)
• United Nations (1)

Psychology:
• Psychology courses (5)

Religious Studies:
• History of World Christianity (2)
• Old Testament (1)
• New Testament (1)
• Christian Doctrine (1)
• Contemporary World Theologies (1)

Sociology/Anthropology:
• Sociology/Anthropology courses (2)
• Principles of Sociology (4)
• Cultural Anthropology (2)

Spanish:
• Spanish courses (1)

Theatre Arts:
• Dance (1)
• Theater courses (1)

Other:
• Seminars (5)
• Small groups (5)
• Classes outside majors (5)
• Professors (1)

Off-Campus Programs Cited

• Europe (4)
• San Francisco Urban (3)
• England (1)
• New Zealand (1)
• Oregon (1)

Non-Academic Programs Cited

• Work on *The Horizon* (2)
• Church involvement (2)
• Missions–Potters Clay (1)
• *The Phoenix* (1)
DIVERSITY STANDARD

Students have the understanding and skills to engage people unlike themselves--both individuals and groups--in ways that affirm others as persons created in God's image. Students are able to approach others respectfully--avoiding the natural tendency to deal with differences by vilifying, romanticizing, or victimizing.

**Self-reflection.** Students demonstrate increased self-reflection on how their beliefs, values, ideas, and practices--while not solely a function of one's context--are influenced by social class, gender, ethnicity, culture, and historical moment.

**Discussion and analysis of issues.** Students demonstrate the ability to bring the dimensions of social class, gender, ethnicity, and culture to the discussion and analysis of issues within their disciplines, as well as to discussions of broader social, cultural, and political issues.

**Formulation of knowledge.** Students are able to recognize that, while knowledge is not solely a function of social construction, any formulation of knowledge may be affected in important ways by gender, social class, ethnicity, and culture.

**Cross-cultural communication skills.** Students have gained increased cross-cultural communications and adaptation skills, empathy, self-awareness, flexibility, understanding of the influence of context, social roles, and culture on behavior, and the ability to locate and evaluate information about other cultures.

**Process of making choices.** Students understand the process of making ethical, Christian choices within multiple cultural contexts, avoiding premature judgments.

**Essential Christianity v. cultural peculiarities.** Students have an understanding of the Christian church cross-culturally, distinguishing between what is essential to Christianity and what is peculiar to a particular culture.

**Foreign language.** Students will have an appreciation of the advantages and insights to be gained from the study of foreign languages and literature.

**Summary**

Several students stated that it was at Westmont that they "discovered" diversity and willingly embraced this standard. But this was one of the standards that aroused the most contradictory evaluations of Westmont's program. Perhaps the most common theme in the interviews was that Westmont is not "diverse." Yet others said they were tired of the diversity discussion on campus, or refused to even address the issue.

When students discussed the positive ways in which they were exposed to the standard, they tended to cite off-campus programs or their personal travels beyond the United States as most formative.
Sociology/Anthropology courses were cited most often as contributing to student growth in this standard, closely followed by Religious Studies. Also significant were non-English literature classes, History, and Applied Studies. Study of foreign languages, which is explicitly mentioned in the learning outcomes, was rarely mentioned except by Modern Language majors.

**Self-Reported Numerical Assessment: Diversity**

- When students entered Westmont  4.6 (mean)
- Spring 2005  7.9 (mean)
- Difference  3.3 (mean)

**Representative Student Observations**

- I have been given countless opportunities to interact with people different than me. They have helped me learn and grow.
- In seminar class [designed for majors] we were in a comfortable community where we could openly discuss issues and formulate opinions with all the knowledge we had acquired.
- Students at Westmont—both minority and others—are over sensitive . . . they should extend grace—in both directions.
- Westmont has very little diversity.
- I still feel very weak in the area of cross-cultural communication skills. This is probably because I have only studied the cultures and never interacted with them.
- Refuse to comment, too complicated.
- This may prove to be the most significant skill I received from Westmont. My eyes have been opened to the diverse world around me with fear but mostly jubilation!

**Representative Student Comments Recorded by Interviewers**

- Racial Reconciliation Conference was eye-opening, changed her perspective. Joined Diversity Committee. . . . Feels that the Diversity Committee is a hidden secret—few students know it exists.
- Diversity is greater than skin pigmentation—religion, beliefs, socioeconomic condition.
- Classrooms were less fruitful contexts for this because (a) the topic was often ‘off-topic’ to course material, and (b) the majority attitude is unlikely to be challenged either by minority students or by faculty.
- Her sense of herself as Asian has become much more acute here [at Westmont] compared to the diverse community within which she grew up.

**Faculty/Staff Insights**

- Diversity continues to be a strongly divisive issue. Students still feel betrayed over the dismissal of Professor Cordero.
• Our vision of diversity never took hold in [the student]. She admits that she doesn’t ‘get’ what the big deal is.

