



WESTMONT

Faculty Position Request Form

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

Department: Communication Studies

Submitted by: Elizabeth Gardner

Date: April 20, 2021

Nature of request:

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

This is a request to fill a vacancy.

Who is the faculty member leaving or retiring? Greg Spencer

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

Additional documents needed:

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

Please submit materials to the Provost's Office.

Faculty Position Supporting Documentation

Enrollment in course during the past 3 years

| Dept/Cr Num. | | Course Cap | S18 | F18 | S19 | F19 | S20 | F20 | Ave |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| COM006 | Messages, Meaning, and Culture | 35 | 34 | 34 | 25 | 42 | 34 | 36 | 34.1 |
| COM101 | Rhetoric | 45 | | 39 | | 20 | | 40 | 33 |
| COM140 | Studies in COM Ethics | 25 | | 15 | | 24 | | 25 | 21.3 |
| COM102 | Rhetoric II | 25 | 20 | | 11 | | 17 | | 16 |
| COM196 | Senior Capstone Seminar | 12 | 6 | | 7 | | 10 | | 7.6 |

Rationale for this Faculty Position:

With Greg Spencer's retirement, the Department of Communication Studies needs to hire another tenured or tenure-track faculty member in order to deliver our required major courses, provide the breadth and depth required for the major, advise our existing majors, and continue to attract interest in the major among current as well as prospective students.

Enrollment History & Projections. The courses that Greg Spencer teaches are regularly well enrolled, attracting interest among majors as well as non-majors. Two of the courses that he teaches each year are required within the major. Two of the other courses he teaches each year help to fulfill core major requirements. For the past three years, COM196 was a pure elective. As of this year and as a result of the recommendations of the Program Review Committee, all of our majors are now required to take a senior capstone course. Moving forward, this shift means that we will need to teach this course every year, and we expect that its relatively-lower enrollments will increase significantly (e.g., this semester it oversubscribed with 16 students). If this faculty position is not filled, we will need to cut electives that are currently being offered in order to ensure that our majors can complete the required curriculum. Some of these electives and courses that are offered on a regular or semi-regular rotation also serve minors that have recently been added to our curriculum, including those in Writing, Environmental Studies, and Film Studies.

Disciplinary Content and Specialization. A new hire would allow our department to continue to offer both the breadth and depth of courses consistent with our vision for a liberal arts orientation to our discipline, including both humanistic and social scientific approaches. Due to our numbers as well as our commitment to provide breadth, it is challenging for any one of our faculty members to carve out a disciplinary specialty. Rather, we all share coverage of lower division introductory courses and some more specialized upper division courses. While we may be specialists in our research, we must, to a large extent, be generalists in our teaching. So, it is most likely that we will be shuffling courses among ourselves and re-imagining existing courses rather than creating a lot of new courses in this transition. We do hope to find a candidate, though, who will be well versed in Greg Spencer's specialties, rhetoric and media ethics.

Serving Our Students. According to the registrar's website, COM currently has 78 declared majors, which means that our department has the fourth highest number of majors in the college (only behind Economics & Business, Kinesiology, and Biology). This number indicates the health of the major and student interest, but also translates into a higher than average advising load within the department. All four faculty regularly have between 25-35 advisees. Hiring to fill this vacancy will allow our department to continue to advise our students well.

Position Job Description:

The Department of Communication Studies seeks a creative scholar who can teach introductory courses in the discipline as well as some combination of upper level courses in media, cultural rhetorics/communication, and their area of research. We welcome a variety of areas of research focus, including topics such as sustainability, race, and film. Potential courses may include introduction to communication theory, media and mass communication, and/or international approaches to the study of communication and rhetoric. We are looking for a colleague who is interested in developing mentoring relationships with students and desires conversation about teaching and scholarship.

Applicants must have a Ph.D. in Communication at the time of appointment.

Our new faculty member will join three other full-time colleagues who embrace a range of humanistic and social scientific perspectives. Our department mission is to help students improve in both “wisdom and eloquence,” a centuries-old but still contemporary ideal. Students develop facility in communication theory and skills, gain an understanding of rhetoric as part of the human experience, and bring Christian values to bear on communication as a moral act.

Class sizes range from 12 (in writing intensive courses and seminars) to 25 (for most lecture courses). A full-time teaching load is 24 units (three four-unit courses per semester). All faculty have advising and committee responsibilities, and actively engage in scholarship.

Initial letters of inquiry should include a statement as to why you are interested in teaching at a Christian liberal arts college such as Westmont. With your letter of inquiry, please include your C.V. and names of three references. Candidates advanced to the next stage will also submit a [Full-Time Faculty Application](#) with accompanying personal statements. Send all materials and inquiries to [*Fill in once search details are finalized.*].