



The Westmont Way

Classic

Leadership and the Liberal Arts: An Education to Last a Lifetime

A President's Reflection | Gayle D. Beebe, Ph.D.

A Letter from the President



Welcome to Westmont

We trust you will enjoy the people, resources and facilities of this extraordinary campus. You will find here much to explore, from the arts to astronomy, from athletics to beautiful gardens, from the resources of the library and science labs to those of music and chapel programs. But mostly, Westmont is about people, and that's our greatest resource: faculty, students and staff — they are the best! We're so glad you're here to experience Westmont.

Enjoy.

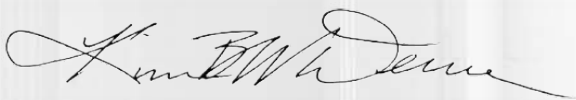
Gayle D. Beebe, Ph.D.
President



A Letter from Our Provost


As Westmont's provost, I steward the charge to remain faithful to the college's legacy of academic excellence while fostering a milieu where Christ holds preeminence. I share this charge with our president, leadership and faculty. Our Westmont professors not only represent some of the best intellectual minds anywhere in the world, but also have hearts that love God and others and hands ready to serve. Both disciples and scholars, they model for our students what it means to be faithful to the call of Christ both in and beyond the classroom. Within this Christian liberal arts authentic community, deep learning and faithful discipleship occur.

We invite you to join us.



Kimberly Battle-Walters Denu, Ph.D.
Provost



A photograph of a garden scene. In the foreground, there are dark, out-of-focus green leaves. In the background, a stone fountain with two tiers is visible. The fountain has a central column and two lion statues at its base. Water is spraying from the tiers. The garden is filled with various green plants and trees, and the scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

From everyone who has been given much, much will
be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted
with much, much more will be asked.

LUKE 12:48

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for
my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast
all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power
of Christ may rest upon me.

II CORINTHIANS 12:9

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The Westmont Way

Discover Classic Westmont

Westmont College, founded in 1937, offers a classic liberal arts education that integrates faith and learning, cultivating both academic excellence and spiritual growth. Located in scenic Santa Barbara, a classic coastal city, Westmont prepares students to lead purposeful lives through local and global experiences, athletics, and a focus on whole-person development.

Mission Statement

Westmont College is an undergraduate, residential, Christian, liberal arts community serving God's kingdom by cultivating thoughtful scholars, grateful servants and faithful leaders for global engagement with the academy, church and world.

Westmont Students

They approach learning with **curiosity**, **humility** and **gratitude**.

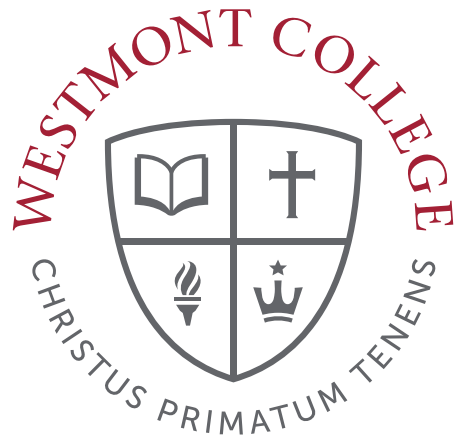
They focus on **pursuing an education**, not a degree.

They embrace **self-evaluation** as they grow and learn from each other.

They embrace the work of **spiritual, moral** and **character formation**.

They cultivate skills to **succeed professionally** and **serve the world**.

They want to **live a life of significance** and contribute to causes that will outlive them.



CHRIST HOLDING PREEMINENCE

Our motto, taken from Colossians 1:15-20 (*"That in all things He might have the preeminence"*) guides everything we do.

The symbols on the Westmont College seal relate to the faith and the ideals of a Christian liberal arts college.

The **open Bible** shows the source of our authority in faith and practice as well as the active learning that occurs within a rigorous Westmont education.

The **torch** reflects knowledge lighting both the mind and the spirit.

The **cross** represents the death and salvation of Jesus Christ.

The **star and crown** symbolize the incarnation and lordship of Christ, and the three points of the crown proclaim our Trinitarian faith.





The two most important
Days of your life are
the day you were born
and the day you figure out why.

~ MARK TWAIN



OUR HISTORY

THE WESTMONT WAY

Every year, we welcome more than 400 new students to Westmont. During their education, we prepare them for a **lifetime of leadership and service in every sphere of modern society**. In between their arrival and their graduation, they encounter a host of academic and co-curricular experiences animated by our core commitments to the twin rails of rigorous academics and deep love for God and the five planks of our mission statement: our **liberal arts** curriculum, our **Christian** identity, our **residential** campus, our **undergraduate** focus and our **global** outlook. These enduring commitments have guided every new generation of board members, administrators, faculty, staff and students as we've pursued the next horizon for the college since our founding in 1937.

FOUNDED IN 1937



Founder Ruth Kerr



President Wallace Emerson

Westmont's founders developed a distinctive vision for the college: offering a rigorous academic program while cultivating a deep love of God. Ruth Kerr, a businesswoman who ran the Kerr Glass Manufacturing Company after her husband, Alexander, died (he invented Kerr canning jars), helped establish Westmont as a Christian college in 1937. When Wallace Emerson became president in 1940, he set the standard for academic excellence that endures to this day.

