WESTMONT COLLEGE

SENIOR SURVEY INTERVIEW PROJECT

Senior Class of 2004

Office of Institutional Research

February 2005
Executive Summary

During the spring of 2004, a trial survey was administered to selected members of the senior class. Unlike previous surveys administered to Westmont seniors, this survey was distinctive in that (1) it was administered through a personal interview format, (2) the focus of the survey was the six Student Learning Standards, and (3) the faculty and Student Life professional staff were fully involved in administering the survey, discussing and processing the results.

Methodology

Every full-time faculty member and Student Life professional were asked to select one senior student who would be willing to complete a brief survey and take part in a one-hour interview. Sixty-four seniors were interviewed, which was 19.4% of the senior class of 2004. The seniors who agreed to be interviewed came from 22 majors. (Twenty-four majors were found in the senior class.) The cumulative gpa of the sample was 3.44, whereas the gpa of the entire senior class was 3.25. The gender distribution of the sample mirrored the gender distribution of the class by a difference of less than 1% (65% females and 35% males).

1. Prior to the interview, students were given the May 2002 Student Learning Standards document to read. For each Standard, they were asked to:
   a. Mark on a scale from 1 to 10 the extent to which they met the standard when they enrolled at Westmont.
   b. Mark on a scale from 1 to 10 the extent to which they met the standard now.
   c. Identify courses or experiences that were particularly influential in helping them to develop in the areas as described by the Standard.
   d. Make any general comments regarding the Standard.

2. The student met individually with a faculty or staff interviewer. The interviewer was instructed to review with the student his or her responses to each Standard seeking elaboration as appropriate.

3. Each interviewer was asked to provide a brief written summary of the interview by responding to the following:
   a. Selected insights gained from the interview.
   b. Specific actions that might be considered by interviewer, academic department or student life program, or college as a whole, to improve students’ experiences at Westmont.

4. Every Department was asked to devote one department meeting for the purpose of discussing the results of the interviews.

5. Departments were asked to provide a written summary of their meeting addressing:
   a. Insights they wanted to highlight from their department meeting.
b. Specific actions that might be taken to improve the quality of students’ experience at Westmont.

Summary

Although it seems impossible to “summarize” the interview responses, several salient points emerge as one reads through all of the comments.

1. Students site a wide spectrum of curricular and extracurricular experiences as contributing to their development in the area of the learning standards. The role and impact of off-campus programs, summer mission projects, and student ministries is multifaceted. Gains reported in the area of the Written and Oral Communication and Research and Technology are most directly tied to specific classes taken.

2. Students’ responses regarding the Christian Orientation, Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking, and Active Societal & Intellectual Engagement Standards were mostly positive. Responses to the Diversity, Written & Oral Communication, and Research & Technology Standards were mixed with some students reporting being quite pleased with their experience at Westmont while others expressed disappointment and criticism.

3. The Learning Standards appear to be a well kept secret from students. Many students expressed not knowing the Standards existed. A number of students expressed appreciation for the Standards and also suggested that students should be made aware of the Standards early in their time at Westmont.

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Part A: Students’ Responses to Christian Orientation Standard

Christian Orientation Standard

I. **Ordinal Scale:** Self-reported assessment of how seniors perceive they are meeting the outcome expectations of the Christian Orientation Standard (1-10 scale; 1 indicates that the standard was met to a very limited extent and 10 indicates that the standard was met to a very great extent).

- When student entered Westmont: 4.7 (mean)
- Now: 7.8 (mean)
- Difference: 3.1 (mean)

II. **Courses/Experiences:** Seniors were asked to identify specific courses and experiences which were particularly influential in helping them develop in the area of the Christian Orientation Standard (number indicates the number of students making similar statements).

- Bio and Faith (2)
- Biology (4)
- Campus Pastors office
- Chamber singers
- Chapel (20)
- Chemistry (General)
- Choir
- Christian peers (5)
- Church (3)
- Comm Rhetoric
- Crafts (Art)
- Cultural and Intellectual History
- Discussions in many classes
- English (Intro to Lit)
- Leadership (2)
- Living in the dorms
- Math and Philosophy
- Microeconomics (Intro)
- Mission trips (6)
- Music in the Worshipping Church
- Off-campus programs (6)
- PO - Christianity and Politics (2)
- PO - Developing Nations
- PO - Political Theory
- Potter’s Clay (4)
- PY - Ethics
- PY - Metaphysics
- PY - Philosophy (Intro) (5)
- PY - Philosophy of Religion
- RS - Christian Apologetics (7)
- RS - Christian Doctrine (26)
- RS - Doctrine of the Word (2)
- RS – Found. of Spiritual Formation
- RS - History of World Christianity (16)
- RS - New Testament (13)
- RS - Old Testament (19)
- RS - Reconciliation
- RS - Reformation
- RS - Theology classes (upper division)
- RS classmates
- Senior Seminar
- Soc - Human Services
- Soc - Latin American cultures
- Soc - Social Policy
- Sociology (Intro)
- Spring Break in the City (2)
- Staff mentoring
- Volleyball
- World Civ (3)
- World Poverty and Economics
- Worship dance team

III. **Comments:** Statements (verbatim) made by senior survey respondents.
Part A: Students’ Responses to Christian Orientation Standard

- Came to Westmont with a solid faith and background
- Learned to make faith own
- Learned to have Christ at center of life
- Learned to use faith and knowledge to make a difference in the world
- World religions not so helpful
- Many other classes contributed to development of “Affections” area: Life Science, ED classes.
- Applying Bible to social problems opened eyes to the reality of God’s word and its applicability to her life
- I grew particularly in the areas of knowledge and a better understanding of virtues.
- Most of my Religious Studies classes were my favorite because of the enthusiasm and sensitivity of the professors.
- I took Christian Doctrine my first semester at Westmont and it was really difficult for me. I wish I would have taken it after New Testament.
- When I came to Westmont I had an understanding of the practices and virtues, but my Biblical knowledge and experience with devotional resources was limited. Room to grow in this area.
- I have a wider view.
- SBIC and outreach programs were helpful and opened my life in terms of faith.
- Chapel fed my spiritual needs.
- Christian Doctrine helped me to think through many issues.
- Christian Apologetics helped me to think through harder questions.
- Christian peers and chapels helped me to realize the importance of listening to God voice and quiet times.
- I learned more about the history behind Scripture in New and Old Testament.
- Off-campus programs help a student to put their faith into a wider perspective through their interactions with various types of people.
- I was impressed by how the subject matter in different courses related to each other.
- Practicing honesty and integrity in writing papers and taking tests.
- I transferred into Westmont after two years at other colleges so much of the development had already begun.
- Christian high school makes a big difference.
- Affections: most growth. Sensitivity, thinking outside a box. Exposure to others.
- I slightly increased my knowledge of the Bible and Church history. Developed a more mature but also weaker faith—more doubt.
- The Westmont environment and books read outside of the classroom have had a far reaching impact on the above-rated area.
- Westmont has not affected my understanding of the Christian faith. All changes resulted from my experiences in life outside the educational realm. I separated them.
- I grew a lot overall but I wish my knowledge would have grown even more.
- High school youth group – stronger – freedom in high school.
- One of the most powerful experiences for me in my walk with the Lord was the semester I spent alone (without other Westmont students) in France. It was just me and the Lord. It
Part A: Students’ Responses to Christian Orientation Standard

was wonderful. I feel that I am less excited about “just any” Christian group/organization, but have a much deeper walk and more discernment now.

- Making my faith my own was crucial to this standard, i.e. attending church without my family because it was MY choice.
- Community of people, faculty leadership was key.
- Trip to N.Y. with friends: showed cooperative power of prayer. RAing and student ministries (where practiced lessons learned). Friends taught him how to “speak my theology.”
- I don’t think I learned to appreciate God’s world very much through Physics. I don’t think this was pursued very heavily as a specific idea except in Modern Physics. I think that Westmont helped me be more spiritually aware but my hardness of heart kept the awareness from turning into much action. I think that Westmont has a tendency to feel either coercive or distant. What it needs is some sort of spiritual reformation that asks people if they are willing to start living for Christ or not. I don’t know what they would do with this information, but at least people would know where they stand afterwards instead of just living the same un-impacted life as before without being confronted with the fact that they need to change. Westmont gave me greater awareness of where I stand and caused to either harden my heart or change.
- Being involved in church and stressing that Westmont is not a church; now has a good base for learning spiritual truths.
- Westmont didn’t just teach me new things, but a deeper understanding of my faith.
- Christian Doctrine was very helpful in regards to basic knowledge and Christianity and Politics was the most helpful in regards to practical application of faith to real issues. My semester in DC was also helpful in that aspect.
- One area I feel Westmont neglects is knowledge of world religions. They offer the class, but not as a GE, which I think it should be.
- My faith remains at a moderate level, but I’m more aware of religious matters around the world—and this has made me search deeper into what I believe.
- Westmont being a Christian institution makes it easier to practice faith, but harder to step outside comfort zone.
- Community life everywhere on campus.
- Strong focus on campus spiritual opportunities tends to inhibit real outreach, as well as broader interaction with Christian community (e.g. local churches)—and to promote “silence and quietness.”
- I loved the Lord when I came here—I love him now, in very different ways and within new paradigms. Difficult to rate on a number line.
- Everyone thinks those questions are a joke (that is, reference to student perceptions of course evaluation questions on integrating faith and learning).
Part A: Students’ Responses to Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard

Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard

I. **Ordinal Scale**: Self-reported assessment of how seniors perceive they are meeting the outcome expectations of the Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard (1-10 scale; 1 indicates that the standard was met to a very limited extent and 10 indicates that the standard was met to a very great extent).

- When student entered Westmont: 4.6 (mean)
- Now: 7.9 (mean)
- Difference: 3.3 (mean)

II. **Courses/Experiences**: Seniors were asked to identify specific courses and experiences which were particularly influential in helping them develop in the area of the Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard (number indicates the number of students making similar statements).

