Part 1. Course Development Project Report

Course Background
I teach large-section courses (150-250 students per class) of the Doctrine and Covenants, both first half of the book (REL C 324) and second half (REL C 325). One of these two courses is required to be taken by each undergraduate student at the university. Teaching over 1,000 GE students each semester from various majors and backgrounds is a unique blessing, but also can offer difficult challenges in course structure, design, and purpose. I centered my course design on a statement about religious education by President Thomas S. Monson, who said, “The goal of gospel teaching . . . is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about living gospel principles.” This “Know, Feel, and Do” model is the foundation of this course’s design and is reflected in the course purpose, outcomes, assessments, and class instruction.

Thus, the purpose of my D&C 324/325 course is to help students To be 1) intellectually enlarged (know), 2) spiritually uplifted (feel), and 3) personally improved (do) through a meaningful and in-depth study of the context, content, and messages of the Doctrine and Covenants. This three-fold D&C course purpose fits into the Religion Department’s mission statement to “to assist individuals in their efforts to come unto Christ by teaching the scriptures, doctrine, and history of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ,” as well aligning with BYU’s AIMS of Spiritually Strengthening (feel), Intellectually Enlarging (know), Character Building/Leading to Lifelong Learning and Service (Do).

Learning Outcomes
The following are the learning outcomes for both D&C 324 and D&C 325 courses:

1. Know key D&C context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations.
2. Analyze D&C revelations to understand core doctrines, principles, and applications.
3. Synthesize truths from multiple D&C revelations to answer questions and enhance understanding.
4. Apply truths from D&C revelations to life.
5. Become more deeply converted to Jesus Christ and his restored gospel.
These course learning outcomes are important for students to learn within the context of this course because they will provide them with the background knowledge and conceptual abilities to understand the revelations of the Doctrine and Covenants, analyze them, synthesize them, and apply them to life. This is knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly relate to their current and future lives as Latter-day Saints, disciples of Christ, and contributing scholars and members of their communities. These course outcomes also align with the course purpose to “know” (outcomes # 1, 2, 3), “feel” (outcomes # 2, 3, 4, 5), and “do” (outcomes # 4, 5). Last, these course outcomes were specifically written in a hierarchical order, following Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy of educational domains as illustrated below:

5. Become more deeply converted to Jesus Christ and his restored gospel.
4. Synthesize truths from multiple D&C revelations to answer questions and enhance understanding.
3. Analyze D&C revelations to understand core doctrines, principles, and applications.
2. Apply truths from D&C revelations to life.
1. Know key D&C context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations.

These course outcomes also follow the overall program learning outcomes for Religious Education, which list various “Factual” outcomes such as students knowing “historical dates and events” and “fundamental doctrines” (compare with D&C course outcome #1), “Conceptual” program outcomes such as “analyzing scripture blocks to identify key doctrines, principles, and practices” and “identifying [scriptural/historical] relationships” (compare with D&C course outcome #3, 4), “Spiritual” program outcomes such as “develop Christ-like attributes” and “faith and testimony” (compare with D&C course outcome #5), and “Application” outcomes such as “discuss a concept or idea” and “solve a problem” (compare with D&C course outcome #2).

Course Activities
The following course activities were used to drive the learning outcomes for this course.

Outcome #1: Know key D&C context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations.
Prior to coming to class, students are assigned to watch a blended-learning video for each section of the Doctrine and Covenants assigned for the upcoming class. As will be related later in the professional project report, I created pre-class learning videos for each section of the Doctrine and Covenants that provide the historical context and background of the section in detail. Students watch these videos prior to coming to class, and answer 2 quiz questions about historical context, people, places, events. Using blended learning is a relatively new approach in religious education, and I am only one of a very few of the professors who incorporate this pedagogical and technological advancement to aid and enhance learning within the college. Also, during in-class instruction, key doctrines and revelations are analyzed and discussed to better know their content and meet this course outcome. Prior to the start of every class lecture I post a “Learning Objectives” slide and list key context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations students need to “know” and focus on during the learning experience, helping to drive this course outcome.

Outcome #2: Analyze D&C revelations to understand core doctrines, principles, and applications.
Before each class, students read each assigned section of the doctrine and covenants, specifically looking for core doctrines, principles, and personal application of the truths they contain. In class, these doctrines and principles are shared, analyzed, discussed, and applied to deepen students’ achievement of this course outcome. This analysis of doctrine, principles, and application happens prior to every class, and during each class discussion, providing ample practice and feedback for the students to help facilitate this outcome.

Outcome #3: Synthesize truths from multiple D&C revelations to answer questions and enhance understanding.

