

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM

For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To

Westmont College

Santa Barbara, CA

March 1 – 3, 2016

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and its Accreditation History, as Relevant

Westmont College is a private, nonprofit, co-educational institution of higher education offering bachelor's degrees—Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BS), and Bachelor of Music Education (BME)—in 26 majors. Its mission states: “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 opened its doors to 72 students in Los Angeles, CA, in 1937, with the founding of the Bible Missionary Institute. It soon outgrew its Los Angeles facilities and purchased a 125-acre property in Montecito, a residential suburb of Santa Barbara, CA. The college moved to the new location in 1945. The Montecito setting has carried some constraints, most notably a limit on the college’s student enrollment. Currently, the conditional use permit issued by Santa Barbara County in 1989 limits the college’s on-campus enrollment to 1,200 students—the historical average enrollment has been 1,199. This limitation impacts new academic program development and necessitates substantial efforts at diversification of revenue. It has, for instance, prompted the college to develop a wide array of study-abroad programs.

Westmont College achieved initial accreditation by WSCUC in 1958. Since then, the college has continued to meet the accreditation standards. Most recently, the college went through a Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) in spring 2005, an Interim Report (IR) panel review in spring 2006, an Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) in spring 2007, and a Special Visit Review (SVR) in fall 2011. In March 2012, the Commission acted to receive the SVR report and proceed with the comprehensive review with an Offsite Review (OSR) in spring 2015

and an Accreditation Visit (AV) in fall 2015, which were later coordinated and rescheduled for fall 2015 and spring 2016, respectively. This team report reflects the lines of inquiry developed during the OSR and describes the AV conducted on March 1 – 3, 2016. (The team did not review the college’s off-campus site in downtown Santa Barbara [“Center for Social Entrepreneurship”], the only extended site, as it is within 25 miles of the main campus in Montecito and students do not complete 50% or more of their degree program at this location. Westmont offers no online programs.)

B. Description of Team’s Review Process

The team reviewed all the materials provided by the college along with its institutional report, Commission action letters, materials from the 2007 EER and 2011 SVR, and supplemental materials requested before and after the fall 2015 OSR. During the site visit, the team also reviewed communications sent to the confidential e-mail account established for the purpose of the review, and met with multiple constituencies in order to explore further the issues raised in the institutional report and the following four lines of inquiry identified during the OSR:

1. Assuring a Systemic and Sustainable Approach to Quality

- a. Quality assurance
- b. General education (GE) assessment
- c. Data collection and use
- d. “Closing the loop”
- e. Next steps
- f. Program review

2. Responding to Increasing Diversity in Society

- a. Consistency of definition
- b. “Risk factors and support structures that affect the persistence of underrepresented student groups” (p. 57 of the institutional report)

3. Integrating the Richness of the Mission throughout the College

- a. Christian perspectives and culture
- b. Institutional Learning Outcome #1—"Christian Understanding, Practices, and Affections"
- c. Board decision-making

4. Ensuring the Future in the Changing Ecology of Higher Education

- a. Enrollment cap
- b. Study abroad programs
- c. Library
- d. Career development
- e. Marketing

C. Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

Overall, the institutional report submitted in preparation for the spring 2016 AV (henceforth, "institutional report") is well written and amply portrays the condition of the institution and the assessment process it has undertaken for the review, demonstrating a diverse spectrum of substantive engagement with the key issues identified for the assessment process as well as a wide range of institutional involvement in the review. The information provided by the institution prior to and during the visit and the observations obtained onsite helped the team understand the progress the institution had made since the last review. (CFR 1.8)

The team found institutional involvement in the accreditation process and review to be extensive. The board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students whom the team met demonstrated a sincere commitment to the mission and goals of the college. Representatives of the campus leadership and community were also ready to provide any information the team requested. The team commends the Westmont community for its engagement in the accreditation process and the amount of time and effort it has invested in the process. The team would also like to express its appreciation to the community for the openness with which they responded to

questions and the provision of additional materials as requested as well as for their effort in making the site visit hospitable with warmth. (CFR 1.8)

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

The institutional report submitted for the Accreditation Visit (AV) provides a thorough review of previous commission feedback, addressing the earlier concerns. Four areas were specified by WSCUC in its action letter dated July 13, 2007.

1. Strategic Vision, Especially around the Library. Westmont has made significant progress since 2007 to address the Commission recommendations to develop a strategic plan/vision especially focusing on the library. It has revitalized the role of the library in the educational culture of the college. The institutional report notes that the following six categories have received considerable attention in the intervening years:

- **Facilities.** A \$500,000 renovation of the library in 2010 significantly improved the facility. (CFR 3.5)
- **Integration with the Institution.** The library staff now serve on the Strategic Planning, General Education, and Program Review Committees, strengthening coordination between the college's planning efforts and the library's own planning process. (CFRs 3.3, 4.6)
- **Program Review and Student Learning.** The library now follows the Program Review Committee's guidelines for six-year reviews and annual reports. The library's current program learning outcomes (PLOs) reflect national standards for library instruction and information literacy and are consulted and assessed when librarians collaborate with faculty and students for research consultations and instruction. (CFRs 3.3, 3.5)
- **Collection and Budget.** To date, \$100,000 has been added to the library's annual operating

budget. With these increased funds, the library has addressed several needs. (CFR 3.5)

- **Staffing and Budget.** The library director has updated job descriptions and expanded liaison librarian duties to include information literacy instruction, research help desk hours, and collection development. (CFR 3.1)
- **Vision.** The library staff composed a six-year plan for the library in 2013–2014 and wrote a vision and values document in the following year. (CFRs 3.2, 3.3)

2. Assessment and Program Review. In 2007, the EER team raised several issues in the college's assessment and program review, calling for greater consistency in review efforts and greater clarity about the role of academic departments in assessing the institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) and General Education (GE). Since 2007, Westmont has made substantial progress on these matters, as described in the institutional report submitted for the current review. (CFR 2.4)

- **Consistency of Work.** The Program Review Committee (PRC) has refined its templates for six-year reviews and annual reports. Templates and resources are available online.
- **Protocols and Infrastructure.** The PRC works closely with academic units. Additional resources have been provided to support assessment retreats and planning by the departments. New protocols clarify who is responsible for the various functions. (CFRs 2.4, 4.1, 4.4)
- **Data and Storage.** A campus network-based storage system has been in place to facilitate archiving reports and data. (CFR 4.1)
- **Sustainability.** In refining the existing protocols, the faculty has aligned and streamlined procedures. The PRC has crafted new expectations for six-year reviews and annual reports that focus on essentials and eliminate redundancies and irrelevancies.

3. Sustained Leadership Support. Westmont was in the midst of crucial leadership transitions at the time of the 2007 EER with four senior leadership positions being vacant, which prompted the Commission to urge “the college’s administration, faculty, and staff to seize this opportunity to work collaboratively toward sustaining the activities undertaken as part of the accrediting review.” All the vacancies have now been filled and the president’s executive team is in place and functioning, committed to the WSCUC Standards. (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.8)

4. Defining and Implementing Diversity. A potential conflict was identified in the 2005 CPR through the concerns expressed by Catholic students who did not feel truly welcomed at Westmont. A potential point of tension was also identified in the 2007 EER between the college’s Christian evangelical identity and its commitment to be a welcoming community for all students. The Commission urged the institution to continue to address how it can be true to its evangelical belief system while creating an environment that is genuinely welcoming to those whose personal beliefs might exclude them from that system. Cultivating diversity and global engagement throughout the college is one of the current priorities of the strategic map. (CFRs 1.4, 4.6)

Westmont experienced a devastating fire right after the 2007 EER—“Tea Fire of 2008,” which destroyed or damaged several campus homes and buildings. Despite this traumatic event, Westmont completed a modified construction plan and has continued with progress in capital projects and kept its strong fiscal operations.