- Art - Drawing
- Art - Principles
- Art - Printmaking
- Art - Watercolor
- Biology (General)
- Chapel (3)
- Chapel discussions
- Chemistry (General) (2)
- Com - Advocacy
- Com - Argumentation (2)
- Com - Messages, Meaning & Culture (5)
- Com- Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution
- Com- Rhetoric (3)
- Com Studies classes
- CS - Artificial Intelligence
- CS - Formal Languages
- CS 10
- Discussing issues with students (2)
- Dorm living
- EB - Comparative Economic Systems
- EB - Entrepreneurship
- EB - Intermediate Micro
- EB - Quant I and II
- ED 100
- ED courses (all)

- Eng – Composition, Advanced (2)
- Eng - Major American Writers (2)
- Eng - Renaissance Literature
- Eng - seminar classes
- Eng - Twentieth Century Art
- Eng 141
- Eng 195
- English Comp
- English Lit (3)
- General aura on campus
- Group projects (2)
- Horizon
- Interdisciplinary G.E.s
- Internships (2)
- KNS - Biomechanics
- Leadership (2)
- MA - Calculus
- MA – Combinatorics (2)
- MA - Statistics
- Math (upper division)
- Off-campus programs (6)
- Physics
- PO - Comparative Politics of Developing Nations (2)
- PO - Modern Political Analysis (2)
- PO - Political Theory
- Potter’s Clay
Part A: Students' Responses to Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard

- Psy - Social Psych
- PY - Contemporary Moral Problems
- PY - Ethics (4)
- PY - Philosophical Theology
- PY - Philosophy (Intro) (6)
- PY - Philosophy of Language
- PY - Philosophy of Religions
- RS - Christian Apologetics (1)
- RS - Christian Doctrine (2)
- RS - Doctrine of the Word (3)
- RS - History of World Christianity (1)
- RS - New Testament
- RS - Ref History
- RS 20
- Soc - Social Theory
- Social Science courses
- Sociology classes
- Summer research
- Theater courses
- World Civilizations (I & II) (9)

III. Comments: Statements (verbatim) made by senior survey respondents.

- Discussions and issues were especially helpful in this area. I have greatly improved in my problem-solving skills and ability to see things from different perspectives.
- I don’t feel like I’ve had much experience in this area. The term “critical thinking” is used a lot, but I don’t know that it has been sufficiently defined. It’s possible that I may exercise this skill in personal interactions without realizing it, but I don’t know.
- The statement “Loving to learn, learning to live, and living to love” has been really influential in learning how to connect my Christian faith with academics as worship.
- Messages, Meaning and Culture helped me to think more abstractly. Also, RS classes and abroad programs helped.
- The majority of my English classes.
- All my courses were helpful in challenging all my ideas and thoughts, and though difficult for me at times were definitely needed and appreciated.
- Increased my range and ability to collaborate and draw from all fields.
- Rhetoric has taught me how to apply all my courses to everyday life. I think this standard is one of my best.
- I have definitely learned how to be a thoughtful and reflective person. I’ve learned to appreciate other viewpoints while becoming confident in my own. Through my classes I’ve also discovered how to analyze and understand diverse viewpoints in a way that is respectable and appreciative.
- Brought to my attention continually at Westmont (especially sophomore year and beyond). Don’t necessarily feel as prepared to collaborate in other fields; “limits” idea an important one.
- Able to think with more humility.
- Information and theories allowed me to grow in my abilities to think creatively about seemingly complex systems.
- I don’t think there are specific courses or experiences—more of a general learning experience.
- I was involved in a problem-solving group in high school, so I feel like I came in with a certain amount of knowledge, but my courses at Westmont have deepened that basic understanding.


Part A: Students’ Responses to Diversity Standard

**Diversity Standard**

I. **Ordinal Scale:** Self-reported assessment of how seniors perceive they are meeting the outcome expectations of the Diversity Standard (1-10 scale; 1 indicates that the standard was met to a very limited extent and 10 indicates that the standard was met to a very great extent).

- When student entered Westmont: 4.8 (mean)
- Now: 7.4 (mean)
- Difference: 2.6 (mean)

II. **Courses/Experiences:** Seniors were asked to identify specific courses and experiences which were particularly influential in helping them develop in the area of the Diversity Standard (number indicates the number of students making similar statements).

- Anglophone poetry
- Anti-colonialism
- Apologetics
- Art History
- Being a minority (2)
- Chapel (3)
- Chemistry Seminar
- Chicano Lit (2)
- Christian Doctrine
- Christianity and Politics
- Civil War
- Clubs
- Contemporary World Theologies (2)
- Counseling class
- Cultural Diversity (2)
- Developing Nations
- Disabilities (2)
- Doctrine of the Word
- Education classes (3)
- ENG 130
- English/Irish Relations
- Ethics
- Ethnic Groups
- Extra-curricular life at Westmont
- First-year student retreat
- Friendships with people of other cultures
- Gender and Sex Roles (2)
- Greek
- History of World Christianity (4)
- History research
- Horizon editor
- ICP dinners (2)
- Independence and Imperialism
- International Marketing
- Internship
- Interpersonal communication
- Intro to International Politics (2)
- Issues in Missions
- Justice Club
- Latin American Cultures
- Latin American Literature
- Leadership
- Living with other students (3)
- Messages, Meaning and Culture
- Metaphysics
- Modernization of the 3rd World
- New Testament
- Off-campus programs (22)
- Philosophy
- Political Ideologies
- RA class and experience (2)
- Race and Ethnicity in Literature (3)
- Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution (4)
- Rhetoric (2)
- SBIC (5)
**Part A: Students' Responses to Diversity Standard**

- Soccer
- Social Theory (2)
- Sociology (7)
- Spanish (4)
- Survey of Theater Arts
- Theological Foundations of Missions
- Urban program (6)
- Urbana 2004
- Volunteering
- Westmont Student Ministries (8)
- World Civilizations (8)

**III. Comments:** Statements (verbatim) made by senior survey respondents.

- Have encountered little diversity except for traveling, i.e. you’re forced to engage in difference, but in the classroom there is very little of this issue being taught.
- Meeting with other students of minority if different than I’m used to—also being around a white dominant society changed my thinking.
- Most of my reflection on this topic has been more about dealing with students than the general community. (ED major)
- My understanding of women’s, children’s, and the church’s oppression was challenged at Westmont.
- I’m a cross-cultural Sociology major because of my passion and commitment to this. I’ve studied this a lot, both in and out of context (i.e. the classroom, Mexico, San Francisco).
- Can be an area of weakness in our major. We talk a lot about culture, gender, ethnicity, etc., but less in the context of our own belief system, the way we formulate knowledge, faith, etc.
- It has really been through my ED classes and student teaching that I’ve grown an appreciation for other cultures. I’ve become a much less rigid person. I’m more open to change and different ways and perspectives. In a way it’s been a bit hard at Westmont to get out of the bubble and be exposed to different people.
- Because of the way I was raised and the mission trips and study abroad trips I have been on, I feel as though I have always respected all peoples—and been able to love them through those differences.
- The nature of Westmont limits experience in this category. There is a lot of talk about the subject, but after graduation is the true test.
- I became much more aware of the world and ethnic groups (through SBIC and Sociology).
- I think that Westmont still struggles with acknowledging the gift of diversity that is not racial or ethnic.
- Westmont needs to work more in this area. There is not much cultural awareness on campus. I can’t stress enough the differences that the abroad semesters made for me!
- Although I am Chinese American, I didn’t understand completely how to embrace this difference as a Christian and a member of society until I came to Westmont. Elena Yee has been very influential in helping me to understand my identity as a Chinese-American.
- I’ve had considerable exposure to people outside my race, but that didn’t mean necessarily that they were from a different culture than me. I think I need to know more about what the issues are before I can discuss them. I don’t think my major addressed such things to a great extent.
Part A: Students’ Responses to Diversity Standard

- Studying the history of Europe and America in class and through my own research has given me a better understanding of other cultures and how they have developed.
- Volunteering at the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission was especially helpful. I am much more aware and my particular set of life experiences.
- I think Westmont has been very sensitive to this and worked hard to educate its students to diversity and cross-cultural education.
- Lack of diversity at Westmont fostered my appreciation of diversity.
- Continual analysis of previously uninspected beliefs has led to growth in this area.
- Westmont is not diverse and no matter how it tries it will always fail; thus the college ought to recognize this and live life through experiences rather than force-feeding its community the racism in disguise of diversity.
- It’s always hard to develop in understanding of cultural diversity in largely homogeneous surroundings, but I have come to understand an appreciate diversity differently through realizing how different and unique we all are. I would love to have a (non-France) Francophone Literature course offered and required as part of the literature major.
- This standard increased due to discussions held in class wherein I observed diversity of thinking, background, etc.
- Awareness of “the Other” I came in with.
- I wish there was a foreign language requirement (had 4 years in high school).
- While Westmont doesn’t have much to stand on in terms of diversity, the concept as it relates to faith and life was brought up a lot. I definitely gained keener insight into those things about culture and society that shape who we are. I think that the institution of Westmont emphasizes diversity but individual classes don’t so it is somewhat ineffective. Bring diversity issues into the classroom.
- The diversity focus occasionally skewed approaches to cross-cultural relationships rather than helped it be common.
- Regret not knowing a foreign language well.
- Classes were diverse in subject. I didn’t feel like campus life was diverse.
- Being an RA to Asian and black students.
- Now [I] celebrate diversity.
- Westmont does a good job with this in theory, but because our student body is not very diverse and not everyone studies abroad, it is difficult to actually practice.
- Reconciliation has changed the way I interact with people daily. Although I still have many cultures and lifestyles I have not experienced, I feel as though I have the basics for successful interaction with all of them.
- I’m in the ethnic minority, but I fit in fine. It’s not really an issue. I never go to ICP events.
Part A: Students’ Responses to Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement Standard

Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement Standard

I. **Ordinal Scale**: Self-reported assessment of how seniors perceive they are meeting the outcome expectations of the Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement Standard (1-10 scale; 1 indicates that the standard was met to a very limited extent and 10 indicates that the standard was met to a very great extent).