Centuries earlier, St. Augustine articulated a philosophy of education that anticipated Westmont's own commitments. Writing near the end of the fourth century, St. Augustine observed, "Usually even a non-Christian knows something about the Earth, the heavens, and the other elements of this world, about the motion and orbit of the stars and even their size and relative positions ... this knowledge he holds to as being certain from reason and experience. Now it is a disgraceful thing for an infidel to hear a Christian speaking nonsense ... mistaken in fields which they themselves know well and therefore they become unwilling to read or hear about matters concerning the resurrection of the dead, the hope of eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven because of our own apparent foolishness."

**How do we craft an educational experience that prepares our graduates to lead and serve in every sphere of modern society while inspiring the admiration and confidence of all who inhabit the public square?
We begin with our core and enduring commitments.**



THE VALUE OF A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

Twin Rails:

Rigorous Academics and Deep Love for God



Five planks of our mission statement

Liberal Arts
Christian
Residential
Undergraduate
Global



The Liberal Arts



Peter Drucker, the father of modern management, once observed that a **liberal arts education provides the best possible preparation** because it teaches us how to take discrete areas of knowledge and place them into a meaningful whole. The liberal arts teach us how to think. They teach us an approach to learning that invites us to see the **interrelationship of all knowledge**. They cultivate **intellectual humility** as we discover the wide, vast universe of human knowledge. This recognition invites a lifetime of learning.

By anchoring our mission to the liberal arts, we connect with a 2,500 year-history dating back to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. In the ancient world, the liberal arts were designed to provide a graduated curriculum that mirrored human development. It began with mastery of the verbal arts of **grammar, logic and rhetoric** followed by grasping the **mathematical arts of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music**. The comprehensive curriculum unfolded in a sequential manner. From the study of grammar, we learn the right use of language; from logic, the right use of thought; and from rhetoric, how to put together the right use of language

with the right use of thought to make compelling arguments that move society. From the study of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music, we learn **higher-order thinking** and the proportions and proportionality that help us rank competing commitments as we build social policies that lead to human flourishing.

The ancient world always studied **the liberal arts as a means to something greater**, training minds in particular subjects to transfer intellectual learning to **addressing the great questions of life**. Beginning with Clement of Alexandria (150-215), Christians considered the role and value of the liberal arts to be central in cultivating **understanding** of our **individual life**, our **corporate responsibilities**, our **relationship to God** and **our ultimate quest for meaning and purpose**.

Over time, the purposes of a liberal arts education developed into a fourfold progression: the acquisition of language skill; the mastery of math skills; the consideration of the nature of ethics, the proper role of politics and the subjugation of our unruly passions; and the proper study of God.

Earlier, Aristotle emphasized that we should not look "...for the same measure of precision in all things, but for the level of precision appropriate to each discipline." **The liberal arts illustrate how we learn the measure of truth appropriate to each category.** Later in the 11th and early 12th century, Hugh of St. Victor amplified this understanding by showing that we can work out our salvation by combining a high view of the liberal arts with productive labor. He expands the original Greek and early church idea of the liberal arts beyond the 'philosophic arts' of Plato and Augustine and the 'practical arts' of Cicero by adding a third component: the 'productive arts.'

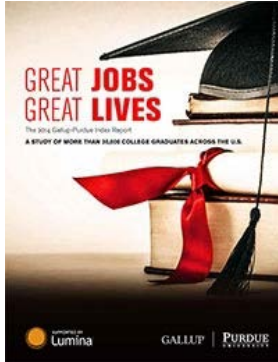
Today, the liberal arts curriculum still animates life on campus, but it has broadened to incorporate the newest areas of human learning, including the emergence of technology, data analytics, AI and machine learning, innovation and entrepreneurship, moral and emotional intelligence, systems thinking, critical thinking, and integrative thinking that leads to creative problem-solving.

We believe a Westmont education will give our graduates the capacity to sustain and integrate all these known and emerging challenges as we move deeper into the 21st century.



97%

**Within six months
of graduating, 97% of Westmont
students are employed or
pursuing graduate school at one
of their top three schools.**



Gallup/ Purdue Index: Great Jobs, Great Lives

The Gallup-Purdue Index, a study of 30,000 college graduates, identified college experiences that help graduates be engaged at work and feel a sense of well-being, especially in five areas: relationships, physical health, community, economic situation and sense of purpose. The executive summary concluded,

“Where graduates went to college — public or private, small or large, very selective or not selective — hardly matters at all to their current well-being and their work lives in comparison to their experiences in college.”

- Professor who cared about me as a person
- Professor who made me excited about learning
- Professor/staff who encouraged me to pursue my dreams
- An internship/job that let me apply what I was learning
- Active involvement in extra curricular activities in an organization
- Opportunity to work on a project that took a semester or more to complete

The study listed six crucial experiences:

In short, graduates who felt supported during college and dove deep into learning enjoyed the best long-term outcomes.