The student’s primary research paper for this class centers on their ability to synthesize truths from multiple D&C revelations to address a doctrinal dilemma. I model this approach repeatedly during in-class discussions and lectures, wherein a doctrinal concept or idea or problem is approached through an analysis of multiple scriptural/prophetic sources and principles. For feedback on their ability to do so, I dedicate an entire class to students bringing in three copies of a draft of their Doctrinal Dilemma Paper. These drafts are given to three peers in the class who provide a review and peer feedback on the paper based upon a standardized rubric I provide for the class. This process enables me to provide my 1,000 students with three peer reviews of their paper based upon standards I provide. It also helps train each student on what is expected for their paper and how it will be assessed, helping to drive the outcome of being able to synthesize ideas together.

Outcome #4: Apply truths from D&C revelations to life.

This outcome receives repeated focus throughout the learning activities in my course. Prior to each class, students study the assigned D&C sections and write a summary of the major doctrines and principles they found within the section. They then choose one of those truths and write an “application to life” paragraph from each section, articulating how a truth from that D&C section may apply to their current life circumstances and how they can act upon it. Additionally, once at the end of each month (three times per semester) students submit a “Go and Do” paper where they report in a two-page summary how they have purposely acted upon things learned in class, what they acted upon, why they chose that action, what their experience has been in implementing it, and their perspectives or beliefs about that action. Students repeatedly have provided feedback in their student evaluations that this is one of the most meaningful assignments they do.

Outcome #5: Become more deeply converted to Jesus Christ and his restored gospel.

This outcome is driven each class session through interaction with the sacred word of God, sharing of testimony and experiences by myself and the students, and by praying for and seeking to learn by the Spirit in each class session and reading of a D&C section. Additionally, conversion is the result of the influence of the Spirit, facilitated by repeated and consistent righteous behavior. The Go and Do monthly report, as well as the consistent immersion in the word of God through the pre-class study and in-class analysis of the scriptures helps facilitate this desired spiritual outcome for those who seek it.

Assessment of Student Learning

The following assessments are used to determine achievement of course learning outcomes:

Outcome #1: Know key D&C context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations.
Students take a closed-book, closed-notes mid-term and a comprehensive final exam specifically designed to test the students’ knowledge of the key D&C context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations (see Appendix A for sample questions). Additionally, students take a pre-class quiz with two D&C context related questions prior to each class session to assess their understanding of the content provided in the pre-class blended learning videos.

**Outcome #2: Analyze D&C revelations to understand core doctrines, principles, and applications.**

Prior to each class—26 total times—students write a summary of the key doctrines and principles they found in each assigned D&C section, as well as writing an “application to life” paragraph from each section (see Appendix B). These pre-class write-ups provide ample time, experience, and evidence that they are able to do this outcome. Pre-class write ups are self-scored by the students based upon the following rubric I provide for them:

- 2 points=Well-written statement of truth for each section with accompanying verses
- 1 point=Labeling each statement of truth as either a “doctrine” or “principle”
- 2 points=Application to life paragraph from each section.

It is necessary for students to self-score as there are 26 of these pre-class reading/writing assignments, and x 1000 students = 26,000 pre-class assignments submitted each semester. In other words, it is an impossibility to read and grade each of them, even with an army of Teacher’s Aids. However, this approach to reading sections looking for their truths, writing them in their own words, labeling them, and applying them is a very meaningful exercise and is repeatedly mentioned by students as an excellent approach. To help students be honest in their self-assessments and submit high quality work each time, I have my TA’s randomly select two pre-class reading/writing assignments for each student and give them a 40 point “quality” grade based upon the same rubric listed above. This approach has worked well and helps demonstrate that, although self-scored, successful students are achieving the desired outcome of analyzing D&C revelations to understand core doctrines, principles, and application. Feedback is provided by the TA for students who score low on their TA quality check to help them better achieve this outcome in future submissions.

**Outcome #3: Synthesize truths from multiple D&C revelations to answer questions and enhance understanding.**

This outcomes is assessed through the term research paper called a Doctrinal Dilemma. Students are provided with four different doctrinal dilemmas (or they can propose their own if it is cleared through me) and demonstrate their ability to synthesize ideas together from the D&C to address this dilemma through this term paper. Students are given a detailed rubric to follow that instructs them write six well-stated principles from the D&C revelations, and then articulating in multiple paragraphs how that principles addresses and informs the issue at hand (see Appendix C). Students work on this paper throughout the semester, receiving peer feedback prior to submitting the paper and post-assessment feedback from myself and my trained/calibrated TA’s on their paper. A paper format allows students to demonstrate

**Outcome #4: Apply truths from D&C revelations to life.**

Once at the end of each month (three times each semester) students write a two-page summary of how they have purposely acted upon something that derived from their study of the D&C (see Appendix D). Assessing someone’s “application” of gospel truths can be difficult, but this open format allows students
to be assessed on their efforts to deliberately act upon that which they have learned, choosing what is most important and relevant to them personally. Additionally, students are assessed on their ability to apply the D&C revelations to life through their pre-class learning written “application to life” paragraph for each section and the TA quality check/review of those paragraphs.

