

Dear Westmont Student,

The current Westmont College Catalog (which is only available on the Westmont website) details the information you will need to make your educational experience at Westmont a resounding success.

<http://www.westmont.edu/academics/pages/registrar/index.html>

Because you and I both know that reading through all of that information can be a bit overwhelming, especially as you prepare to make some major changes in life, the following document has been prepared for you. It is full of the basic information that will help to get you going. This document is not meant to replace your Catalog, so be sure to consult your catalog on the Registrar Web site for more specific information.

Please keep the following things in mind.

1. Look through this document and ask any questions that might arise BEFORE the deadlines.

This one simple step will keep you more informed as to the requirements that lie ahead. Feel free to call me (805-565-6159) or the Student Records Office (805-565-6060) with any questions.

2. This is YOUR education so take responsibility for ALL aspects.

Your academic advisors are there to help guide you, but the ultimate responsibility for your education falls on you. Know deadlines and procedures. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Make sure to keep yourself on track towards educational success. It will save you a great deal of time and grief in the long run!

3. Try to view your advising as an educational moment.

Your academic advisor is a great resource to discuss your present and future plans. Come prepared to any meetings with specific questions regarding your academic, occupational and personal goals in life. Remember that your advisor has a vast deal of information, and the more you tap into it, the easier your academic journey will be.

4. Meet with your academic advisor throughout the year (outside of the registration times).

Your academic advisor wants to learn who you are, and choosing classes for the next semester is not always the best context in which to have those “get to know you” conversations. The more they are able to meet with you and get to know you, the better their advice will be.

When you check in for Orientation you will learn which professor is your academic advisor. If you have questions about what classes to choose you can contact me using the contact information below.

I truly hope that you will find this information helpful. Again, feel free to contact my office if you have any questions. I wish you God’s blessings on your future here at Westmont.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hardley
Director of Academic Advising
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

(CLICK THE OPTION YOU WANT TO EXPLORE)

[What Do I Need To Graduate From Westmont?](#)

[The Purpose of General Education at Westmont](#)

[An Overview of General Education at Westmont](#)

[Components I., II. and III of General Education at Westmont](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Frequently Needed Forms](#)

[Responsibilities of Advisors And Students](#)

[Advising Checklist](#)

WHAT DO I NEED TO GRADUATE FROM WESTMONT? (Graduation requirements in a nutshell)

1. A minimum of 124 units

--While 4 different PE activities are required for graduation, up to 8 units of PEA (but only one course per semester) may be applied to your degree.

--It may take more than 124 units to complete both your major and your general education requirements, especially if you are double majoring.

2. Maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of at least 2.0

3. Maintain a G.P.A. of at least 2.0 in the required courses for your major

--An average of "C" (2.0) is required for the total of all courses in the major

4. Meet the senior residence requirement

--You must maintain full-time status (12 units or more) at Westmont or on a Westmont approved off campus program during your final 2 terms, or complete 32 of the last 40 units for your degree at Westmont.

5. Complete the general education requirements

6. Complete a major

7. At least one half of the upper division major requirements must be taken on campus or on a Westmont approved off-campus program

8. Complete 60 units outside your major department

--A course is outside of your major department if it has a catalogue prefix different than the major prefix (e.g. PSY instead of BIO for a biology major). Such courses may include:

- a. non-departmental **general education requirements**
- b. up to 8 units of **PE activities**
- c. non-departmental **electives**
- d. **courses required for the major but taught in another department**

9. You will be required to file an application for degree 3 semesters before you anticipate graduating

The Purpose of General Education at Westmont

Academic Program. In keeping with our overall philosophy of education, our academic program is designed to foster intellectual vitality, Christian character, and commitment to service that will last a lifetime. Crucial to this goal is providing our students with an education that is both deep and broad. In the context of a major, students learn the discipline of submitting to a particular methodology and of mastering a specialized body of content. It is in their general education that they acquire the tools for relating this specialized knowledge to other realms of understanding, to their own lives, and to the world around them. In addition to acquiring the knowledge and skills embodied in the general education program and a major, we at Westmont also hope that our students are put on a trajectory of development that will lead them to live wisely and effectively and to be agents of God's loving and gracious redemptive purposes in the world. Throughout the entire curricular and co-curricular programs, the design of the Westmont educational experience is guided by institutional learning goals which foster learning and development.