Component 2: Compliance with the Standards and federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with each of the four WSCUC Standards, as

detailed below. The team also found the institution to be in compliance with federal requirements for credit hour, marketing and recruitment, student complaint, and transfer policy—see appendices 1 – 4. It also found the institution’s Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) to be complete, reflective, and analytical.

Standard 1

Institutional Purposes

The institutional report described five planks of the college mission as constituting the meaning of a Westmont degree—i.e., 1) liberal arts, 2) Christian, 3) residential, 4) undergraduate, and 5) global. The college uses these five planks as the lead on the campus website to articulate the distinctive character of Westmont College. There is considerable evidence, such as institutes (e.g., Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts) and programs (e.g., the wide range of study abroad options), that these planks truly represent the nature of the Westmont experience. The five planks also strongly shape strategic planning and the seven ILOs: 1) Christian Understanding, Practices, and Affections; 2) Global Awareness and Diversity; 3) Critical Thinking; 4) Written Communication; 5) Oral Communication; 6) Information Literacy; and 7) Quantitative Literacy. Trustees view their role as protectors of the mission and utilize the five planks as a framework for making decisions regarding strategic priorities and investments. The team found that the mission of Westmont College is widely understood and accepted by the campus community as grounding the work of the college. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 3.9, 4.6)

Integrity and Transparency

A page on the website entitled “Core College Documents” elaborates on its Christian commitments, including “Articles of Faith” and “Community Life Statement.” Faculty reflect together on how to strengthen the integration of Christian perspective with learning across the

curriculum. They work to develop the ILOs such as critical thinking and communication skills widely and deeply, within the context of a faith-based perspective. The great majority of students live on campus and efforts are being made to make it possible for even more students to live on campus, except if they are away on a global/study abroad experience. The fact that a significant proportion of faculty are able to live in institutionally-subsidized housing adjacent to the campus strengthens faculty support for that residential experience by creating many opportunities for faculty-student interaction outside the classroom. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 3.1)

The faculty believe that their common faith basis gives a foundation for helping students learn to approach all human beings as worthy of respect and kindness and grace and love. The “Core College Documents” webpage also includes a document entitled “Biblical and Theological Foundations of Diversity,” which was adopted by the board of trustees in 2012. Over the past several years, Westmont has sought to make progress regarding various issues concerned with diversity, such as increasing the ethnic diversity of the student body, faculty, and staff, and improving the climate for Catholic and non-evangelical Christian students. The current Strategic Map 2014-2017 includes the crosscutting theme “Cultivate Diversity and Global Engagement Across the College.” The student body is growing in diversity, particularly with an increase in the percentage of Latino/a students. However, the team heard concern, particularly from staff and students, regarding attrition of faculty and students from racial/ethnic minority groups. Students described the culture of the college as a “white, female, Christian bubble,” which sometimes does not feel safe for ethnic minority or low-income students. They indicated that neither faculty nor other students seem to know how to engage in conversation regarding issues of diversity. The team recommends that, in addition to continuing its efforts to recruit students, staff, and faculty of color, Westmont invest in training in intercultural competence, to give people on

campus the tools needed to engage in the dialogue necessary for greater mutual understanding and support. (CFR 1.4)

The college's website includes educational objectives at both the institutional and program levels. Prospective and current students can get information on its strong retention and graduation rates—77% four-year graduation rate—in three clicks. Information about student achievement is available for each program; however, it is not consistent across majors in presentation and is not particularly user-friendly. The information provided consists primarily of annual assessment results, which appear to consider faculty and administration, as opposed to prospective or current students, as the primary audience. There is also information available, for example, on the physics major homepage, regarding the annual “Student Research Symposium,” which clearly demonstrates some of the fascinating projects in which students have been engaged. (CFRs 1.2, 1.6, 1.7)

An additional section of the institutional report worthy of mention included reflections on how Westmont contributes to the common good through significant student services to support both curricular and co-curricular programs, significant contribution to the intellectual and artistic life of the Santa Barbara region, engagement with local businesses and the community around issues such as water conservation, and using the experience gained from the devastating Tea Fire that damaged the campus in 2008 to become a leader in higher education for emergency readiness and risk management. (CFRs 1.2, 1.5, 1.7, 2.5, 2.8, 2.11, 2.13)

Standard 2

Teaching and Learning

The team found ample evidence of attention to the criteria for evaluating compliance with Standard 2 in the institutional report and appendices, Westmont website, and other documents.

The institutional report describes degree programs with content and standards consistent with the norm for undergraduate programs; attention to the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree; and core functions sufficiently developed to achieve educational objectives. Westmont College's clear strengths include its small student-to-faculty ratio, high percentage of instruction provided by full-time faculty, and virtually all full-time faculty possessing the terminal degree in their discipline. (CFRs 2.1, 2.8)

Since 2007, Westmont has made substantial progress on assessment. The team verified and confirmed the progress described in the institutional report concerning assessment and program review—see **2. Assessment and Program Review in Component 1** above (pp. 4–6). Westmont College is to be commended for its successful efforts to deepen the culture of assessment. The institution has developed a system of assessment and program review characterized by faculty ownership and engagement; collaboration among faculty, student life, and administration; and resources and support from the administration. There is ample evidence of significant progress since the last review in 2007 and Special Visit in 2011. (CFRs 2.4, 4.3, 4.5)

The team found the institutional report and accompanying documents to be thoughtful and reflective about struggles and remaining challenges as well as achievements; for example, honest reflection was exhibited in the acknowledgement that while faculty, staff, and administrators are aware of and committed to the ILOs, that awareness is not fully shared by students. The team's review of a random sample of syllabi for spring 2016 indicated a fair amount of variation in elements included in syllabi, with few of those sampled including the connection between course learning outcomes and PLOs/ILOs, which could help to explain students' lack of awareness of ILOs. The institution addressed the provision of useful and

complete program information and advising to students of non-evangelical Christian faith traditions in its response to previous reviews, and its provision of useful and complete program information and advising can be inferred from its high retention and graduation rates. (CFRs 2.1, 2.8)

Scholarship and Creative Activity

Support for faculty professional development, sabbaticals, and involvement in off-campus study is amply demonstrated; support for development of pedagogy is clear as is support for scholarship and creative activity. The regular update of faculty professional accomplishments on the provost's webpage clearly recognizes and honors the importance of such activity.

Westmont College's institutional report, its supporting documents, and the site visit addressed student evaluation of faculty contributions to their research and learning, and performance review and evaluation of faculty scholarship and creativity. (CFRs 2.3, 2.9, 2.12)

Student Learning and Success

Westmont College has made great strides in assessment of student learning in terms of ILOs, annual and six-year program review, and General Education (GE). The team recommends that the Westmont faculty continue to implement the GE assessment program, which has not yet fully matured. In addition, the team recommends that the institution ensure the sustainability of assessment by committing resources to technology for collecting, storing, analyzing and managing assessment and program review data; disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, and risk factors to track and improve student success; and facilitating the connection between program review and strategic planning. (CFRs 2.4, 4.4, 2.7, 4.2, 4.6)

The team commends the institution for continually strengthening the articulation and collaborative approach between the faculty and the student life personnel in addressing ILOs and

assessment. Collaborations between and among the student life and academic divisions, at all levels including staff, faculty, and administration, was evident and discussed in detail and with appreciation by all during the site visit. (CFR 2.11)

Also see **Component 5** below (pp. 28–29).