**Outcome #5: Become more deeply converted to Jesus Christ and his restored gospel.**

Admittedly, this outcome is not easily assessed and measured. However, as the mission of religious education is “to assist individuals in their efforts to come unto Christ” I felt an overall stated outcome along these lines was necessary. This may be a case where this outcome needs to be re-worded or taken out of my stated course outcomes, or where I need to design a specific assessment that helps students, at minimum, be self-reflective on the process of their deepening conversion and assess or demonstrate their growth in that process. As it now stands, nothing in my course assessments truly is de this outcome.

**Student Achievement of Learning Outcomes**

The following indicators provide evidence of student achievement of desired course learning outcomes:

**Outcome #1: Know key D&C context, doctrines, people, places, events, and revelations.**

Student scores average about 90% on midterm and comprehensive final exams designed to measure this outcome. Exams require students, from memory, to match key D&C sections, identify correct answers about key doctrines, etc. While some may justly argue that achievement of 90% on a test may indicate that students already knew that information, base-line date from course pre-tests do not bear that assumption out. The first week of each semester I provide a pre-test to assess current student knowledge and to help guide my instruction. Some of these questions from the pre-test are included in later mid-term or final exams. Note the change in improvement on scores from the beginning of the semester (Pre-class, n = 322) to the end of the semester (Final, n = 317) for the following few sample questions from my D&C 325 Fall, 2014 semester:

- Identifying which section is known as the “olive leaf” instructions given to the school of the prophets; Pre-class = 22%, Final = 75%
- Where the saints immediately settled after being driven from Zion by mobs. This place becomes the headquarters of the Church in 1838 and is where the Saint became officially “exterminated” from by the State; Pre-class = 55%, Final = 96%
- Who is William Law; Pre—class =29%, Final = 96%
- The primary purpose of Zion’s camp, Pre-class = 51%, Final = 97%

The average score of my Fall 2015 D&C 325 pre-test was 47.4%, and the average score of the final exam with similar questions and content for the same semester of students was 92.0%.

**Outcome #2: Analyze D&C revelations to understand core doctrines, principles, and applications.**

The primary evidence for achievement in this outcome from examples of student work (see Appendix B), with the fact that my TA’s scored the average, independent, randomly selected quality check of the students’ ability to identify doctrines, principles, and application as an 18/20 (90%).
Outcome #3: Synthesize truths from multiple D&C revelations to answer questions and enhance understanding.

Once again, primary evidence for the achievement of this outcome can be seen in the papers students submitted synthesizing doctrines and principles from the D&C together to address a doctrinal dilemma (see Appendix C). The average score was graded as a 72/80 (90%) for this outcome. I thought to include at least one comment from a student about the process of writing this paper that demonstrates its achievement of the desired outcomes of this course:

“I just want to thank you for this [Doctrinal Dilemma] assignment. I have read many talks and scriptures while writing this paper and have gained so much insight. Truly, my testimony has been strengthened. . . . I’m learning a great deal in your class.”

Outcome #4: Apply truths from D&C revelations to life.

Evidence for the achievement of this outcome is seen in the “application to life” section of Appendix A and also in the “GO and DO” portion of an assignment in Appendix D. Students repeatedly commented that this GO and DO assignment—whereby they report at the end of each month how they have put into practice and applied something deliberate from their study of the Doctrine and Covenants—has motivated them to think more conscientiously about how they are being doers of the word and not hearers only, and that this assignment has blessed their lives and motivated them to act in doctrine. However, this is one outcome where performance may be weak for some or there is insufficient evidence that they are acting upon what they are learning. Some students don’t think about this assignment at all and then at the end of the month they “reverse engineer” something they already did (or would have done regardless) and count that as their “GO and DO,” tying it in some way to what we studied in the D&C this month. I have tried to correct this by having them self-assess on the deliberate and proactive nature of their application, but it still leaves something to be desired in its rigor, implementation, and assessment.

Outcome #5: Become more deeply converted to Jesus Christ and his restored gospel.

While a spiritual outcome such as this may be most difficult to measure or demonstrate achievement in this outcome, student ratings for this course in Fall of 2014 list it as a 7.7/8.0 on “testimony strengthened” and a 7.8/8.0 on “spiritually inspiring,” indicating high achievement. Multiple student comments similar to, “He allowed the Spirit to testify of truth to us -- and provided an environment where we could ask questions and seek understanding. Awesome teacher and course!” and, “You have contributed so much to my testimony by being my teacher” also lend some evidence of student achievement of this desired outcome.

