

# Titan Mascot Request & Costume Rental Policy & Guide

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## Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for requesting the Titan Mascot for events and renting the mascot costume. It ensures the mascot is used appropriately and is available for events that align with the college's mission and values.

## Requesting the Titan Mascot

### Who Can Request Titan:

- Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs)
- Faculty
- Staff
- College departments

### How to Request

All requests must be submitted through the official Titan Mascot Request Form, available on the College's [Titan's Engage page](#).

### Submission Timeframe

Requests must be submitted at least ten (10) business days prior to the event date. The Office of Student Life recommends that if your annual calendar is put together, that you get requests in advance.

### Approval Process

- Requests will be reviewed by the Office of Student Life.
- Approval is based on staff or student availability, event alignment with college values, and event specific needs.
- Confirmation will be sent via Engage within 2-3 business days of submission.
- Ensure all required information is filled out.

## Costume Rental by College Departments

### Who Can Request the Titan Costume:

- Faculty
- Staff

- College departments

### Rental Process

1. Submit a reservation form via [Titan's Engage page](#) at least ten (10) business days prior to the event date.
2. Include event details, responsible staff member, and intended use.
3. Ensure all required information is filled out.

### Faculty, Staff, and College Department Responsibilities

- Proper Use: Ensuring the costume is used in a respectful and appropriate manner.
- Care & Maintenance: Returning the costume clean and undamaged.
- Liability: Covering any repair or replacement costs due to damage or loss.
- Transportation: Coordinating pick-up and return of the costume from the designated storage location.

### Rental Duration

Costumes may be rented for a maximum of 48 hours, unless otherwise approved.

### Penalties for Misuse

Misuse of the Titan Mascot costume or failure to follow this policy will result, generally, in the following penalties:

- Written warning and mandatory meetings with the Office of Student Life.
- Suspension of mascot privileges for the individual or department for one semester.
- Permanent revocation of mascot privileges and potential disciplinary action through the appropriate college conduct process.

The Office of Student Life reserves the authority to determine and implement appropriate sanctions in response to violations of College policies, community standards, or the Student Handbook. These sanctions may vary in severity depending on the nature and circumstances of the incident.

### Examples of Misuse Include (but are not limited to):

- Wearing the costume in a disrespectful, offensive, or inappropriate manner
- Using the costume while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Allowing unauthorized individuals to wear or handle the costume
- Using the costume for personal, political, or commercial gain
- Performing dangerous stunts or actions that could damage the costume or harm others
- Altering or modifying the costume in any way
- Failing to return the costume on time or in proper condition
- Using the costume in environments that could cause excessive wear, staining, or damage (e.g., muddy fields, food fights, paint events)

- Posting inappropriate or unapproved content involving the costume on social media

## Contact Information

For questions, contact the Office of Student Life at [studentlife@westminster.edu](mailto:studentlife@westminster.edu) or visit [Titan's Engage page](#).

# Titan Mascot Guide

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Ensuring the safety of TITAN and the mascot performer is of the utmost importance. Whether attending a meet-and-greet or performing for a crowd at a sporting event, there are certain practices and precautions that should be observed.

It is the responsibility of the mascot performer, mascot handler and all event staff to assist in ensuring a safe, fun and enjoyable experience for all involved.

For the purposes of this guide, TITAN, the mascot and mascot performer may be used interchangeably.

## TITAN Personality

TITAN represents a tough, energetic and welcoming spirit. While athletic in appearance, TITAN is a “guardian” of the Westminster community, showing care and concern for all its members. In public, TITAN will exude energy, often waving and inviting others to interact with him.

## TITAN Appearances

The following guidelines have been established to help identify the types of events TITAN will be required to attend. This has been created in order to balance the needs of Westminster institutional events and requested event appearances, as well as the academic obligations and personal schedules of mascot performers.

1. TITAN will make regular appearances at athletic events, as requested, and weather permits.
2. TITAN will make regular appearances at institutional orientations, special recruitment days, academic celebrations, Family Day, Homecoming and events requested by the President.
3. TITAN will make appearances at requested events that are celebratory in nature, promote positive school spirit, encourage good sportsmanship and community relationships, and are generally meant to be social and interactive for everyone within the Westminster community.
4. Effort will be made to limit scheduled appearances of TITAN to a maximum of two per week as to not negatively impact the academic success of mascot performers. Exceptions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the availability of performers, with the understanding

that events, such as Homecoming or Orientation, present unusual circumstances due to the high volume of activities during those events.

