MEMORANDUM

DRAFT

Date: January 20, 2011
To: Ray Rosentrater
From: Program Review Committee / Tatiana Nazarenko
Re: 2010 General Education Six-Year Program Review Report

Thank you for your timely submission of the General Education Six-Year Program Review Report and downloading it into the Program Review Archives.

The Program Review Committee is impressed by the quality and scope of your assessment efforts and the results achieved over the six-year time period. The reports attests to the fact that a robust comprehensive GE program built upon the classical Liberal Arts tradition and informed by a Christian worldview has been successfully developed since 2004, when the first Westmont class entered under the new General Education curriculum.

The Program Review Committee applauds your excellent curriculum development and assessment practices as demonstrated in the report. Specifically, we would like to commend you on the following accomplishments:

- an impressive quality and quantity of assessment work and remarkable volume of solid and clearly interpreted data
- utilization of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis
- valuable recommendations and suggestions drawn from the data analysis
- implementation of the results suggested by the data
- comparison of Westmont GE practices with peer institutions and with national trends in Higher Education
- excellent report-writing skills which include effective data presentation and clear interpretation

Even though the entire current General Education Program is new, important data-driven changes have been implemented to improve student learning in various GE areas. These changes include:

- developing and approving Learning Objectives – recently converted in the Certification Criteria – which are well-aligned with the Institutional Learning Goals
- developing, reviewing and approving new courses for all 22 GE areas
- conducting thorough assessment in several GE areas. While not all GE areas have been assessed by the time of the report submission, those areas in which assessment has been conducted\(^1\) have been found to be sound
- developing the policy and procedures for delisting the courses which do not fully fulfill the GE requirements such as MA 005 for *Reasoning Abstractly* Certification Criteria.

We would like to acknowledge the comprehensive and clearly articulated GE mission (p. 1), which is attuned to the college mission statement and the GE Program Goals (p. 17). In their turn, the GE Program Outcomes are aligned with the Institutional Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes, which results in the strengthening of student learning attainment at Westmont in both, GE and major courses.

The Outcomes assessment via Senior General Education Survey administered in spring of 2010, confirmed that a significant majority of respondents have positive experience with the GE program and believe that the GE Program effectively fulfill its mission. Simultaneously, it outlines some areas for improvement, in particular the issue with the transfer students who may require greater support in order to fully benefit from the GE Program. This issue demands further study and response in the subsequent years.

Yet another important issue to be addressed in the future is the resource allocation (p. 39). The new GE curriculum may require a different model of resource allocation that would better ensure that a sufficient number of GE courses are offered in all areas on a regular basis both on campus and off-campus, as well as provide support for faculty professional development related to General Education issues. We appreciate your candor in bringing up this issue and your valuable suggestions on the matter.

The PRC also commends Ray Rosentrater, the former Associate Dean for Curriculum, for comparing Westmont GE program with peer institutions and identifying several issues to consider for improving the GE program such as developing and implementing the first year seminar and reinforcing our language requirements (pp.1, 44). We also appreciate Ray’s vision on the further progress of the GE curriculum and on strengthening its interdisciplinary aspect in particular.

Last, but not least, we would like to acknowledge again the effectiveness of data presentation and interpretation, as well as clarity and cogency of the inferences drawn from these data and analysis.

The PRC applauds both the quantity and quality of the work that you have conducted in all areas of General Education. Thank you for your exemplary commitment to student success!

\(^1\) Common Context: Philosophical Reflections on Truth and Value; Common Inquiries: Reasoning Abstractly, Physical Sciences, Performing and Interpreting the Arts, Thinking Globally; Common Skills: Physical Education; Competent and Compassionate Action: Serving Society; Enacting Justice.