Steps Planned or Taken to Improve Teaching and Student Learning

Based upon student performance in these outcomes, and also upon feedback from students, peers, and supervisors, the following steps are planned or have already been taken to improve teaching and student learning:

1. Blended learning videos: Implementing “flipped” or a blended learning approach in Fall of 2014 has been a great learning experience for me, and has produced changes in my teaching approach and student performance. Feedback from some students in previous semesters centered on lots of history and information being given in class, and not enough time for quality discussion and analysis of ideas and content. Using the blended learning videos to provide the
historical context of each of the D&C revelations has helped enhance students’ abilities to learn factual content and historical context, and enhanced in-class teaching and learning time to be on higher-order levels of Bloom’s revised taxonomy (analyze and apply). The following are student comments supporting this conclusion:

- “I really liked the new pre-class videos that were added this semester. I took D&C 324 last year and it was a lot harder to understand context. The videos fixed that.”
- “I liked the videos, I was worried at first because it was different from the 1st half (that I took from you as well) but it ended up being great and felt like it allowed more of a discussion to be had in class.”
- “LOVED the way the course was set up, especially the context videos. I felt like it allowed for constructive conversation in class, with everyone on the same page.”
- “The pre-class learning videos were awesome, and I learned a lot. It was nice to have class time spent mostly answering questions and explaining concepts instead of just giving historical background.”

Additional evidence of the effectiveness of the blended-learning video approach is that the overall course was rated as a 7.3 in Winter 2014, and Fall 2014 (with the videos) was rated as a 7.6. Amount learned increased from 7.2 to 7.5 (Winter to Fall). The primary difference in those courses was simply the structure of pre-class/blended learning videos and their effect upon students’ pre-class readings and in-class discussions. The content remained the same. However, there still needs to be improvement in this approach. While the majority of students who commented on the videos were very positive about them, some students felt that there were “too many” videos, that some were “unnecessary” or felt like “busy work” to watch them before reading every assigned section of the D&C. I plan to revisit the videos this semester and spring term and to shorten videos that are too long, change videos that are not visually interesting, and better help students understand they “why” behind the videos (better contextual study, and more time for in-class analysis instead of delivery of content).

2. Related to “busy work,” I need to continue to re-evaluate my out-of-class assignment time. Much of it is centered on watching these pre-class videos, reading the assigned D&C sections, and then doing a write up of the doctrines, principles, and applications they found. However, student comments are that over time this begins to feel monotonous, and they need a change. This is reflected in student ratings of my “valuable time out of class” that are slightly lower than the department average on this rating. This gives me pause as it is the only rating of all 22 student ratings where I am below the department average. I plan to discuss with other teachers who teach D&C 324/325 how they have students approach pre-class assignments (pre-reading) and may move them to assignments that are due once per week instead of due before each class (cutting the number of pre-class assignments from 26 to 13, but weighting them heavier).

3. Another change to improve my course is feedback on assignments. It is challenging to have 1,000 students, as compared to 100 or so for most research professors. The challenge lies in giving 1,000 students any measurable formative (not summative) assessment and feedback. Students have noted in my ratings that they desire more feedback on their papers, and in particular their pre-class assignments finding doctrines, principles, and application. I have instructed my TA’s, who grade two “quality” checks on those pre-class assignments, to provide email feedback on any assignment below a 90% grade. However, this still seems to be
insufficient. This past semester I implemented a peer-review feedback session for their semester paper, which helped immensely in the quality of the papers (scores increased from an average score of 81% in Winter 2014 to a 91% in Fall of 2014. These papers were scored using the same rubric and requirements each semester). Students brought three printed copies of their draft of a paper to class, and in-class they exchanged those papers with peers who gave them feedback based upon a rubric I provided. I think a peer-review format similar to this for the pre-class assignments, even if it were only once at the beginning of the semester, would help provide some formative feedback that students are requesting to help them do these semester-long assignments with more confidence and capacity, without overburdening myself of my TA’s trying to give detailed feedback to 1,000 students.

Part 2. Professional Teaching Project Report

As a professional teaching track professor, this project replaced the “Scholarship Strategies Project” as outlined in the FDS seminar proposal. For my professional teaching project I proposed to create and implement blended-learning pedagogy as follows:

1. Create a blended-learning proposal for a foundations course, including a proposed weekly model, a pre-class learning module, in-class higher-order learning activities, and brief review of the strengths and weaknesses of a blended learning approach in religious education foundations courses. This proposal would be presented to Dean Top and other administrative leaders in the college of Religious Education.

2. Experiment on and develop some blended learning modules for one of my D&C courses where students work through web-based modules (with audio, videos, demonstration, questions, writing, etc.) for context and content, then class time is used for clarification, discussion, questions, problem solving, skills, etc.