Faculty/Staff Recommendations

• We probably need to evaluate how we program on diversity issues. And how we reach . . . the "great middle" of students who are not hostile, but also feel they are getting more "diversity" than they need or want.
• Encourage faculty to be very circumspect in making broad generalizations about ethnic or racial groups.
• Have the Westmont shuttle stop at Scolari's on Milpas St. instead of at Vons in Montecito. This would weave diversity into everyday life, instead of it being one-time encounters.

Courses Cited

Applied Studies:
• Internships (5)

Art:
• Art & Christian Worship (1)

Communication Studies:
• Messages, Meanings (1)
• Reconciliation (1)
• Organizational Communication (1)

Education:
• Cultural Diversity (2)
• Cultural Diversity in Secondary Schools (1)

English:
• Jewish/American Literature (2)
• World Literature (2)
• Chicano Literature (1)
• Ethnicity and Race in American Literature (1)
• Latin American Literature (1)
• Modern Grammar and Advanced Composition (1)
• Women Writers (1)

French:
• Elementary I and II (1)
• Intermediate I and II (1)

History:
• Ethnicity and Race in American Literature (1)

Kinesiology:
• Foundations (1)
• Pedagogy (1)

Music:
• Music in the Worshipping Church (1)

Philosophy:
• Philosophy courses (1)
• Modern and Contemporary Philosophy (1)
• Ethics (1)

Physics:
• General Physics (1)
• Astronomy (1)

Political Science:
• Christianity & Politics (1)
• Sex, Gender, and Power (1)

Religious Studies:
• Christian Doctrine (3)
• World Religions (3)
• Islam (2)
• Contemporary World Theologies (2)
• Apologetics (1)
• History of World Christianity (1)
• Doctrine of God (1)

Sociology/Anthropology:
• Principles of Sociology (5)
• Cultural Anthropology (4)
• Deviant Behavior (2)
• Child Welfare (1)
• Cross-cultural Communication (1)
• Ethnic Groups (1)
• Food (1)
• Intimate Violence (1)

Spanish:
• Spanish courses (1)
Off-Campus Programs Cited

Several seniors emphasized that their experiences in these programs were the key to their growth in this standard.

- Europe Semester (5)
- San Francisco Urban (5)
- Costa Rica (2)
- England (2)
- Houghton in Tanzania (1)
- Thailand (1)
- New Zealand (1)
- Sri Lanka (1)

Non-Academic Programs Cited

- Potters Clay (9)
- Student friendships and discussions (6)
- Chapel (5)
- Spring Break in the City (5)
- Emmaus Road (2)
- Horizon diversity discussion (1)
ACTIVE SOCIETAL AND INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT STANDARD

It is our hope that students are equipped to benefit from a Westmont education over the course of a lifetime. As a result of their educational program, they will have the skills, attitudes, and commitments that enable them to be effective in both their personal and vocational lives throughout all the stages of their lives.

Interpersonal competence. Students possess the interpersonal competence that enables them to be effective in a quickly changing and demanding workplace.

Sympathy. Students have broad and expansive sympathies for all those in conditions of confusion, suffering, and vulnerability, as well as for the natural world.

Responsibility. Students demonstrate responsibility for their learning.

Equipped for lifelong learning. Students are equipped with the tools to continue learning throughout their lives, both because learning can become a source of lifelong satisfaction, and because of the ever-changing nature of our world.

Christian vocation. Students develop a sense of Christian vocation that will inform career goals, marital choices, and other central lifestyle decisions.

Effective participants. Students have the skills, knowledge, and motivation to be effective participants in the civic, charitable, and cultural lives of their communities.

Summary

Students expressed appreciation for Westmont's emphasis on life-long learning. Some said they came to college without a sense of responsibility for their own learning, but developed it at Westmont, sometimes as late as their senior year.

In connection with this standard, several seniors expressed uncertainty about what they would be doing after graduation. They wished they had had more guidance in how their degree prepared them for the next step in their lives. They recommended that faculty discuss their own path of Christian vocation. Another suggestion was to provide more forums for exploring career paths after leaving Westmont.

Self-Reported Numerical Assessment: Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement

- When students entered Westmont 5.0 (mean)
- Spring 2005 8.4 (mean)
- Difference 3.4 (mean)
### Representative Student Observations

- I was pushed by my peers to learn to love knowledge and to try new experiences. I have taken so much more responsibility for my learning than I would have taken had I not been here.
- You don't have to be a Religious Studies major to have a Christian vocation.
- The college gave me a passion to learn.
- We need more help in the area of emotional and mental needs in the transition to after graduation.
- When I came to Westmont, I was very weak in social skills. I also didn't have the drive for success that I have developed at Westmont.

