REPORT OF THE DIVERSITY AUDIT TEAM

OFFICE OF INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS

Westmont College

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It is our pleasure to offer this evaluation of the Office of Intercultural Programs at Westmont College. We are grateful to the administration of Westmont College for the invitation to serve as auditors and for bringing together such an excellent team of evaluators for the purpose of providing feedback to the college on the status of these programs. It was a delight to work together with such highly qualified and dedicated individuals.

The following summary of our findings includes a brief overview of our method for gathering the information used to compile this report followed by our conclusions in the subcategories of (1) affirmations, (2) concerns, (3) recommendations, (4) general observations, and (5) a review of the CAS Standards.

Methodology

The team spent two days meeting with and interviewing representatives of the administration (including the President’s staff), students, faculty, deans, staff, a member of the board of trustees, and the Director of Intercultural Programs. In addition to the interviews and focus groups, the evaluation team spent time reading and analyzing the results from the student and faculty and staff versions of the Intercultural Programs Survey. Further, relevant documents were reviewed for the purpose of providing additional insight into the broader work and history of diversity on campus and to provide a more complete context for the assessment of the intercultural programs. Finally, the evaluation team met regularly to debrief and reflect on our notes and observations. The team notes and observation were then discussed and synthesized into this final report.

In every way we have attempted to be faithful to report what we heard from the respondents and what we read in the documentation. The frequent debriefing in which we engaged was essential to our arriving at a consensus with respect to our conclusions. As a team we are grateful for the time that each group spent with us and for their insights, candor, and encouragement of the process.
Finally, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to Elena Yee, Director of Intercultural Programs, for her diligence and assistance to the team before, during, and after the program audit. And for the leadership she has provided for Westmont in this crucial area for the past few years.

**Affirmations**

It is important to note that there were a number of findings for both the college and the Office of Intercultural Programs that are to be affirmed and commended.

**College:**

- The college administration has made a demonstrable commitment to address diversity by its inclusion in the strategic plan of the college, in the ongoing recruitment of students from historically underrepresented groups, the effort to recruit faculty of color, the inclusion of Diversity in the Six Student Learning Standards, and in the ongoing support and development of the Office of Intercultural Programs.

- There is evidence that diversity efforts are happening outside of the purview of the Office of Intercultural Programs such as the creation of the campus diversity committee, the collaborative effort to hold the Summit of Justice in Spring 2006, and the expansion of Westmont and the Arts into the Santa Barbara area that is indicative of a growing appreciation for diversity and a wide-spread awareness of the need for Westmont to broaden its commitment to intercultural learning and understanding.

- In addition to the commitment to recruit students from historically underrepresented groups, it is being reported that students of color are generally satisfied with their experiences at Westmont College, persistence and graduation rates have increased, and their grade point averages are as high as majority culture students.

**Intercultural Programs:**

- There is widespread awareness and understanding of the Office of Intercultural Programs and its purpose of Support, Educate, and Celebrate on the part of students of color and faculty.

- The Director of Intercultural Programs has received praise and affirmation from both students and faculty as one who is in “process,” a listener who is growing in her understanding of ethnic identity development and intercultural issues, is committed to ongoing learning and professional development, and is appreciated for being available to them.
• The Director of Intercultural Programs has established a reputation as one who is “building bridges” to both majority culture faculty and faculty of color, has established a rapport and a positive working relationship with them, and though admittedly is not a “curriculum expert” has nevertheless made efforts to resource faculty with materials for use in their courses.

• The Director has clearly established a rapport that a significant number of the students of color perceive that she is a resource to address campus concerns regarding diversity.

• The department is very effective at getting information to students regarding programs and is responsive to student input.

Concerns

• Although the broad purposes of Support, Educate, and Celebrate are understood by many, there is a lack of clarity with regard to how these purposes are actually being achieved through the various programs and activities offered by the Office of Intercultural Programs and how these achievements interface and work toward the fulfillment of college-wide commitments to diversity.