- When student entered Westmont: 4.9 (mean)
- Now: 8.3 (mean)
- Difference: 3.4 (mean)

II. **Courses/Experiences**: Seniors were asked to identify specific courses and experiences which were particularly influential in helping them develop in the area of the Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement Standard (number indicates the number of students making similar statements).

- Academic rigor
- Art - Theory & Criticism (2)
- Art History
- Being an R.A. (6)
- Bible studies
- Chapel (8)
- Chem - Organic Chemistry
- Class projects (2)
- Colloquiums
- Com - Argumentation and Advocacy
- Com - Reconciliation
- Com - Rhetoric
- Convocations (2)
- Debate/speech tournament
- Discussions outside the classroom with students and faculty
- EB - Entrepreneurship
- EB - Finance
- EB - World Poverty and Economics
- ED - credential courses (2)
- Eng - seminar courses
- Having professors who know me
- Horzonz staff
- Independent study
- Intercollegiate athletics
- Internships (7)
- Kinesiology classes (2)
- KNS - Pedagogy
- Leadership (4)
- Living situations (3)
- Math/CS department interactions and functions
- Mission and ministry outside speakers (3)
- Off-campus programs (10)
- PO - Comparative Politics
- PO - Constitutional Law
- PO - International Politics (2)
- PO - Political Theory
- Potter’s Clay and Potter’s Clay core team (2)
- PY - Ethics
- PY - Philosophy (2)
- RS - Christian Doctrine
- RS – History of World Christianity
- SBIC (2)
- Senior Seminar
- Sociology (3)
- Spanish Lit
- Spring Sing committee
- Study group with L.P.
- Study habits (2)
- Tennis team
- Westmont Student Ministries (3)
- Work experience (3)
- World Civilizations (3)
III. **Comments:** Statements (verbatim) made by senior survey respondents.

- Most of my professors have encouraged me to pursue learning outside the classroom and the general atmosphere at Westmont is one that takes learning seriously and emphasizes its importance in life.
- Lifelong learning is emphasized throughout Westmont.
- I love learning and people. I'm not sure how this will work itself out outside of the Westmont environment.
- Westmont needs to develop a healthier view of vocation by teaching students that performance isn't everything and that what we do in life is much more than how successful we are.
- One thing that Westmont succeeded at was giving me lifelong learning skills. Especially on a social and personal level (not an academic level). I like to say: "Westmont taught me about life." I failed to embrace a lot of the principles like responsibility (I expect someone to teach me, not to go figure it out for myself), sympathy (I recognized needs around the world now, but find little concern in my heart), and effective participants (same as sympathy).
- Intro CS courses led to desire to pursue a CS major.
- Would rate "equipped for lifelong learning" pretty high!
- The biggest growth has occurred in this area because of the maturing process that naturally takes place during college.
- My French major has helped me understand and develop more communication skills in many different contexts.
- I would say that this has been the most valuable to me and what I am most grateful for.
- I feel like I have been really encouraged to look at things from different perspectives, and to take into account the minority way of thinking while at Westmont.
- I do feel prepared to be effective both personally and vocationally.
- Westmont's holistic emphasis on learning permits us to pursue all our passions.
- Nothing at Westmont has changed or improved my social skills or standards. It certainly hasn't taught me anything about a Christian vocation. My intellectual growth is significant and developed as a result from most of my lecture-based courses.
- My love for learning seems to be fed by learning itself.
- I came here for free and feel that I have been irresponsible. I took so much for granted and regret being shy, but I now have a perspective for future engagement.
- Most of this was built in my study abroad. It motivated me to become involved lifelong. The great churches in the area and chapel have made me take responsibility for my own faith.
- Interaction with diverse groups of people helped me realize both the benefits and responsibility of the education I have been given. I knew I wanted to serve God generally when I entered Westmont, now I know how to more specifically.
- Potter's Clay has a huge impact on the students that participate. Europe semester lead me to desire a deeper understanding of the people in this world.
- I think that common sense, more than Christian vocation, does more to inform my decisions. But the Christian values that I grew up with do have an influence. I have the motivation, but not the knowledge or time to be an effective participant.
- I definitely feel more interested, equipped, and confident now than I ever did in terms of intellectual engagement, and I want to take an active role in societal issues. Before I was much more indifferent.
- Before Westmont I could have been a very effective participant in my small hometown community, now I can be effective in more than that single community.
- The field of Kinesiology was opened up to me. I feel prepared to continue my education and service in the workplace.
- My internship in the DA’s office has been particularly applicable here.
- I feel like I am extremely competent and prepared for my future career. Student teaching has been a wonderful transition. I feel like I am prepared to face the world as a loving, knowledgeable, passionate, and caring Christian.
- I don’t feel that one particular class led to this development, but rather the cumulative effect of four years at Westmont.
- I’m still working on this. I have limited work experience, but this is becoming more natural to me and I’m sure with more time and experience I’ll have a good grasp on this. My internships have helped teach me about this goal.
- Building on a large jump in interdisciplinary thinking, I am better equipped to think quickly and react to changing environments, especially in the workplace, evidenced by successful internships.
- Exposure to those with needs was eye-opening.
- I feel equipped for lifelong learning. Have developed habits of reading and research. I need a willingness to change.
Part A: Students’ Responses to Written and Oral Communication Standard

Written and Oral Communication

I. **Ordinal Scale:** Self-reported assessment of how seniors perceive they are meeting the outcome expectations of the Written and Oral Communication Standard (1-10 scale; 1 indicates that the standard was met to a very limited extent and 10 indicates that the standard was met to a very great extent).

- When student entered Westmont: 5.0 (mean)
- Now: 8.1 (mean)
- Difference: 3.1 (mean)

II. **Courses/Experiences:** Seniors were asked to identify specific courses and experiences which were particularly influential in helping them develop in the area of the Oral and Written Communication Standard (number indicates the number of students making similar statements).

- Art - Theory and Criticism
- Art courses
- Art History
- Art, Principles
- Being an R.A.
- Chapel
- Com - Argumentation and Advocacy (2)
- Com - Gender and Communication
- Com - Media Ethics (2)
- Com - Messages, Meaning and Culture (4)
- Com - Public Discourse
- Com - Public Speaking (4)
- Com - Rhetoric (3)
- Communication Studies classes (4)
- EB - Microeconomics
- EB - Quantitative Economics
- EB - World Poverty
- ED 100
- ED 120
- Education courses
- Eng - Composition
- Eng - Film Studies
- Eng - Honors Intro to Lit (2)
- Eng - Intro to Lit (7)
- Eng - Literature courses (7)
- Eng - Mod Gram/ Adv Comp (3)
- English courses (4)
- General Education courses
- Internship (2)
- KNS - Pedagogy (2)
- Leadership
- Missions trips
- Off-campus programs (2)
- PO - American Political Experience
- PO - Comparative Politics
- PO - Con Law
- PO - Developing Nations
- PO - Political Theory
- PY - Ethics (2)
- RS - Christian Doctrine (3)
- RS - Contemporary World Theologies
- RS - Doctrine of the Word
- RS - History of World Christianity
- RS - Religious Studies courses
- Soc - Latin American Cultures
- Soc - Social Theory (2)
- Soc, Intro
- Sociology research projects
- Sociology/Anthropology courses
- Spanish Lit courses
Part A: Students' Responses to Critical/Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard

- Liberal arts require a person to be educated in many different areas.
- Maturity has greatly contributed, writing reflections and papers demand original ideas. Art is another form of thinking outside the box.
- Each class forced a recognition of how to inhabit gray areas, how to use multiple disciplines to approach any hope of a workable solution to specific problems.
- In most of my courses I have been encouraged by professors to use all my knowledge and the things I am learning in other classes to find new insights. Often students will bring up in class information they have learned in another course.
- All my classes did this, but especially my general ED course like World Civ because of groups of people.
- Internships because of pulling together all knowledge and practically applying to the worksite.
- Westmont is exceptional at this. I had a background in this approach before Westmont, but was given more skill and even the ability to lead others in this through Westmont and the collaboration involved in class projects and Potter’s Clay.
- Hard to determine what happened in the interim between departure (2) and arrival (7) (his self-ratings on this standard)—but it was sophomore year. Junior year: more confident. Especially enjoyed moments in other disciplines (English, Messages, Meaning.….) that showed connections with RS. Also Urban—showed what had happened.
- My major (Social Science) helped.
- Courses in which a lot of writing was done really helped here.
- This seems to be one of the biggest benefits of a liberal arts education vs. a tech school or something specific.
- Learning to write critical papers for my French and English literature classes pushed me to think and reason more critically within my disciplines. Taking classes within a semester whose topics of study overlapped made me excited about thinking and talking about the issues as they pertained to each other and to the world I live in.
- Internship at Urban (SF General Hospital Chaplain)
- Outside reading of plays, novels, manifestoes, and philosophical literature.
- Courses in Philosophy, Mathematics (and a host of others), as well as the general consequences of aging have brought me to where I am today on this “standard.”
- All Philosophy courses and liberal arts in general.
- Sometimes this seems to be talked about a lot and expected, but never really taught in concrete ways.
- Good variety of courses offered outside major.
- I feel as if I still need to grow in the area of working with other fields of study and involving more disciplines in my research.
- Double-majoring and taking a variety of GE courses.
- Work’s upper division RS seem to integrate other subjects such as History and English.
- My Philosophy courses were crucial as well as the general attitude in the classroom created by the interdepartmental interactions.
- Being a critical person is not being a critical thinker. People in my major are intimidating.
Part A: Students’ Responses to Written and Oral Communication Standard

- Speech and debate tournament (3)
- Summer youth ministry
- Talks with roommates
- Westmont Student Ministries
- World Civilizations II (3)
- Writer’s Corner (3)