### Representative Comments Recorded by Interviewers

- Student thinks we should have an integrative seminar each year.
- The student's experiences have resulted in a young woman whose values of doing right, respecting others, accepting others, and contributing to her community and society flow naturally out of her faith; but at this point, she is not sure how or where to live her faith; that is, job, career, more education.

### Faculty/Staff Insights

- We have a surplus of campus activities--we don't need to have so many programs, parties, etc., available.
- We need a more active, fully-staffed Counseling Center.
- We need a female campus pastor to complement Ben Patterson

### Faculty/Staff Recommendations

- I wonder if we should do more discussion of possible careers within our major in seminars or workshops. There is a segment of the graduates who are not sure which direction to pursue.
- Consider how our courses shape someone who wants to be a leader.
- Encourage more students to get involved in leadership projects.
- More connecting with faculty outside classroom, perhaps through faculty-run clubs based on hobbies (music, photography, surfing, gardening).
- More emphasis on "life syllabus"--books to read, trips, goals, etc.

### Courses Cited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applied Studies:</th>
<th>Chemistry:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction to Leadership (3)</td>
<td>• Organic (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Internships (2)</td>
<td>• Analytical (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lifelong Learning (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art:</td>
<td><em>Communication Studies:</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• History of Western Art (1)</td>
<td>• Messages, Meanings (2)</td>
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<td>• Theories of Rhetoric (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Reconciliation (1)
• Organizational Comm (1)
• Senior seminary (1)

Economic/Business:
• Senior seminar (1)
• World Poverty (1)

Education:
• Student teaching (3)
• Cultural Divers in Second Schools (2)

History:
• History of World Civil (2)
• California Experience (1)

Kinesiology:
• Foundations (1)
• Pedagogy (2)
• Senior Seminar (1)

Music:
• Ensembles (1)

Philosophy:
• Cont Moral Problems (1)

Political Science:
• Political Science courses (1)
• Presidency (1)

• Doing Public Policy (2)
• European Politics (1)
• United Nations (1)
• Intro to Political Science (1)

Psychology:
• Abnormal Psychology (1)
• History and Systems (1)
• Practicum (1)
• Psychology of Religion (1)

Religious Studies:
• Religious Studies courses (2)
• Apologetics (1)
• Old Testament (1)

Sociology/Anthropology:
• Deviant Behavior (2)
• Sociology/Anthro courses (2)
• Child Welfare (1)

Spanish:
• Practicum (1)

Other:
• Professors (12)

Off-Campus Programs Cited

• San Francisco Urban (5)
• England Semester (2)
• Europe Semester (2)
• Thailand (2)
• Costa Rica (2)

Non-Academic Programs Cited

• Spring Break in the City (2)
• Potters Clay (2)
• Chapel (3)
• Friendships (3)
• Dorm life (2)
• Student ministries with community involvement (3)
• Residence directors (1)
• Student government (3)
• Horizon (1)
• Phoenix (1)
• Gospel Choir (1)
• Lecturers and speakers (1)
WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION STANDARD

Students will be effective communicators, both as speakers and writers, in a wide range of contexts. Their communication, both at the personal and professional level, will be characterized by clarity, accuracy, and graciousness.

Lower to higher order thinking. In both speech and writing, students demonstrate a full range of abilities from lower to higher order thinking skills.

Rhetorical effectiveness. Students are able to speak and write with rhetorical effectiveness, using a variety of forms and modes appropriate to a range of settings and purposes.

Creativity and intellectual virtues. Students' speaking and writing display creativity and the intellectual virtues of fair-mindedness, openness to ideas, openness to criticism, and judicious and patient use of reason.

Historical and cultural awareness. In both speaking and writing, students display historical and cultural awareness.

Christian faith without clichés. Students are able to speak and write about matters of the Christian faith in relation to learning without reliance on popular clichés.

Mature, critical assessment. Students are capable of mature, critically insightful self-assessment and peer assessment of both writing and speaking.

Summary

Majors in the Humanities and Social Sciences were generally positive about their development in written communication. They praised particular professors who read their written work and gave them valuable criticism and guidance.

English and Communication Studies courses were mentioned most often with regard to this standard, but not exclusively (see table below). There was a definite sense that the Westmont faculty care about the quality of their students' written work and hold them to high standards.

However, there was overall dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunity to hone oral communications skills. One solution proposed was a required course in public speaking for everyone. Another suggestion was that more class time be devoted to open discussion, where faculty might push students to be more articulate and reasoned in their speech.
Self-Reported Numerical Assessment: Written and Oral Communication

- When students entered Westmont: 5.0 (mean)
- Spring 2005: 8.5 (mean)
- Difference: 3.5 (mean)

Representative Student Observations

- Writing has become harder. I spend a lot of time on it. I realized there's a difference between stating a fact and making an argument.
- I think this learning outcome would be better met by requiring communication studies classes.