Standard 3

Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff appear to be of sufficient quantity (e.g., low student-to-faculty ratio) and good quality. By its own admission, the college desires to have a more diverse faculty and staff employee base. A deliberate process to recruit, hire, and retain faculty and staff of color is in place. The president and his executive team are overseeing accountability in this regard. A review of open positions within the organization reveals that approximately eight to 10 staff positions are currently vacant, with five of those being in the information technology (IT) area, and approximately six to eight faculty searches are in process. There are approximately 105 full-time faculty in place and between 200 and 225 staff members employed at the college. It is noted that while the college is making progress in employing a more diverse faculty and staff, there are few African-Americans in the employ of the institution. (CFRs 1.4, 3.1)

A comprehensive set of faculty and staff policies, practices, and evaluation methods is in place: 1) tenure and promotion procedures for faculty; 2) hiring procedures outlined; 3) a mutual mentoring program for professors; 4) a new faculty orientation and mentoring program; 5) student course evaluation process; 6) annual performance reviews for staff; and 7) a new staff orientation program (“Westmont Institute”) that meets one hour per week for 10 weeks, focusing on topics including Westmont history, culture, mission, governance, organizational responsibilities, etc. (CFR 3.2)

Various means of professional development are currently in place and found to be a strength at Westmont: 1) faculty faith-learning seminars; 2) scholars' retreats for faculty; 3) funded professional development opportunities for both faculty and staff; 4) leadership roundtable for staff; 5) Westmont Institute, as described above; 6) faculty reading groups; 7) weekly lunch forums for faculty; and 8) periodic topic-focused faculty workshops. (CFR 3.3)

Fiscal, Physical and Information Resources

Recent financial audits are clean and unqualified. There is a long history of the institution living within their financial means—i.e., “multi-decade annual operating budgets without deficit.” There is an understanding of the need to diversify revenue sources, beyond the standard enrollment and fundraising sources, and college personnel are making an attempt to do that on several fronts—e.g., Santa Barbara downtown center, Northern Europe and England global initiatives, Asia/Singapore global initiatives, Jerusalem and Istanbul global initiatives, various institutes (Gaede, Martin, etc.), increased emphasis on summer conference services, summer scholars program, on-campus cell tower rental, Augustinian Scholars program, Michaelhouse scholarship, and Act Six program. Recent capital campaigns have been robust and successful, setting the stage for the kick off of a very large campaign in the next few years. The financial areas of the institution are managed well, are well communicated, and therefore are well understood by the institution at large. Financial performance is understood by all Westmont College stakeholders to be key to being able to perpetuate the mission of the college. (CFR 3.4)

Resource allocation and resource prioritization have been handled well through the strategic planning process, which is well understood by all members of the Westmont employee base. A technology plan is not in place. This may be a consideration for implementation going forward. The college has a well-experienced Chief Information Officer (CIO), who clearly

understands the critical role IT plays in the modern workplace. There are currently five open positions in the IT area, which validates the concern for any business entity that well qualified technology personnel are often hard to hire and difficult to retain due to the many opportunities available to them in the current marketplace. There is an expressed need for more training for faculty on the use of technology. Recent technology improvements at Westmont include: 1) campus wide wireless network; 2) increased classroom technology; 3) expanded technical support via the help desk; and 4) investment in computer resources for faculty and staff. (CFR 3.5)

The team verified and confirmed the progress described in the institutional report concerning the library in the following six categories: 1) facilities; 2) integration with the institution; 3) program review and student learning; 4) collection and budget; 5) staffing and budget; and 6) vision—see **1. Strategic Vision, Especially around the Library in Component 1** above (pp. 4–6). It is noteworthy that library staff members have been providing expanded instructional services to students and have provided a liaison program to faculty. Investment has been made into increased library facilities and resources. Continued investment into information services will help the college meet its educational learning objectives and its student learning outcomes (SLOs). (CFRs 2.13, 3.5)

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

This area was self-reported as a strength for the institution, and the team found it is indeed a strength. The board of trustees is well informed and are appropriately engaged in the work and mission of Westmont. The president is well respected in all areas of the institution and by the board. He clearly carries out his duties with integrity, high performance, responsibility, and accountability. Likewise, the executive team is held in high regard and appears to be a high

performing unit. Some elements in place include: 1) trustee training focusing on governance; 2) a *Board Policy Manual*; 3) annual goals of the executive team shared with faculty, staff, and trustees; and 4) executive team reports to the board of trustees on progress toward these goals. Some of the policy statements currently in place include: 1) conflict of interest; 2) conflict resolution; and 3) harassment discrimination. (CFR 3.6)

There is an organization chart in place, and roles and responsibilities appear clear. It is obvious that the strategic planning process that is in place across the institution is driving resource prioritization and allocation. The strategic planning process is clearly a distinctiveness of the institution's leadership team and is essentially ubiquitous across the entire organization, including the board of trustees. There are faculty and employee handbooks in place. The following items, providing clarity in planning and decision-making, are available on the Westmont website:

- *“Decision Making at Westmont College”*
 - Brings some clarity to each of these decision making processes:
 - Academic Programs, Policies & Personnel (*Faculty Handbook*)
 - Capital Improvement Projects
 - College Budget
 - College Policies
 - Fundraising Priorities
 - Strategic Planning
 - Student Processes
- President's Implementation Council
 - Roles

- Responsibilities
- Membership
- Strategic Planning materials (CFR 3.7)

Both a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) are in place in full-time positions. The institution has a sufficient number of other qualified administrators to provide effective educational leadership and management. The team verified and confirmed the progress as described in the institutional report concerning the organizational leadership—see **3. Sustained Leadership Support in Component 1** above (pp. 4–6). (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.8)

The board of trustees exercises appropriate oversight over all institutional integrity, policies, and ongoing operations, including hiring and evaluating the CEO. Some items that demonstrate that oversight are: 1) a Trusteeship Committee assessing performance of the board of trustees; and 2) a Trustee Personnel Committee annually evaluating the president. (CFR 3.9)

Academic leadership appears to be effective and serving Westmont College well. The governance roles, rights, and responsibilities of the faculty are clearly defined and well understood. This is self-reported as a strength for the institution and is noted as a strength by the team. (CFR 3.10)

Standard 4

Quality Assurance Processes

As noted in the *Standard 2* section above, the team commends the college for the continuing development of a systematic structure for its quality assurance processes. Significant forward steps include the identification of the Faculty Senate as the overseer of program review and GE assessment, the integration of the assessment activities across the college, the consolidation of college-wide outcomes, and the strengthening of faculty leadership in

assessment and improvement processes. The institutional report notes faculty participation in planning for assessment, analysis of data, and subsequent conversations leading to action steps. Specifically, the Faculty Senate discusses the annual assessment report and utilizes the results to make decisions for improving student learning. In addition, the student life division has further refined their system of evaluation with an effort to include faculty involvement and to retune assessment to the consolidated ILOs. (CFRs 2.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6)

The institutional research (IR) function has also been enhanced through the reorganization of duties, freeing the associate provost to focus on IR responsibilities. With additional dedicated time from the administrator overseeing IR, the college has made progress in articulating the strands of data collection into a whole, creating a schedule for data analysis that is correlated to decision-making points in the calendar. (CFR 4.2)