A Westmont education provides all these experiences for students. Our professors care deeply for students and develop personal relationships with them, serving as valued mentors. They're committed to teaching as well as doing research, and they excel in the classroom. About 70 percent of Westmont graduates participate in an internship during college, and a growing number undertake capstone and honors projects or conduct research. Most Westmont students get involved in one or more of the many student clubs and activities available on campus.

Our emphasis on rigorous academics and deep love of God and our supportive college community lead to the best possible outcomes for our graduates.



Our Christian Identity



A high view of Scripture animates Westmont's commitment to a robust Christian faith and belief that life-changing capacities result from an encounter with God and a winsome hope and confidence in a life beyond this life. The streams of thought that inform this outlook include **biblical studies, philosophy, historical theology** and **philosophy of religion**. These interacting areas of study allow us to consider the nature of faith, the right use of reason, the problem of evil and suffering, and how we ask and answer life's greatest questions. For Westmont, these intersecting realities come to a focal point in the **life and teachings of Jesus** and form the foundation that **shapes our own Christian identity**.

Everyone needs a fixed point by which to approach life. For the Christian, the life and teachings of Jesus and the efforts we expend to understand them form the most compelling starting point for navigating life's journey. As people committed to a life with God, we believe this process unfolds over time. Our educational enterprise plays a key role as we deepen our knowledge of God at the same time we broaden our outlook and understanding of all that life offers. In this way, **people animated by faith**

and **motivated by their intellect** weave together a sacred mosaic of deeply held commitments that **bring meaning and purpose to all we do**.

But how do we gain knowledge of God that can guide and sustain us in this way? Augustine, Luther and Calvin emphasize the importance and primacy of Scripture. Thomas Aquinas emphasizes the right use of reason and the importance of sound doctrine. Blaise Pascal, the 17th century philosopher and mathematician elevates the role of reason by stating, "...if we submit everything to reason, our religion will be left with nothing mysterious or supernatural. If we offend the principles of reason our religion will be absurd and ridiculous." Ignatius, John Wesley, and later 19th and 20th century thinkers highlight the importance of an integrated approach to theological thinking that **makes room for religious experiences by showing how they align with Scripture and the light of reason**. All this intellectual and spiritual inquiry occurs in the life and context of the great faith communities of the church. These dynamic thinkers fortify the relevance of these testimonies as they articulate their understanding of Jesus's person and work throughout history.

The late 20th century classic work by Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries*, captures one of the most remarkable and beautiful expressions of this understanding. Pelikan creates a kaleidoscope of insight into the life of Jesus by identifying several key understandings that reflect how



Christians have understood Jesus across time. Each example reminds us of **the role great thinkers in the history of the church play in making the life and teachings of Jesus relevant to each age**, preserving what is timeless while offering fresh insight into what is time-bound.

Our Residential Life



Our residential program nurtures the community where students develop the capacity for human flourishing. Through an integrated approach of academics and education for the whole person, **we consolidate study and experiences into meaningful wholes.** Richard Light makes a great case for this unique partnership when he asks the simple yet poignant question, “...if students are in class an average of 16 hours a week, what are they doing with the other 152 hours?”

At a broader level, cultural currents work against educating the whole person and our deliberate efforts to craft a residential community. The rise of the Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th century elevated the individual

above the community. Simone Weil and others raise important questions about what happens to a society—and even a whole civilization—when individuals lose track of their responsibilities by boldly asserting their individual rights. As a corrective, we want our students to **learn how to think for themselves while they live for others.** In this way, we begin to ask and answer what it means to belong to a community.

Communities form around shared understandings. They embody a particular way of seeing the world and reflect how we understand and interpret specific experiences. Communities identify values, articulate purposes and determine the role they will attempt to play in the wider affairs of the world.

At Westmont, we believe the residential experience helps our graduates understand the **unique and enduring contribution made by mutual commitment to community.**

Friendships are forged across the most unlikely of circumstances because of the common context of our college community. As a result, we **see into the lives and perspectives of our fellow residents** and friends and gain a new perspective on the variety of priorities and circumstances that make up the global community.



We're often tempted to diminish the **important decisions made during our undergraduate years.** Culturally, we drift toward seeing 30 as the new 20, as if we could suspend 10 years of development and check back in after a period of wandering. Some have called this period an extended adolescence. Others have described it as a gradual uphill climb toward adulthood. But Meg Jay helps us see and understand the vital importance of this period.

Additionally, students forge **mentoring relationships with faculty and staff** that endure long after they graduate. Mentoring helps students experience the caring oversight of key professors who activate their excitement about chosen areas of study and even future careers. Students feel the warm embrace of a community that wants them to succeed not only in the classroom but in all areas of their life. Despite the reality that many of our students get over-committed to extra-curricular activities and service, these same commitments end up being the source of **joy** and **growth** that propel them to a life of **leadership** and **service.**

The Undergraduate Focus



In her landmark work, *The Defining Decade: Why Your Twenties Matter—and How to Make the Most of them Now*, Jay demonstrates that **seven of the 10 most important decisions we make in life occur in our 20s**—or we're laying the groundwork for them in our 20s. How do we pay attention to what matters most? She identifies key areas that help us learn to discern what we'll like best and take the job that will grow us the most. Pay attention to weak ties, those relationships

beyond our circle of friends where a greater likelihood of career advancement rests. Reactivate latent dreams we have for ourselves. Focus not on how we look on social media but on what matters most to us in life. Live the narrative we want for ourselves. Begin to think about marriage by pursuing relationships with people we would want to marry. Pay attention to our partner's family. Exercise discipline and restraint. Pay attention to what we love and what we don't.