Representative Comments Recorded by Interviewers

- Student praised practice of oral exams.

Faculty/Staff Insights

- Writing, oral communication, research, and the thoughtful/responsible use of technology were generally lumped together as things students get to do in certain classes. There was a sense that these skills happen in selected areas within the curriculum, and yet are non-existent in many courses (both within and without her major). She seemed to compartmentalize those areas of the curriculum where these happen (where there are very high standards), and where they do not.
- The new GE writing requirements are a good thing.

Faculty/Staff Recommendations

- Westmont's curriculum-wide emphasis on writing is a good thing. Our student interviewee felt very well-educated in this area.
- Provide more opportunities for students to write early on, in their first year of academic experience.
- One student, an RA, was amazed at what poor writers the students in his section were. Should Admissions take writing proficiency into account more seriously?
- More oral communications requirements in courses--not just written assignments.

Courses Cited

**Applied Studies:**
- Introduction to Leadership (2)

**Art:**
- History of Western Art (1)
- Theory and Criticism (1)

**Biology:**
- General (1)

**Chemistry:**
- Senior Seminar (1)

**Communication Studies:**
- Communication courses (2)
- Theories of Rhetoric (4)
- Public Speaking (3)
- Argumentation (3)
- Messages, Meanings (2)
- Interpersonal Communication (1)
**Economics/Business:**
- Economics courses (3)
- Philosophical Perspectives (1)
- Philosophical Theology (1)
- Theory of Knowledge (1)
- Metaphysics (1)

**Education:**
- Education courses (1)
- Theory of Knowledge (1)
- Metaphysics (1)

**English:**
- English courses (5)
- Introduction to Literature (7)
- Modern Grammar and Composition (6)
- Composition (3)
- Shakespeare (2)
- Creative Writing (2)
- Faulkner (2)
- Major American Writers (2)
- Film (2)
- English Renaissance (1)
- Global Novels (1)
- 20th Century Poetry (1)
- Ethnicity & Race (1)
- World Literature (1)
- Senior Seminar (1)

**History:**
- World Civilization II (2)
- European Intellectual History (1)

**Kinesiology:**
- Kinesiology courses (2)
- Pedagogy (1)
- Senior Seminar (1)

**Math:**
- Math Analysis (1)
- Modern Algebra (1)
- Upper division courses (1)

**Philosophy:**
- Philosophy courses (8)
- Inclusive language requirement. (1)

**Physics:**
- Physics courses (1)

**Political Science:**
- Presidency (1)
- Foreign & Security Policies (1)

**Psychology:**
- Child Development (2)
- Psychology of Religion (2)
- Experimental (1)
- Social Psychology (1)

**Religious Studies:**
- Religious Studies courses (2)

**Spanish:**
- Spanish courses (2)

**Theatre Arts:**
- Acting (1)

**Other:**
- Professors (26)
- Research papers (6)
- Class presentations (5)
- Seminars (3)
- Interviews (2)
- Oral testing (2)
- Peer editing of papers (2)
- Research projects (2)
- Tutorials (2)
- Debates (1)
- In-class essays (1)
- Mission projects (1)

### Off-Campus Programs Cited
- England (1)
- San Francisco Urban (1)
- Thailand (1)

### Non-Academic Programs Cited
- Dorm life (2)
- Student government (2)
- Speech and debate tournament (2)
- Chapel (1)
- Horizon (1)
- Gospel Choir (1)
- Lecturers/Speakers from off campus (1)
- Mission projects (1)
RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY STANDARD

*Students will have the skills and critical understanding necessary to make use of appropriate technologies in assessing, evaluating, and communicating information. In addition, they will possess the critical capacities necessary to evaluate the impact of technology on their work and in the world--understanding both the possibilities and limitations of technology.*

**Discernment.** Students will learn to discern the quality and appropriate use of a full range of databases and other sources of information.

**Research and documentation.** Students will be familiar with appropriate research and bibliographic guides, equipment, and professional documentation standards in their major area of study.

**Organization and communication.** Students will develop basic skills in word processing, database management, spreadsheets, and presentation software appropriate to their major.

**Integrity.** Students will be committed to integrity in the use of research materials, research methodologies, and documentation.

**Ethical issues.** Students are sensitive to a range of moral and ethical issues raised by technology--including privacy, respect for fellow users online, equity of access, and various addictions.

**Possibilities and limitations.** Students are sensitive to the limitations and possibilities of technology for human well-being.

**Summary**

This was the standard with the fewest comments from students. When they did comment, they tended to either respond to the research component of the learning outcomes, or the technology component--rarely both.

