

## Proposal for Westmont in Istanbul Semester Program

**Overview:** The following proposal lays out provisions for a new off-campus, semester-long Westmont program in Istanbul, Turkey. The proposal builds upon the work of the presidentially-appointed Global Initiatives Task Force that met from May 2009 through April 2010 and the vision of President Beebe to have Westmont fulfill more fully the global plank of its educational mission. It specifically envisions a program capable of realizing in the lives of its student participants many of the “Student Learning Outcomes for Global Education” (see attached sheet) identified by the Global Initiatives Task Force and the Off Campus Programs Committee.

**Why Istanbul?** In assessing potential sites for a new Westmont semester program, Istanbul emerged as especially attractive for a large number of reasons. Here are some of them:

- Istanbul and Turkey more broadly has long been and remains a great bridge of continents and cultures, linking East and West, Asia and Europe. It functioned as the center of three very important empires (Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman) and continues as a critical player in the emerging geo-politics and global economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In all these ways, it would offer our students a rich past and present from which to learn.
- If we are looking for 21<sup>st</sup> century strategic locations within which to give our students firsthand experience to equip them for future vocations and ministries, Istanbul is an excellent choice. It’s one of those world cities likely only to grow in import in the next half century.
- Istanbul and Turkey will afford our students a good chance to see the breadth of Islam, politically, religiously, and culturally. As a secular Islamic state, Turkey provides a freedom of instruction and a receptivity to Western educational institutions that might be lacking in other Islamic countries.
- As the center of 1<sup>st</sup> century Christianity, Turkey is an appealing destination for our students interested in the early church and the history of Christianity.
- Turkey is a stable political state with relatively strong, positive relations with the US. There are comparatively few Americans studying there, though there are many international students from Europe and Asia. It appears to be a safe city with an effective police force.
- There is a small but vital Christian presence in Istanbul into which our students could merge. This includes churches of both Eastern and Western Christian traditions.
- Istanbul is the largest city in Europe both in terms of population and geography. It has a good public transportation system and a wide range of neighborhoods. It reflects a predominant Islamic influence but also exudes a strong secular European flavor as well. International transportation into and out of Istanbul is quite straightforward and accessible.

**Content Focus:** Istanbul and Turkey offer a rich array of possibilities for curriculum offerings that take advantage of its past and current realities. Potential course topics include the history of Christianity, especially early and Eastern Christianity; all aspects of

Islam – its history, theology, politics, culture, science, art, etc.; contemporary Middle East politics and culture; Turkish language, literature, arts, history, politics, etc.; contemporary European politics; economic development and trade; immigration and ethnic conflict; pluralism and religious freedom; theories of modernization and secularization.

**Credits Earned:** Students would typically earn 16 units on the program.

**General Education Requirements met:** The semester is designed as primarily a General Education program; that is, it will be intentional about its aim to fulfill a variety of General Education requirements for students. Each time it is offered, the program would fulfill at least three General Education requirements for students. Those requirements could include Thinking Globally, Thinking Historically, Understanding Society, Communicating Cross-Culturally, Performing and Interpreting the Arts, Modern/Foreign Languages, and others as approved by the General Education committee.

**Major or minor credit:** Where appropriate, courses on the program could be approved by particular departments for credit in their major or minor.

**Pre and Post Orientation Seminars:** Students would typically enroll in a 2-unit pre-trip orientation seminar the semester before the program operated, and a 2-unit post-trip seminar the semester following the program. These seminars would typically be taught by the faculty leading the program.

**Student Eligibility:** The same eligibility requirements that apply to other Westmont off campus programs would be in place for Westmont in Istanbul.

**Numbers of students:** 25-40 students would participate on the program.

**Costs:** Westmont tuition and fees plus room and board; any additional travel fees would be determined by the Director of Off Campus Programs in consultation with the Provost

**Frequency of program:** The program would operate during spring semesters in alternating years. It would operate twice, after which an evaluation would be made by the college to determine whether to continue the program.

**Staffing:** The Director of Off Campus Programs, in consultation with the Provost, would identify appropriate staffing for the program. Once selected, faculty leaders would be responsible for designing the specific curricular, logistical (e.g. housing, meals, classroom spaces), and travel components of the program. All courses would need to go through normal faculty processes for appropriate approvals.

## Proposal for Westmont in Israel/Palestine Semester Program

**Overview:** The following proposal lays out provisions for a new off-campus, semester-long Westmont program in Israel/Palestine. The proposal builds upon the work of the presidentially-appointed Global Initiatives Task Force that met from May 2009 through April 2010 and the vision of President Beebe to have Westmont fulfill more fully the global plank of its educational mission. It specifically envisions a program capable of realizing in the lives of its student participants many of the “Student Learning Outcomes for Global Education” (see attached sheet) identified by the Global Initiatives Task Force and the Off Campus Programs Committee.