The fifth and most unique plank of our mission statement focuses on our enduring commitment to **cultivating a global outlook through off-campus programs**. From our inception, Mrs. Kerr and Dr. Emerson envisioned a curriculum that included a commitment to the global community. But they could scarcely have imagined how **the world would shrink as technology and travel grew**.

Westmont provides truly pioneering work in global education. Our Cycle of Global Learning, first developed and then popularized by our own faculty, incorporates three distinct phases.

Learn the difference between the highly structured world of academics and the highly adaptable world of adult life.

We face these, and other realities, during our time as an undergraduate. Educating the whole person cultivates both a sense of the unfolding realities of our **individual development** as well as the **growing opportunities available in our wider community**. Together, we have to balance the life we long for with the life we're living.



First, the **pre-trip seminar prepares students to enter a foreign culture**. Then, the mentoring during the trip, when our **professors travel with our students**, helps them interpret their experiences. Recent research demonstrates the value and importance of **interpreting key experiences** and events while traveling abroad. We hear echoes of T. S. Eliot's famous line from Four Quartets, "*...they had the experience, but they missed the meaning.*" Our study-abroad trips provide the experience and capture the meaning. But the third and most difficult part, and the unique insight and contribution made

by our faculty, is the **re-entry seminar**. When students return to their family of origin, their friends and their host culture, they often feel alienated. The re-entry seminar helps our students **bring the learning home and consolidate the important lessons that only result from traveling outside our own culture** and discovering how to live, learn and think in a society different from our own.

More recently, professors from our Psychology Department have provided cutting-edge research and discovery in the area of **implicit bias**, the unconscious way we form prejudice against other individuals and groups. **Our cycle of Global Learning can address this bias**, especially when combined with intake instruments, ongoing feedback and deliberate training and coaching.

All this effort reflects the larger priority of **building a society and a global community that leads to human flourishing**. Important help comes from a variety of sources, including Robert Wuthnow's excellent work, *Communities of Discourse*. This book considers why some societies succeed and others fail as they endure a variety of tensions and dislocations due to internal strife and external threat. He amplifies his conclusions by demonstrating the role of eight key areas:

1. Social conditions.
2. Economic conditions.
3. Political systems and ideologies.
4. Religious systems and ideologies.
5. Attitudes and definitions of deviance.
6. Cultural and intellectual productivity.
7. The role and responsibility of the military.
8. Legal and judicial institutions.

Although Wuthnow provides enormous and complex detail, his greater goal is helping us make sense of other cultures and societies.

More recently, the work of Erin Meyer in *The Culture Map* distills our thinking into **cross-cultural comparisons along eight primary lines**.

1. Communicating: explicit (low-context) vs. implicit (high context).
2. Evaluating: direct negative feedback vs. indirect negative feedback.
3. Persuading: deductive vs. inductive.
4. Leading: egalitarian vs. hierarchical.
5. Deciding: consensual vs. top down.
6. Trusting: task vs. relationship
7. Disagreeing: confrontational vs. avoid confrontation.
8. Scheduling: structured vs. flexible.

Between Wuthnow's eight spheres and Meyer's eight comparables, we receive insight into how cultures function and how we can understand the dynamic interplay of their many parts. By integrating these different spheres into a meaningful whole, we begin to understand **why countries and civilizations differ so dramatically throughout history**.


As societies migrated in increasing numbers to the cities of Europe and then America, urbanization, immigration and industrialization played an increasingly interactive role in producing the social and cultural changes that remain to this day. By looking back, we gain better insight into the emerging realities fueled by technology, artificial intelligence and the social dislocation underway as a result of machine learning. Ultimately, we hope that by assisting our students to understand these elements, we'll **prepare them for a life of leadership and service in every sphere of society**.

Conclusion

Together, the twin rails and the five planks provide the guiding framework for our mission as a college. As we move deeper into the 21st century, simmering challenges to our core values and growing questions about the relevance of a liberal arts education only heighten our responsibility to provide a thoughtful and compelling rationale for what we do. The proof always lies in the outcome, and **our graduates continue to flourish in every sphere of society**, providing both competency in their chosen field and the character and moral orientation to sustain them in their life and work. As more and more Fortune 500 companies recognize and celebrate the strength of a liberal arts curriculum, the wide and growing appeal of a Westmont degree will become more evident.

Last year, we celebrated our 85th anniversary. By college standards, we're young. By business standards, we're old. Caught between these competing

timelines, we face the ongoing challenge to balance the budget year in and year out while we grow the financial strength of the college to endure any and every challenge that might come. **We remain deeply committed to the unique approach we pursue at Westmont.**

We also recognize it as the most cost-sensitive way to provide education. We began by wondering what it means to describe a student as educated. We finish by affirming that an educated student possesses the character to face every challenge in life and the intellectual and emotional preparation to respond with wisdom and grace as they confront it. The wisdom and vision of our founders remains our guiding light today. 