III. Comments: Statements (verbatim) made by senior survey respondents.

- Rhetorical effectiveness improved as I learned how to be prepared to speak and how to speak well when called upon.
- The Liberal Arts approach helped with my writing and communication. The small classes helped with communicating.
- I see myself as having a long way to go. I desire more depth which will lead to confidence in these areas.
- My Intro to Lit course changed my way of communicating, and all my Religious Studies courses with their many papers honed this.
- This is one area in which Westmont excels. I believe almost everything I have done at Westmont has served to make me a better communicator. I am constantly being challenged to improve.
- Westmont helped me become an effective, thorough writer. Not enough emphasis was placed on speaking. In one of my English classes thoroughness and depth of thought was stressed and made my learning experience much richer.
- I don’t know what Lower and Higher Thinking Skills are. I did not get as much practice in speaking and writing as I had expected from college.
- I feel that my written and oral communication skills have increased in the last four years, although they are not to where I would like them to be.
- Writing a lot of papers and engaging in discussions helped me formulate my ideas more clearly. I now feel that I have competence to get beyond clichés in communicating.
- I think this would be more so if I were majoring in Communications.
- I haven’t really developed speaking skills, but my writing skills and ability in rhetorical, cultural awareness and Christian faith without clichés has increased.
- After my first year my skills atrophied. There should be more writing in more courses.
- I was never aware of clichés before having to write about them. My own self-reflection helped immensely in ridding me of clichés once I realized I was using them.
- Public Speaking should be a General Education requirement.
- My verbal rhetoric has been enhanced by most courses taken, especially philosophy courses. Chapel has also (however strange this may seem), led to a great degree of growth in this area.
- This is one area that I have seen growth in or at least a definite development as a result of my years here at Westmont. Specifically developed from my composition courses and my Victorian and neo-classical courses.
- There is a huge difference between where I was 4 years ago and where I am now!
- Messages, Meaning and Culture really helped me to understand the importance of clear and effective communication as a Christian.
Part A: Students' Responses to Written and Oral Communication Standard

- All of my literature and writing courses have been very helpful in teaching me to express myself clearly and in such a way that the reader/listener connects with what I am trying to communicate.
- I've learned a lot about thinking, writing, and speaking clearly through courses, but also just through peer engagement.
- I don't feel that my writing improved, possibly because of my major, but I am more confident as a speaker.
- The speech/debate tournament helped me to confront my fear.
- Papers, presentations and critical analysis help with clarity, articulation and precision.
- Realization of other people's differences in beliefs and faith was hard to adjust to. It made me more open-minded through different situations. I've had to communicate in a way that was appropriate.
- I think I still have some improvements to make with regards to research style writing, but my education at Westmont has definitely helped me develop my voice and style in writing.
- The more I write or speak in any course, the more I develop in this category. Modern Grammar and Advanced Composition challenged my writing skills.
- My written standards have been far better off from the research papers and memo style papers written at Westmont. I have learned to consolidate and effectively communicate through written work.
- I've written many papers during my college education. Messages, Meaning and Culture helped remind me of proper presentation etiquette. It's a process though—there's always room for improvement.
- More writing, less speaking, although speaking addressed indirectly in several classes (presentations).
- I have come so far in these areas. My ED classes have required so much writing, it has forced me to hone my skills and really master bringing my thoughts to life. Before Westmont, I was extremely shy. All my ED classes and student teaching have taught me how to speak and eloquently articulate my goals.
- Rhetoric has helped my ability to communicate in every way. This area is my forte.
- The papers, presentations, and projects in my major greatly improved my communication. I was able to assess this aspect of my education constantly.
- Perhaps my confidence has improved, but not my skills.
- All of my courses forced me to think and articulate in the best possible way. Writing papers were an excellent way to practice being clear, confident and thoughtful with my responses and ideas.
- Various presentations in physics, tutoring, teaching, orchestra, Gordon classes.
- I didn't have to write much. My longest paper was 12 pages.
Part A: Students’ Responses to Research and Technology Standard

Research and Technology Standard

I. **Ordinal Scale:** Self-reported assessment of how seniors perceive they are meeting the outcome expectations of the Research and Technology Standard (1-10 scale; 1 indicates that the standard was met to a very limited extent and 10 indicates that the standard was met to a very great extent).

- When student entered Westmont: 4.3 (mean)
- Now: 7.3 (mean)
- Difference: 3.0 (mean)

II. **Courses/Experiences:** Seniors were asked to identify specific courses and experiences which were particularly influential in helping them develop in the area of the Research and Technology Standard (number indicates the number of students making similar statements).

- Bio - Bioethics and Research
- Bio - Botany
- Bio - General Ecology
- Bio - Into to Microbiology
- Bio - Marine Biology
- Bio - Marine Mammals
- Bio - Molecular Biology
- Biology labs
- Chemistry labs
- Chemistry seminar
- Com - Communication Ethics (2)
- Com - Persuasion and Propaganda
- Communication Studies courses
- Community life
- Computer Science courses (2)
- EB - Entrepreneurship
- EB - International Marketing
- EB - Qualitative Research Methods (3)
- ED - Computers for Teachers (3)
- ED 110
- Eng - Anglophone Poetry
- Eng - Ethnicity and Race in American Literature
- Eng - Modern Grammar/Advanced Composition
- Eng - Neoclassical Literature
- Eng - Victorian Literature (2)
- Eng - Women Writer’s
- History, Intro
- Internship (2)
- KNS - Biomechanics
- KNS - Exercise Testing and Prescription
- KNS 172
- Leadership Development
- Library research (2)
- MA - Statistics (2)
- Online assignments
- Physics research
- PO - Comparative Politics of Developing Nations (2)
- PO - Constitutional Law
- PO - International Politics
- PO - Modern Political Analysis (2)
- Psy - Cognitive Psychology
- Psy - Exper Psychology
- Psy - Learning
- Psy - Social Psychology
- Psychology
- PY - Ethics
- Research (4)
- RS - Biblical Interpretation
- RS - Greek
- RS - History of World Christianity
- RS - New Testament
- Soc - Child Welfare
Part A: Students’ Responses to Research and Technology Standard

- Soc - Gender and Sex Roles
- Soc - Human Services
- Soc - Sociological Theory
- Soc - Topics of Consumption
- Social Science courses
- Sociology
- Working in the Westmont library
- World Civilizations II
- Writer’s Corner

III. Comments: Statements (verbatim) made by senior survey respondents.

- I was virtually computer illiterate and really did not understand research, but through Experimental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, and Learning, I learned a lot. Also, my work and experience in the summer research program was excellent.
- I had a poor foundation to work with coming into Westmont. Through presentations and research I learned how to use resources available.
- Better able to evaluate research presented and ethics of research.
- Every Religious Studies course has been a step up in learning to write a research paper. Learning comes in the form of not being intimidated. I still favor books in learning.
- Although I feel adequately trained in research, I don’t like it. However, I do enjoy comparative studies of different nations.
- I now know what resources are out there and I am more comfortable using them.
- Molecular Biology taught me to read primary literature.
- Utilizing the library’s resources has been greatly beneficial to my development.
- I’ve had practice/exposure with the different types of scholarly works and documentation, as well as with word processing and presentation software.
- I think Westmont was not good at this at all. I learned some stuff about using Excel, but I think Westmont has a long way to go in educating people about citation, legal issues of electronic ownership, online addictions, and general research (especially within a discipline).
- I knew quite a bit about research skills beforehand, and had very few extensive research projects.
- Now I enjoy research because I have acquired skills through papers and assignments.
- I used on-line resources as a Writer’s Corner tutor and in my Communication Ethics course. I also used on-line databases for my sociology courses.
- This is an area that Westmont must emphasize more. I understand the organization and ethics behind technology, but was never properly taught how to use research methods.
- Technology was not emphasized much but I feel competent regarding research.
- Integrity in research has definitely been encouraged in all my classes. I don’t feel completely equipped to do formal research. I have not done a large amount of research in the courses I’ve taken at Westmont. However, I have become more familiar with researching in scholarly journals.
- I feel that everything I learned in this area was from individual study.
- This growth only occurred because I have never owned a computer or had one readily available until I came to Westmont. So I have grown tremendously because of the computer labs.
Part A: Students' Responses to Research and Technology Standard

- Courses in biology have greatly informed and honed my ability to discern research and scholarship of quality from that which is not.
- Professors that demanded thorough research.
- This was covered in the majority of Westmont courses.
- Most of my growth in this area is learning to research and document.
- Lots of writing and research. I relied on the computer to produce just about all my work.
- Good to address issue of integrity, ethical issues, limitations. I still don’t feel 100% confident, but I feel like I’ve been exposed to the things I’ll need to know in my field.
- I wish that I’d been required to take more research. I would have hated it, but I think I’m not proficient in this area.
- These classes stressed all of the outcomes associated with this input. Perhaps the research standard, especially use of statistics, was most beneficial.
- I actually don’t think I was challenged much in my general courses to develop very far in this area.
- I had very little knowledge to begin with, but I still think I’ve got a ways to go.
- I discovered the vast array of information on the web—some valid, some not.
- I use the Internet and that is as far as I go. Weak.
- I learned things incidentally.
- Ethical issues are not prominent. There’s much trust here.
- Westmont is a little behind the times.
- Some of the first English courses I took taught me research methods and documentation procedures. I have learned more with each research project. I do not have a very wide working knowledge of databases, etc., but am confident in my research documentations skills and my ethical commitments and awareness.
Part B: Interviewers’ Observations

Observations from Interviewers

Chapel

1. Student was initially (as a freshman) very critical of the chapel program. He now appreciates chapel a lot—especially the visiting speakers, but also Ben and Stan.
2. Westmont does Chapel very well. (Student missed it during Semester at Sea. It strengthens his faith.)
3. In the Christian Orientation Standard the “Practices” are the most challenging. Student really wants to be involved in a church after graduation, but will never find a church like Westmont Chapel. That’s a problem. Feels unchallenged by any church, but will need to step up to the plate and minister, not just be ministered to. Chapel was a lifeline and it has equipped.
4. Student repeatedly mentioned the positive impact of chapel.
5. Although the student’s reactions to chapel were mixed (liked some, not others), she thinks it is good to require attendance because many would not attend otherwise.
6. Chapel has provided a view of the Christian faith without clichés.
7. Chapel inspired student toward service. Missions Week had a big impact—giving lots of different visions for how a person might serve.
8. This student greatly appreciated chapel all 4 years.
9. The student specifically mentioned a lack of diversity in our chapel program. The style of chapel worship seems to be the same always. He wished that students could have the opportunity to become acquainted with different worship styles in chapel, as well as more diversity in the speakers that are invited to chapel.
10. Over the four years that the student was here the chapel program has evolved into a better program, which indicated a willingness to listen to students’ perspectives.
11. Diversity in chapel is helpful.
12. The student felt like the Senior chapel policy “freed or liberated” her and now “she gets to go to chapel.”