In contrast, Natural Science majors reported improvement in both aspects of the standard.

Some of the most positive statements on research were from those who actually went to the library, discovered its resources, and asked for help from library staff. Others who spoke favorably on this aspect of the standard attributed their development to required research papers that forced them to learn research techniques.

Students who did not improve their research skills typically said they were not required to do in-depth research in their classes at Westmont.
As for technology, the assumption was that "technology" meant computer skills. Several students either stated or implied that they gained little or nothing in this area while at Westmont. Either they came with the requisite skills, or they managed to avoid having to deal with technology while here. The exception was in majors where computer courses were required.

**Self-Reported Numerical Assessment: Research and Technology**

- When students entered Westmont 4.4 (mean)
- Spring 2005 7.6 (mean)
- Difference 3.2 (mean)

**Representative Student Observations**

- Not a big computer jock. I don't know how to abuse the internet. However, the student did discover more resources than before, where to go, that there are good journals.
- Thanks to various research papers I can finally appreciate the Dewey Decimal System.
- The interlibrary loan service is great, as is the library staff.
- I don't feel like this area was particularly emphasized to me.
- More needs to be done regarding ethical issues.
- I have only had two research papers assigned and no classes requiring the use of technology (beyond a calculator or Internet access).

**Representative Comments Recorded by Faculty/Staff Interviewers**

- Student was helped by all the research projects in history, by being forced to find things.
- As a non-computer science major, the student was not challenged to [quoting the standard] "develop basic skills in . . . database management, spreadsheets, and presentation software."
- Student feels like her research skills are relatively undeveloped.
- Student came in having no idea how to do research, but feels very comfortable with it now. This has become progressively easier each year. However, she wishes there were more digital graphics courses.

**Faculty/Staff Insights**

- The student affirmed that Westmont showed her/gave her many good tools in her classes, but there were not enough opportunities to actually use the tools in doing research and interacting with various technologies that comprise academic pursuits.
- We're still behind on technology.
- Is this standard outdated? Students now are technologically savvy enough that they are surprised by the question and find it hard to answer.
• All of the students interviewed by this department mentioned feeling ill-equipped for the technology learning standard, and said that Westmont was not doing enough in the area.

**Faculty/Staff Recommendations**

• There is a need for more digital graphics courses.
• Encourage assignment of more research papers in majors.
• More formal student-geared workshops on technology--Excel, etc.

**Courses Cited**

**Applied Studies:**
• Introduction to Leadership (1)

**Art:**
• Computer Graphics (2)
• History of Western Art (1)
• Public Design (1)

**Biology:**
• Biology courses (1)
• Microbiology (1)
• General Ecology (1)

**Chemistry:**
• Chemistry courses (2)
• Research (1)
• Culture and Society (1)

**Communication Studies:**
• Research (2)

**Computer Science:**
• Computer Science courses (4)

**Economics/Business:**
• Corporate Finance (1)
• Real Estate (1)
• Statistics (1)
• Microeconomics (1)
• Macroeconomics (1)
• Ethics (1)

**Education:**
• Computers for Classroom Teachers (3)
• Student Teaching (1)

**English:**
• Shakespeare (1)

**History:**
• California Experience (2); History courses (1)
• Introduction to History (1)

**Kinesiology:**
• Foundations (1)
• Senior Seminar (1)
• Biomechanics (1)
• Motor (1)

• Cardiopulmonary (1)

**Math:**
• Statistics (1)

**Music:**
• History of Western Music (1)

**Philosophy:**
• Ethics (1)
• Philosophy of Language (1)

**Physics:**
• Physics courses (1)

**Political Science:**
• International Relations (2)
• Constitutional Law (1)
• Public Policy (1)
• United Nations (1)
• Sex, Gender, and Power (1)
• Research Methods (1)

**Psychology:**
• Research (3)
• Psychology courses (2)
• General Psychology (1)
• Experimental (1)
• Child Development (1)
• Cognitive (1)
• Abnormal (1)
• Social Psychology (1)

**Religious Studies:**
• Old Testament in Near Eastern Context (1)
• Islam (1)

**Sociology/Anthropology:**
• Qualitative Research (3)
• Intimate Violence (1)
• Theory (1)
• Third World Studies (1)

**Other:**
• Research papers (7)
• Professors (3)
• Off-campus research (2)
• Research projects (2).
• Library staff (2)
• Interlibrary loan (1)
• Non-specified library "services" (1).

• Teaching assistants (2)
• Information Technology work (1) were also cited.

Off-Campus Programs Cited

• Europe (1)
• New Zealand (1).