Institutional Learning Goals. Our eight Institutional Learning Goals concern themselves with those areas of an education that go beyond mastery of the content in any particular subject area and that concern themselves with aspects of our education that are common to all areas of study at Westmont. They represent aspects of our educational process that are prerequisites to obtaining an education in any particular subject area, but they are also constantly being developed as a result of the study of any particular subject area. These college-wide goals, while certainly not exhaustive, augment the learning outcomes that are assumed in any particular discipline, by recognizing those areas of learning that are more distinctly characteristic of a Christian Liberal Arts education.

1. **Christian Understanding/Practices/Affections.** Westmont graduates will 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.
2. **Diversity and Global Awareness.** Our graduates 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.
3. **Critical and Interdisciplinary Thinking.** 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.
4. **Competence in Written and Oral Communication.** Our graduates 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.
5. **Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement.** As a result of their educational program, our graduates 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.
6. **Research and Information Literacy.** Our graduates will have the skills necessary to access, evaluate, use and communicate information effectively and ethically in a technology-intensive environment. In addition, they will possess the ability to evaluate the impact of technology on their work and in the world—understanding both its possibilities and limitations.

7. **Physical and Emotional Health.** Recognizing that mind, body, and spirit are inseparably linked, our graduates will be equipped with the skills, attitudes and knowledge that will prepare them to pursue a life of balance – physically, emotionally and spiritually.

8. **Creative Expression.** Our graduates will recognize aesthetic and creative dimensions, both within their respective fields and within the Fine Arts specifically. They attain the knowledge and skills necessary to guide original or otherwise imaginative production in a variety of disciplines.

Major Program. Each student, by the end of the sophomore year, will choose a major program. (The various major programs are outlined later in this catalogue.) The primary purpose of a major is to provide students with the experience of going beneath the surface of a field of learning. Though the particular skills of “going deep” may vary from discipline to discipline, the overall experience inculcates such broadly applicable virtues as patience, persistence, sustained attention, and awareness of complexity and ambiguity.

General Education. In the tradition of the liberal arts, Westmont’s academic program requires students to set their major programs of study within the larger context of General Education. The General Education framework ensures that students’ major programs will be supported by the skills, the breadth of knowledge, the strategies of inquiry, and the practices that will enable them to mature in wisdom throughout their lives and to apply their learning effectively in the world around them. As a liberal arts college in the Christian tradition, we ground our pursuit of learning and wisdom in the context of God’s revelation—manifested in the scriptures and in the world around us, and apprehended through reason, observation, experimentation, and the affections. Through the General Education program, students develop the necessary contextual background, concepts, vocabulary, and skills to support their exploration of these various avenues to understanding the world. In addition to developing knowledge and skills, our general education curriculum at Westmont seeks to inspire students to become constructive agents of redemption in a diverse and complex world. Thus, the General Education program provides Finally, we offer students the opportunity to practice their learning in the context of concrete experiences that facilitate the acquisition of wisdom, empathy and practical expertise.

An Introduction to General Education

Westmont students grow in ways that reflect the rich diversity of God’s created order. But students are nourished by a common grounding that provides a shared context for growth in the Christian liberal arts tradition. As they grow in faith, students become rooted in the canon of the Old and New Testaments and in theological understanding. As they grow in skill, students cultivate their ability to write cogently, to reason mathematically, to converse in a language other than their native tongue, and to be fit stewards of their bodies. As they grow in knowledge, students increase their ability to grasp world history, to read and analyze discerningly from a Christian perspective, and to distinguish truths and values as they think through issues of eternal significance.

