Ray, greetings from Asia.

I'll tell you why I like the policy, but it's chiefly anecdotal: A student of mine who took two consecutive off-campus semesters several years ago lost much of his academic momentum. He was a very bright A student who went pretty unchallenged in his two off-campus semesters, and by the time he got back it was difficult for him to write a paper or read a book at the course's level of sophistication.

Moreover, he absorbed sketchy theology from both programs, and that exposure left his Christian faith distorted in a lasting way.

The experience left me suspicious of too much time away, and enthusiastic about preparation and re-entry programs for our students who travel off-campus. (As well as disappointed in the programs he participated in, but that's off topic.)

Thanks for asking. Grace and peace, Telford

Telford,

How flexible would you propose the Review Committee be in granting exceptions? Phrased another way, under what circumstances would you make exceptions?

Thanks,
C. Ray Rosentrater

Ray, it's hard to say because programs and students are so different. To generalize, I'd look for cases where the combination of programs, the specific student, and that student's specific curriculum would be served *in terms of the substance and coherence of Westmont's mission and all its distinctives (Christian, undergraduate, liberal arts, residential, global)*.

In other words, we shouldn't make exceptions where consecutive programs would jeopardize or likely weaken that student's growth in one or more of our distinctives. Or, put more strongly, we can make exceptions where consecutive programs will improve students' education in one or more of our distinctives without sacrificing others.

That's a generalizable criterion that is flexible according to student circumstances. It's also off the top of my head.

Grace and peace, Telford