Liberal Arts

Christian

Residential

Undergraduate

Global

What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of others.

That is what love looks like.

Augustine, City of God



Leadership Centers of



WESTMONT

GOBLE CENTER FOR GLOBAL LEARNING

The Goble Center expands Westmont's off-campus programs, implements the college's unique Cycle of Global Learning, and encourages all students to benefit from study abroad and cross-cultural experiences.

MONTECITO INSTITUTE FOR EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

The Montecito Institute provides a world-class executive education for leaders from a variety of fields and nations.

CENTER FOR APPLIED TECHNOLOGY

Student researchers create solutions through technology that help shape the Westmont experience and serve the admissions and advancement offices.

CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGY, CREATIVITY AND MORAL IMAGINATION

Westmont's Center for Technology, Creativity and Moral Imagination is committed to engaging AI in a way that educates and allows the college to develop a meaningful and effective strategic response to opportunities within the field of artificial intelligence.

EATON CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

The Eaton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is a student-centric environment where we explore the often-challenging intersection of faith, learning and business

HUGHES CENTER FOR NEUROSCIENCE AND LEADERSHIP

The Hughes Center helps leaders develop emotional intelligence and qualities such as empathy and human rapport.

MARTIN INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE

The Martin Institute for Christianity and Culture is dedicated to placing an enduring emphasis on spiritual formation with a particular focus on the path of authentic transformation as an interactive, loving relationship with Jesus.

CENTER FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Located in Santa Barbara's vibrant downtown corridor, the Center for Social Entrepreneurship hosts a range of interdisciplinary and innovative initiatives and programs in social change, problem solving, and community engagement.

MOSHER CENTER FOR MORAL AND ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

The Mosher Center seeks to influence a national dialogue on the critical significance of moral and ethical leadership.

WESTMONT CENTER FOR DIALOGUE AND DELIBERATION

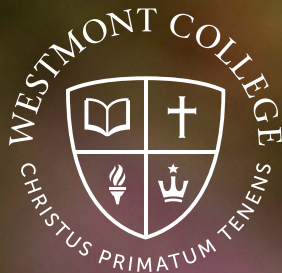
A Westmont College initiative that works with neighbors to speak and listen well together about challenges facing the Santa Barbara community for our common good and human flourishing.

GAEDE INSTITUTE FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS

The Gaede Institute hosts scholarly conversation on the present and future of the liberal arts, promotes educational access for underserved populations, and fosters interdisciplinary contact between faculty and students.

CAROL HOUSTON CENTER FOR BIBLICAL JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

Westmont will continue the legacy of trustee emeritus Carol Houston, a lifelong bridge builder and agent of God's reconciling work in the world.



A Classic Honors College

Do you hope to enroll in an honors college and benefit from a program designed for serious and academically committed students seeking a challenge? You'll thrive at

Westmont, where all students study in an honors college. Everyone receives the intellectually stimulating, engaging, high-touch experience usually open to only a limited number of students at institutions with honors programs. At Westmont, you belong to an academic community best described as **a true honors college** based on the academic quality represented by the student body.

- **You receive close personal attention from accomplished scholars in small seminars at Westmont.** Full-time professors who've committed to mentoring undergraduates — first-year students as well as seniors — teach

85 percent of our courses. You can also work on primary research and scholarship with your professors and possibly receive publication credit before earning your bachelor's degree.

- According to surveys and appraisals, **Westmont students read more and receive more personal attention than many students at elite colleges and universities.** You'll engage in careful reading and examine great books, and you may complete advanced research projects or honors theses, experiences typically found only in graduate school.
- **Our liberal arts curriculum and ideal size promote interaction with scholars and artists from numerous disciplines.** Conversations at Westmont regularly flow across



academic boundaries, and students can meet and interact with renown visiting speakers and experts, global leaders and artists from many nations and walks of life.

- **You'll be encouraged to study abroad.**

Westmont provides a rich array of global programs, including study in Europe, Latin America, Cairo, Asia and Africa. We even allow you to apply your financial aid when studying off campus. Our faculty travel, learn and explore with you. Few colleges offer this combination of financial support and personal mentoring.


- **You join a vibrant campus community.**

Rather than separating out honors students, we create a sense of belonging and familiarity for all, with professors and staff who know and care

for students. Our students' impressive academic profile and the college's rigorous academic climate qualify Westmont as a true honors college. Our bright, accomplished, fun-loving and creative community will enrich your heart and mind.

Westmont's size, curriculum and ethos make an honors experience widely available across campus. You'll feel challenged and supported here and empowered to undertake truly creative and adventurous work.

Westmont students honor God with their commitment to a **deeper purpose** in life and by what they produce and who they become at Westmont.



What creates a sense of belonging and community at Westmont?

A deep **love for God and neighbor** because
God calls us to love one another.

A common purpose of seeking to **know and serve God**.

A willingness to trust one another and build
an **authentic** and **transparent community**.

A commitment to **engage with the utmost civility**,
especially in the midst of challenges.