Recognizing the breadth of their heritage, Westmont students explore a variety of the branches of human knowledge and inquiry. Such exploration necessarily involves choice. In choosing courses, students will encounter some disciplines and not others. But the array of options within the general education program ensures that in reaching out to a wide variety of specific branches, each student will grasp something of the

rich diversity of human learning as an organic whole. By becoming familiar with the vocabularies and types of questions asked in several disciplines, students equip themselves to be members of an increasingly global and diverse intellectual community.

Students encounter their heritage through courses labeled Common Contexts, Common Inquiries, and Common Skills. Each Common Contexts class grounds students in a body of material and explicitly invites them into an understanding of the Christian liberal arts. Each Common Inquiries class empowers students to explore the knowledge, methodologies, and modes of inquiry of a given discipline. Each Common Skills class encourages students to develop their verbal, quantitative, or physical dexterity. Once students have appropriated this heritage, they are asked to begin contributing to it through courses labeled Competent and Compassionate Action.

As they grow deeper in the common ground they share with other members of the community, Westmont students also master the methods and knowledge of their chosen majors. But a Christian liberal arts education is more than an intellectual exercise; students must incarnate their emerging maturity in competent and compassionate action. Living out what one has learned not only embodies the liberal arts tradition, which has always sought to produce informed and capable citizens, but also the Christian tradition, in which faith is demonstrated through works.

Reflecting the rich diversity of creation, such blossoming may take many different forms. It may emerge from and be demonstrated within the student's major field of study, or within academic work outside the major. Students demonstrate the capability not just to know but to do, not just to study but to perform, not just to speak clearly but to communicate cross-culturally, not just to recognize right but to enact justice. A student completing general education and a major field of study leaves Westmont ready to live out the good news of Christ and the empowerment of education. However difficult it may be to acquire, a Christian liberal arts education exists to be given away, for free, in a lifetime of competent, compassionate service to God and to others.

An Overview of General Education at Westmont

A minimum grade of “D-” is required to satisfy General Education Requirements.

I. Common Contexts (20 units)

Common Contexts courses must be taken at Westmont College or at an approved institution similar to those in the Christian College Consortium.

A. Biblical and Theological Canons

1. Life and Literature of the Old Testament (4)
2. Life and Literature of the New Testament (4)
3. Introduction to Christian Doctrine (4)

B. Introduction to the Christian Liberal Arts

1. Philosophical Reflections on Truth and Value (4)
2. World Civilizations in Christian Perspective (4)

II. Common Inquiries -- Courses satisfying each of the 8 categories.

- A. Reading Imaginative Literature (4)
- B. Exploring the Physical Sciences (4)
- C. Exploring the Life Sciences (4)
- D. Reasoning Abstractly (4)
- E. Performing & Interpreting the Arts (4)
- F. Thinking Globally (4)
- G. Thinking Historically (4)
- H. Understanding Society (4)

III. Common Skills

A. Three writing-intensive or speech-intensive courses:

1. Writing for the Liberal Arts
2. Writing/speech within the major
3. Writing/speech outside the major

B. Quantitative and Analytical Reasoning

C. Modern / Foreign Languages

D. Physical Education (four 1-unit courses) Fitness for Life plus three activity courses

The following GE requirements are typically satisfied during the junior and senior years.

IV. Competent and Compassionate Action

A. Complete one of the following three options:

1. Productions and Presentations
2. Research
3. Integrating the Major Discipline

- B. Complete one of the following two options:
1. Serving Society; Enacting Justice
 2. Communicating Cross-Culturally

Components I., II. and III of General Education at Westmont

I. Common Contexts. *Common Contexts* courses must be taken at Westmont College or at an approved institution similar to those in the Christian College Consortium. In order to obtain the developmental benefits the general education program is designed to confer and to insure timely progress toward graduation, it is strongly recommended that students complete the *Common Contexts* requirements by the end of the second year.