**Why Israel/Palestine:** In assessing potential sites for a new Westmont semester program, Israel/Palestine, and particularly Jerusalem, emerged as especially attractive for a large number of reasons. Here are some of them:

- The lands, and specifically Jerusalem, hold special significance for all three monotheistic faiths, and were central to events in the life of the nation of Israel, Christ, and the earliest Christians.
- Jerusalem is a cultural center for both Jews/Israelis and Arabs/Palestinians; it is also linguistically rich with not only Hebrew and Arabic but Russian, Armenian, French, German, and Spanish in common use
- Israel/Palestine is regionally central, allowing access to other Middle Eastern/North African states, including Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt
- Israel/Palestine is an ideal location for studying the many dimensions of the modern Middle East conflict (e.g. Israeli identity, politics and security, Zionism and the settler movement, the status and challenges of the West Bank, Gaza and Palestinian refugees, aid and development, microfinance, human rights issues, U.S. foreign policy and aid, the role of NGOs, Christian Zionism, local and international media coverage, militarism and terrorism, religious fundamentalism)
- Israel/Palestine affords rich opportunities for exploring archaeological and religious sites important for Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- Jerusalem is a vibrant center for various Christian communions (Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, Protestant)
- Israel/Palestine would likely allow for home stays and intensive foreign language study in both Hebrew and Arabic
- Jerusalem is a major center for Holocaust studies

**Content focus:** Israel and Palestine offer a rich array of possibilities for curriculum offerings that take advantage of the region’s past and current realities. Potential course topics include all aspects of biblical studies, the history of Christianity, especially early and Eastern Christianity; all aspects of Judaism and Islam – their history, theology, politics, culture, science, art, etc.; contemporary Middle East politics and culture; the Israel/Palestine conflict; the history of modern Israel/Palestine; the Holocaust; conflict and post-conflict economies; archaeology; U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East; conflict resolution.

**Credits Earned:** Students would typically earn 16 units on the program.

**General Education Requirements met:** The semester is designed as primarily a General Education program; that is, it will be intentional about its aim to fulfill a variety of General Education requirements for students. Each time it is offered, the program would fulfill at least three General Education requirements for students. Those requirements could include Religious Studies Common Contexts (Old Testament, New Testament, or Christian Doctrine), Thinking Globally, Thinking Historically, Understanding Society, Communicating Cross-Culturally, Performing and Interpreting the Arts, Modern/Foreign Languages, and others as approved by the General Education committee.

**Major or minor credit:** Where appropriate, courses on the program could be approved by particular departments for credit in their major or minor.

**Pre and Post Orientation Seminars:** Students would typically enroll in a 2-unit pre-trip orientation seminar the semester before the program operated, and a 2-unit post-trip seminar the semester following the program. These seminars would typically be taught by the faculty leading the program.

**Student Eligibility:** The same eligibility requirements that apply to other Westmont off campus programs would be in place for Westmont in Israel/Palestine.

**Numbers of students:** 25-40 students would participate on the program.

**Costs:** Westmont tuition and fees plus room and board; any additional travel fees would be determined by the Director of Off Campus Programs in consultation with the Provost

**Frequency of program:** The program would operate during spring semesters in alternating years. It would operate twice, after which an evaluation would be made by the college to determine whether to continue the program.

**Staffing:** The Director of Off Campus Programs, in consultation with the Provost, would identify appropriate staffing for the program. Once selected, faculty leaders would be responsible for designing the specific curricular, logistical (e.g. housing, meals, classroom spaces), and travel components of the program. All courses would need to go through normal faculty processes for appropriate approvals.

## Student Learning Outcomes for Global Education

Westmont yearns for its students to become World Christians able to encounter God in new contexts, participate well in the world-wide Christian church, enjoy the rich diversity of God's creation, share their faith graciously with peoples of other languages and cultures, and work for peace and justice in a broken world.

Westmont students' participation in a global educational experience should facilitate their becoming World Christians through:

- Enlarging their vision of the breadth and depth of God's work in the world, past and present
- Enriching their capacity to articulate and incarnate the gospel of Jesus Christ in both familiar and foreign contexts
- Enhancing their appreciation for the variety and richness of human cultures
- Developing their awareness of their own culture
- Increasing their abilities to communicate cross-culturally and to adapt effectively to new cultural environments
- Increasing their capacities for building relationships of mutual respect across cultures
- Enhancing their understanding of others' histories, religions, and cultural identities
- Enlarging their understanding of contemporary global geo-political and socio-economic realities
- Deepening their appreciation for and knowledge of the languages of others
- Deepening their understanding of the geographical and environmental features of other places