Non-Academic Programs Cited

• Dorm life (2)
• Horizon (1)
SENIOR INTERVIEW DEPARTMENT REFLECTION: HUMANITIES

Art

Insights:
• We need to ask hard questions, ones that may not have a readily apparent answer. Even if we don't perceive it, students do wrestle with these questions outside of the classroom.
• I'm becoming more and more convinced that the Urban Program is one of the strongest aspects of Westmont. I intend to promote this program more to my students.
• Diversity continues to be a strongly divisive issue. Students still feel betrayed over the dismissal of Professor Cordero.
• Syllabi are a useful tool in understanding learning goals.
• Societal and Intellectual Engagement growth comes through campus life and co-curricular activities.

Specific departmental actions:
• Our senior seminar needs continued revamping. One of our top seniors had strong criticism for us in this area.

Specific Westmont actions:
• Continue to emphasize writing.
• Faculty should encourage more risk-taking, particularly with shy or retiring students.

English

Insights:
• The numerical ranking used for the Christian Orientation Standard should be changed. If feedback from the senior interviews forms part of a loop in which responses result in program changes, this is one of the first things that needs changing. For two years in a row the first thing out of students’ mouths has been the objection that the use of a numerical scale for faith is an insult to the intelligence of students who have received a Christian liberal arts education.
• The format of the Senior Response Form should be changed. It should be available electronically so students can write responses on their computer rather than being confined to three square inches of paper.
• The English curriculum needs to do a better job of involving students in the use of bibliographic tools of the discipline--particularly students who do not complete a major authors course on campus (by virtue of their participation in England Semester).
• Christian ethos of Westmont encourages students to over-commit themselves to ministry at a time when they need to concentrate on their class work more reflectively.

Specific departmental actions:
• Require English majors to compile a portfolio that includes a research paper.
• Keep pushing off-campus programs.

Specific Westmont actions:
• Ditch the numerical ranking for the Christian Orientation Standard.
• Make the Senior Response Form available electronically.
• The college needs to be proactive about students who are subjected to hate mail for being Catholic or a member of an ethnic minority.
• Mentors are needed for sophomores.
• Students need more people available to talk to, e.g., in the Pastor's office, especially when they are struggling.
• Should Admissions take writing proficiency into account more seriously?
• We need to give seniors more time between exams and graduation in which they spend time with family and friends, giving them a chance to say goodbye.
• Faculty needs to talk more about “real-world” connections to their disciplines, particularly in area of Diversity Standard. But must beware of alienating students by pushing too much on this point.
• Be sure that students currently participating in off-campus programs receive information about registration for the next year's off-campus programs.

Modern Languages

Specific departmental actions:
• Take into account the importance of hiring faculty of color in our job search.
• Design a capstone course for our majors to help them as they prepare for life after Westmont. This might be combined with the internship class. We might also invite alums to speak to current students to discuss their transition out of college and how they came to choose their career. This could be done in the capstone course, the Departmental Chapel, or in a special, end-of-year event.

Specific Westmont actions:
• Give freshmen the Senior Response Form to fill out when they arrive, so they can more accurately remember where they were four years ago.

Music

Insights:
• Students are not aware of the six Student Learning Standards in all their specifics, but reported significant development in them, nevertheless.
• Co-curricular activities such as off-campus programs and out-of-classroom interactions with professors are a critical part of student development.

Specific departmental actions:
• Further development of library resources in music.
Specific Westmont actions:
- Courses and course materials could more specifically address the six Student Learning Standards.
- Off-campus programs need to focus on times of worship and reflection, in order to allow students to process their experiences.
- Greater student interaction concerning written assignments, with faculty and with other students.
- Chapel should encourage reflection over dictation.

Philosophy

Insights:
- Student commented in relation to the Diversity Standard, that she felt "more afraid than equipped." Not sure what student life or classes are doing or should do to "equip."
- Another student said that some of the courses here, particularly in the GE, were less challenging than some of his high school courses. He was concerned that standards for grading and evaluation were too low.

Specific departmental actions:
- Have more writing assignments in philosophy courses of diverse kinds (e.g., philosophical essay, dialogue, meditation, narrative, etc.).
- Help students to learn one style for footnotes.
- Provide more opportunities in class to discuss diversity questions.

Specific Westmont actions:
- One student wanted more assignments that motivate students to develop their own ideas, rather than merely regurgitating learned material.

Religious Studies

Insights:
- The character of our students needs improvement.