Transfer students attending Westmont for three or fewer years must complete one requirement at Westmont from *Biblical and Theological Canons* for each full year of attendance at Westmont. Similarly, transfer students attending Westmont for two or fewer years must complete one requirement at Westmont from *Introduction to the Christian Liberal Arts* for each full year of attendance at Westmont. Transfer students are encouraged to complete the entire requirement in order to receive the full benefit of the General Education Program.

II. Common Inquiries. *Common Inquiries*, collectively, seek to introduce students to a range of methodological approaches that one might employ in the quest for knowledge. These courses give particular attention to various ways of acquiring knowledge and evaluating information and incorporate appropriate consideration of the resources and implications of information technology.

III. Common Skills. *Common Skills* classes encourage students to develop their verbal, quantitative, or physical dexterity. Students are also expected to demonstrate competence in a wide range of contemporary information technology processes. To the extent that it is possible, students are encouraged to fulfill their skills requirements in the context of a course in the major or a course taken to satisfy another general education requirement. *Until the requirements have been satisfied, it is recommended that students complete at least one Writing/Speech Intensive and one Physical Education course per year.*

A. Three Writing-Intensive or Speech-Intensive Courses. Students develop their communication skills at Westmont by taking at least three courses that emphasize writing fluently or speaking clearly and effectively. All students are encouraged to take a writing-intensive course during their first year at Westmont. Such writing intensive or speech-intensive courses encourage students to develop their abilities to articulate information, ideas, and convictions both in written and oral discourse. Students are expected to be able to communicate effectively to a wide range of audiences, within the academy, the church, and the public. The Writer's Corner enables students at all levels to discuss writing strategies individually with peer consultants.

1. Writing for the Liberal Arts. To fulfill this requirement students may:

- a. take ENG 002 Composition at Westmont
- b. complete an equivalent course to ENG 002 at another college or university
- c. submit a score of 4 or 5 on the AP test for Language and Composition or the AP test for Literature and Composition
- d. submit a score of 5, 6 or 7 on the Higher Level IB examination for English A1
- e. Students who submit a test score of 580 on the writing section of the SAT Critical Reasoning Test or a test score of 29 on the ACT English subscore are not required to take ENG 002 Composition and may fulfill the Writing for the Liberal Arts requirement by taking a writing-intensive course offered by any department.

2. Writing-Intensive or Speech-Intensive Course within the Major. All students take at least one writing-intensive or speech-intensive course in their major.

3. Writing-Intensive or Speech-Intensive Course outside the Major. Students completing a single major take a writing-intensive or speech-intensive course in any field outside that major. Students completing a double major take a writing intensive or speech-intensive course in both majors.

B. Quantitative and Analytical Reasoning. Since many phenomena in our world can best be understood through quantitative and analytic methods, students should develop the ability to interpret, evaluate and communicate quantitative ideas. Central to this experience is: the use of mathematical models for physical or social systems or; the understanding and communication of numeric data including the computation and interpretation of summative statistics and the presentation and interpretation of graphical representations of data. Students should gain skills in quantitative and analytic methods, or, alternatively, the reflective use of quantitative methods as a tool.

C. Modern/Foreign Languages. Westmont encourages students to continue developing their fluency in a language other than their native tongue by requiring students to complete one semester of college language beyond the level of the two year entrance requirement to the college. Alternatively, having met the entrance requirement in one language, they may take one semester of college-level study in another language. A course in any modern spoken language (e.g. Spanish, French, or German) or ancient language (e.g. Greek or Hebrew) is accepted as fulfilling this requirement. Students satisfy this requirement if they (1) submit a SAT Language Subject Test score of 580 or higher, (2) place into the fourth semester (or higher) of a language in a proctored examination setting at Westmont College or (3) present evidence of a primary language other than English to the Student Records Office. Realizing that learning a foreign language may be especially difficult for those with certain disabilities, Westmont offers the following accommodation for those who have a **documented language based learning disability**. These students may take one semester of college level American Sign Language (ASL) at a Community College. To qualify, students must present documentation of their disability to the Director of Academic Advising and Disability Services. The Director will verify the documented disability and notify the Student Records Office that the student is eligible for the ASL accommodation.