A **common humanity** and respect for **God's creation**.

A capacity to **balance competing commitments** and
contribute to the greater good.

A generosity and grace to practice **hospitality**
to people unknown to us.

A **focus on others** and desire to serve purposes
greater than ourselves.

A desire to live with others who **think**
differently than we do.

A commitment to **holding Christ preeminent**
in our work, service and lives.



LEADERSHIP AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

AN EDUCATION TO LAST A LIFETIME

What does it mean to be educated? At Westmont, we not only embrace a liberal arts curriculum, but we define an educated person as someone who has encountered the reality of God. As higher education developed throughout the centuries, institutions typically incorporated a recognition of God and religious faith. But that approach has collapsed. Today, many colleges and universities simply offer an array of options that lacks unifying ideals and a philosophy of education. The focus has shifted from producing great and educated citizens to mastering techniques for successful careers with little or no concern for the moral, religious and emotional development necessary for developing free and responsible citizens.

Westmont has held fast to our mission and tradition, and we've created a curriculum that cultivates a knowledge of the liberal arts, prepares students for professional service in the world, lays a strong moral foundation, and deepens our love and knowledge of God. These essential building blocks establish a Christian outlook on education and a Christian understanding of life.

The ancient world believed the liberal arts provided a graduated curriculum that mirrored human development. It began with mastering the verbal arts, moving next to the mathematical arts and then considering the right nature of ethics, the proper role of politics, and the subjugation of our unruly passions. According to Plato, the final step involved pursuing the highest good, which early Christians transformed into the proper study of God.

Aristotle made a compelling contribution by recognizing the varying levels of precision in fields of study. The liberal arts illustrate how we learn the measure of truth appropriate to each area of knowledge. Aristotle also placed a high value on the physical realm, where our learning begins with observations of nature. He regarded lower levels of learning as building blocks for higher study and ably articulated the distinction between philosophical knowledge (studied for its own sake) and practical knowledge (pursued for the sake of action).



CAN THE LIBERAL ARTS HELP US DISCOVER **WHO WE ARE, WHY WE'RE HERE, AND TO WHAT EXTENT WE'RE RESPONSIBLE** TO GOD, TO OTHERS, AND TO OUR COMMUNITIES?

Cicero and the Roman Stoics described three key elements and successive stages of human learning: logic, physics and ethics. Then Christian thinkers, especially Clement of Alexandria and Augustine of Hippo, identified the role and value of the liberal arts in cultivating an understanding of God and a relationship with him. The Early Church saw the liberal arts as a means to something else: addressing the great questions of life. How do we learn to love God? Does education make us wise and lead to our salvation? Can the liberal arts help us discover who we are, why we're here, and to what extent we're responsible to God, to others, and to our communities? Augustine and Clement both concluded that Christians need to go beyond exploring every area of human knowledge to learn how to think properly about God and comprehend and communicate the wisdom and knowledge of God as revealed in Holy Scripture.

Today we recognize the challenge of identifying an educated person as someone who has encountered God. In his work, "Interpretation and Belief," Austin Farrer identifies four essential categories of life and thought we must integrate when pursuing ultimate truth and knowledge.

- » The **physical sciences**, limited to studying basic physical dynamics or essential chemical processes and excluding questions relating to human need or ethical value.
- » The study of **human nature** that quantifies, objectifies or explores human nature and human response without reference to ethical or religious values.
- » **Ethical questions** about the knowledge gained in the first two categories and making judgments on life as we encounter and live it.
- » The unique category of **religious truth** that deals specifically with humans before God.

A trend began in the mid-1990s that elevates values over virtues as the guiding ideals of our society, contributing to a strong erosion of the capacity to make moral judgments. Values can be beliefs, opinions, attitudes, feelings or even preferences, becoming morally equal and morally neutral. Virtues become fixed and enduring, not governing actual behavior of all people for all time but setting standards for judging behavior. Conduct that falls short of these standards becomes wrong or immoral — not merely misguided, undesirable or inappropriate.

LEADERSHIP AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

But Christians understand virtue as cultivating a disposition to life that expresses wisdom and common sense. Virtue helps us know what is right and do what is right. We believe we exist in part to embody noble ideals that fulfill our destiny as individuals and our responsibility before God.

From its earliest days, the Christian intellectual tradition anchored itself to the rich fabric of the liberal arts tradition that arose with the Greeks and developed over time to elevate the unique ideal that educated people have gained mastery both of human learning and knowledge of God.

In the 21st century, we face the challenge of integrating our Christian intellectual tradition with modern social and natural science. Since the 17th century and the advent of a modern worldview, a conviction has grown about the incompatibility of Christian belief and scientific progress. The chasm between faith and reason deepened further with the belief that only “fact-based” science can contribute to social policy, while “value-based” religion must remain sequestered in the private domain, propping up individual life but not intruding on the public square.

We aspire to bridge this problematic and disruptive gap by demonstrating the compatibility of Christian belief and natural science and recounting the major role core Christian beliefs played in the birth of science. In fact, Christian concepts have significantly shaped science and remain in deep harmony with genuine scientific thought and methodology.