## **TITAN Guidelines**

1. TITAN will embody and represent the mission of Westminster College at all events and in all interactions. Westminster College is a recognized 501c3 organization; as a result, and keeping with Westminster policy, TITAN will not endorse, through its presence, candidates for public office, invited guests and speakers, nor the content of their presentations.
2. TITAN will always strive to be friendly, courteous and animated while remaining calm, polite and positive in interactions.
3. TITAN, while in public view, will remain in character at all times, never removing any piece of the costume. The mascot may only break character once completely away from public view.
4. The mascot performer is prohibited from smoking, eating or drinking while in costume or partially dressed, as well as avoid speaking or making noises while in costume. Clear liquids are permitted while partially dressed. The mascot performer must be free of the influence of alcohol and/or drugs and must notify the Director of Student Life if any prescribed or over the counter medications could potentially impact the ability to perform required functions.
5. TITAN, when taking pictures, will avoid pictures with guests smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, and wearing politically branded clothing or clothing with foul or defamatory language, tobacco or alcohol imagery, or any clothing deemed inappropriate by event staff for any reason.
6. TITAN will avoid being seen entering/exiting restrooms, when possible based on the event venue.
7. TITAN is prohibited from holding babies, kids and animals for the safety of all involved.
8. TITAN is prohibited from accepted any form of tips during an event by anyone attending the event or profiting individually through the establishment of a linked, separate business.

## **TITAN Costume**

The mascot costume includes a head, vest, pants, boots, gloves, cuffs/bracelets, shirt, shield and sword. In addition, a cooling pack is available with chargeable fan and cooling packs. Additional props or accessories may be approved by the Director of Student Life or designee. Officially licensed merchandise by Westminster College that is sold within the Campus Store may be utilized and/or worn by TITAN.

The mascot performer does not come dressed as TITAN. Due to the size of the costume, the mascot performer will need a private room, with reasonable room to move around, to change into costume. Bathrooms, vans/vehicles or facilities where the mascot performer can be seen getting in or out of costume are not acceptable.

## TITAN Communication

Communication is very important for a mascot. Certain kinds of communication work better than others, however, **mascots should NEVER speak!** It ruins the illusion for others, often the human voice can sound distorted and muffled through a mascot head and multiple performers have different voices.

Mascot handlers can use some popular excuses to explain why the mascot is not speaking, such as those listed below. Based on the event, predetermine an excuse you feel most appropriate to use.

- TITAN has a sore throat today from all of the singing he did yesterday
- TITAN was cheering so hard for the team that he lost his voice. Can you show him your favorite cheer?
- TITAN is a bit shy.
- TITAN ate way too much peanut butter yesterday and he's still clearing it out of his throat.

## TITAN Social Media

TITAN will be featured on official Westminster social media platforms and not have individual, separate accounts. Mascot performers and handlers are prohibited from:

1. Taking personal photos of themselves or anyone else wearing the costume or parts of the costume unless approved by the Director of Student Life or designee.
2. Posting any information online and/or through social media that indicates they are a mascot performer.
3. Removing any portion of the costume from the storage property, except for a specifically scheduled event, or unless authorized.

## Handlers

In a meet-and-greet situation, mascot handlers must **always be present as the eyes, ears and voice of the mascot performer.** This ensures the safety of the mascot and others. Mascot handlers should be alert and always paying attention to the people approaching. A handler should wear an official College/event t-shirt or uniform to clearly establish their role with the mascot. The handler is responsible for ensuring the mascot sees everyone interested in interacting with the mascot, as well as crowd control.

## Handlers: Mascot Communication

Student Life staff will establish hand signals with the mascot prior to events to ensure mascot needs are met, such as needing to leave quickly due to not feeling well. If Student Life cannot

provide a handler, the event coordinator must ensure their provided handler communicates with the performer ahead of the mascot's appearance for the safety of everyone.

## Schedule/Breaks

Breaks and appearance times must be established before every performance according to the needs of the event and environmental conditions. This is an important part of mascot safety, given the suits are inherently hot.

The event coordinator should consult with the Director of Student Life or designee to determine performance and break times for the duration of the event.

In most meet-and-greet situations, as a general guideline, **a mascot may be in the costume for up to 30 minutes before having a break of equal time.** In colder or comfortable, temperature-controlled indoor environments, this can be increased; in hotter temperatures and outside environments this can be decreased.