D. Physical Education. The physical education program is designed to provide instruction and exposure to fitness, skill-based and leisure activities. All students are required to take Fitness for Life and three 1-unit physical activity courses. Transfer students must complete one Westmont PE Activity course for each full year they are enrolled at Westmont, or complete all four (4) PE Activity course requirements, including PEA-032 Fitness for Life.

⇒FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS !←

How many units may I take?

--The minimum full time load is 12 units per semester. A student may take up to a maximum 20 units plus 1 PEA course if their cumulative Westmont GPA is 3.0 or above or if their cumulative Westmont GPA in the previous 2 semesters is 3.0 or above.

What is the typical number of units a student takes?

--Students will typically take between 13 units (3 classes at 4 units each with a 1 unit PEA course) and 17 units (4 classes at 4 units each with a 1 unit PEA course). The number of units you take your first semester depends on your extracurricular activities, work pace and your own preference.

Can a student take 13 units each semester and graduate in 4 years (8 semesters)?

-- No. You may take 13 units for 2 semesters, but then for 6 semesters you will have to take 16-17 units in order to have the 124 units needed to graduate in 4 years. You may take your semesters of 13 units at any time. Many students choose to take a lighter load during a semester abroad or when they reach their senior year so that they can pursue various internship opportunities. You may also increase the number of semesters you can take a lighter load having passed AP or IB exams, or by completing coursework over the summer.

What class rank am I?

0-25 units = first year student

26-58 units = sophomore

59-91 units = junior

92 or more = senior

Can I improve my Grade Point Average by taking a class again?

--You may only repeat a class taken at Westmont if you initially received a grade lower than a C- or NC (No Credit).

--The repeated class must be taken at Westmont in order to improve your GPA.

--Repeating a course previously passed with a D+/D/D- grade earns NO ADDITIONAL CREDIT but the new grade will replace the old grade in your cumulative grade point average.

What is academic probation? How do I avoid it?

--A student is automatically placed on probation if his or her cumulative G.P.A. falls below 2.00. Students on probation are eligible to return for one more semester.

--A student on probation is automatically suspended at the end of the semester in which his or her cumulative G.P.A. remains below 2.00. Suspended students may return only if an appeal for reinstatement is granted.

--Students on academic probation after their second semester at Westmont may not participate in athletic competition.

Additional Questions?

Contact the Director of Academic Advising (x-6159) or the Student Records Office (x-6060).

⇒FREQUENTLY NEEDED FORMS !⇐

Many of the forms that you will need for the situations below will be easily accessible from the forms drop box on the Registrars Web site.

Change of Advisor

On your admission application you were asked what your areas of academic interest were. That information will be used to assign you to an academic advisor. We know that often students will change their mind regarding a major or minor. That is fine! We expect that to happen as you learn more about yourself and the various subject areas at Westmont. Be sure to let us know when you have changed your mind and have found another advisor.

To change your advisor:

1. Obtain a change of advisor form from the Student Records Office or from the Registrar's Web site.
2. Visit your FORMER advisor and get his or her signature so they know to pass on your advising file to your new advisor.
3. Then visit your NEW advisor and get his or her signature.
4. Lastly, please bring the form back to the Student Records Office.

A simple process, yet very important to your academic success!

Major and Minor Declaration Forms

The Major Declaration Form should be filled out whenever you are ready to make your decision regarding a major official, but no later than the end of your sophomore year. To do so, you must print the form from the Registrar's web site or pick up a copy in the Student Records office. Fill in the form completely, have your advisor sign it and bring it to the Student Records Office. If you are changing your major or your advisor, you must also have your former advisor's signature. All students enter Westmont as "Undecided". You do not have an official major recorded until you complete this form.

