I understand that you are looking for a flight program that will help you prepare for a career as a professional pilot. You are, or soon will be, receiving emails, letters, and glossy brochures with beautiful images of airplane and simulators from many prospective flight training providers. Everyone will tell you their program is special, and it’s quite a challenge sorting out all of the information and deciding what program is best for you.

I’d like to tell you four things about the Westminster College aviation program that are important to consider. First, when you complete this program you will have all of the certificates and ratings you need and you will have excellent flying skills. But this doesn’t make us unique because most of the good aviation programs will get you this far.

Second, we are focused on helping you develop the pilot-in-command skills that are important for a professional pilot and are the key factors important to employers. They want to see that you have the decision making, resource management and teamwork skills that are needed in a professional pilot; however, since the FAA does not emphasize these skills in certification requirements most schools don’t emphasize these areas. If you review our flight program you will see that these skills are at the center of the program. Other institutions may say they cover these skills, but a close examination will show they simply focus on the FAA minimums to get the pilot certificate.

Third, the Westminster College liberal education program fully supports the development of these skills that the employers consider to be so important. The Westminster Core Values which include collaboration and teamwork, personal and social responsibility and high ethical standards are all areas that employers constantly stress as being the characteristics they are looking for in professional pilots. These core values are complemented with the educational goals of critical thinking, leadership and communication skills that are also critical for your success.

Fourth, at Westminster College another core value is impassioned teaching and active learning, and the aviation program fully embraces this approach. The focus of the program is on helping you achieve the skills you will need to succeed as a professional pilot.

I hope you will have the chance to visit Westminster College. It is the best way to get a feel for the Westminster College experience, and allow you to see how we stand apart from the rest.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Fairbairn, Ph.D.
Professor of Aviation
Chair, Aviation Department