Courses and Curriculum

1. Student was very appreciative of what she learned in her religious studies courses. She gained the confidence to have opinions. Valued the way in which faith/science conflicts were handled in her science courses.
2. The best we can do for our best students is to encourage them to take possession of their own learning process, adapt assignments to more ambitious ends if they’re so inclined, and provide individual coaching during office hours.
3. This student got a lot out of his Computer Science courses.
4. Once of the most valuable academic experiences was in Messages, Meaning and Culture.
5. The student was very appreciative of what he learned concerning our Christian faith in his religious studies classes. History of World Christianity, in particular, was helpful since it contrasted rather sharply with the otherwise rather uniform environment here at Westmont.
6. While most students (and even some faculty) speak about general education courses as “things to get out of the way,” this student very much enjoyed these courses.
7. Adjunct faculty, particularly in English, was the only negatives that this student offered.
8. Research papers work!
9. The student’s Religious Studies major was the fundamental factor in shaping his experience and growth. Also helpful were Westmont Student Ministries, Urban Program and English.
10. Racism at Westmont feels ingrained to this student. He’s quite general about his experiences at Westmont.
11. Religious Studies courses (GE) are very valuable
12. He has appreciated how his courses in philosophy, mathematics, and the sciences, in particular, have helped him improve his critical thinking skills. In science he appreciates learning to distinguish good science from bad science. This enables him to look for biases when he reads.
13. Computer Science department should address job and interview techniques more, and include more writing.
14. Student wished that she had had an area of concentration in her Liberal Studies major.
15. Student was disappointed with the number of part-time faculty.
16. Student was disappointed in the quality of some of her classes.
17. Westmont does a good job of faith/learning overall.
18. It is helpful that the premed program includes English composition.
19. Student felt that he received a great education in his major as well as other areas, and he enjoyed his experience at Westmont.
20. Westmont does a very good job of showing the inter-disciplinary nature of topics, majors.
21. Student changed majors in her junior year because of the Psychology Department’s lack of assistance in her desire to pursue clinical psychology while at Westmont.
22. Student appreciates interaction with and accessibility of faculty.
23. The student described the Christian Perspective on Learning as the fabric or the funnel that his education flows through. He reflected upon the integration that took place between a chapel talk and his history or other classes.
24. Collaborative learning experiences were very important, but not many were encountered.
25. Major was successful in various ways. Most of the Political Science courses emphasize the faith component; they assisted her development in critical thinking, writing/communication; understanding of politics; integrating her understandings and political science.
26. Political Science major played a role in continuing considerations of ethnic differences, gender issues, etc.
27. The course Messages, Meaning and Culture introduced student to an understanding of gender roles in communication.
28. Although the student felt she grew spiritually in significant ways, virtually all of the growth happened outside of the classroom (the exception being her rhetoric class). She felt that faculty did not integrate spiritual issues into classes. Said she grew the most from her two off-campus programs.
29. Student did not observe integration of faith and learning outside of her Religious Studies classes.
Part B: Interviewers’ Observations

30. Student really enjoyed those Religious Studies classes where there was more integration with church.
31. The student really enjoyed faculty who integrated their own writings into the course.
32. The student began to see how science played a role in her daily life, and not just while she was focusing on it. She saw more clearly that science was to be her career and calling (vocation), and how that would be achieved (what further education would be required, and what was necessary for admission, etc.).
33. For women, the earning of respect from the professor is essential, to prove herself. This is important for her as an adult.

Diversity

1. One experience she had with a minority black student showed how [ ? ] the discrimination issue is. She was told that people’s overly kind attitude to her (the minority student) particularly was a form of discrimination.
2. The student felt that early opportunities to volunteer in places where diversity exposure was part of the community services experience was very helpful in her growth.
3. This is a student of color who felt that when she came to Westmont “everyone looked the same” and she had a hard time differentiating people. She never felt discrimination here at Westmont and felt “free to be herself.” She felt unique.
4. He felt strongly that Westmont needed to broaden its range of the Christian experience. He wanted to know more about Christianity in “real life.”
5. The lack of diversity on campus makes the “Diversity Standard” fairly theoretical in nature.
6. The student feels she has become more accepting of different viewpoints and backgrounds, but thinks her overall experience with other diversities was more homogeneous at Westmont than in high school.
7. Diversity is “forced.” (Students are forced or pressured to deal with diversity issues.)
8. There is still an appalling insensitivity to diversity issues on the part of a significant contingent of Westmont students. Students of color at Westmont encounter disenfranchising and demeaning experiences at the hands of a painfully large number of their fellow students.
9. The student felt that she gained a much more intense understanding of diversity issues this year as an R.A. by having an Asian and a black student in her section.
10. Westmont is weak on diversity. It is a monocultural academic campus.
11. Though this student is sympathetic to the need and has a heart for the issue, she felt the attempts at intercultural programming seemed forced and uninviting to non-diverse students.
12. Participating in Potter’s Clay was perhaps the most helpful context in which this student had an experience of cultural diversity. Other than that, she really did not have a lot of opportunity for experience with ethnicity, although she had more opportunity to interact with people with different belief systems from her own.
13. The student recognized his perspective on diversity and the world in general was rather myopic after high school graduation. He mentioned an anthropology class as one of a few classes that broadened his horizon and helped him realize he was part of a broader world community.
Part B: Interviewers’ Observations

14. Diversity on campus is a real problem area for Westmont.

Faith Issues

1. Student was a nominal Christian in high school. He took Doctrine his first semester and was shocked by what he didn’t know. He was an atheist during most of his first year (canon seemed accidental, etc.), but he became a Christian in the fall of his sophomore year.
2. The student comes from a strong background of Christian experience. She has struggled mightily with her faith here, and conflicts with teachings by professors and parents have been difficult.
3. The student said that her experience at Westmont has given her a profoundly altered perspective on the Church, and a new appreciated for liturgy, as well as for a variety of forms of worship.
4. Student started out at Westmont with a strong but simple Christian faith (and was critical of people not sharing his convictions and values). He now has a weak and complex faith and is much more open to alternative points of view.
5. She, on the other hand, benefited tremendously from the Christian environment of the college.
6. Westmont encourages students to stretch their faith—to make it their own.
7. The cliché-ridden nature of campus conversations about faith (chapel, dorms) was a problem for this student. She felt removed from a great deal of campus culture because she couldn’t use the same language.
8. Students tend to choose local church involvement or campus spiritual activities—not both.
9. This student learned values and theology “behind” things and God got “bigger.”
10. The student would like to go to church more, but transportation is a problem at Westmont. She does not have a car. The churches that send vans are not ones she wishes to attend.
11. The student now more appreciates diversity of religious views, yet still maintains firm convictions of his own.
12. This student was not satisfied with the Christian life on campus. For her it lacked depth.
13. The student felt the majority of his spiritual development happened outside the classroom through chapel or having chats with friends. Leadership class was very important.
14. He also indicated that his faith changed significantly: he now understands faith as a “conversation” rather than some kind of result, and enjoys the fact that he is constantly in the process of “working out [his] salvation.”

General

1. Student’s experience at Westmont was overwhelmingly positive. He indicated that reading is now an active element in his life, which was not the case when he entered Westmont.
2. This student is very capable academically, but gained tremendously from out-of-classroom experiences.
3. Westmont profoundly contributed toward this student’s maturity: spiritual and academic. She attributes this to Westmont’s small size and orientation toward liberal arts. She says Westmont wanted to be involved in her spiritual growth.
4. Good students sometimes have skills and maturity levels that are unevenly developed: for instance, intellectual agility and verbal acuity may be coupled with rather simplistic faith premises or may be discipline-specific and not extend to math/science skills. We need to help them with interdisciplinary integration.

5. What one might call a culture of passivity, sometimes masquerading as politeness or respect, in classroom discussion is distressing to students who seek and are capable of vigorous argument, questions that challenge norms, and exploring edge or “dangerous” issues that threaten what some students want to protect.

6. This student attributes much of her growth to extra-curricular activities (choirs, Potter’s Clay, debate tournament, travel) and much to classes (including training in the affections and preparation for lifelong learning).

7. Students do seem to grow appreciably here. Even what is not learned in class is affected by the ethos of the college and the goals at which it aims.

8. The student’s path is toward an educational and ethical holism that makes the breakdown of categories across these questions odd or problematic.

9. Extra-curricular activities within and beyond Westmont life were critical components of “putting it all together” for this student.

10. Westmont is a very difficult place for students less wealthy than most. Course load doesn’t consider students who are working substantial hours and opportunities for extra-curricular events cost money.

11. The college experience is and should be a challenging one, it should stretch one to the limit so as to help individuals better understand their abilities and capabilities, their capacities, and to give them a greater overall confidence.

12. The best way to formulate your own ideas is to be confronted with opposing or different ones. That is not to agitate an individual or change their ideas, but to give greater insight and produce more guided, well-considered ideas (beliefs and values).