• There is a lack of understanding on the part of students, both students of color and white students, as to what specifically are “ICP programs,” their particular purposes, and how they are intended to serve the students that participate in their events. In this regard, it does not appear to be clear to white students that these programs also exist to serve them and even amongst students of color there were questions about which students in particular these programs were designed to serve. At times, students actively involved in specific ICP Programs (e.g. Saturday Connection dinners and student groups such as L.C.O and B.S.U) were not aware that those programs were the work of ICP. Student organizations need to know their relationship to the ICP so that the perception of their programs is connected to the Office.

• It became evident in our interviews and observations that the job description for the Director of Intercultural Programs may be too broad and not specific enough to focus the day-to-day tasks of the Director, to define the target audience of the Intercultural Programs, to clearly define the relationship between the Director and Office of Intercultural Programs and the college as a whole, or to clearly establish the parameters of authority and scope of influence for the Director of Intercultural Programs to affect campus-wide changes.

• There appears to be some confusion about which student populations the Office of Intercultural Programs has been established to serve and why this office is expected to serve such a wide range of students on campus (historically underrepresented students, Third-Culture/MKs, Emmaus Road, International Students). There is also concern that the range of students with their individual
needs may be over burdening the Director and putting undue pressure on the office as a whole.

• There is concern that the Director of Intercultural Programs may need to develop the "Big Picture" vision necessary to effectively connect the work of the Office of Intercultural Programs to the broader diversity goals of the college.

• While there have been some notable “one time” collaborative efforts between the Director and Office of Intercultural Programs and other departments at the college (i.e. The Summit for Justice, Residence Hall Diversity Programming Grants), there is a visible lack of on-going and structurally “built in” collaborative efforts with specific departments at the college who have shared commitments to diversity, particularly with the programs and services of the Department of Student Life. One obvious place for collaboration to occur would be with the New Student Orientation Program. However, there was some degree of confusion expressed on the part of individuals about the degree to which the Director should be participating in New Student Orientation and other similar events.

• There is frustration on the part of students of color who believe that Westmont abdicates responsibility to them for teaching majority culture students and faculty about diversity both inside and outside of the classroom.

**Recommendations**

Based upon the findings of the audit team, we recommend that serious consideration be given to each of the following:

• **Christian Mission.** In discussions on diversity, it is critical that the Office of Intercultural Programs and the college have a vision for diversity that is based in scripture and deeply grounded in the Christian Mission of Westmont College. It is imperative that the motivation and rationale for becoming a diverse community be directly linked to the Christian mission and that all programs and services be measured against this standard. In interviews it was made clear that it is important for students of color to know, as well as others, that Westmont’s rationale for diversity is not about simply increasing numbers or having a good appearance on brochures or calendars. Tying the vision for diversity to the Christian mission of the college would strengthen the work of the Office of Intercultural Programs. In this regard, it is important that the Office of Intercultural Programs and its three-fold purpose of *Support, Educate, and Celebrate* align with the overall Westmont vision for diversity and that it is clear to the Director how the Intercultural Programs are to work to fulfill this broader vision of the college.

• **Role of the Director.** Revisit and clearly define the job of the Director of Intercultural Programs so that it is relevant to the current needs of the college, in alignment with college-wide diversity goals and expectations, and clearly understood by the Director and those she serves. As part of this process it is our
recommendation that the specific roles and responsibilities of the Director be spelled out in greater detail; that the students and programs to be served by this office be clearly identified; that the required knowledge, skills, and dispositions for the Director be identified; that expectations for success be communicated; that expectations for how this office interfaces and collaborates with other departments on campus be decided; and that the parameters of authority and decision-making power the Director has to influence or determine policies that affect change be delineated. Also, if the administration should choose to expand rather than limit the Director’s current responsibilities, it is our recommendation that consideration be given to an additional support person to be added to the existing staff or that the current part-time staff position be expanded to a full-time position to provide the support necessary to adequately serve the students.

