



WESTMONT

Faculty Position Request Form

(Used for requesting a new faculty position or filling a vacant position)

Department: Theatre Arts

Submitted by: Mitchell Thomas, Chair

Date: August 2022

Nature of request:

This is a request for a new faculty position (addition) in the department.

This is a request to fill a vacancy.

Who is the faculty member leaving or retiring? Dr. John Blondell

Rationale: On a separate page, please briefly describe the curricular need for this faculty position, including benefit to the department if the position is filled and the negative impact if it is not.

Additional documents needed:

- (a) Please complete the table on the next page listing courses the person will teach and the enrollment in these courses for the past 3 years. Also, identify any new courses the department hopes to offer if this position is filled.
- (b) Position job description

Please submit materials to the Provost's Office.

Faculty Position Supporting Documentation

Enrollment in courses during the past 2+ years

Dept/Cr Num.	Course name	SP 20	Fall 20	Spring 21	Fall 21	Spring 22	May 22	
TA 001	Great Literature of the Stage		29		23	36		
TA 120	History of Theatre I		9					
TA 50/150	Rehearsal and Performance	22	12	42	15	33		
TA 140	Race and Gender on the American Stage	8		9	10			
TA 125	Directing			8				
TA 121	History of Theatre II	12				5		
TA 186/187	World Theatre I/II (Mayterm in London)						15	
TA 145	Writing for Performance *			12		8		
	* taught by adjunct							

Potential New Courses			
Theology and Performance		TA XXX	
Writing for Performance		TA 145	



Rationale for Theatre Arts Tenure Track Position Replacement

The theatre arts department is seeking to replace Dr. John Blondell, who has served at Westmont for more than 35 years. John's legacy in the theatre program cannot be overstated, as he has been a key figure in the program for generations of students. A PhD with a professional career as a director (typically an MFA background), John developed and taught a vast array of courses for theatre arts, including courses in literature, history, directing, theory, race and gender, and global theatre. As part of his teaching load, John also directed a mainstage production each year, and alternated curating and overseeing our annual Fringe festival in the last spring.

At present, the theatre program has three full time (FTE) faculty – two tenure track faculty (John Blondell and Mitchell Thomas), and one multi-year faculty member (Jonathan Hicks). The department hires multiple adjunct artists to design for our production season, and often hires adjunct faculty to teach courses that are a regular part of our departmental offerings. Over the last two years, the department has hired a guest artist/scholar for justice, reconciliation, and diversity during the fall semester, funded by John Blondell electing into a 2/3 time contract to pursue professional directing work in Europe and to reduce his teaching load at Westmont.

The program has largely been divided into three categories under the three FTE faculty, with Blondell teaching the courses typically taught by a PhD in theatre arts: literature, history, and theory. Due to his professional focus, John has also typically taught the directing course that is required for the major and minor. Mitchell Thomas oversees and leads most of the performance and professional courses (MFA), including acting, voice, movement, contemporary theatre and film performance, and senior seminar. Jonathan Hicks oversees the design and technical program, teaching courses in design and technology along with a significant amount of his load going toward production management and technical direction for the department and our season. John and Mitchell share directing mainstage production duties, with one production per year each, and rotate overseeing our annual Fringe festival each spring.

Simply put, not replacing this position would be untenable for the program, curriculum, and remaining faculty and staff. If the position were not replaced, the department would need to significantly revise and reduce our major, cut down the number of productions we do in a year by half, and find adjunct faculty for much of our teaching assignments each year. If the position is funded, we can continue to build on the strong legacy of Dr. Blondell, increase the diversity of course offerings with a new faculty member, and continue to offer a vital and potent program for our students, the college, and the Santa Barbara community.





Theatre Arts Tenure Track Job Description

Westmont College, a small Christian residential liberal arts college with ~1,300 undergraduates located in beautiful Santa Barbara, CA, invites applications for a **tenure-track assistant professor** in the Department of Theatre Arts beginning Fall 2023. The successful applicant will join a supportive, collaborative, and creative Christian community committed to cultivating thoughtful scholars and artists, grateful servants, and faithful leaders for global engagement with the academy, the church, and the world.

The **Department of Theatre Arts** will consider applications from candidates with specialties in theatre history, literature, applied theatre, writing and directing for performance, and/or theatre of the global south, Black, Latinx, Asian/Pacific Islander, Indigenous theatre and performance traditions. Candidates should be prepared to teach courses in theatre history and literature. A background in performance (acting, directing, playwriting and/or design) is highly preferred as candidates will contribute to a generalist theatre program with a full production season. The ideal candidate will also be able to teach in the college's general education program, create new courses around theology and performance, as well as contribute to interdisciplinary programs such as Gender Studies, Film Studies and Ethnic Studies. Successful candidates will demonstrate commitment to justice, reconciliation, and diversity in teaching, production, student mentoring, and the profession. PhD or ABD preferred, MFA considered.

Westmont is a national liberal arts college in the evangelical Protestant tradition. We seek faculty invested in undergraduate teaching, a program of scholarly activity, and the mission of liberal arts education, whose work grows out of a vital and informed commitment to the Christian faith. Westmont is an EEO employer, seeking to be diverse in people and programs consistent with its mission. The college seeks to enrich its educational experience and its culture through the diversity of



its faculty, administration, and staff. Women, candidates from historically underrepresented groups, and international scholars are especially encouraged to apply.

Use this link to access the application, which will ask for a cover letter, CV, and four brief statements (500-1500 words) related to working in the Westmont Community. Westmont requires that all full-time faculty indicate full agreement with the Articles of Faith and support the standards enumerated in the statement on Community Life. Questions can be directed to the chair of the search committee, Professor Mitchell Thomas, chair of the department of theatre arts, at thomas@westmont.edu. Review of applications will begin in November 2022 and continue until the position is filled.

Westmont College does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, medical condition, religion, marital status, military status, or veteran status. Westmont has a generous benefits package, competitive salaries, and offers housing programs for full time faculty.