13. The student had his vision of the world expanded by Westmont’s program.

14. The student noticed that in the last couple of years more discussions about controversial current events have taken place on campus. He found a number of the evening events with invited speakers very interesting.

15. Even though some students are able to deepen their faith, improve their ability to communicate, synthesize issues that they encounter in various disciplines, heighten their sensitivity to diversity issues, and emerge with the kind of grounded, dynamic faith that fulfills all we hope for in a Christian liberal arts alumna, even these students may feel at sea regarding their vocation.


17. The student felt that he had learned as much from his mistakes as his accomplishments. He was unsure of his “calling” when he first entered Westmont and initially was a vessel with a reason. As he explored via classes in various disciplines he discovered what a calling is and what his calling is.

18. Student felt that her Westmont experience was pivotal. She senses tremendous personal growth. Close interaction with professors who care about/for her was critical to this. Her personal interaction with professors molded her.
Part B: Interviewers' Observations

19. Professors lead by example—examples of commitment to learning: “Professors who loved what they taught, taught me to love what I learned.”
20. Doing this evaluation made the student realize even more how much she appreciates what was learned and gained at Westmont.
21. When a person is quieter or more hesitant to invest outside of the classroom, experience is more limited as well as benefits of the Westmont education.
22. This student was very glad to have engaged in this process. He was surprised and pleased to see all the specific ways in which he has grown here. (He knew generally that he had learned a lot before he did this.)
23. Student has grown in his love of learning and reading. He has enjoyed his coursework very much. He has also found time to read a number of classic works outside of class.
24. Student felt that Westmont is in a “bubble.”
25. Student’s first impression of the liberal arts was that they were a diverse set of unconnected disciplines. He now really enjoys seeing connections between things he is learning in different classes in different disciplines.
26. Student enjoyed participating in this process. He learned a lot about himself (what he has learned, how he has grown, how he has changed) in the process.
27. Student wished that she could have been more involved in the Westmont community, but the workload was overwhelming, which did not leave much time for extra curricular activities.
28. Freshman year was so disorienting that she doesn’t recall much about her academics.
29. Student feels that Chapel, residence hall and campus ethos is very important in conveying (or not conveying) our goals.
30. Student came into college ahead of most of her peers in the areas of maturity and intellect and Westmont did not challenge her enough in order to make major changes.
31. Student thinks that they will grow much more after graduation—after being in the world—and she believes that she has a strong foundation from which to begin.
32. Students have a change in world-to-personal view, going from being a freshman to a senior.
33. The student feels confident that here education at Westmont has prepared her for anything she might encounter in her future career choices.
34. Although the student appreciates and values her education, she gets more joy from other things, i.e. education in itself is not her passion.
35. The student likes the fact that faculty and student life people make an effort to learn the names of students. It acknowledges individuality. She did not feel like a number here.
36. Student feels that Westmont may be losing, or trading, its core values for good students. By that he meant the first-year class may be best academically, but also biggest partiers.
37. The way Christians enter Westmont College is not the way they leave—good or bad. Their zeal for disciplines, self-improvement have been compromised by a very comfortable life.
38. The student felt there was a major divide between (or hierarchy) the staff and the students (e.g. janitors in dorm). He would like to see that eliminated.
39. This student felt that interpersonal interactions were different at Westmont—“Students get along better than anywhere else I’ve been.” Her experience was that marginalized students were invited into the group, that gossip was resisted, and that there was mutual encouragement toward Christian maturity.
Part B: Interviewers’ Observations

40. This student is concerned about the male/female ratio and the resulting social implications including competition between women focus on physical appearance, eating disorders and overconfidence and arrogance of males.

41. The student felt that she received a “rich” education at Westmont. She felt that she had received so much and yet could have got so much more, and she is aware of what she doesn’t know yet.

42. This student could not see the point of G.E.—he views it as a checklist of requirements. It would seem that his G.E. courses were not very challenging (he said they were “like high school courses”).

43. For this student the benefit of being at a Christian college derives from the social community, and not from anything we are doing with our curriculum (outside of Religious Studies classes).

Learning Standards

1. Writing papers for courses introduced the student to bibliographic databases and the standards of documentation.

2. This student is a thoughtful person who feels deeply grateful to Westmont for a Christian liberal arts education that she has found deeply transforming. But she is displayed a profound disappointment with the college for expecting her to subject her experience to the oversimplification of a numerical scale. She felt that using a numeric scale to self-report on such qualities as faith, hope and love struck her as not only fraught with peril but as fundamentally antithetical to what she had learned at Westmont.

3. The student was unaware of the Standards until invited to the interview, but she recognized the goals as having been expressed throughout her program never-the-less.

4. Even though Westmont is a Liberal Arts college, the student felt that skills acquisition was necessary to make knowledge relevant.

5. Student hadn’t realized it was a goal of the school to have students learn skills involved with technologies. The instructional class times in the library make more sense to her now.

6. The student wishes that she’d had more experience with research/secondary sources.

7. The student wishes that she’d paid more attention to grammar and mechanics.

8. The student resonated with the language in the introduction which spoke of “pursuing these goals in a spirit of hospitality and invitation,” commenting on how true she found that description of her experiences in the College.

9. Potter’s Clay helped bridge the gap between learning and action.

10. The student feels that he has definitely improved in the area of the Written and Oral Communication Standard. The improvements are the result of having to write and speak in just about all of the general education classes (outside of the courses in his engineering-physics major). The small class sizes were a definite plus here, in that this made it possible to improve oral communication skills.

11. The frequent use of computers in math, physics and engineering classes helped greatly in the area of the Research and Technology Standard.

12. Student could see positive movement in all 6 areas, once identified.

13. The student firmly felt that all of these Standards were already a part of her Westmont experience and she grew.
Part B: Interviewers’ Observations

14. This student in particular is unusually articulate and thoughtful, a fine example of a Westmont student who has been successful in meeting the learning standards. I am especially struck by her attentive comment that being a critical thinker is not the same as being a critical person.

15. The diversity of people and ideas contributed toward her Active Societal engagement.

16. Critical and interdisciplinary thinking were one of the key advantages of a liberal arts college. She gained critical thinking skills especially through philosophy and math courses.

17. Re: Critical Interdisciplinary Thinking, the student felt that she grew in her abilities in this area through having courses which treated the same topic, but came at it from different perspectives.

18. One instance in which she felt that “thinking critically with the appropriate attitudes” was modeled extremely well for her was when an “intelligent design” proponent debated with a professor in her class. The professor asserted his views with confidence while at the same time treating his opponent with respect.

19. The Sympathy component of Active Societal Engagement Standard puzzled the student. (“We didn’t even have recycle bins until 2 years ago.”)

20. Speaking and writing about what you do makes it more valuable, relevant and authentic (Written/Oral Communication Standard). Writing and reflecting were essential components in the student’s education. Art classes (some of them) were really good for her to reflect on the purposes of her art making.

21. Maybe there should be a required class, seminar or assignment for new students to take that involves reading through and understanding the six standards. A professor could explain and give examples of each. This would allow students a better understanding of the intentions, purpose and goals as they continue their education at Westmont.

22. Speaking skills remain underdeveloped.

23. Students seem to be overly dependent on using the Internet as a sole means of research.

24. Expect critical thinking skills, but do not concretely teach how to critically think.

25. The student perceives that her areas of greatest growth were in Critical Thinking and Active Societal Engagement categories. She describes herself as having become passionate about certain social justice issues while here, and having gained an enlarged notion of sin as both structural and individual.

26. Very difficult to get a handle on research standards in the Liberal Studies major since the courses are in different areas of study and each area has different standards.

27. Westmont does an excellent job of helping students to learn which kind of questions to ask—issues regarding stewardship, vocation, responsibility, citizenship, faith and diversity.

28. After reading the standards, the student commented that she didn’t realize the school was so intentional about its mission. (2)

29. Co-curricular programs have played an important role—particularly in diversity area.

30. The additional overt attention to written and oral communication in the new G.E. will be a good thing.

31. The college vastly expanded the student’s sense of what’s possible with respect to the “Christian Orientation” standard.

32. The student feels that he knows how to learn and how to relate to the outside world.
Part B: Interviewers’ Observations

33. Technology is not mainstream at Westmont.
34. Across several standards, including active societal and intellectual engagement, and research and technology, student found that collaborative projects often wound up being too Student appreciates that the specific assertions made to provide a structure, philosophically that feeds into the goals of this institution as a whole. She also appreciates that she can see these insights subtly played out in her classes.
35. Westmont is excellent at offering critical thinking skills that can be valuable to all areas of life, family, work, worship and play.
36. The student was pleasantly surprised, and confident about indicating, that his growth in several areas had been “very significant.”
37. In research and technology she felt “Westmont was of almost no help at all” and that almost everything she learned there she learned on her own. The exception was learning EXCEL in the statistics course.
38. The student regards herself as primarily a problem-solver and especially appreciates courses of experiences that reinforce that quality.
39. Student seems reasonably satisfied with the use of technology for research purposes although she does not particularly like doing research.
40. Student felt that if she understood at the outset the goals of a Westmont education, she would have been more intentional about setting aside time to accomplish those goals.
41. Student felt she would have liked to have been pushed to develop oral communication skills.
42. Student was not previously aware of the Standards. (6)
43. Christian Orientation standard will be reached most effectively through personal initiatives of students.
44. Westmont students are well prepared to engage in the society in which they live and work.

Off-Campus Programs

1. Off-campus experience in Honduras was life-changing.
2. Student affirmed significant learning value of off-campus programs, both for critical-interdisciplinary thinking and understanding diversity.
3. She has taken advantage of the many off-campus opportunities offered by the college to broaden and deepen her life and classroom experience.
4. Her greatest growth here was from her semesters in Italy and Chile. She feels that off-campus programs are critically important for diversity understanding and should be required.
5. The student is highly impacted by off-campus experiences, especially the May Term reconciliation (Ireland) program and the Semester at Sea program.
6. Off-campus programs created the most personal change. She went on two programs at the prompting of her advisor.
7. Student has benefited greatly from off-campus study programs.
8. A good job is being done to encourage students to become involved in various off-campus projects, or to participate in an off-campus academic program. The student regrets not having taken advantage of at least one of these off-campus programs.
Part B: Interviewers' Observations

9. This student was profoundly shaped by her two off-campus program experiences—Oregon Extension and Urban Program. The former shaped her thinking about her faith and a host of other issues; the latter shaped her appreciation of her faith.