I feel I had high success in accomplishing these goals as I evaluate my efforts, activities, and results from this project. Together with John Hilton III in the Ancient Scripture department, we created a high-quality blended learning video on the translation of the Book of Mormon. To produce this video entailed a mountain of work, including researching the topic, writing a word-for-word script, having it read by a third party, recording and editing the voiced script, purchasing and learning a screen-cast video production software called Camtasia Studio, learning how to work it, and creating the visuals and final video product. This blended learning video, and the theoretical concepts supporting blended learning, was presented in a 20 minute presentation to the administrative council for religious education to demonstrate how blended learning could be incorporated in the upcoming curriculum changes to the required courses for religious education, highlight the benefits and challenges of such an approach for the college. After the presentation, one of the administrative council members sent us the following email: “What an inspiring and exciting product you presented in AC today! Thank you for all your work and for walking me through a tangible example. . . .You are both brilliant teachers with a remarkable ability to motivate others.” Presenting this example of blended learning to the administrative council also led to my being invited to present on the topic of blended learning to the entire religious department faculty at our pre-school faculty meetings in August, 2014. I presented on “Blended Learning: Using Technology Outside of the Classroom to Aid in Learning” and was able to develop a
video and handout that helped teachers know why and how to create screen-cast videos for their courses. Many instructors since then have continued to ask for my assistance in their implementation of blended learning approaches.

Perhaps the greatest amount of effort, however, in regards to accomplishing this goal has been my efforts to “flip” or incorporate blended learning in my D&C 325 course in the Fall of 2014. After teaching in 2013 I felt the need to incorporate blended learning in my own courses, feeling frustrated as I “dispensed” background information on my students, not using class for more effective and higher-order learning activities. Thus, through the entire Fall semester of 2014 I created a pre-class “context video” for every section of the Doctrine and Covenants detailing the context, history, background, people, places, etc. that were necessary to understand why the revelation was given and its historical intent. This has been a large undertaking, demanding 8 hours per week each week (nearly a full day, mostly on Fridays) to create these videos. On average I created 4-5 videos per week throughout the semester, each demanding a few hours in preparation and production. The learning curve was steep, and admittedly the videos were of higher production quality and were created with more rapidity than the earliest videos. These videos were then posted on Learning Suite, and students would watch them (and answer quiz questions to hold them accountable for the video’s content) to provide context before studying the assigned sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. As was mentioned in the Course Development Project portion, the effects of these videos have been net positive. While only a true control/experiment group could measure effect, the natural experiment of teaching the same course and the same history and content and doctrines, etc., but only changing the approach using blended learning, has provided an interesting case-study at minimum between my Winter 2014 and Fall 2014 student ratings. The following student ratings scores demonstrate consistently that the students had a notable increase in their learning experience from Winter 2014 (no blended learning) to Fall 2014 (blended learning implemented).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall Course</th>
<th>Overall Instructor</th>
<th>Amount Learned</th>
<th>Materials Effective</th>
<th>Active Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2014</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this project and this experience I have begun to implement a blended learning approach in my D&C 324 course this Winter 2015 semester, and plan to use blended learning to aid in the new required Foundations of the Restoration course I will pilot teach in the Fall of 2015. I anticipate I will continue to refine the content and quality of my videos as I gain more experience and based on student and peer feedback as well, but this project has already helped demonstrate in my experience that the potential and actual benefits outweigh the difficulties and work involved in implementing blended learning pedagogy.

Part 3. Citizenship Project Report

For my citizenship project, I proposed the following two activities:
1. Create a transfer/adjunct faculty welcome and instructional pamphlet/handbook for Church History and Doctrine teaching in collaboration with my mentor, Dr. Guy Dorius.

2. Develop a religion department peer observation form that is outcome, standards, and evidenced based. Currently our departmental observation forms are not grounded in our desired departmental outcomes, and are more preference based. This project would include reviewing the current forms for strengths and weaknesses, creating a new proposed peer observation form based upon stated department outcomes, and pilot testing this form through observing other teachers classes and soliciting their reviews of the strengths and weaknesses of the form.

While my course development project and my professional teaching project were met with high implementation and success, my citizenship projects—in my estimation—were not implemented nor received as well. For project proposal #1 to create a handbook to guide new adjunct and transfer faculty, I found that numerous attempts had already been made, and various versions of this packet already existed, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. This didn’t eliminate the need in my mind to still create and put something together that is more applicable and understandable to help adjunct and transfer faculty get started, but it did minimize the need. Additionally, my department chair emphasized to me that the greater need within our department was to resurrect department in-service to truly aid in improving our teaching, and to put together and implement a plan to hold these in-service training meetings. I met with Dr. Kent Brooks—with whom I serve to assist him on the Church History and Doctrine Department In-service Committee—and we jointly developed a plan together with the department leadership to address the teaching needs within our department. Many of these were pedagogical, and thus each month we implemented a new focus and training on an aspect of improving pedagogy, beginning in the Fall of 2014. I have now researched, presented, and led in-service trainings on two topics: “Course Design: Aligning Learning Outcomes and Assessments” and “Guidelines for Creating Great Test Questions,” and assisted Kent Brooks in his two in-service presentations as well. These in-services have been very well attended and received, with the assistant dean emailing with “I just wanted to write and tell you that I have rarely been treated to a better discussion on the subject of outcomes then in our inservice yesterday. You were just brilliant. Thanks so much for your preparation and delivery. It was awesome” and my department chair emailing me after my last presentation, “Thank you for the excellent job you did in our In-Service meeting this morning. I can’t think of how you could have done it better. Well done! You and Kent are really helping our faculty.” Fortunately these in-service trainings have been attended by some adjunct and part-time faculty, but the trainings still don’t adequately cover the need in my mind for new teachers to have better direction and help in beginning new religion courses. I plan to continue to make this a focus, together with my colleagues Kent Brooks and mentor Guy Dorius.