Specific actions for Westmont:
- Diversify chapel worship beyond contemporary worship styles: allow contemplative, Taize, and other forms of worship to be experienced by students.
- Strongly support/require off-campus programs--to help students think outside the "Westmont Worldview"-but yet be Christian.
- Providing a course (1-2 units) on "how to do research in the library" for humanities students, not just social science students.
- Can we move to a 2-sided student interview form? My remarks need more space; students do, too.
- We should find a way to ask the whole graduating class to fill out these forms, not just to gather data but to help them frame their whole education. Reward them with
a Starbucks certificate or a donation in their name to a scholarship fund or the charity of their choice? The exercise could help connect them to being alumni.
• Take steps through the CCA requirement to pull together class work and learning/growth outside class, to reduce "Westmont Overcommitment Syndrome."

Theatre Arts

Specific departmental actions:
• Syllabi should now reflect that the Six Learning Standards exist.
• Discussion should be set aside in class near the beginning of the semester as to how each of the standards (or some) are pertinent to a particular class.

SENIOR INTERVIEW DEPARTMENT REFLECTION: NATURAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Biology

Insights:
• Societal engagement seems to happen more outside the classroom than within.

Specific Westmont actions:
• College clubs need to be more active and be more engaged. They are not—as compared to club activities offered at other institutions.

Chemistry

Insights:
• Career and Life Planning is a good resource—more students should use it.

Specific departmental actions:
• I wonder if we should do more of a careers-in-chemistry-type seminar or workshops. There is a segment of the graduates who are not sure which direction to pursue.

Specific Westmont actions:
• More conversations in the dorm on "hot topics."

Mathematics and Computer Science

Specific departmental actions:
• Make sure students are sufficiently challenged to explore beyond where they are currently at.

Specific Westmont actions:
• Encourage professors to continue finding ways to understand where students are in their spiritual walk--encourage them to keep doing what is good.
• Require Computer Science 5, Fundamentals of Computing, for all students as part of the GE.
• The Christian Doctrine course would be more useful as a junior/senior year course.
• Have these interviews with more students, earlier.
• More oral communication requirements, not just written.
• More emphasis on "life syllabus"--books to read, trips, goals, etc.

**Physics**

*Insights:*
• Student thought it would be wonderful if the physics department could offer more (any) elective classes. Or an off-campus program with a science component.

**Psychology**

*Specific departmental actions:*
• More departmental activities to develop a sense of community.
• More collaborative learning in courses (e.g., group projects, seminar courses).

*Specific Westmont actions:*
• Opportunities should be provided for students to discuss concerns about career decision-making with other students, faculty, and staff, exploring possible ways of approaching the problem.

**SENIOR INTERVIEW DEPARTMENT REFLECTIONS: SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Communication Studies**

*Specific departmental actions:*
• Examine courses for faith/learning components.
• Consider how our courses shape someone who wants to be a leader.

**Education**

*Insights:*
• At the campus level, concerns were raised about a need for a more active, more fully-staffed counseling center; a female pastor or associate pastor.
• We have a surplus of campus activities--we don't need to have so many programs, parties, etc. available.
• At the department level: we have too many part-time professors.
• I was impressed that so much of what left an impression on students was from the first year (both for good and ill). Clearly we need to take that year especially seriously.
• Was also impressed at the reported impact of the chapel program.
• In evaluating how we're doing with diversity, we need to realize what our baseline is for many of our students. We really are making a difference for some of our students.
• The importance of professor modeling--how we talk about our faith, our work, our values, does get noticed.

Specific departmental actions:
• Encourage more of our students to do an off-campus program. More of our students need to get off campus--there is a perception that peers are too sheltered. Should we require an off-campus experience?
• We need to take seriously students' first year courses, and not assume that the "important" courses are the upper-division courses.

Specific Westmont actions:
• Have an associate female pastor who could also serve as a part-time counselor.
• Add more hours for the counseling department.

Economics/Business

Insights:
• Importance of economics classes connecting with GE, benefits of students discussing non-economic factors and their relation to economic principles.
• One student had compartmentalized things "Christian" within Westmont's overall education process, and across the standards.

Specific departmental actions:
• Provide more opportunities for students to write early on, in the first year of their academic experience.
• Encourage more students to get involved in leadership projects.

History

Insights:
• Lack of language to express faith.

Specific departmental actions:
• Diversity!
• Improving capstone course (something the department is working on).
• Oral exams.
• Assign devotionals that help students consider a wide range of possible languages for devotion.
• Teach students how to discuss group work.

**Specific Westmont actions:**
• Encourage faculty to be very circumspect in making broad generalizations about ethnic or racial groups.
• Encourage the English department to assign more research papers. Interviewee went through the English major with very little research experience.

**Kinesiology**

**Insights:**
• Small group work in classes provides the opportunity to gain valuable perspectives from peers.
• Gained appreciation for diversity through the Kinesiology Guatemala program.
• The Biomechanics course helped to improve confidence and competence with technology.