10. Urban semester and her history courses were instrumental in enhancing her ability to put herself in other’s shoes and in showing her the limits of her ability to do this completely.
Part C: Interviewers' Proposed Changes

Interviewers' Proposed Changes to Improve Student Experience

Courses and Curriculum

1. Assign more great literature.
2. Experiential education is very important.
3. Public speaking ought to be required of all students as a GE requirement.
4. Art department should offer at least one Asian or African art course. That would help the student body learn deeply about cultural diversity, not just hear about it or use it for entertainment.
5. Do not allow students to graduate without taking History of World Christianity.
6. Service projects as a class.
7. Continue to work with departments reducing number of part-time faculty teaching Liberal Studies courses.
8. Computer Science students should take Software Development later rather than early in the program.
9. More practical emphasis is needed on oral communication.
10. More emphasis on research skills and experience. (2)
11. Find ways to model to students examples of healthy student collaboration on group projects.
12. Incorporate service-learning into classes so service isn't seen as separate from academics.
13. Because the college re-formulated its policy on plagiarism, it was talked about in a lot of her classes. She felt it was overdone and scared students too much.
14. She wishes we would require memorization of scripture in some of our Religious Studies courses.
15. Provide more structured and informative seminar classes.
16. Maintain a stable staff of the same professors, or develop better ways to contact old/part-time staff for questions or references.
17. Improve interdisciplinary connections—General Education is seen as "introduction to various disciplines."
18. Teach students how to write.
19. Develop strategies for group discussions that foster student learning.
20. Have some joint seminar courses between departments that focus on the bigger, more general issues.
21. Chemistry needs to incorporate more discovery-based experiments in labs.
22. The Religious Studies department should provide more professional orientation—"from school to ministry."
23. Strengthen the extent to which the Biology department works on the faith/science integration in the senior seminars.
24. Improve the introduction of students to scientific instrumentation.
25. Teach Excel to students in the sciences.
26. There should be a greater emphasis on other faith systems in addition to the Christian world-view. This could be an option in General Education.
Part C: Interviewers' Proposed Changes

27. Periodically have additional topics courses offered, such as AutoCAD, in order to help with job placement later. (Many potential employers are asking applicants if they had any training in this area.)
28. Regardless of major, all students should be given the opportunity to intern so as to gain experience and clarity in their particular field of study.
29. Hire fewer adjunct faculty.
30. Professors in other disciplines should pay more attention to the mechanics and research methods of students. (I think this was an English major.)
31. Teach synthesis and analysis techniques.
32. Encourage early community service in all majors.
33. Improve lower division courses.
34. More explicit encouragement and even coaching in orientation and first-year activities to help students recognize the importance of speaking up and actively taking on the challenge of public classroom discussion.
35. More language skills should be required of Political Science students in the International Affairs track.
36. Professors should avoid reusing tests, or should re-collect them to avoid cheating. They should also be alert for paragraphs cut and pasted from the Web. Plagiarism is common.
37. Recommend that the college require students to take a foreign language.
38. Continue to make it possible for faculty to put an emphasis on writing in their courses.
39. The more impromptu writing that can be encouraged within classes across the curriculum should be a great improvement.
40. The college needs to continue to improve the use of technology into individual departments and across course offerings. Kinesiology has made strides in this regard, but more funding needed for additional needs.
41. G.E. courses need to be more challenging.

Diversity

1. Continue to work on diversity issues. (4)
2. Work to encourage more love of diversity.
3. Diversity programs should be broader in appeal and more large-scale.
4. Need to expand how we talk about diversity to be more inviting and inclusive of differences within majority student culture.
5. Assist students in coming to know and understand the “other.”
6. We need to make radical improvement in student experience in the area of diversity. Minority students need to be able to experience a Westmont education without confronting racism from their fellow students. Majority students need to become more self-reflective about their unconscious or unintentional racist behaviors and assumptions.
7. In order to break out of the Westmont bubble the student suggests that we somehow get students more involved in the local community, as Santa Barbara itself is an interesting and diverse community.
8. Actual diversification of admissions processes and curriculum and ongoing correctives to simplistic ideas about diversity.
Part C: Interviewers’ Proposed Changes

9. Students need more natural integration experiences with students from diverse backgrounds (ethnic groups).

General

1. Increase community connections.
2. Spring Break in the City was good, but students need to be better prepared for it. This activity should be a requirement.
3. Some degree of community involvement (volunteer work) should be required.
4. Set up mentorship programs with local churches, whereby a student can be “adopted” and given spiritual guidance during that crucial freshman year. Have sign-ups at the dining hall.
5. The more controversial topics need to be discussed with less intolerance and judgment. These topics need to be discussed in a more loving way.
6. The cliché-ridden nature of campus conversations about faith (chapel, dorms) was a problem for this student. She felt removed from a great deal of campus culture because she couldn’t use the same language.
7. Business and Record’s Offices are not convenient. These two offices should communicate better with each other. (Seemed more like businesses than services to students.)
8. Improve the condition of the training room, athletic fields, locker room, etc. Give the athletic area more of a voice.
10. Do more with UCSB.
11. More involvement of faculty with chapel program (attendance and participation).
12. Brainstorm about how we can prepare our women students for the challenges of the workplace, i.e. sexual harassment.
13. Women at the top of the class were given attention, even from the freshman year up. How do we give the “average” female student the attention and respect that they deserve (to the equal extent that we give to the top students)?
14. Help students discover that their social class, gender, etc. does influence how they think about Christianity.
15. Interview first-year students in a similar manner for their sakes (their understanding awareness) and for ours (data).
16. Continue to foster close professor/student interactions as professorial examples seem to be critical to student learning and growth.
17. Class offerings need to be sequenced better over a four-year period.
18. Don’t house transfer students together—it makes it harder to integrate into the community.
19. There is no accountability outside of class that values being taught are practiced and integrated into life. More faculty involvement with student accountability is needed.
20. Have students be self-reflective throughout their education. A formal interview isn’t necessary, but it would be nice if there were some organized opportunity for such reflection.
21. More extracurricular opportunities to engage in discussion of serious issues. The student cited the Iraq forum of spring 2003 as one of the learning highlights of his time here.
Part C: Interviewers’ Proposed Changes

22. Encourage more student involvement in campus activities, including theater, sports, and ministries. How facilitate? Perhaps faculty could encourage involvement and make classroom announcements regarding these activities.

23. We need to do a better job articulating our mission to students.

Learning Standards

1. Better resources to aid in growth in the area of research.
2. Make students aware of College’s intentionality and goals at the outset. (3)
3. Creating a “standard” (?) on making sure all majors incorporate some level of research that would prepare them for future graduate studies or work life.
4. Continue as a college to practice being both overt and covert in articulation of what college is trying to foster in students lives and how we are trying to do it.
5. Possible need to articulate these standards, not only General Education standards, in syllabi and department missions.
6. Westmont needs to emphasize Research/Technology more. Courses should use more instructional technology.
7. After leading students to appreciate the complexity of theological, ecclesiastical and hermeneutical issues, we should avoid subjecting them to the demeaning experience of asking them to use a numerical grid to evaluate their faith, hope and love. (student opinion)
8. Attach the standards to students’ syllabi during the first year, or syllabi for selected classes, indicating how some of the standards will be covered. (This will cause the student to focus on this aspect during their coursework.)
9. We should tell students that we want them to be tech savvy and why.

Off-Campus Programs

1. Increase off-campus programming.
2. Every student should have at least one semester-long off-campus experience. (6)
3. Strengthen and encourage study abroad programs in third world countries.
4. Continue to pursue developing a unique Economics and Business department off-campus program with a variety of learning experiences offered.
5. Review off-campus programs relative to various standards.
6. Would like to see more students encouraged to go on off-campus and missions programs.
Part D: Departments’ Reflections and Insights

Comments and Insights from Departments’ Discussions

Art
1. The chapel program is a huge problem: it is stifling and “insulting” to some students. It needs more diversity and students have no venue for practicing diversity.
2. Westmont is a ghetto of “privileged white kids.” Students need to be made aware of global issues and enabled to engage more diverse worlds in off-campus programs.
3. All students interviewed loved their Westmont experience overall, but each had different highlights based on their individual experiences. Everyone felt they were much better for having come here.
4. The diversity issue was the biggest concern and biggest overall criticism. Students felt there was much talk about it, but little action. “The college does not practice diversity.”
5. Chapel speakers were more akin to high school youth group—a higher caliber of speakers were desired.
6. World Civ classes were favorites.

English:
1. Students tend to be involved in local church activities OR in on-campus spiritual activities but NOT both.
2. Students need more practical opportunities—throughout the college curriculum—to develop their oral communication skills.
3. Students need more opportunity in the English curriculum to develop their research skills and to use secondary sources. The need more opportunity to analyze and synthesize secondary sources rather than using research to compile information.
4. The use of a numeric grid as part of the senior interview process is problematic—especially with respect to the Christian orientation standard. Students find it offensive to evaluate their faith, hope, and love on a numeric scale. Our best students rank themselves low because they have a more balanced view of what is possible.
5. Some of our students are dismayed by a culture of passivity, masquerading as politeness or respect, in which students and faculty refrain from vigorous debate on crucial issues. The exception that proves the rule was the all-campus Faculty Forum last year on the war in Iraq. Apart from that vigorous and invigorating exchange, our students see their peers and professors as unwilling to engage in debate on the occupation of Iraq, the Palestinian situation, gay marriage, and other issues of the day.
6. Students report that they had no idea that the college wanted them to learn skills involving technologies. We should tell students that we want them to be tech savvy and why.
7. Some students wish the English curriculum paid more attention to grammar and mechanics. They report that professors in other disciplines should pay more attention to the mechanics and research methods of students.
8. Students report deep concern about how white the campus is, how insensitive some white students are to diversity issues, how intimidating or oppressive the campus atmosphere can be for students of color.
History:
1. All three students emphasized the transformative impact of their off-campus programs (together they participated in five different programs), particularly in heightening their global awareness and sensitivity to issues of diversity. These experiences, along with on-campus courses across the Social Sciences and campus ministry programs such as Potter's Clay and the International Justice Mission chapter, significantly intensified their concern for social justice.
2. Overall, all these students spoke very positively of their Westmont experience.