Institutional Learning and Improvement

As the institutional approach to assessment has coalesced and data is collected and analyzed across the campus, key questions have been added to the process to assist the faculty in review, and departmental assessment web pages have been developed for publishing the outcomes of program reviews. There remains, however, some unevenness in the quality of departmental reviews of programs (self-study, observation of reviews at website). Additionally, the institutional report notes that there is still work to do in moving from a “compliance” approach to a “program improvement” approach in departmental reviews. Program reviews for co-curricular departments and offsite programs are not fully developed, and in some areas direct samples of student work or feedback are needed. However, connections are being made between assessment and program improvement, and have been documented. (CFR 4.5)

In the college's ongoing inquiry into teaching and program effectiveness, multiple constituents have been involved in assessment and planning. Online surveys have collected feedback and data from the college's alumni. The board has participated in strategic planning and prioritizing with an eye toward the current challenges posed for higher education in the U.S., as well as local constraints. A three-year planning cycle has been implemented, allowing for broad consultation, regular reviews and updates, and responsiveness to a changing environment. (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

Final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

Federal Requirements

The team found the institution to be in compliance with federal requirements for credit hour, marketing and recruitment, student complaint, and transfer policy. Credit Hour and Program Length Review Report is attached as appendix 1, Marketing and Recruitment Review Report as appendix 2, Student Complaints Review Report as appendix 3, and Transfer Policy Review Report as appendix 4.

Educational Effectiveness Indicators

The Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) is complete and reflects the faculty's collective responsibility for setting SLOs and standards, assessing student learning, demonstrating achievement of standards. The format in which the IEEI is presented, with a page for each program generated by that program's faculty, demonstrates faculty ownership of assessment. (CFR 2.4)

Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees

The college's mission statement defines Westmont as “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.” As such, the institution focuses on the planks of (1) *undergraduate* education in a (2) *residential* setting with a strong commitment to the (3) evangelical Protestant tradition in cultivating *Christian* understanding, practices, and affections. The curriculum is committed to (4) a broad, interdisciplinary vision of the *liberal arts* with the goal of highlighting (5) *global engagement* in the student learning experience. Within the framework of the five planks, the institution's self-study characterizes the student experience as providing “a sense of community and exploration, a shared space and a range of outward journeys.” (CFR 1.1)

The Westmont degree signifies a meaningful, robust educational experience guided by the institution's five planks of the college mission as “framing motifs” (institutional report, p. i). The team found that the mission and five planks clearly guide the institution at all levels, from the board of trustees to strategic planning, to curricular work and the organization of learning outcomes, to teacher-student interactions and campus-life events. The mission clearly articulates and guides all aspects of campus life. Students also expressed a familiarity with the mission and the value of the five planks in guiding their academic and co-curricular experience. (CFR 1.1)

Comprising the first strand in articulating the quality and integrity of the institution's programs, Westmont's seven ILOs combine two of their institution-specific planks—“Christian understanding, practices and affections,” and “global awareness and diversity”—with the five core competencies delineated by WSCUC: critical thinking, written communication, oral communication, information literacy, and quantitative literacy. These ILOs, consolidated by the

faculty from several lists previously used, form a broad framework for the planning, delivery and assessment of Westmont's degree and co-curricular programming. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.4)

The institution significantly resources its commitment to the ILOs; examples include the planned new Westmont Institute for Global Learning and Leadership, the provision of staff directors to work with global and diversity programs, and the support for a variety of Christian service programs. It was clear, in the team's interactions with faculty, staff, and administration, that the ILOs have provided the anchor point for significant, deep, and ongoing conversation as the institution's work on the assessment program has progressed. At the time of the visit the institution had completed most of one cycle in assessing the ILOs, and faculty were able to clearly articulate a deep understanding of the ILOs and the ways in which institutional assessment has led to enhancing the quality of the degrees. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.4)

One area of concern arose regarding the integration of the ILOs throughout the institution, specifically pertaining to the "Global Awareness and Diversity" ILO. Specifically, while many Westmont students partake of the rich array of study abroad programs and outreach/service projects, there does not seem to be a detailed description of the meaning of "global awareness," nor a structure in place to assure that every graduating student has achieved the "global awareness" objective within their program. The team recommends that Westmont College clarify the "Global Awareness and Diversity" ILO to more clearly delineate and define the two terms with clear descriptions of how they are to be realized within the context of the institutional mission. Westmont College is encouraged to explore models of global awareness and engagement (e.g., charity versus social justice) to help the institution and its students articulate values and practices consistent with the College's mission. The team recommends reflection and discussion about the extent to which global engagement requires experience

abroad and/or can be realized on campus and in other U.S. settings, and what constitutes global awareness and engagement. Although a number of elective experiences are offered for forming and enhancing student global awareness, the team recommends that the requirements and outcomes for the “Global Awareness and Diversity” ILO be systematically addressed in such a way as to be assured for all students graduating with a Westmont degree. With the upcoming scheduled assessment of this ILO, the team expects that the institution will find the discussion, assessment, and resulting program improvement to be an enriching experience across the institution. (CFRs 1.4, 2.3)

The second strand relating to quality and integrity can be seen in the GE program as an expression of the institution’s goals. Westmont ensures the meaning and integrity of its GE program through the alignment of requirements of the program to the ILOs. An earlier approach to GE assessment was challenging and unsustainable; thus the General Education Committee has adopted a new protocol for evaluating the components via a six-year cycle, which employs the review of syllabi and the direct assessment of student learning via signature assignments. Each of the GE learning objectives is assessed by a cross-disciplinary team with expertise in the area being assessed. Because the revised protocol for evaluating the GE curriculum was launched in 2014, the institutional learning from the new process has barely begun. The institution has piloted the use of analysis software (LiveText) for assessment of signature assignments and ability to disaggregate data, but the usefulness of this tool will not be fully realized until such analysis is extended throughout the GE program assessment. As the institution proceeds through the cycle of GE assessment, evidence from other components of the assessment program provide a reasonable expectation that the quality of the GE program will be enhanced by curriculum revision emerging from the continuous improvement processes. The team noted the need for

continued institutional focus and reflection on the process in this area as the cycle proceeds.
(CFR 2.6)

The third strand in assuring the meaning and integrity of Westmont's degrees lies in the departmental reviews and six-year reviews. PLOs are aligned with the ILOs, and it is clear that there is recognition across the institution as to how the ILOs guide the academic and co-curricular programs. The college's institutional report notes that external reviewers are now mandatory participants in all departmental reviews (p. 32), and states in addition that "when appropriate, six-year reviews have been aligned with formal evaluations by professional guilds" (p. 33). Some departments make their full program reviews public, and others are password protected from external access. The team noted ample evidence of benchmarking and student achievement data being used to "close the loop" and drive program improvement. Additionally, conversations with faculty provided confirmation that departments are familiar with the program review cycle and invested in the process. (CFRs 1.2, 2.7, 4.3)

Westmont provides an institutional portfolio at the college's website with multi-year data available on enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. Information on program reviews is posted on the website, as is data on student achievement. (CFR 1.2)

In ensuring the quality of the degrees offered, Westmont employs a number of externally available methods and measures for gathering benchmarked data about student performance and experience. These measures include the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) student ratings, U.S. News and World Report college rankings, Forbes and Princeton Review rankings, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey results, and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results, all of which document strongly positive outcomes for the Westmont student experience. Additionally, Westmont's primary learning goals

have been analyzed for alignment with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Essentials and the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualification Profile (DQP) matrix of proficiencies, and have been noted to correspond closely to these benchmarks. It is also noted that Westmont's "interdisciplinary problem-solving tasks... exemplify the ideals presented in the Liberal Education & America's Promise (LEAP) criteria" (institutional report, p. 27). In addition to external measures and benchmarking, Westmont also gathers information on surveys of alumni. Data from two 2015 surveys included factors similar to those identified in the *Great Jobs, Great Lives Report* on a national survey of college graduates, and documented the strongly positive feedback from Westmont alumni on their academic and co-curricular college experiences. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2)