• **Collaboration and Communication.** As Westmont seeks to become a more diverse community, it is incumbent on the college to insure that the Office of Intercultural Programs does not become isolated from other departments and thus find itself on the margins of campus life in its service to students. It is our recommendation that the administration offer support and vision to the Director of Intercultural Programs for intentionally forming links to collaborate with other programs and groups (Student Life, student government, residence life) and to draw on other campus resources to better serve students and to achieve the mission of the program and college. For example, the presence of the Director at new student orientation events and other events that serve incoming freshmen would heighten the awareness of the Office of Intercultural Programs as well as enhance the “esprit de corps” necessary to cultivate community on campus. Additionally, interviews indicated the need for clear communications from the Office of Intercultural Programs to other groups on campus such as to the Westmont College Student Association and Residence Life about events and programs that are of relevance to them. The Director is encouraged to explore multiple venues for communicating and announcing events in addition to email. It was expressed that regular and frequent communications are appreciated but that announcements can get lost in email.

• **Outside Mentoring for the Director of Intercultural Programs.** It was evident from our assessment that the Director is widely appreciated for her work and dedication to the students that fall under her areas of responsibility, as well as for her accessibility by others. However, there was also concern expressed for her heavy workload, inexperience (she is a learner who is in process herself), and easy accessibility. As a result, it is our recommendation that the Director seek an outside mentor for support, encouragement, accountability, and advice.

• **Office Location.** It is our recommendation that consideration be given to finding a new location for the Office of Intercultural Programs and its staff that is more visible to the community at large, accessible to the students and faculty, and that is appropriate to support a growing diversity commitment. A new location would send a strong message to the college about the value of the Office of Intercultural
Programs as well as the priority of diversity for the institution. Program offices and physical locations symbolize the commitment of the college while also enhancing the aesthetics and campus climate for students who are served by these programs.

• **Diversity Training.** As the topics of diversity and intercultural learning are becoming more and more a part of the language and ethos of the college, it is not surprising that there would be questions as to Westmont’s working definition of the terms. It was expressed in interviews that “diversity” be clearly defined for students as well as the need to foster increased intercultural understanding and competencies. Therefore, it is our recommendation that the college develop strength in training for diversity by building upon the foundation of the Office of Intercultural Programs and that would extend to other units of the campus to educate students, faculty, and staff. It was evident in interviews and focus groups that training in diversity and intercultural understanding need to be ongoing and expanded to include a wide range of topics, such as white culture and privilege, social and economic class issues, ethnic identity development, and institutional and structural racism. Additionally, it was suggested that the college consider a variety of means and venues to explore these sensitive topics such as seminars, discussion forums, campus-wide dialogues, and symposia. Further, it is important that any training in diversity seek to educate for the purpose of understanding the life experiences of students and faculty from historically underrepresented groups and that any training also be focused on developing white students and faculty as well. It is vital that training and education not be perceived as a “minority” issue but rather something that is for the benefit of the entire campus community. It is not our recommendation that the Director of Intercultural Programs take charge of this full range of training seminars and discussions across campus constituencies; the Director’s job description is already too extensive. Rather, we would affirm Student Life’s on-going efforts to work with campus structures such as the President’s Staff, the Office of the Provost, and Faculty Council and Senate to enhance campus appreciation of diversity as crucial in Westmont’s desire to reflect the Kingdom of God, and to educate for the coming of that Kingdom.

**General Observations**

The commitment to institutionalize diversity on our Christian college campuses is relatively recent in Christian higher education and Westmont has continued to take the steps necessary to become a more inclusive campus. The creation, ongoing support, and current evaluation of the Office of Intercultural Programs are evidence of this commitment. But, as in any assessment, there are things that emerge in interviews that are outside of the focus of the primary investigation but that nevertheless have an impact on the program being reviewed. In this final section, we would like to offer some general observations that should be considered, together with the affirmations, concerns and recommendations listed above.
• **Institutional History.** It was clear from our interviews that Westmont is still emerging from a recent difficult and painful experience related to a popular diversity leader who is no longer at the college. This event has been linked to other past events in the minds of some that has led to the conclusion that diversity at Westmont is “crisis driven.” Negative incidents, a pattern of progress and digress, can contribute to discouragement and resentment on the part of faculty, staff or students or contribute to divisions between the academic and student life houses of the campus. It is within this ethos that the current Director and Office of Intercultural Programs exists and operates. In interviews it was indicated that the former director was a confident, visible, and outspoken advocate for diversity on campus and that perhaps the current Director is not only being compared to the previous director, but perhaps is expected to lead in the same manner.