Modern Languages:
1. Students all mentioned their study abroad experience as key to their growth at Westmont. In our department conversation, however, it became clear that we need to do a better job of preparing our students for their abroad experience—to teach them how to perceive and understand cultural difference effectively. We are very pleased that SP/FR 150 will be a regular part of the Modern Language curriculum. The senior interviews certainly confirmed the necessity for this course.
2. One student mentioned that a highlight of her college career was the Chicano Literature course she had with Professor Jesus Rosales. In her words, she learned more about diversity in this one course than in her entire time abroad. It opened her eyes to a community she did not know existed before, and has made her more aware of social issues.
3. It was interesting that students tended to reflect upon the first standard (Christian Orientation) mainly in terms of RS and Philosophy courses. This sent a message to us that we need to be even more explicit at articulating the connection between our discipline and our faith.
4. A final note is that it seems that some students need help interpreting the instrument itself. For example, a student put the same number for one category before and after Westmont (indicating no growth); when I read the description of the standard with her and asked if at 18 years she was in the same place as she is now, she then understood that she had, in fact, grown a great deal in the area (although it was not reflected in her assessment).

Music:
1. Students were very receptive.
2. Students were appreciative of the interview. They were encouraged that we care enough to go to the trouble.

Philosophy:
1. The students we interviewed appreciated what they gained here in the areas of (1) faith and learning; (2) critical thinking; and (3) love of learning.
2. They liked forming close relationships with professors.
3. They all agreed that the chapel program was valuable to them.

Political Science:
1. Several commonalities appeared in the interviews: (1) Education at Westmont College makes a difference in our students' lives: (a) courses raise the right questions for
consideration; (b) efforts at diversity are noted and are important; (c) the education assists students in their problem solving; (d) the introductions of technology for research are helpful; and (e) off-campus programs are important. (2) The students are appreciative of the political science major (for reasons including the ones noted for point (1)). (3) Political science majors find the small class sizes conducive to their education.

2. One student noted that educational success also is dependent upon the interest and effort expended by the students.

Religious Studies:
1. The form is more complicated and directed than perhaps necessary.
2. One student interview highlighted a potential conflict between two courses in the curriculum. The professors involved have since carried on a dialogue about the differences in an attempt to keep our students from being confused on an important issue, though there is some question whether the confusion was the result of the student’s own individual lack of comprehension.

Sociology/Anthropology:
1. All of the students expressed their appreciation for chapel, for Christian Apologetics, and for the spiritual dimension of their experience at Westmont.
2. Most of the students expressed the importance of off-campus experiences (programs, internships and work) in their development.

Student Life:
1. For the most part, students were unaware of the learning standards. Some commented that more specific knowledge re: standards would have been helpful in shaping their educational experience at Westmont.
2. Spiritual Development occurred primarily through peers, RA’s, chapel. However, students did not perceive that spiritual development occurred much within the classroom. A common theme was the students’ sense that spiritual formation needs to be woven into the classroom more. RS classes did give students the foundations for their faith and historical context, but courses outside the RS scope did not have as much impact.
3. Diversity: Students felt that Westmont failed to acknowledge diversity in its broader sense and focused only on racial or ethnic diversity. In the classroom, students were not forced to grow or interact in the area of racial diversity. Students would like the diversity conversation to be broadened beyond race and culture. Students who went on off-campus programs felt they engaged with different cultures/races/ethnicities, and they grew tremendously through these experiences. Diversity standard is best “caught” through off-campus programs which are held in a cross-cultural context. On-campus classes don’t include diversity standard. Rhetoric is key class where “written and oral communication” standard is taught.
4. Written and Oral Communication: Rhetoric was reported as the key class where the “written and oral communication” standard is taught. Even those who hadn’t taken Rhetoric wished they had had the opportunity to take it.
5. Several students observed that there needs to be better coordination and communication between the Registrar’s Office and Off-Campus Programs, as well as Registrar’s and...
Part D: Departments' Reflections and Insights

Business Office. Also, the Registrar is closed during the times when students' schedules are most open. Students commented that the Registrar’s Office and Business Office are the least student-friendly offices on campus.

6. Engagement in the World: Off-campus programs are the most important tools for interacting with the world. Are there ways which we could help students early in their time at Westmont to think through which OCP to go on later? Some majors make it nearly impossible to fit an off-campus program into their time at Westmont, making proper planning from the beginning critical. (A student commented that because Florence was out of the office a lot it was hard to get information regarding OCP.) One great way to think about OCPs is framed in the questions of "what do you want to learn about" rather than “where do you want to go?”

7. The impact of off-campus programs also needs to be evaluated. The numbers will continue to grow as students love their experiences, but what will be the impact in the development of community here at Westmont, a connection to the college, etc.? How will the off-campus students’ circle of friends be affected, how will the leadership pools at Westmont be affected, how will the student transition from leaving campus then returning? However, this is not all to say that every OCP experience is positive. One student on a recent xxxxxxxx semester suggested that Westmont be more careful in selecting the faculty that lead trips. Not all faculty are able to fulfill the academic and non-academic goals of the college.

8. Christian Orientation: Peer relationships are key in the faith development of students. There is a widespread feeling that Westmont culturally has embraced postmodern Christianity. Christianity is all about relationships, love, the individual, the concept that it is acceptable to doubt your faith as long as you own your own belief. That is why the Doctrine class can be overwhelming to students because what really matters to the students is love, relationships with friends, etc.

9. A common attitude among students is “What can I do about the knowledge I am gaining right now? How do I apply it to the outside world?” Faculty don't seem to know how to respond to that. Students therefore look for other ways to answer the question by conversing with peers, going to chapel, but not utilizing the faculty. There need to be more ways for faculty to engage students in that conversation. Some professors are trying to answer the question of how to apply classroom learning to the community/world.

10. Note: There were a high percentage of student leaders interviewed within our group.
Part E: Departments’ Suggested Changes

Department’s Suggestions for Changes to Improve Students’ Experience

Art:
1. Devise more unique and inventive ways for students to engage in chapel experiences.
2. Make learning standards easily accessible to students so they can visibly see where their learning will take them. (All of our interviews revealed a pleasant reaction to these standards, and they all wished they had seen them or known about them early in their career.)
3. Define what diversity is: social, racial, ideological?

English:
1. Eliminate the numeric grid as part of the senior interview process—especially in the area of Christian orientation.
2. Provide more extracurricular opportunities for discussion of serious issues. Provide explicit encouragement in classes and in first-year activities to help students recognize the importance of speaking up and actively engaging in public discourse.
3. Revise appropriate English syllabi to explain to students that we want them to be tech savvy and why.
4. After first ensuring that undergraduate students develop their ability to read closely and write cogently, we should incorporate opportunities for students to develop their research skills and engage in synthesis and analysis of secondary sources.
5. Perhaps we could consider a portfolio approach in which students demonstrate they have done research, have used online databases, know how to document sources properly, and have engaged in analysis and synthesis of secondary sources.

History:
1. Given their strong interest in cross-cultural encounters in North America and abroad, these students would like to see the college’s emphasis in foreign language acquisition strengthened.
2. Make greater efforts within classes to identify vocational possibilities within the particular field.

Modern Languages:
1. Be more intentional in syllabi and class conversations about the connection between our discipline and our faith.
2. Prepare our students better for the study abroad experience. SP/FR 150 is an excellent tool for this.
3. Consider adding a course on Chicano Literature (or something like this) to increase students’ awareness and understanding of marginalized peoples and their stories.

Music:
1. Initiate the students in the parameters of the standards earlier in their career at Westmont.
Part E: Departments’ Suggested Changes

Political Science:
1. Aside from the positive reactions to technology and research (see Insights—Political Science), it was noted that more needs to be done in this area.
2. There should be greater emphasis on world religions.
3. Standards need to be more specific: in off-campus programs and within the department (greater clarity with respect to standards and the mission of the department as provided in the course syllabi).

Philosophy:
1. The students agreed that all students should go on an off-campus program. Some believed there should be a public speaking requirement in GE. Also, some thought there should be a special chapel program for seniors.

Sociology & Anthropology:
1. Most students stated that the research and technology aspect of their education was important, but felt somewhat inadequate in enacting the research process and using research technologies. The department needs to address this concern in our Qualitative Research Methods course and elsewhere. Concern was also expressed regarding the absence of diversity on campus.

Student Life:
1. There is a different kind of learning that takes place on OCPs and not on campus at Westmont. For example, a student on Europe Semester said that every morning he realized he learned something new every day. How do we translate that type of learning and revelation to Westmont? One idea: implement a service learning class. A class could be focused on taking what is learned in the classroom and then put to use in the community. (A class about the homeless in America could be fully realized and internalized for the students if they participated in feeding the homeless population in SB.) There needs to be more ways that students and faculty could be made more aware of what is happening off campus and to help them draw connections.
2. A clearer description of learning standards needs to be communicated earlier in Westmont career.
3. There is questioning or wrestling of faith in OCP experiences. Greater effort is needed in order to provide mentoring to students with all their wrestling. We need to develop an intentional plan for mentorship so students can re-piece their faith when they return home.
4. Add more demographics on the senior interview such as major, male/female, etc.
5. Review impact of off-campus programs.