In addition to program improvement through its assessment program, Westmont's institutional report notes that the quality of its programs is ensured to a large degree by the excellence of its faculty and staff. The president noted that in the hiring processes, significant attention is given to both "faith and fit" for the richness of the institutional mission, and the institution is willing to extend its search as it waits for a strong candidate to fill a position. The commitment to strong qualifications is certainly impressive; 98.7% of tenure-track and tenured faculty hold a doctorate or terminal degree. Full-time faculty provide about 85% of instruction. All resident directors hold a master's degree. Additionally, the yearly funding for individual professional development along with support for sabbaticals and faculty-directed research with students demonstrates an impressively strong institutional commitment to quality. (CFRs 2.1, 2.8, 3.1, 3.3)

Finally, it is noted that the Strategic Planning Committee supports the meaning and integrity of Westmont degrees as it integrates into its work the outcomes of faculty governance

that are related to the quality of teaching and learning. The participation of academic committees is integrated into strategic planning as priority items from these committees are listed under the learning track. (CFR 4.6)

In summary, Westmont College's meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree are wrapped up in a campus-wide understanding of five planks—Christian, residential, undergraduate, liberal arts, and global—which overlap with their ILOs. These guide the structure of the curricular and co-curricular programming, define the points for assessment of effectiveness, and serve as the standard by which the students' educational experience is shaped with the character of the institution and its commitments.

Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

It is evident, from the Westmont institutional report and from conversations with multiple groups on campus during the site visit, that the work of assessment and program review have continued to broaden and mature as a result of significant attention and hard work across campus in recent years. The team affirms faculty, staff, and administration for making it a clear priority to effectively refine its assessment structure and processes, focusing its work on the three strands identified under **Component 3** above.

The institution has demonstrated an intentionality in expanding its approach to assuring educational quality by adding the position of the Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness, and by providing internal and external professional development for faculty and staff leaders in assessment activities. Faculty and staff have worked collaboratively to define learning outcomes and standards of performance, which have been widely shared and are recognized across campus, and to coordinate the three strands of assessment into a coherent whole. The Faculty Senate has taken seriously its role in assessment oversight and serving as the

clearinghouse for assessment reports. Faculty described their work as making sure that program reviews address key issues, and to shorten the program reviews so as to make the work sustainable. They noted that a combination of leadership, resources, equipping, a democratic approach, and transparency have enabled the success of the effort. Additionally, the faculty described the GE assessment as an interdisciplinary endeavor, and remarked, “assessment is part of the culture now.”

In the assessment of ILOs, a Lead Assessment Specialist has been assigned to work with a faculty/staff team to identify assessment tools and to collect and analyze data related to each ILO being assessed. A six-year cycle is in place for the assessment of the seven ILOs, with the full faculty receiving the report and the Faculty Senate using the data and discussions to inform curriculum change. Program enhancements were well documented in the institutional report, and bear evidence of thorough and detailed work, discussion, and response. The institution is to be commended for its work in endeavoring to identify definitions, assessment tools and processes for evaluating student outcomes in these “five planks” areas that are central to the institution’s mission, and at the same time so challenging to assess. For example, one of the more interesting tasks has been borne by the assessment team dealing with the “Christian Understanding, Practices, and Affections” ILO. The college’s institutional report indicated that the work on this ILO has led to stimulating discussions, new programs, and the exploration of ways to address some of the concerns—as in the case of biblical literacy—arising from the institutional Christian Life survey. It is expected that the work on the other ILO included from the institutional planks—Diversity and Global Awareness, scheduled during the 2016-2017 year—will produce similar challenges and stimulating discussions. (CFRs 2.2, 2.7, 4.3)

The GE assessment program—the second strand—has only been in place for one year prior to this site visit. Eighteen standards were developed by the faculty to guide the GE program, seven of which are aligned with the ILOs. Written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking are all included in the eighteen standards, and also comprise five of the seven ILOs. The 11 requirements not aligned with the ILOs are scheduled into a six-year assessment cycle, two at a time. Assessment is carried out via signature assignments aligned with the GE learning outcomes, embedded in coursework and assessed via locally developed rubrics. As faculty are doing the work of assessing the SLOs, the experience is producing conversations about simplification of the wording of the requirements, as has been proposed regarding the “Understanding Society” SLO. Faculty are also addressing challenges such as rubric scoring reliability, and how to explore and assess measurement of the integration of faith and learning. (CFRs 2.2a, 2.6)

With the relatively short time in which GE assessment has been underway, more time will be needed to fully see the effect of the institution’s structure and processes in documenting achievement of educational objectives and effectiveness with regard to the GE program. Additionally, time will be needed to fully expand and use the capabilities of LiveText for analysis and disaggregation of the data collected in GE assessment. The team also noted that GE assessment employs locally developed rubrics for evaluation, and suggests that the General Education Committee consider incorporating standardized tools where possible to provide external benchmarks for the assessment of GE outcomes. (CFRs 2.2a, 2.6)

The departmental program reviews—the third strand of the institution’s assessment system—have been underway for some time at Westmont College. The institutional report documents recent findings and subsequent changes and/or enhancements made based on the

reviews, which also include those from non-academic programs such as athletics, global education, the library, the student life division, and career advising. Departmental program reviews are available at the assessment website, but access to a department's review may or may not have been made publicly available. As the institutional report notes, "some departments have conducted more rigorous and profitable reviews than others," and consistency will be an ongoing part of the work in the coming phase of quality assurance efforts. Interviews with groups on campus confirmed use of departmental reviews to drive responses such as curriculum redesign and change, the provision of internships, the additions of capstone courses and seminars, changes in teaching focus, and requests for resources. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

The AV has provided significant evidence of Westmont's work in systematic assessment and continuous improvement. The institution is to be commended for the considerable progress made. While the institutional report indicated concern for sustainability of the assessment program, that concern did not emerge as a significant one during interactions with various groups during the visit. However, the team recommends that the institution continue to seek ways to guard the sustainability of the institution's approach to assessment. This is necessary in maintaining the meaningfulness of the quality assurance efforts. Additionally, the institutional report indicates next steps in assessment to be: making "sure that the faculty as a whole comprehends the general architecture of Westmont's plan for review and assessment," refining the approach to ILO assessment and program reviews, and following through on the implementation of plans made as an outcome of "closing the loop." The team concurs with these goals and recommends that in addition to the successes gained thus far in quality assurance, the Westmont faculty continue to implement the GE assessment program, which has just begun but has not yet fully matured. In addition the team recommends that the institution ensure the

sustainability of assessment by committing resources to technology for collecting, storing, analyzing and managing assessment and program review data; disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, and risk factors; using assessment to track and improve student success; and facilitating the connection between program review and strategic planning. (CFRs 2.4, 4.4, 2.7, 4.2, 4.6)

Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation

Evidence of student learning is documented in the college's institutional report and accompanying appendices, additional documents provided by the institution, and in annual reports and six-year reviews. Retention and graduation are tracked in the aggregate and disaggregated by relevant categories such as major, gender, race/ethnicity, and Pell grant recipients. Retention and graduation rates are higher than the national norm for private colleges and universities, with retention from first year to second year consistently between 86% and 90% since 2002, and four-year graduation rates for all students between 72% and 75% for classes that entered between 2002 and 2010. For private, non-profit institutions nationally, the comparable four-year graduation rate is 51-53% and the six-year graduation rate is 65%. The institution also compares its retention and graduation rates to selected sets of peer institutions among California private colleges and universities, members of the Christian College Consortium, and California members of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, and in all comparison groups retention and graduation are consistent with those of peers. The institution has a goal of increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body, and it demonstrates the capacity to disaggregate and analyze that data to track student learning, retention, and graduation rates among diverse groups of students as it pursues that goal. (CFR 2.10)