For the second part of my citizenship project, I successfully created a revised and standardized observation form for religious education. In the past the observation forms used varied between the two departments (Ancient Scripture and Church History and Doctrine), and the items they were assessing on were not outcomes driven. This project was an attempt to unify the observation form for all of religious education and standardize them based upon desired outcomes. Over spring and summer term of 2014 I worked with the assistant dean, Robert Freeman, to develop and pilot test this form. Below is the final result:
Peer Observation of Teaching and Student Learning

Instructor reviewed: ____________________________  Semester/Year: ____________________________
Name of reviewer: ____________________________  Course: ____________________________

**Instructions:** This form is to guide you in your observation of a peer's classroom teaching and student learning. Based on the Religious Education Learning Outcomes on the left, record your notes and observations regarding that outcome on the right.

### FACTUAL

Teaching assists students in their ability to recall the factual information necessary for a basic understanding of Latter-day Saint scripture, doctrine, and history including the ability to:

- Define content specific vocabulary
- Recall significant historical dates and events
- Locate major historical sites on a map
- Identify characters of importance
- Define fundamental doctrines
- Use basic scriptural research tools

### CONCEPTUAL

Teaching assists students in their ability to analyze and interpret LDS scripture, doctrine and history including the ability to:

- Identify significant relationships among ideas
- Explain fundamental doctrinal principles in their own words
- Analyze scripture blocks to identify key doctrines, principles and practices
- Summarize and generalize information from a variety of sources

### APPLICATION

Teaching assists students in their ability to use foundational knowledge and conceptual understanding of Latter-day Saint scripture, doctrine, and history in problem-solving tasks in order to:

- Discuss a concept or idea
- Teach a principle or idea to another individual
- Explain a principle or truth
- Solve a problem
- Provide possible responses to case studies
- Evaluate a set of factors

### SPIRITUAL

Teaching assists students in their desire to seek the Holy Ghost as an aid in studying and pondering LDS scripture, doctrine and history in order to:

- Express feelings of faith and testimony
- Distinguish between truth and error
- Assess spiritual promptings related to learning
- Develop Christlike attributes
- Demonstrate the ability to balance spiritual, intellectual and behavior factors

Notes/Observations
This form was presented and reviewed by the administrative council, with positive reviews and recommendations for improvements (their input is reflected in the final example listed above). However, I have yet to see its dissemination and implantation within the department as we observe, evaluate, and provide feedback for faculty members, or potential hires within the faculty. The form needs to be field-tested more and improved upon in subsequent editions, but I feel an outcomes standardized form such as this could be beneficial and is needed for religious education. Thus, in summary, while its execution and creation went as planned, its implementation and use has not been as well received and I plan to follow up with the deanery and administration about the status of the form and how it can be improved upon to become a better tool to assist in evaluating teaching and learning within our department.
Appendix A
Sample Exam Questions Testing key D&C Context, Doctrines, People, Places, Events, and Revelations

Context
The United Order
   a. Is another name for the Law of Consecration
   b. Is a consecration-based business organization of the Church
   c. Is the same things as having all things common
   d. Is another name for the United Firm

Doctrinal
Based upon the symbolism of numbers as used in the Bible and in the Book of Revelation, what answer below best summarizes what the number 7,000 may represent in a scriptural passage?
   a. The infinite nature of God’s works
   b. Something vast or large that is complete
   c. A grand work cut short because of wickedness
   d. Much opposition

People
What happened to Jesse Gause that led to his being replaced in the First Presidency?
   a. He lost his testimony of Joseph Smith’s prophetic call
   b. He committed adultery and was excommunicated
   c. He abandoned his calling and didn’t fulfill it
   d. He returned to his former Shaker beliefs
   e. He struggled with health problems that debilitated him

Places
Which place becomes the new headquarters of the Church in 1838?
   a. Independence, Missouri
   b. Spring Hill, Missouri
   c. Liberty, Missouri
   d. Far West, Missouri

Events
What percentage of the Church fell into apostasy during the Kirtland apostasy period of 1837-1838?
   a. 5%-10%
   b. 10%-15%
   c. 15%-20%
   d. 20%-25%

Revelations
Which section is best understood in context as the CAUSES and CURES for the problems the saints were experiencing in Jackson County, Missouri?
   a. 97
   b. 98
   c. 101
   d. 103
   e. 105
Appendix B
Example of a Pre-class Writing Assignment Analyzing Doctrines, Principles, and Application

Pre-Class Reading Insights #23 (D&C 131-132)

Section: Doctrine and Covenants 131
Doctrines and Principles:
- Doctrine: In the Celestial Kingdom there are three degrees (v.1).
- Doctrine: An individual must have a Celestial marriage in order to obtain the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom (v.2).
- Doctrine: All spirit is matter, but it can only be discerned by purer eyes (v.7).

