

Request for Market Research Proposal

October 21, 2013



WESTMINSTER
COLLEGE

Overview and Purpose

Westminster College invites you to submit a proposal for contract services to conduct market research to help us expand enrollment and revenue options. The College wishes to assess areas that hold new opportunities for growth and revenue that will lead to a financially sustainable future for the institution.

Tuition-dependent liberal arts colleges have been suffering in enrollment numbers and revenue in recent years. Can Westminster College be financially sustainable with its current market offerings? If so, how – what programs, elements or aspects hold the greatest potential return on investment?

Are there segments of the population we have not traditionally targeted, but should? Where should we re-tool our current offerings, and/or what programs should we add to support financial sustainability? What are the trends? What areas of projected growth should the College explore?

Areas to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

Identify the curricular and co-curricular programs currently offered at Westminster that provide the best growth opportunities for the College, in terms of attracting prospective students. What does the College currently offer that we have not maximized our potential with? Regarding co-curricular programs, are we missing any key elements that hold significant market demand?

Determine the market perception for our current offering of a liberal arts education. Does the market value what we offer? To what degree? Is a Westminster education perceived as worth the money? Are there geographic areas or certain demographic populations that hold high potential – potentially underserved areas or populations that represent high demand the College should consider?

Identify curricular programs, disciplines and/or certification programs that, if offered in the future, would provide strong job opportunities for our graduates and, therefore, attract prospective students and facilitate growth for the College.

About Westminster College

Founded in 1851, Westminster College is a private, selective, coeducational, residential, undergraduate college with a curriculum based on the liberal arts with an emphasis on developmental experience and leadership. The College is dedicated to teaching excellence and an education centered on key values (integrity, fairness, respect, and responsibility) that prepare our graduates to become leaders of character.

Westminster currently operates two campuses, one in Fulton, Missouri and one in Mesa, Arizona.

The College's historic, traditional Missouri campus was founded in 1851. Winston Churchill delivered his famous "Iron Curtain" speech on campus in 1946, and in more recent years, George Bush, Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev, Margaret Thatcher, and Lech Walesa have participated in the College's international lecture series. Prominent on campus are the National Churchill Museum and the monumental sculpture "Breakthrough," created from sections of the Berlin Wall.

The student enrollment in Fulton is just over 1,100 with a student/faculty ratio of 14:1. More than 60 percent of our students are from Missouri. Westminster's student body includes representation from approximately 35 states and 70 countries, making Westminster one of the most diverse small liberal arts colleges in the nation.

The College is located in Fulton, Missouri, a community of 13,000 residents that is approximately 25 miles from both Columbia and Jefferson City, the state capitol.

Westminster's Mesa, Arizona campus welcomed its first students in the fall of 2013. In 2011, the City of Mesa, seeking to expand its educational options to attract students and stimulate the downtown economy, sent invitations to more than 1,000 colleges and universities asking them to apply to develop a Mesa campus. Ultimately, the city selected four colleges as partners: Westminster College, Wilkes University, Benedictine University, and Albright College.

Westminster at Mesa students receive the same educational experience that is the hallmark of the Fulton campus but in a different environment. Engaged learning, civic engagement, service, global education, and a holistic and dynamic approach to student development are all a part of the Westminster success story.

Visit <http://www.westminster-mo.edu/explore/president/Pages/MissionVisionStatements.aspx> for more on Westminster College, including our mission and strategic plan.

Deliverables

Proposals should include the following:

- A complete description of the process and research methods the firm proposes to accomplish the goals requested, including timeline.
- Description of the firm's expertise (including information on personnel who would work directly to accomplish the project's goals), scope of services, background in the education market, and how it can achieve our research goals effectively and efficiently.
- Names and contact information for three references.
- Outline of fees and what those fees would cover.

Evaluation of Proposals

All proposals will be evaluated Westminster College Departments of Institutional Advancement and Enrollment Services. Our evaluation will be based on these considerations:

- The greatest value with respect to the each firm's response, proposed scope of services required to complete the research requested, and responsiveness to the requirements of the RFP,
- The quality of the services offered,
- The general reputation of the firm,
- The quality of the references provided,
- The qualifications of the firm's personnel who will oversee the assignment,
- The firm's understanding of the research task and scope,
- Flexibility and ability to meet the College's needs and timetable.

Deadline

The deadline for the proposal is Monday, November 4, 2013, and Westminster plans to select a partner no later than Monday, November 18. The preferred deadline for the completion of the market research project and delivery of the findings report is Thursday, January 16, 2014, but this timeline is open for discussion.

Please submit proposals as PDF files to Jennifer Bondurant, Executive Director Marketing and Strategic Communications, Jennifer.bondurant@westminster-mo.edu or 573-592-5313.