The institution uses national surveys, including the National Survey of Student Engagement, and the College Students' Beliefs and Values Survey Efforts, as well as an Alumni Survey, to assess student satisfaction and perceptions of their educational experience. Efforts to improve student success include the Student Care Team and a re-focusing of the Office of Life Planning, now named the Career Development and Calling Office. In its institutional report, the college notes that academic support for students who struggle is an area of emphasis, to take important next steps in ensuring student success. "Student success is now a vital focus on the B2/B3 subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by the Vice President for Student Life." The team noted the cooperative relationship between the academic and student life divisions and the collaboration across divisions in assessment and program review to guide improvements in student success. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11)

Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

Westmont's institutional report and supporting documents contain evidence of significant progress in deepening the culture of assessment. Evidence includes documentation of regularly conducted program reviews with significant attention to collection and strong use of data; clear reporting of results and recommendations; evidences of closing the loop with respect to assessment; good use of disaggregated data with external benchmarks; and comprehensive alumni surveys with excellent response rates. Academic administration has expressed the desire to conduct more detailed analysis of data disaggregated by gender, race, ethnicity, and other salient factors, but indicates that the limited number of LiveText licenses available means that an analyst is spending time allocating licenses to meet assessment needs, and workload constraints mean that disaggregating and analyzing data are not the current priority. (CFR 4.1)

Since the 2007 EER, and especially since the Special Visit in 2011, Westmont College has made great progress in developing its capacity and practices in assessment. Its three major assessment efforts—assessing ILOs, the GE program, and the academic degree programs—have all developed in sophistication and usefulness since early efforts. For example, Westmont’s institutional report noted that the assessment of written communication was limited by the skewed sample resulting from voluntary participation; assessment of oral communication and Christian understanding, practices, and affections were also noted to use volunteer samples. Those assessment projects, conducted in 2011-2013, did not include efforts to account for the effect of the voluntary sample. In the 2013-14 assessment of critical thinking, those designing the assessment included methods to compare students in the sample with the total population of seniors, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings and showing evidence of progress in deepening the culture and capacity for meaningful assessment at Westmont College. The assessment of the “Information Literacy” ILO in 2014-15 introduced comparison between lower-division and upper-division student work. Over the years since 2010, assessment efforts have come to demonstrate more attention to designing assessment to be meaningful, and to overcoming the limitations of the sample. The college redesigned its GE assessment plan to emphasize “closing the loop,” with findings reported to multiple constituencies and used to generate discussions and prompt revisions to curriculum and instruction. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

The institutional report and accompanying documents include many examples of how assessment findings are used in decision-making, and in some cases the impact is tracked. Assessment in the student life division and the alignment with the academic division is described in the assessment of the “Christian Understanding, Practices, and Affections” ILO, and “closing the loop” is described in the example of the creation of Spiritual Formation Coordinators. The

full assessment cycle, including tracking results of actions, is clear in the example of the Student Care Team to coordinate support for students experiencing potentially life-threatening mental health issues. Collaboration across divisions occurs through activities such as forums held by the provost for student life staff to work with assessment and institutional research data. (CFR 4.6)

The process and results of program review are documented in the institutional report and accompanying documents, and were further explained and interpreted during the visit. Faculty and department engagement in program review is evident in the annual and six-year reports, and the process includes review by a Program Review Committee and an action plan by the department. Faculty and administration describe their pride in a process that is characterized by faculty engagement and a collaborative relationship between faculty and administration. As the strategic plan is used extensively to guide decision-making, it is important to strengthen connections and communication between program review findings, resulting actions, and incorporation into strategic planning. (CFRs 2.4, 4.5, 4.6)

Throughout Westmont's institutional report, accompanying documents, and meetings during the visit, all involved described a transformation in attitudes toward assessment. Faculty especially discussed their ownership and investment in the process, and use of findings for improvement. They discussed the hiring of the Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness as a turning point in providing them the guidance and resources they needed to take ownership and conduct meaningful assessment at the program, GE, and institutional levels. Faculty described an organizational culture in which unsatisfactory assessment results could be openly discussed and used to improve curriculum, instruction, and, sometimes, assessment methods. They described the learning process involved in beginning to use indirect assessment methods to answer the "why" of direct assessment results. Westmont's work over the past

several years has positioned it to deepen its culture of assessment and use assessment and results in increasingly sophisticated ways to improve learning and achievement. (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 4.3)

Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

Adequacy of Financial Resources

The institution has shown a recent history of living within its financial means having achieved a “decades long” record of generating operating surpluses. This is an important metric in achieving financial sustainability and stability. Given the recent tumultuous journey for small colleges since the Great Recession, this is a commendable achievement for Westmont College. (CFR 3.4)

The measure of financial adequacy used by the U.S. Department of Education is the Financial Responsibility Index. Data shows that in six of the past nine years Westmont has received a maximum score on this measure and in the other three years they were well within the bounds deemed as healthy by the Department. A better measure of financial health of a college or university is the Consolidated Financial Index (CFI), created with the sole purpose of evaluating the financial wellbeing of higher education institutions. On this scale, Westmont is also showing excellent financial health, having recorded a most recent three year average score of 5.1 on a -4 to 10 scale, where 3.0 is considered healthy. The strategy descriptor associated with a score in this range—i.e., 4.5 to 6.5—is “focus resources to compete in future state.” This implies being in a good financial position to move confidently into the future. (CFR 1.7, 3.4)

Given its relatively small size, the capacity of the Westmont donor base is impressive. Over the past eight years, private gifts and grants have been between \$10 million and \$20 million. The current strategic plan establishes a priority for increasing the endowment and scholarship support in order to remain affordable. There has also been a recent emphasis on the

deferred giving program, which will bear fruit in future decades and will provide resources for a new generation of Westmont leaders and students. (CFR 3.4)

There is recent momentum in the fundraising area, which is laying a strong foundation for Westmont's future. Much of the recent fundraising success has involved more meaningful engagement with the local Montecito and Santa Barbara communities. Some of these new endeavors include an art museum, various Westmont institutes, and public lectures and conferences. This has resulted in more local attention and good publicity for the college. The increases in gift income will help pursue the strategic priority of keeping Westmont affordable and competitive. (CFR 3.4)

Alignment of Financial Resources

It is important for an educational institution to appropriately align its resources to support student learning and success. It appears that budget and resource allocations have been in line with institutional priorities and provide a good basis for educational effectiveness and student success. The strategic plan is being used widely across the institution and has served Westmont well in this regard. In addition, the strategic plan has provided stability, common ground for discussion about the future, and a blueprint for bold goals and aspirations. Discussions with members of the Westmont organization indicate a good working relationship and open communications with the president and CFO regarding budget priorities and resource allocations. While not all requests for funds can be fulfilled in any given budget year, there seems to be a broad understanding of what drives Westmont revenues and how resources are allocated. Credit for this, as noted by many, is the ubiquitous strategic planning process and implementation. (CFR 3.4)