## TITAN Gestures

Mascots have been trained to utilize the following gestures to help communicate with audiences. Event coordinators should speak with the Director of Student Life or designee if additional gestures are requested to confirm the ability of performers.

1. *Waving* – The mascot uses their entire arm for a big wave in situations that really need to stand out like a sports game or walking in a parade. Mascot simply opens and closes their hand when waving to a smaller child in a meet and greet situation.
2. *Laughing* – Mascot bring their hands up to their mouth and nods the mascot head forward in a rapid motion to signal laughing.
3. *Blowing a kiss* – Mascot puts their hand to their mouth and then moves their hand flat out in front of their head with the palm up.
4. *I love you!* – The mascot points to themselves then use both hands to draw a heart in the air and point to the recipient.
5. *I'm scared!* –The mascot runs away, covers their eyes, and shakes their knees. The mascot can lift one hand up to peek out, for an added comical effect.
6. *Aww, shucks!* – Mascot gives a little sweeping kick forward while hooking their arm in front of them.

## TITAN Meet-and-Greets

*Adults and Teens* – The mascot will shake hands, give a big hug (when initiated by the guest first), laugh, take a picture and even blow a kiss. The handler should make eye contact and say something like “Who do we have here?” to initiate a conversation with those that approach.

This type of introduction and interaction with teens and adults can diffuse many potential uncomfortable or even violent encounters.

*Children* – The mascot will attempt to keep their movement slow and gentle with children. The mascot understands many kids are afraid and intimidated by mascots. Performers have been trained to hold their hand out and open and close their hand slowly to wave.

*Hugging* – While hugging is permitted, it must always be initiated by the guest first. The mascot is encouraged to hug gently and keep hands as close to the top of the shoulders as possible; children may feel shy or intimidated by a gigantic furry presence and adults based on health and life experiences may perceive physical contact as initiating an aggressive or confrontational situation.

Handlers will assist with children, giving voice to the situation, such as indicating the mascot is also nervous (demonstrated by an I'm Scared gesture) or directing the mascot to the next audience member until the child and family are ready to attempt a meet-and-greet again.

## **TITAN at Sporting Events**

*Waving* – The mascot will regularly wave to the crowd and can even help start a giant crowd wave.

*Scoring* – When Westminster teams score, the mascot can perform a coordinated action based on the team. Event staff should coordinate with the Director of Student Life or designee on the mascot performers' abilities and time to practice and perfect any special requests. Reactions to the other team scoring can be discussed as well, as long as the reaction remains respectful of the opposing team.

## **TITAN in Parades**

*On the Float* – The mascot should always try to remain seated on a float but if they have to stand, the mascot should remain in one spot. Moving around the float could cause the mascot to lose their boundaries and fall. While the audience is constantly changing as the float moves, simple, safe and repetitive movements by the mascot are fresh to the people watching.

*Off the Float* – If music is playing, a simple choreographed dance is possible. Movements should be small as the parade route may be long. Dancing should be limited mainly to arm movements the mascot can do while walking. This can repeat frequently as the audience is constantly changing. The need/desire to shake a few hands, give a little laugh or interact with the crowd should be confirmed prior to the event.

## Emergency Planning

Ensuring the safety of the mascot performer is a priority at all times. For all events, emergency exits and devices, such as pull stations and fire extinguishers, should be identified in advance. Event planners should provide any emergency procedures/expectations to Student Life prior to an event so they may be reviewed with performers and handlers.

In the event of a pending/anticipated emergency and/or during an emergency, performers and handlers are expected and encouraged to act in a manner that prioritizes their safety and permits them to disregard established policies and protocols in the interest of their personal safety. This may include, but is not limited to, removing portions or all of the mascot pieces and speaking.

## Additional Topics for Development (may be documented in separate documents)

### Mascot Personality

- Autograph or stamp
  - Suggest create a stamp, if this is desired
  - Handler responsibility
- Image and likeness creation and use
  - Illustration of full Titan in different poses
  - Illustration of the sword
  - Illustration of the shield
  - Illustration of Titan with any athletic items
  - Filters?

### Mascot Training Program

- Arrival prior to fall
- Checklist for completion
- Out of suit versus in suit routine and practice
- On-going training to remain successful
- Videos for all standard gestures and situations
- Athletic gesture requests for sports
- Offer departments option to try on and train
  - Cheat sheets
  - Short video clips on costume

### Mascot Selection

- Interview questions
- Physical test requirements
- Comfort physically of applicants

- Comfort with expectations of applicants