In light of this history, it is important that the college heals completely and learns from past negative events but also that it remain positive and seek for opportunities to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of the diversity effort on campus. We encourage Westmont to be firm in its commitment to diversity and to see the role of the Director and Office of Intercultural Programs as integral in building for the college’s preferred future by supporting students and being a resource to faculty.

• **Diversity Leadership.** In interviews, questions emerged concerning who is ultimately responsible for leading the campus diversity effort, on whose desk does the “buck stop” and what is the role of senior leadership. The conviction that diversity should be articulated from the “highest levels of administration” was also expressed. It was also reported that though there is widespread support for diversity on campus and appreciation for the work of the Director of Intercultural Programs, not everyone is perceived to be “passionate” for the issues and it is believed that the current Director is driven to fill that void. This “drive” may also account for the general sense that the Director is overworked, over extended, overwhelmed, and under pressure to perform. It is important to individuals working for diversity on campus that the value and commitment to diversity be clearly articulated and modeled from the highest levels of administration for the benefit of the entire Westmont community. In time, as the work of diversity more significantly influences curriculum and faculty, consideration may have to be given to the kind and level of leadership the college will need to effectively lead curriculum reform and faculty development.

• **Faculty of Color.** As mentioned previously, Westmont is to be commended for its recognition of the need to diversify the faculty. Understandably, the ability to achieve faculty diversity has proven to be a challenge. Competition with other schools, salaries, and the cost of living in the Santa Barbara area were cited as factors contributing to the modest gains. We encourage Westmont to remain committed to faculty diversity, to reassess the status of its current strategies, and to explore multiple methods for increasing the applicant pool. Additionally, Westmont is encouraged to consider the needs of its current faculty of color and
to explore means of support that are important and of relevance to them. For example, a desire was expressed for the college to consider opportunities to engage in faculty dialogues and forums on race and ethnicity in order to educate and raise awareness of these sensitive issues. Furthermore, consideration might be given to a more focused and specialized faculty mentoring effort that focuses on the social and cultural needs of faculty of color, the negotiation of institutional culture, and assistance with the promotion and tenure-track processes. A continued intentional link between faculty of color and the ICP office is also a goal that must be facilitated on a consistent basis. The mentoring of faculty should also include the mentoring of the ICP director.

- **Student Learning.** With the emphasis upon learning-centered education and assessment of educational effectiveness as per the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the college should determine the extent to which its educational programs are effectively achieving the Six Student Learning Standards and the specific standard related to Diversity. In interviews, it was reported that Westmont has made efforts to assess learning in the General Education, that small grants have been used to encourage faculty to infuse diversity themes in their courses, and that these courses have been identified and put into the hands of students. Additionally, it was clear that faculty, both majority culture and faculty of color, have appreciated the input and intercultural teaching resources that the Director of Intercultural Programs has provided to this point, but they also realize that the level of professional development needed to develop learning outcomes and assessments centered on intercultural understanding is beyond the scope of the current Director and that in the future faculty will require a greater degree of assistance and a level of expertise that can only be provided by the academic affairs side of the college.

