

New Integrated Faculty Position Request – Fall 2019

Departments of Psychology and Economics & Business

Rationale

Following recent analysis and discussion in the departments of Economics/Business (EB) and Psychology (PSY), we have developed a coordinated plan to address major unmet needs in our two departments. This plan is in line with trends at Westmont over the last several years that have seen significantly increased student interest in our two disciplines. Furthermore, national and worldwide developments in both fields reflect a growing need for integrated education and training in the two disciplines. An excellent example of this is the recent visit to Westmont by the Nobel Prize laureate, Dr. Daniel Kahneman, a psychologist in the field of behavioral economics.

Due to the relatively small number of permanent faculty, coupled with the outsized teaching and advising loads that both departments maintain relative to other departments, we currently struggle with appropriate staffing and course offerings. In Fall 2018, the EB department had 12.9% of all majors and the PSY department had 9.6% of all majors. Thus, these two departments together represent 22.5% of majors at Westmont, but have less than 10% of the fulltime faculty positions on campus. Notably, due to the relatively lower number of FTE faculty, these two departments have the highest number of majors/FTE (EB = 18.2; PSY= 15.8; Westmont = 7.2), the highest number of advisees/FTE (EB = 31.6; PSY= 21.6; Westmont = 13.7), and among the highest credit hours/FTE (EB = 559.2; PSY= 519.8; Westmont = 399.2). Both departments also accommodate a greater number of majors and nonmajors in our upper division courses relative to most other departments on campus.

Our limited number of FTE positions and high reliance on adjunct faculty in order to accommodate the large student demand for EB and PSY courses is not an optimal or sustainable permanent solution. The situation would best be addressed by recruiting an additional full time faculty member, specifically in an area that naturally bridges the two disciplines. We have identified industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology and behavioral economics as high priorities for development in our two departments. These cross-disciplinary areas have pronounced potential for future growth in modern economics and psychology and would enhance the learning experience, research opportunities, and career options for our students. Furthermore, a joint hire would expand cross-disciplinary interaction of faculty and students at Westmont.

Recruitment Strategy

Recognizing the difficulties in hiring high caliber faculty candidates, we plan to take a flexible strategy in recruiting for this position in order to increase our chances of a competitive applicant pool. We have identified four general (but not exclusive) options that we prioritize as follows:

1. Hire an I/O psychologist, with the primary appointment in the PSY department and a secondary appointment in the EB department. This would allow for a broad range of applicants in I/O, social, and cognitive psychology with scholarly interests in the targeted areas noted below. Cross listing of multiple courses would provide both departments with increased course offerings and provide potential minor tracks in I/O and related areas to benefit EB and PSY majors.

2. Split appointment in PSY and EB. This approach would give flexibility to recruit applicants who may have extensive dual graduate training in EB and PSY programs. Course offerings and student opportunities would be similar to option 1.
3. Potential applicants who may possess training and skill sets in other areas of PSY that interface with EB. For example, the growing field of neuroeconomics draws on principles of neuroscience that impact decisions made in the marketplace. Such applicants may rise to the top level of consideration based on their credentials and caliber of fit at Westmont.
4. Primary appointment in EB with a secondary appointment in PSY. This option allows capture of applicants coming primarily from PhD programs in economics and management, but who also have interests in behaviorally centered teaching and research. Course offerings and student opportunities would still be similar to option 1, but more heavily weighted towards EB.

In each of the above scenarios, we envision benefits at all levels to the college by providing much needed faculty strength to two of the largest demand programs on campus, enhanced course offerings in a dynamic cross disciplinary field, increased opportunities for student training, and more integrated faculty activity between departments. The goal in recruitment would be to find the best-qualified cross-disciplinary applicant who will make significant contributions to the college and our students.

Job Description:

The Psychology department and the Economics/Business department at Westmont College invite applications for a tenure track faculty position that will start in Fall 2020. The Psychology and Economics/Business departments are highly regarded for their ability to prepare students for meaningful careers and successful postgraduate study. Candidates must have a PhD and evidence of scholarship in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Applied Organizational Psychology, or related areas. We seek applicants with a serious commitment to high quality undergraduate teaching in a Christian liberal arts setting. Teaching interests in industrial/organizational psychology, behavioral economics, consumer psychology, and related areas of psychology and economics are required. Research focus in areas such as cognitive factors in decision-making, application of psychological principles and methods to solve problems in the workplace, and psychological factors in consumer decisions are preferred. The application requires candidates to submit a statement describing their ability to work in the context of a community that affirms the Community Life Statement and the Articles of Faith of Westmont College.

Questions may be addressed to Professor Ronald See at rsee@westmont.edu. Review of applications will begin on **DATE** and will continue until the position is filled. To apply, please go to: