

# THE SEARCH FOR A VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND DEAN OF THE COLLEGE

**W**estminster College seeks a Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College (VPAA) who will provide visionary academic and institutional leadership for one of Pennsylvania's finest liberal arts colleges. The search commences as Dr. Kathy Brittain Richardson begins her service as the College's 15th president. The new VPAA will arrive at an exciting moment in the life of the College, as a new senior leadership team engages with faculty and staff to shape initiatives designed to enrich the learning experiences for all Westminster students.

The Westminster faculty and administration are united in seeking a person who will provide leadership and momentum for the faculty and the curriculum, a contemporary framework for defining programs and pedagogies in the liberal arts and pre-professional programs, and an inclusive yet decisive manner that will bring energy and direction to Westminster's educational future.

The VPAA exercises oversight of the curriculum via a robust shared governance structure, is responsible for all faculty personnel matters, supervises academic departments and information learning resources, provides leadership on issues of program development and funding for program support, and manages all elements of the academic administration. As chief academic officer and member of the president's leadership team, the VPAA serves as an advocate for the faculty and the academic program, maintains close communication with the president and fellow senior administrators, and serves in a liaison role to selected committees of the Board of Trustees.

## AT A GLANCE

**Location:** Westminster is located in New Wilmington, Pa., 60 miles north of Pittsburgh, 80 miles south of Erie, and 85 miles southeast of Cleveland.

**Campus:** Westminster's campus extends over 300 acres. The campus includes 24 buildings, athletic fields, tennis courts, 100-acre outdoor laboratory and Brittain Lake.

**Students:** Westminster's enrollment is approximately 1,300 undergraduate and graduate students.

**Faculty:** 91 percent of the faculty hold terminal degrees. Faculty members are selected on the basis of education, scholarship, experience, and professional interests congruent with the mission of Westminster College.

**Accreditation:** Westminster is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

**Library:** Holding more than 283,000 volumes, the library provides facilities for group and individual studies. New leadership in the library seeks to develop information services that support Westminster's evolving research and curricular needs and to integrate emerging technologies and methods of scholarly communication into the traditional library environment.

**Faith and Spirituality:** As a college we strive to provide a supportive atmosphere that welcomes and respects individuals who represent a wide range of beliefs. The Westminster community reflects a faith-based, service-over-self philosophy. It fosters a climate of respect for people of all faiths and backgrounds, creates camaraderie, and giving of self.

**Curriculum and Calendar:** A general education program is required of all students. Specialization is offered in 41 majors. Westminster operates on a semester calendar, with Fall and Spring semesters of 16 weeks. A Summer Session is also held.

**Degrees:** Westminster grants three undergraduate degrees — Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Music— and one graduate degree: Master of Education. A Bachelor of Science in Nursing will be offered in the fall of 2017.

**Student Activities:** Westminster students participate in band, choir, orchestra, NCAA Division III athletics, broadcasting, theatre, national fraternities and sororities, student government, publications, special interest groups and honoraries, and other activities. Many of these groups and organizations offer opportunities for service and experiential learning.

# ABOUT WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

**WESTMINSTER COLLEGE** is an independent, coeducational liberal arts college, related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). For over 160 years, Westminster has been characterized by the excellence of its educational programs.

Development of the individual —intellectually, spiritually, and socially—is the primary purpose of Westminster. The College views education as a maturing experience and believes the liberal arts heritage offers exceptional opportunities for development of the individual in today’s rapidly changing world. The advancement of Westminster’s graduates in a wide variety of careers and professions is evidence of the inherent value and relevance of the liberal arts.

Westminster is a community of learning, small enough to encourage the exchange of different ideas and philosophies yet large enough to provide diversity of knowledge, experiences and values. Its residential atmosphere enhances personal interaction.

Westminster is proud of its heritage. One of the earliest coeducational colleges in the nation, Westminster has been dedicated to “the mental and moral training of youth of both sexes” since it opened its doors in 1852. The first catalog (1853) stated that “no person will be refused admission on account of color, caste, or sex,” making Westminster a pioneer in supporting nondiscrimination. Dedicated to these ideals today, the College admits students of all races, creeds, and national and ethnic origins, and accords all students equal rights and privileges. Westminster College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, age, handicap or disability, marital status, veteran status, genetics or any other protected class as those terms are defined under applicable state or federal law in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to admissions and employment.

## WESTMINSTER COLLEGE MISSION & GOALS

**THE MISSION** of Westminster College is to help men and women develop competencies, commitments, and characteristics which have distinguished human beings at their best. The liberal arts tradition is the foundation of the curriculum continually designed to serve this mission in a rapidly changing world. The College sees the well-educated person as one whose skills are complemented by ever-developing values and ideals identified in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Westminster’s quest for excellence is a recognition that stewardship of life mandates the maximum possible development of each person’s capabilities. The College thus realizes its mission in men and women who as students:

- Develop intellectual curiosity and the competencies to reason logically, evaluate critically, communicate effectively, imagine creatively, and appreciate aesthetic and creative expressions of humanity;
- Acquire a knowledge and appreciation of self, society, human cultures, the natural world, and human relationships to God;
- Develop and demonstrate moral and ethical commitments to neighbor, society, and the natural world consistent with an understanding of self;
- Commit themselves to lifelong learning and the acquisition of skills for careers and responsible service as world citizens.

The curricular and co-curricular learning programs are designed as a means by which the College endeavors to fulfill its mission.

# POINTS OF DISTINCTION

## Academic Program

From a curricular perspective, Westminster's vision of a liberally educated person results from engagement with a four-year integrated course of study known as the Westminster Plan. It involves general education (Intellectual Perspectives), prescribed graduation requirements, a major and electives.

Liberal Studies is at the center of the Westminster Plan curriculum and spans all four years of the undergraduate experience. The entry point for Liberal Studies is Inquiry 111, a semester-long, first-year core requirement for all students. Communication skills are developed in conjunction with the Inquiry course. Students enroll in semester-long courses in writing and oral communication.

The middle portion of the Westminster Plan is devoted to interdisciplinary courses and courses satisfying prescribed Intellectual Perspective requirements.

Finally, the process of liberally educating students is completed with a senior capstone course which involves in-depth course work in a major and with electives.

Throughout the entire curriculum, the use of information technologies is emphasized in order to enhance teaching and learning, and to provide students with knowledge acquisition skills necessary for a lifetime of learning.

## Faculty

Trained in universities around the globe, Westminster College faculty choose to teach and conduct research at Westminster because of its focus on student and faculty development and a pervasive collegial atmosphere. More than 90 percent of Westminster faculty hold terminal degrees. Westminster faculty continually demonstrate a broad range, quality and quantity of research and scholarship endeavors. Annually, on the average, faculty publish 25 books, articles, and book chapters and share 95 presentations, exhibits, and performances in national and international venues.

Westminster faculty and students collaborate on research projects and make joint presentations at international conferences.

They are partners in teaching and learning. Westminster's Undergraduate Research & Arts Celebration in April serves as a showcase for more than 200 student research presentations. Faculty Forum, established in 1990, provides an opportunity for faculty members to meet weekly to share their scholarship in the best tradition of the liberal arts. Faculty members from all disciplines volunteer to present lectures on their current research, artistic productions, and/or scholarship of teaching and learning. Each forum presents new ideas with innovative lecture techniques.

## Students

Westminster is small by choice, and we are proud of the young women and men who share their diverse talents.

- 3,000 applications are received for 400 spots in first-year class.
- Incoming first-year students have a mean 3.5 high school grade point average and nearly 1050 SAT, and most rank in the top 20% of high school class.
- 12:1 student-to-faculty ratio — Students receive the personal attention they deserve from dedicated faculty.
- 37% of Westminster students receive Pell grants, and approximately 26% of them are first generation college students.
- 98% of Westminster graduates are employed or enter graduate school within a year of graduation.
- Westminster graduates are accepted into medical school at double the national average (86% vs. 43%).
- 90% of Westminster graduates who apply to law school are accepted.
- Most students complete at least one internship and career seminar during their four years on campus, many with the assistance of the Career Center.

## Points of Distinction

- Westminster College placed as the 119<sup>th</sup> "Best National Liberal Arts College" in the nation — *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best Colleges"
- *Washington Monthly* ranked Westminster among the top 50 best liberal arts colleges in the U.S.
- *USA Today* reports that Westminster College was ranked #7 in the nation offering the "Best Value for the Money," according to College Factual.
- Recipient of a \$1,027,000 grant from the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program of the National Science Foundation for increasing quality science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (IQ STEM) secondary educators.
- Received a \$105,000 grant for the National Endowment for the Humanities to lead a summer seminar for college and university professors.
- *The New York Times'* Upshot ranking positioned Westminster College at #12 in the nation for "doing the most for low-income students."
- One of the "50 Great Affordable Colleges in the Northeast" — Great Value Colleges.
- Ranked one of the top 20 small colleges in the nation to offer the "best deal" for STEM degrees, according to Great College Deals.

# DESIRED ATTRIBUTES FOR THE NEW VPAA

**THE NEW VPAA** should have an earned terminal degree, classroom teaching experience, sustained scholarship, administrative experience and identifiable achievement as an academic leader. In addition, certain related attributes will be critical. The VPAA should bring to the position:

- Visionary leadership combined with a commitment to the liberal arts as a foundation for the total academic program;
- Experience that reflects a high value of teaching, learning, scholarship, academic freedom, and the centrality of the student/faculty relationship;
- Financial acumen necessary to engage in budget analysis and development, priority setting, and administration of resources;
- Experience as a strategic thinker and a proactive planner, particularly with the creative development of undergraduate programming in a liberal arts environment;
- Strong and transparent leadership skills with an ability to listen, communicate, and build consensus and energy around new initiatives;
- Demonstrated intercultural competence, global perspective, and a commitment to diversity in its many forms;
- Familiarity with accreditation and assessment models that enhance student success;
- An ability and willingness to play a visible role in the life of the Westminster campus community;
- Capacity to work as a member of a leadership team that will be innovative, hardworking, and willing to take prudent risk;
- A working knowledge of issues currently prominent in independent higher education, including but not limited to curricular development, the practical application of the liberal arts, relationship of curriculum and co-curriculum, appropriate integration of technology into program and pedagogy, enrollment management, and effective governance.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The VPAA/Dean Search Committee is evaluating materials on a rolling basis through November 2016. Candidates should submit materials by November 15, 2016 for the most favorable consideration, but applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The VPAA will begin work no later than July 1, 2017.

Application materials should include a letter of candidacy responding to the opportunities and the desired attributes for a new VPAA/Dean, a complete CV or resume, and the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of three references, none of whom will be contacted without the formal permission of the candidate.

All material should be submitted electronically to [VPAAsearch@westminster.edu](mailto:VPAAsearch@westminster.edu) and addressed to **Kenneth J. Romig, Chair of the VPAA Search Committee**.

All nominations, inquiries and applications will be confidential until finalists are identified for on-campus interviews.

*Westminster College is an Equal Opportunity Employer*