In his work, “Christian Belief in a Postmodern World,” Diogenes Allen identifies six key attitudes that gave rise to modern science. He points out that the classical scientific method emerged in the late 16th century in the heart of a Christian civilization. He cites Christian beliefs in a creator God who made people in his image and the goodness of creation for the conviction that humans can analyze and reason their way to understanding God’s purposes.



**CHRISTIAN
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WITH GENUINE
SCIENTIFIC
THOUGHT AND
METHODOLOGY.**

THESE INNATE CAPACITIES HELP CULTIVATE **SIX ATTITUDES.**



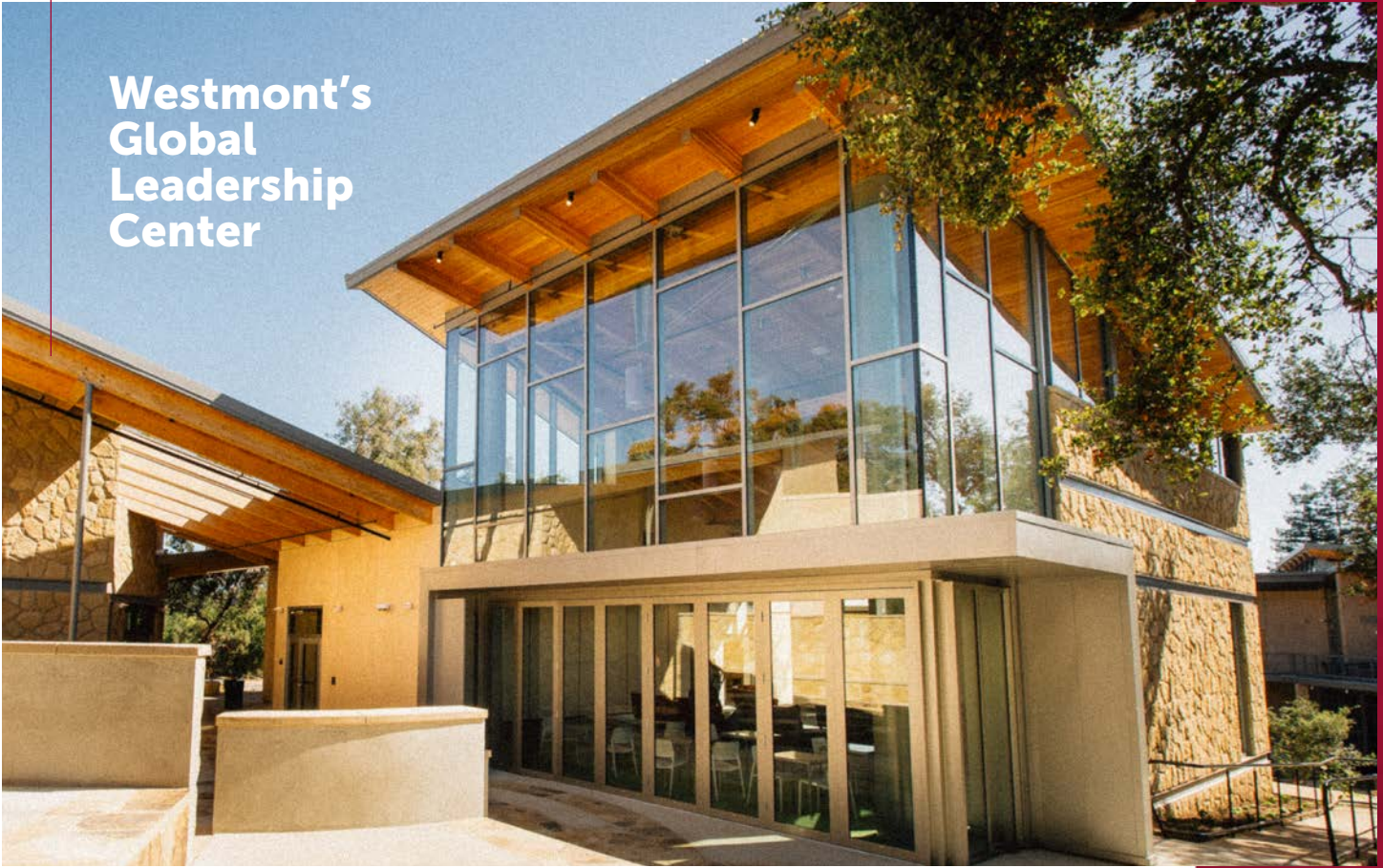
1. **Awe.** By identifying and understanding the limits of human research, Christian scholars appreciate the universe's infinite and divine nature.
2. **Interest.** Christians believe the entire universe depends on the existence of a perfect being and that nature and matter are good, a concept noticeably absent from most cultures.
3. **Orderly nature.** Christians think that nature, created by a good and rational being, behaves in a consistent and rational way. Understanding God as a personal creator with a divine intelligence encourages a search for order in a rational and discernible nature.
4. **Knowable nature.** Seeing nature as ordered leads naturally to the conviction that we can observe, study and comprehend it — and discover more about its creator.
5. **Manifesting design.** We possess motivations, plans and designs and reasonably infer that these characteristics resemble the nature and actions of the creator.
6. **Sharing science.** The scientific method represents a community undertaking similar to the communal nature of Christian faith. As Christians studied nature to improve life on earth, they also explored human societies and spawned the social sciences.