**Specific departmental actions:**
• Although Westmont does not have a diverse student body in the classic sense, every student comes from a diverse background... Encourage students to explore these differences.
• Emphasis given to the Christian Learning Standards. While introduced to the Standards during orientation, student never encountered them again until Senior Seminar.
• Continue to improve in areas of technology.
• Continue to provide opportunities for research to counter-balance lack of facilities/equipment at a smaller college like Westmont.

**Specific Westmont actions:**
• On-campus housing that is not a dorm--apartment style options.
• Of particular concern is the integration of faith and learning by our faculty. I feel this is CENTRAL to the mission of this college and yet our faculty might not embrace this or be prepared in this area.

**Political Science**

**Insights:**
• Each student stressed that they had a positive experience at Westmont.
• Recognition of importance and achievement of faith-learning integration; recognition that education is not a hindrance to faith but a process that fortifies it.
• Four years demonstrated clear improvement on the learning standards, some more than others.
• Student ethos issues--Westmont students feel pressure to be perfect and not show signs of doubt (spiritually, politically, etc.)
Strong concerns were expressed that Westmont has not done enough in the area of diversity—specifically in terms of race, ethnicity, and human sexuality. Lack of critical space for genuine dialogue among different Christian perspectives, the lack of both faculty and student sensitivity to students of diverse racial and sexual identities, and a hope for an administration that will be more open and active in rethinking current policies and encouraging change.

**Specific departmental actions:**
- Be more proactive in assuring that alternative points of view are presented.

**Specific Westmont actions:**
- College needs to reconsider its stance on diversity issues—make effort to be more inclusive, even when that counters subcultural traditions.
- Need more formal student-geared workshops on technology practicalities—Excel, etc.

**Sociology**

**Insights:**
- Students report that the department is meeting these campus-wide learning goals; the findings from the interviews are consistent with our own senior evaluation survey.
- The department should incorporate more discussion of the sociological implications of technology as well as teach more skills in this area, re: software and database use.
- While our department faculty addresses diversity throughout our curriculum that is not being done across the campus.

**Specific departmental actions:**
- We will discuss and implement ways to more thoroughly address technology.
- Provide more opportunities for students to implement their sociological skills.
- Increase the number of classes that are discussion-based, interactive, and allow the hearing of a variety of perspectives.
- Develop class that looks at some more contemporary theory; i.e., feminist, gender, etc.
- Have more research opportunities.

**Specific Westmont actions:**
- The administration should demand greater accountability from all departments to address the diversity standard in ways authentic to the particular discipline.
- Look for ways to foster a more academic environment outside the classroom, including chapel.
- There appears to be a problem with communication between Student Life and students when it comes to dealing with personal crises, such as suicidal roommates/friends. One interviewee said she felt the college had placed the burden for monitoring a suicidal friend on her. On the other hand, Student Life is often frustrated that students don't involve them when there is a crisis. It's also possible
that students pick up on problems living with people in the dorm in a way that Student Life cannot.

SENIOR INTERVIEW DEPARTMENT REFLECTION: STUDENT LIFE AND AFFILIATED AREAS

Insights:
• One issue that came up repeatedly involved the Diversity Standard. All but one of the students had a rather strong reaction–either in the positive or negative end of the spectrum to the issue of diversity, and how it has been addressed on campus. One observation that was made was that until the discussion of diversity is coupled with a personal experience (one that forces them to confront their own ideas about diversity), the students either don't care, or feel as though the issues is addressed too often.
• All of the students mentioned feeling ill-equipped for the Technology Standard, and that the school was not doing enough in this area.
• Another comment brought up by several interviewees was that they aren't even aware of the Learning Standards that they are to be working toward. They felt such an awareness would be helpful in "making meaning" of their education.
• One student interviewed seemed to typify Westmont students in general. This person navigated their experience here pretty well, got what she wanted/needed without too much help from faculty/staff, and without getting too involved in any leadership positions. The issues this interview raised involved reexamining who it is we are directing our programming towards. If the "typical" student can manage their experience fine here on their own, should we be putting so much energy into programs geared towards them? Or should we be more focused on the non-typical student, who isn't making the connection to the learning standards as easily? How do we continue to look for genuine moments of connection with those "self-reliant" students, while looking for more "critical" connections to be made with students who may not be having as easy a time with their Westmont experience?

Specific departmental actions:
• The Dean's Council could have some discussions surrounding the issues about what are the "typical" Westmont students' experiences, and are they necessarily the students we want to tailor our programs toward.

Specific Westmont actions:
• To address the issues of the Diversity Standard and the disconnect between what is being said and taught by faculty and staff and students' personal experience, perhaps we should give them a nudge in the direction of having a personal experience. For example, sending the shuttle that currently drops students off at Vons down to Scolari's for their shopping needs. The idea here is to weave the Diversity Standard into everyday life, not just have it be a one-time encounter with which they are faced.