Application from this section to my life: I need to always keep my covenants I have made in the temple so I can have an eternal marriage. An eternal marriage isn't only being sealed for eternity in the temple. "Eternal" is another name for God, so "eternal marriage" means "God's marriage." It means to live with my spouse and treat my spouse as God would treat a spouse. If I am not faithful to my covenants today, I won't have an eternal marriage tomorrow. I need to act heavenly to have a heavenly marriage.

Section: Doctrine and Covenants 132
Doctrines and Principles:
- Principle: Our hearts must be prepared to receive and obey the instructions of the Lord (v.3).
- Doctrine: All covenants and contracts, which are not performed under proper Priesthood authority and not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, will not be valid after death (v.7).
- Doctrine: If a man and woman marry by God’s word, by His new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise by someone with Priesthood authority, the marriage will continue into the eternities if they abide by the covenant (v.19).
- Principle: Eternal life is to know God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (v.24).
- Principle: If you are obeying a commandment of the Lord, even when it seems contrary to what you believe is true, it will be counted as righteousness unto you (v.34-36).
- Principle: If the Lord gives something to you, it is lawfully yours (v.62).

Application from this section to my life: Although I have no issues with the early Saints' practicing polygamy, I struggle to feel that I would be willing to practice this if the Lord commanded me to do so. The application I received from this section is the need for me to increase my faith and prepare my heart to receive the instruction of the Lord. Not to say that He will bring back polygamy and require me to live by this law, but in general I want my faith to be strong enough to accept whatever the Lord asks of me. I don’t know that I am there right now, which is why I must increase my faith.
Appendix C  
Example of a Student “Doctrinal Dilemma” Semester Paper Synthesizing Principles from the Doctrine and Covenants to address a difficult question

Doctrinal Dilemma Article  
Rel C 325- The Doctrine and Covenants  
Dr. Anthony Sweat

*Dilemma #2* We have been promised in scripture that “The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of this Church to lead you astray.” (President Wilford Woodruff, *Official Declaration #1*). However, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf recently taught in general conference that there have been times when, “leaders in the Church have simply made mistakes” (CR, Oct. 2013). How do we balance those two statements? How can we follow sometimes imperfect leaders in perfect faith?

Many have fallen away from the Church because of this difficult issue. In the past, prophets and other priesthood authorities have made mistakes. Members who fall away fail to realize that the Lord will never allow the Church to be led astray. He chooses imperfect people to lead His perfect Church. There are six helpful steps to help members be assured that following our leaders is the only way to make them truly happy in this life.

1. **Priesthood authority is eternal.** The Priesthood was restored to the earth to Joseph Smith. He had hands placed on his head by Peter, James and John. He and the twelve Apostles had all of the keys of the priesthood, and they have been given to our current Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and First Presidency. Because we know they have authority given directly from God, we can trust that they are leading the Church correctly. *Doctrine and Covenants 65:2* says, “The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth.” Priesthood authority has always been a responsibility given
to every Apostle and Prophet. Alma “ordained priests and elders, by laying on his hands according to the order of God, to preside and watch over the Church.” (Alma 5:1.)

2. **We are all imperfect beings.** The only person who has lived a perfect life is our Savior Jesus Christ. It is easy to forget that the leaders of the Church are human, just like the rest of us. When I was younger, I thought that my parents were nearly perfect and that they knew everything about parenting. Time, events, and my own observations led me to the conclusion that they are not perfect. But they are trying the best that they know how. This is also true of our Church leaders. They are mortal and they make mistakes, but they will never lead us off the path. There are many examples in the scriptures of prophets making mistakes. One example is Jonah. The Lord commanded him to preach in Nineveh, but Jonah thought he knew better. **Jonah 1:2-3** says, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord…” Later he repented and was able to be cast out of the fish. Joseph Smith is another example of an imperfect person called to be the Prophet of the Church. After the Lord commanded him not to let Martin Harris take 116 pages of scripture, he made up his mind to let him regardless. **Doctrine and Covenants 3:5-7** says, “Behold, you have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them. And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men. For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words.” As a result of Joseph Smith’s disobedience, the pages were lost.
3. **The Lord always speaks through prophets.** God uses His holy messengers to reveal his will. In the *Bible Dictionary*, it says, “The work of a Hebrew prophet was to act as God’s messenger and make known God’s will. The message was usually prefaced with the words “Thus saith Jehovah.” He taught men about God’s character.” This means that prophets are literally speaking for and in behalf of our Father in Heaven. The Bible Dictionary also uses the term “forthteller” to describe a prophet or apostle. There is a difference between this term and the term “foreteller.” A forthteller reveals to men the revelations he has received that will help them come unto Christ, and warns them of the dangers of the world. A foreteller merely tells the future. *Doctrine and Covenants* 138:30 talks about how the Lord chooses leaders and speaks through them. He refers to them as his “messengers.” It says, “From among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men.”

4. **The faith of Church members must be tested.** Sometimes the Lord changes the organization of the Church or how it runs, but He never changes the doctrine. He is not a “respecer of persons”, and He does things in His own time. One example of this is when black males could not receive the priesthood. Brigham Young said that they should not be able to be ordained. Later, this was changed. This was truly a test of member’s faith in the prophet of God. As we follow our leader’s counsel, we will come to a knowledge of the truthfulness of it. The Lord commands His children to follow His chosen leaders. *Doctrine and Covenants* 124:46 states: “But if they will not hearken to my voice, nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed, they shall not be blest, because they
pollute mine holy grounds, and mine holy ordinances, and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them.” One example of people failing to follow is found in 1 Nephi 1:20. “And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain; and they also sought his life, that they might take it away.” This was because Lehi had prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed if they did not repent. They did not believe that he had been called of God to be a chosen vessel of the Lord. God chooses the Prophet, the people do not. The Lord often chooses those who do not seem like the most powerful, so that the members’ faith is tested. This is also true of Joseph Smith. The Lord chose him because of his humility. He was a poor and simple farm boy with little education. This greatly tested the faith of members of the Church.

5. **God’s doctrine is eternal.** God will run His Church in the way that He desires, and it will always be the right way. If we follow the commandments and heed the prophets and apostles, we will be blessed. Our leaders do not receive revelations on their own. They are inspired from Heavenly Father, and I believe that they speak with Him face to face. God does not care what is popular or acceptable in the world, and so He does not command His children accordingly. Doctrine and Covenants 1:35 says, “For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh…when peace shall be taken from the earth.”

6. **The Spirit will confirm the truthfulness of the authority of our leaders.** Doctrine and Covenants 8:2 says, “Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.” I have had the incredible opportunity to meet President Monson two times in my life. The first
was at a nursing home. I sang with some other young women in my ward. Afterwards, he talked to my sister and me and he said we looked alike. The second time I met him was at a concert and he shook my hand. I also had the great privilege of playing my violin at Sister Monson’s funeral. To my surprise, he wrote me a personal letter thanking me. In all three of these instances, I felt the same feeling. It was the Spirit testifying to me that President Monson is the prophet on the earth, and he holds all of the keys of the priesthood. He is God’s messenger and he communicates with him often to receive revelation on how to run the Church.

If we are diligently doing all that we can to follow our chosen Church leaders, we can have peace and assurance that we will never be led astray. They are imperfect people, but so are we. There is a difference between making mistakes and leading the Church in the wrong direction. Our Heavenly Father would never let this happen because this work needs to continue so that His purposes can be fulfilled.
Appendix D
Example of a GO and DO Assignment Demonstrating the Outcome of Applying D&C Truths to Life

[Name]
D&C 325
Brother Sweat

Go and Do #3

Which class or D&C section/verses did your GO and DO come from?

For my “GO and DO” challenge, I decided to be more diligent with my fast offerings. The verses that impacted me the most were from D&C 117 verses four and six. What is property to the Lord? He is the great creator. It really made me think about why the Lord expects us to give tithes and offerings. I knew that it was for our benefit, but I wasn’t placing enough importance on the offerings part of these commandments. In Malachi it doesn’t just talk about tithes, but encourages us to bring our tithes and our offerings. In class it impacted me even more as we had an open discussion on tithing and the benefit it gives to the saints.

Why did you choose this action?

Since being home that has been one area that I have struggled. Tithing hasn’t been difficult, but many times I have forgot to bring money on fast Sunday. As I did my reading on the importance of money to the Lord, and due to our discussion in class, I felt that I should make a greater effort to pay my fast offerings as I fast for the things I need in life.

What specific action did you take or do?

These past two fast Sundays I have made an effort to pay my fast offerings along with my tithing. I prayerfully figured out before church how much money I should give as an offering and brought it with me and gave it with my tithing. I have seen the blessings of tithing in life, but it was cool these months as I made a conscious effort to pay both.
**What did you experience from the action—what were the results, fruits, findings?**

I really had a lot more control over my expenses. These past two months I was able to put more money into savings than any other so far. I also felt a sense of peace and joy knowing that I am using my money to help build the kingdom and serve the poor and needy, and using my money in a way that pleases God.

**What is your belief or testimony (conclusion) related to the principle you acted on?**

I know that paying fast offerings is a divine way we can care for those in need, without really costing us much. As members of his Church I know that the Lord wants us to care for the needy as he did, and that the more we do so through actions like paying our offerings the more we will be in tune with the Spirit of God.