- **Student Engagement.** Some majority culture students articulated both lack of knowledge of programs of the ICP and lack of recognition that they were fully able to engage in the department. It is a challenge in a community that is only 15% people of color to fully engage a significant portion of the campus. Nevertheless, ICP has effectively and efficiently attempted to engage the majority of the campus by providing opportunities and options for addressing diversity; however, it is impossible for an office of two to encourage the entire campus to address diversity when it appears that many want to be “Color Blind.” ICP continues to gently encourage a greater understanding of diversity and to challenge misinformation about differing ethnic groups. A challenge is to move away from the institutional culture of “niceness” and to recognize as a whole the peculiar work of dialogue, which includes at times disagreeing, but being determined to work things through.
CAS Standards for Multicultural Student Programs and Services

The question was asked regarding the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Standards for Multicultural Student Programs and Services. The standards set out in the CAS guidelines are based on self assessment and outside observation. It would be helpful for the Office of Intercultural Programs to periodically go through the self assessment process on its own. As observers we make the following observations on the various parameters set out by the CAS. For some we merely state the meeting of the basic guideline without too much detail. In all, the assessment is positive reflecting on the intentionality of work, yet we continue to highlight the need especially in the area of programming to allow more theory to determine programs.

Mission

The mission of ICP is clear and defined from the point of view that others can articulate and recognize the call of the department. Elena is clear about a mission that promotes the academic and personal growth of a cross section of the student body.

Program

ICP is continuing to develop programs that are holistic and developmental with an emphasis on intellectual growth (what is diversity?), effective communication (how do I discuss diversity?), enhancing self-esteem (what does this diversity have to do with me?), social responsibility, etc.

Leadership

ICP staff is continually engaged in learning greater theories and ideas regarding diversity concerns. Student leaders are selected based on education, training, relevant experience, personal skills and competencies and open to learning.

Organization & Management

ICP is working in this area; they are working to ensure that comprehensive and accurate information is used to make clear decisions and that these decisions follow institutional protocol. The programs are structured purposefully and managed effectively. They will need to determine their own policies and report those to others. This audit is part of their intentionality to strengthen the organization and management of their programs.

Human Resources

Elena clearly is a continuing student on the subject of diversity and she has served as a resource for others as they seek to understand more. She has knowledge about identity development and the intersection of various aspects of diversity. She is growing in her ability to assess the impact of cultural issues that she has identified. And she has a commitment to social change and justice.
Financial Resources
Please see the recommendations earlier in this report. There is need for clarity on the mission of ICP which will determine necessary fiscal resources.

Facilities, Technology, & Equipment
ICP will need to determine this internally.

Equity & Access
The programs of ICP are currently offered in an equitable and fair manner, which are open to all. The diversity scholarship program is not race exclusive.

Campus and External Relations
ICP is working to enhance critical relationships with campus departments and working with faculty and staff. Part of the mentoring process may be the identification of additional resources both on and off campus for the growth of students and staff at Westmont.

Diversity
Elena in her leadership of ICP, strives to nurture an environment where commonalties and differences are recognized and honored. The program promotes experiences characterized by open communication that deepens understanding of identity, culture, and heritage. The programs serve a broad constituency.

Ethics
Elena and ICP operate by ethical principles which are developed out of a Christo-centric worldview which includes the unique creation of all people in the image of God.

Assessment and Evaluation
Through the use of surveys ICP has begun finding data regarding their effectiveness. We strongly encourage continued use of this process and the modification of programs as necessary predicated upon the assessment.

Conclusion
This report attempts to summarize a complex and active department of Westmont College. Among the many issues we address is the perception that Westmont is friendly to people of color, and that the issue of Diversity, though important at times, seems to fade into obscurity within the institution as a whole. Our focus as a review team has been on Christ-centered diversity that will ultimately bring unity. Recognizing the goal of unity in diversity is foundational in the continued development of an intentionally diverse learning environment.

The Office of Intercultural programs, Elena and her colleagues, have played a consistent and positive role in this continued development. We are confident that with continued
resources she and the office will continue to provide direction, leadership and encouragement to the college. The use of both the curricular (Elena’s class) and the co-curricular are positive. The challenge is the shared nature of institutional diversity with ICP taking a lead voice in collaboration with others. We believe that the institutional focus to prepare students to serve the Lord globally and to understand the unique gift of serving Him across cultural lines is important.

Again, we thank Dr. Jane Higa and Elena Yee for their invitation. We believe that Westmont as an institution and the Office of Intercultural Programs are on the right path and that with modifications can continue to support and challenge students to understand Christ-centered diversity.

Respectfully submitted,

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