Westmont has a longstanding commitment to strong academic programs and related student support services. A significant measure of that commitment is the level of financial resources allocated to instructional and student related segments of the college. Recent financial data shows that over 43% of the budget was allocated for the areas of instruction, academic support, and research. If this is combined with student services—athletics, counseling and health, records office, etc.—and auxiliary enterprises includes off campus academic program travel expenses and on campus residential experience costs, the total resources allocated directly and indirectly to the overall student experience is over 80% of the budget. This suggests a well-resourced institution in pursuit of student success and educational effectiveness. (CFRs 2.13, 3.4, 3.5)

Evaluating the Changing Higher Education Landscape and Anticipating Potential Changes

In order to help determine what might lie ahead for Westmont with the changing higher education environment, the president has formed a Futures Group consisting of faculty, staff, and administrators. This group is being asked to read widely on current and projected issues for higher education. With their perspective developed from their research, the group, then, helps to inform the strategic planning process. The college is working to make strategic planning more of a data-driven process, and in that regard they have recently increased their investment in institutional research. Through the strategic planning process, faculty, staff, administrators, students, trustees, parents, and alumni are asked to engage in assessing Westmont's key strengths to build upon its areas in need of improvement and the critical issues that it will likely face in the upcoming years. (CFRs 4.3, 4.7)

The Futures Group works to enrich the strategic planning conversations by staying current on a wide range of matters with respect to imminent threats and potential opportunities

for higher education in general, and Westmont College, in particular. Some of the issues that this group has been exploring include: 1) Moody's assessment of the economic health of the higher education sector; 2) studies on tuition and affordability; 3) theories on disruptive innovation; 4) public perceptions and opinions regarding higher education; 5) studies of the characteristics and values of millennial students; and 6) changing demographics within the Church. (CFR 4.7)

Financial stability and sustainability is the key for any organization to be able to carry out its mission into the future. In that vein, the president has made achieving greater financial sustainability a central theme of Westmont strategic planning. This has led to the creation of an Affordability and Competitiveness Taskforce. As a result of the work of this group, the following priorities have been included in the current strategic map: 1) achieve targeted growth in the endowment, including the number of endowed chairs; 2) increase scholarship support to reduce the cost to students and to provide greater opportunities for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds; 3) secure external grants and awards; 4) make an effective case for the challenges facing the college to help faculty and staff understand their roles in innovation and the prudent use of resources; 5) clarify the return on investment for Westmont graduates; and 6) increase revenue by enrolling more students in programs beyond the Montecito campus and, therefore, not subject to the on-campus enrollment cap. This includes growth in off-campus and global programs: 7) expand programs that will bring in non-tuition revenue, including programs offered by Westmont's various institutes; 8) find more ways to inspire and reward mission-driven innovation; and 9) streamline systems and processes to lower the costs to serve. (CFRs 3.4, 4.7)

Several questions that the institution has been grappling with and will continue to consider moving forward include:

- Physical capacity is currently limited to approximately 1,200 students on the Montecito campus—Will this number of students be enough to be able to sustain Westmont financially?
- What can be done to bring in additional revenue beyond the primary two conventional means—i.e., tuition/room & board and fundraising?
- What can be done to prepare the college for the possibility that state and federal loans and grants may become at risk for Westmont in future years?
- Rising costs of higher education put a strain on student access to that education, and the ability for students and families to pay those costs gets more and more challenging—Will student demand be adversely affected with seemingly ever increasing tuition rates to the point of impacting the ability to adequately resource the operational needs of the institution? Can the student demographic base at Westmont sustain these increased prices? Given the cost of attendance at Westmont, how can the college be more accessible and affordable for a more diverse student population that is more than likely less affluent?

With a robust strategic planning process in place and given the engagement of the Futures Group, Westmont College seems well positioned to garner an informed perspective on the threats posed and opportunities available to it in the years ahead. As the president stated, “We are very sober about considering our future;” he considers the process of charting a course to perpetuate the mission of Westmont College within the changing ecology of the higher education industry to be a “twenty year dog fight.” (CFRs 3.4, 4.7)

The team recommends that Westmont College continue to aggressively explore all of the ramifications involved in being able to perpetuate its mission and chart a course for a sustainable

future, particularly given the following external influences on the college: 1) an on-campus enrollment cap imposed by Santa Barbara County; 2) increasing socio-economic diversity in California; 3) a growing lower income population in California; and 4) a relatively high cost base and price of attendance at Westmont. It is recommended that the institution continue to explore multiple strategies to address these matters and to not solely rely on the fundraising/endowment solution. (CFR 3.4)

Component 8: Optional essay on institutional specific themes

N/A — The institution did not use specific themes to guide its self-study. The Westmont institutional report states that the “three themes—*richness*, *refinement*, and *resilience*—emerged from the processes of self-study and report drafting” (p. ii); that is, they were presented, not as themes guiding the self-study, but as concluding themes to summarize the current state of the college based on the results of the assessment.

Component 9: Reflection and plans for improvement

Westmont College focused on the themes of richness of mission, refinement of planning, and resilience as capturing much of the reflection that emerged from this period of self-study. The team saw extensive evidence of these themes across the campus. The institutional report clearly identified next steps from the extensive self-study process, in order to ensure the future health of the college and student success. The stated goals are closely aligned with the Strategic Map and related Strategic Priorities and Tracks of Work for 2015-2016. These include responsiveness to salient national issues, including affordability and the value of a liberal arts degree. Westmont will continue to build its endowment to assist students with financial need. The career services that Westmont students receive are being strengthened as is an integrated marketing plan that helps students understand the distinctiveness and value of a Westmont

degree. Community engagement and service assists students in perceiving that value and also contributes to the vitality of the larger Santa Barbara community. The new downtown campus is an opportunity to enhance this engagement. Other goals include developing stronger action plans from ILO and GE assessment through meaningful campus-wide faculty conversations and a continued enhancement and integration of their global education programs.

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS

N/A—There are no other issues (e.g., substantive change) addressed elsewhere in the report.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations:

1. *Engagement:* The team commends the Westmont community for its engagement in the accreditation process and the amount of time and effort it has invested in the process. The team would also like to express its appreciation to the community for the openness with which they responded to questions and the provision of additional materials as requested. (CFR 1.8)
2. *Mission:* The mission of Westmont College is widely understood and accepted as grounding the work of the college. The five planks articulated—undergraduate, residential, Christian, liberal arts, and global—define how Westmont sees itself as distinctive. The five planks strongly shape strategic planning and the ILOs. (CFR 1.1)
3. *Culture of Assessment:* Westmont College is to be commended for its successful efforts to deepen the culture of assessment. The institution has developed a system of assessment and program review characterized by faculty ownership and engagement; collaboration

among faculty, student life, and administration; and resources and support from the administration. There is ample evidence of significant progress since the last review in 2007 and Special Visit in 2011. (CFRs 2.4, 4.3, 4.5)

4. *Co-curricular Assessment:* The team commends the institution for continually strengthening the articulation and collaborative approach between the faculty and the student life personnel in addressing ILOs and assessment. (CFR 2.11)
5. *Faculty:* Westmont College has a strong, well-resourced faculty. A high percentage of faculty have earned the terminal degree in their field, and a high percentage of classes are taught by full-time faculty. The college maintains a low student-to-faculty ratio. Significant institutional resources are dedicated to faculty development. A significant number of full-time faculty are able to live in institutionally-subsidized housing adjacent to the campus and so can be readily available to students for interaction and support outside the classroom. (CFR 3.1)
6. *Financial Stability:* Westmont College shows a strong, long-term record of achieving a balanced operating budget and adding significant assets, resulting in a consistently satisfactory Department of Education Financial Responsibility Index score and Consolidated Financial Index scores. In addition, fundraising efforts at Westmont College have been quite successful over the last decade. Based on the positive momentum established in prior capital campaigns and donor relationships that have been cultivated during those campaigns, the college is poised to take on the challenge of a large campaign that will have generational impact on the institution. (CFR 3.4)
7. *Sustainability:* The Westmont College leadership is to be commended for the establishment of the cross-constituency Futures Group to survey and discuss the

American Christian higher education landscape in order to prepare for potential future changes. This ongoing effort is evidence of a proactive stance by the college to stay dynamically engaged in order to guide a path toward a sustainable future for the institution. The opportunity to think creatively together is helping to inform the Westmont College leadership, board of trustees, and Strategic Planning Committee. (CFRs 3.7, 4.7)

8. *Strategic Planning*: Strategic planning is a living process at Westmont College. The Strategic Map, developed on a three-year cycle, identifies the particular strategic priorities that are clearly being implemented across the campus. The board gives oversight to strategic planning; the administration owns and manages the process and the implementation; and a wide variety of campus constituencies and groups contribute to its development and to its vibrancy in implementation. (CFR 4.6)

Recommendations:

1. *Global Awareness*: The team recommends that Westmont College clarify the “Global Awareness and Diversity” ILO to more clearly delineate and define the two terms with clear descriptions of how they are to be realized within the context of the institutional mission. The team encourages Westmont College to explore models of global awareness and engagement (e.g., charity versus social justice) to help the institution and its students articulate values and practices consistent with the college’s mission. The team suggests deep reflection and discussion about the extent to which global engagement requires experience abroad and/or can be realized on campus and in other U.S. settings, and about what constitutes global awareness and engagement. Although a number of elective experiences are offered for forming and enhancing student global awareness, the team recommends that the requirements and outcomes for the Global Awareness ILO be

systematically addressed in such a way as to be assured for all students graduating with a Westmont degree. (CFRs 1.4, 2.3)

2. *Diversity*: In order to achieve its stated commitment to the theological foundations for diversity, and in order to better prepare students for an increasingly diverse society, the team recommends that Westmont further articulate and demonstrate its commitment to “welcome diversities of gender, ethnicity, class and culture in its populations and programs.” The team recommends that the institution address diversity through further exploration, open dialogue and reflection, training, attention to diversity in hiring, and sustained attention to the development of a supportive learning environment. Specifically, the institution is encouraged to further enhance the competencies of the faculty and staff in working with students who represent diversity in areas such as race, culture, beliefs, class, and political perspectives. (CFR 1.4)
3. *Assessment*: The team recommends that the Westmont faculty continue to implement the GE assessment program, which has just begun but has not yet fully matured. In addition, the team recommends that the institution ensure the sustainability of assessment by committing resources to technology for collecting, storing, analyzing and managing assessment and program review data; disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, and risk factors in order to track and improve student success; and facilitating the connection between program review and strategic planning. (CFRs 2.4, 4.4, 2.7, 4.2, 4.6)
4. *Financial Stewardship*: Westmont College should continue to aggressively explore all of the ramifications involved in being able to perpetuate its mission and chart a course for a sustainable future, particularly given the following external influences on the college: 1) an on-campus enrollment cap imposed by Santa Barbara County; 2) increasing socio-

economic diversity in California; 3) a growing lower income population in California; and 4) a relatively high cost base and price of attendance at Westmont. Across the breadth of the organization, including the board of trustees, there is a common desire to have fundraising and a larger endowment fill in the gaps for student aid in order to address the affordability issue for Westmont College. While this is completely appropriate and likely to be a successful endeavor, sole reliance on this as the affordability strategy will put tremendous pressure on the fundraising team to deliver results beyond those seen previously at Westmont. It is recommended that the institution continue to explore multiple strategies to address this matter and to not solely rely on the fundraising/endowment solution. (CFR 3.4)

APPENDICES

1. Credit Hour Review Report

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Where is the policy located? On the college's website and portal as well as in publications such as <i>Academic Catalog</i> and <i>A Helpful Guide to Completing Your Westmont Degree</i> : http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/registrar/academic_policies/credit_hour_definition.html http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/registrar/documents/Catalog.pdf http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/registrar/documents/Web-AHelpfulGuidetoCompletingYourWestmontDegree-3.pdf
	Comments: Westmont is in full compliance and has a comprehensive policy on credit hour.
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The college follows a well-established procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments through program review, new course approval process, and periodic audits.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The college follows a well-established protocol for reviewing the policy.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? N/A – Westmont does not offer online programs.
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)?
	What degree level(s)?
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Comments:	
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other	How many syllabi were reviewed? 18 – randomly selected from different programs, courses, years and semesters

kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	What kinds of courses? Traditional (lecture), seminar, internship – elective and/or service, service-learning, independent research
	What degree level(s)? Bachelor’s – Westmont is an undergraduate institution.
	What discipline(s)? Anthropology, applied studies, biology, history, arts, philosophy, religious studies, sociology, natural science, physical education, etc.
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Break time is also allocated into the class schedule. Non-traditional non-seat time experiences also adhere to the credit hour policy.
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 4
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? BA, BS, BME (as well as GE)
	What degree level(s)? Bachelor’s – Westmont is an undergraduate institution.
	What discipline(s)? Anthropology, applied studies, biology, history, arts, philosophy, religious studies, sociology, natural science, physical education, etc.
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

Review Completed by: Tomoko Takahashi
Date: March 1, 2016

2. Marketing and Recruitment Review Report

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	<p>Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: Westmont is in full compliance with the federal regulations on recruiting students.</p>
Degree completion and cost	<p>Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: Information about the degree completion is provided on the institution's website. The institution also makes available student success data with the percent of students that complete within the prescribed time. The costs of all programs and financial aid are illustrated on the website and in publications such as the <i>Academic Catalog</i> and <i>Student Account Information</i>: http://www.westmont.edu/offices/financial_aid/student-charges.html http://www.westmont.edu/offices/registrar/documents/Catalog.pdf http://www.westmont.edu/offices/business/documents/2015StudentAccountsBrochure.pdf</p>
Careers and employment	<p>Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO (not by industry – Westmont is a liberal arts college.)</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: Employment data is also made available to prospective students.</p>

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed by: Tomoko Takahashi

Date: March 1, 2016

3. Student Complaint Review Report

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? On the college's website.
	Comments: "Student Concerns and Complaints" policy available on Student Life website: http://www.westmont.edu/student_life/student_handbook/StudentComplaintPolicy.html "Sexual Assault, Stalking, Dating and Domestic Violence Policies and Procedures" (Title IX) policy available on page 69 of the online Student Handbook, also available on the Student Life website: http://www.westmont.edu/student_life/student_handbook/documents/2015-2016StudentHandbook.pdf Various types of possible issues listed on first site with appropriate office identified.
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, please describe briefly: Process clearly identified on website; steps for addressing concerns and complaints clearly articulated.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where? Records of student complaints and resolutions are kept in locked cabinet in office of Dean of Students. Records of Title IX complaints and resolutions are kept in locked cabinet in office of VP for Administration, Research, Planning, and Implementation.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: Student complaints are tracked via Advocate by Simplicity software by the Dean of Students. Title IX complaints are tracked via a spreadsheet by the VP for Administration, Research, Planning, and Implementation.
	Comments: Reports are generated at a macro level in order that trends can be monitored and responded to.

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed by: Judith Maxwell Greig

Date: March 1, 2016

4. Transfer Policy Review Report

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Is the policy publically available? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? http://www.westmont.edu/offices/registrar/academic_policies/transfer-credit-policies.html
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

- (1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
- (2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed by: March 1, 2016
Date: Ginger Ketting-Weller