The Minor Declaration Form should also be completed when you are ready to make your final decision regarding a minor. To do so, you must print the form from the Registrar's web site or pick up a copy in the Student Records office. Fill in the form completely, have your minor advisor sign it and bring it to the Student Records Office. If you are switching minors or advisors, you must also have your former advisor's signature. Minors are not required to graduate from Westmont, but may help give you skills and background knowledge that will help you in your future educational and career pursuits.

If you are planning on taking classes elsewhere over the summer . . .

Review the Transfer Agreements on the Registrar Web site for pre-approved General Education courses at selected California Community Colleges. If the institution you plan to attend or the course you plan to take are not on the list you will need to print a "Pre-Approval GE" form from the Registrars Web site. By filling this out during the spring semester before you begin your summer school classes, you will be sure that your credit will transfer back to Westmont. Note that the minimum grade required for transfer is a C-. All courses taken for General Education credit (except PEA courses) must be taken for a letter grade.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORS AND STUDENTS¹

Advisor's Responsibilities

1. Post office hours and let students know what times are available for advising.
2. Provide accurate and specific information. Be familiar with the college catalog and departmental offerings.
3. Listen to the student. Guide the student in the decision making process.
4. Review student's registration material to ensure the proper selection of courses.
5. Suggest other available resources.

The Student's Responsibilities

1. Contact and keep in touch with advisor (best to do well in advance of official registration)
2. Come to appointments with the necessary materials. Ask specific questions.
3. Be familiar with the college catalog.
4. Discuss concerns regarding major, life choices, vocation, etc.
5. Build a schedule of classes based on courses needed or desired.
6. Ask about college resources

¹ Adapted from *How You and Your Advisor Will Work Together*, University of Iowa, 1981

ADVISING CHECKLIST

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

- Meet with assigned advisor during Orientation and discuss your academic and vocational future.
- Access your Program Evaluation (General Education Requirements) via WebAdvisor. Go over this with your academic advisor.
- Notify the Student Records Office of any discrepancies on your Program Evaluation.
- If you have chosen a major and/or minor, consult the college catalog and learn the requirements. Discuss any questions with your advisor.
- If you are undecided for your major, consult the college catalog, the Office of Life Planning, your advisor and other resources to gain information to aid in your decision.
- Know what tutoring services are available in your courses if needed.
- If you are thinking of taking summer courses elsewhere, in the spring before the summer review the Transfer Agreements on the Registrar Web site for pre-approved GE courses at selected California Community Colleges. You may need to download a "Pre-Approval GE" form from the Registrar Web site.
- Get involved outside of the classroom to learn transferable skills and broaden your experience.
- Bring at least one draft of a paper to the Writers Corner for input.
- Seek information on off campus programs so you may plan your academic schedules accordingly.

SOPHOMORES

- Choose a major and/or minor and fill out a major/minor declaration form.
- Schedule a longer advising time to work with your advisor to write out a schedule of classes needed for graduation (do outside of the registration period).
- Gain information regarding off campus programs if interested.
- Double check your Program Evaluation and notify the Student Records office of any discrepancies.

JUNIORS

- Fill out an "Application for Degree" (WebAdvisor Program Evaluation) with your advisor and turn in to the Student Records office by the deadline.
- Review your program/graduation requirements/academic progress with your advisor and/or the Student Records Office to make sure 124 units are going to be met.
- Fill out applications and take the GRE, GMAT, MCAT, LSAT or other exams if needed for graduate school.
- Check out the Internship office or major department for internship opportunities.

SENIORS

- Take the GRE, GMAT, MCAT, LSAT or other exams if needed for graduate school.
- Fill out graduate school applications.
- Review your "Application for Degree" sheet to make sure you are on schedule to graduate.
- Visit the Office of Life Planning to begin your job search.
- Attend workshops through the Office of Life Planning on resume writing, interviewing and the job search process.