However, applying the scientific method to human behavior led to the massive exodus of intellectuals from the church at the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century because they perceived Christianity as incompatible with science. But Christian thinkers such as Michael Polanyi ("Personal Knowledge"), C. C. Gillispie ("The Edge of Objectivity"), Austin Farrer ("Interpretation and Belief"), E. E. Evans-Pritchard ("Theories of Primitive Religion") and others began to make room for Christian belief by demonstrating the impossibility of pursuing scientific truth without regard for the reality of God.

These core beliefs animate our mission at Westmont. We strive to offer an educational program that provides the best training for the mind while helping our students gain the capacities to answer the great questions of life and make a meaningful contribution to the world. We offer a unique perspective of an educated person for whom a balance of rigorous academics and deep love for God yields deeper awareness and wider impact.

Our history overflows with people animated by their faith, motivated by their intellect and willing to embrace deeply held commitments that inspire a lifetime of learning, leadership and service. A liberal arts education embedded in the Christian intellectual tradition invites us to see the interrelationship of all knowledge and to learn how to reach into every area of human learning to find new solutions to vexing problems.

Westmont's Global Leadership Center



Explore the World with Westmont

Westmont's global approach offers opportunities for students to study and serve beyond Santa Barbara. Through faculty-led study abroad programs, students deepen their understanding of other cultures and grow in adaptability, independence, and communication skills, all while forming lasting memories. Students also participate in global ministry and outreach, partnering with local communities through cross-cultural fellowship.



WESTMONT AROUND THE WORLD

Pack Your Bags, and Your Scholarships!

Westmont is one of the few colleges that allows students to use their financial aid and scholarships for their study abroad opportunities.



-  **WESTMONT OFF-CAMPUS SEMESTER PROGRAMS:**
- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Cairo | Northern Europe |
| East Asia | San Francisco |
| England | Santa Barbara |
| Europe | Singapore |
| Jerusalem | <i>(Summer Session)</i> |
| Mexico | Uganda |
| Mediterranean | |

-  **WESTMONT GLOBAL MINISTRY AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:**
- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Bolivia | Mexico |
| China | Nepal |
| Ecuador | Philippines |
| Guatemala | South Korea |
| Indonesia | Spain |
| Israel | Taiwan |
| Japan | Turkey |
| Madagascar | Uganda |
| Latin America | |



RANKINGS



For two decades, U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges list has ranked Westmont as the top Christian liberal arts college in California and the Western U.S. In the 2025 edition, Westmont appears at No. 108 (tied) among all national, not regional, liberal arts colleges. And, Westmont remains one of the top Christian liberal arts colleges in California, listed among 10 other liberal arts schools in the state. Overall, it's one of only two nationally ranked in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.



Westmont is a top performer on the U.S. News Social Mobility ranking, which measures how well schools enrolled and graduated students who received federal Pell Grants. U.S. News also included Westmont in its national rankings of top undergraduate economics programs.

Westmont's U.S. News score improved in faculty resources rank, student-to-faculty ratio (9.9), faculty salary rank, peer assessment score and college grads earning more than a high school grad (85%).

Payscale - rankings report shows Westmont graduates (all alums) in the top 7% for all 1,539 bachelor-degree institutions in the U.S. in mid-career salaries (median after 10+ years of experience), earning an average salary of \$146,800. Westmont graduates who only earn a bachelor's degree are in the top 9% of mid-career earnings with an average salary of \$137,900.



Forbes

Forbes' list of America's Top Colleges 2025 spotlights Westmont, which is in the top-10 small colleges in California. It is also included in Forbes lists for Best in Private Colleges, in Liberal Arts Universities and in the West.



Best Colleges

Money - awarded Westmont as one of America's Best Colleges in its 2024 Best Colleges rating, which analyzed the country's top 745 four-year colleges with a focus on quality, affordability and student outcomes.

The Fiske Guide - to Colleges 2025 includes Westmont in its review of more than 300 of the "best and most interesting" colleges in the U.S., Canada and UK.

College Raptor highlights Westmont as a Hidden Gem and No. 3 overall in Hidden Gem D2 Schools, focusing on smaller schools that compete in NCAA DII.



Best College Towns

WorldAtlas - ranked Santa Barbara as No. 3 in its **Best College Towns in California**. "Not only beloved for the towns refreshing coastal scenery, picture-perfect architecture, and perfect climate often described as Mediterranean and dubbed the American Riviera, Santa Barbara also boasts great opportunities for higher education."

U.S. News and World Report's 10 Destination West Coast College Towns - says "for many students, attending college in a beach town is an easy sell. Santa Barbara offers a palm-lined beachfront location on the Pacific Ocean."



DISCOVER MORE AT [WESTMONT.EDU/RANKINGS](https://westmont.edu/rankings)



Great is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

CHORUS

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

CHORUS

COLLEGE HYMN, 1937

#1 Discover the Top Christian Liberal Arts
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The Westmont Way



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