Building a Better House of Learning

JOHN S. TANNER

I invited Clayne Robison to sing this aria from *The Magic Flute*[1] today for several reasons—in addition to the fact that I love his rich voice. First, I chose this piece because this year marks the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth. It seemed fitting to select a piece by Mozart, who left the world so much beauty in so short a span. Second, I chose this particular aria—entitled "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" or "Within These Sacred Halls"—because it expresses sentiments well suited to our theme: "A House of Learning." The lyrics, sung by a high priest named Sarastro, speak of a house of learning, enlightenment, love, order, peace—a temple of sorts, much like that described in our theme scripture:

Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.[2]

But, most of all, I selected this aria because it summons up memories of the exhilarating experience I had when I first heard it as a freshman in Todd Britsch's Humanities 101 class. It reminds me of the joy of learning.

The Joy of Learning

I'll never forget the thrill of first hearing "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" while sitting in the Listening Lab on the fifth floor of the library. The singing enchanted me, captivated me. I listened to it over and over. As I did so, I felt an unspeakable sense of peace and joy, an intense thrill at the sheer beauty of the piece. I felt as did Emily Dickinson when she read great poetry: "I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off."[3] I knew just enough German from high school to have a sense of the lyrics, and this knowledge of a foreign language greatly increased my pleasure. But it was Mozart's music that most transported me.

Listening to the aria prompted me to check out a recording of the whole opera, which introduced me to yet more expansive pleasures. The program notes taught me something about Mozart's life, Freemasonry, and the Enlightenment, while the recording introduced me to yet other beautiful songs. I was charmed by the often birdlike courting duets

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of Papageno and Papagena. I was moved by Pamina's immensely sad and lovely aria "Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden" ("Ah, I feel it, it is gone"). And I was overwhelmed by the virtuosity of the Queen of the Night's hysterical call for vengeance, which reached the highest note I'd ever heard. This was amazing stuff for me, an 18-year-old freshman who had grown up playing a lot of football and basketball and listening to rock, pop, and American musicals. The world of opera was far removed from the world I'd known. "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" entered my heart and soul like no music before. It opened up the whole opera, and thence the whole world of opera by Mozart, Verdi, Puccini, and others, about which I'm still learning.

I mention this experience from my freshmen year to remind us of the joy of discovery, of learning. Of course learning can be tedious and tough slogging too—no doubt about it. High school German was for me, certainly. But learning can also be a source of intense pleasure and exhilaration. And even tedious subjects—like German grammar for me—can ultimately enable exciting, high-order discoveries.

As faculty we are learners privileged to help other learners. We get to open doors onto new worlds. We get to ascend mountains that reveal grand new vistas. We get to labor *in diesen heil'gen Hallen* at BYU—meaning not only the lecture halls and labs but the sanctuaries of our students' hearts and minds. To learn in order to help others learn is our fundamental duty as well as our great privilege as faculty. And, just imagine, we even get paid for it!

An Imperative to Become Better

Today I want to talk about making BYU an even better house of learning by our becoming more fully focused on learning. My remarks are meant to build on last year's talk, in which I spoke of Joseph Smith's dream of raising up a university that would become "one of the great lights of the world."[4] It also follows up on our reaccreditation.

Last year I told you that "I can think of nothing more needful than a renewed commitment at every level to become a [great] learning community."[5] I also noted that "lifelong learning must be a fundamental institutional goal at BYU [where learning] is more than a practical necessity: It is a gospel imperative."[6] I further observed:

> *A serious institutional commitment to lifelong learning . . . has profound implications for how we teach our students. It forces us to focus less on what* we *teach and more on what* they *learn. This can be a difficult paradigm shift for those of us who sometimes indulge exclusively in the "sage-on-the-stage" model of teaching. It is, however, a paradigm shift that for more than a decade has radically altered the landscape of higher education.*[7]

If you have not yet begun to understand and adjust to this paradigm shift in your classes and programs—and I recognize that many of you already have—I suggest that you do so soon. For what I had intended to present today as an invitation to the campus community has become an imperative—an imperative with a deadline. As President Samuelson mentioned, along with many commendations, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities also issued a few recommendations. The first of these in fact constitutes a request. The Northwest Commission has requested that BYU

- identify and publish expected learning outcomes for *each* of its degree programs;
- demonstrate that students who complete their programs have achieved the stated outcomes; and
- provide evidence *consistently across its programs* that its assessment activities lead to improvement of teaching and learning.

Furthermore, we are to provide a focused interim report and host a commission representative in fall 2007 regarding this recommendation.

This means, alas, that university accreditation is effectively not over for the faculty. We are going to have to roll up our sleeves and get back to work. Fortunately, some programs are much further ahead toward meeting this expectation than others. Some of our programs have been doing this for years in order to meet specialized accreditation—such as our programs in engineering, nursing, and secondary education. Other programs are well underway. For example, the Marriott School is in the midst of this process as we speak. Others have a ways to go. I am grateful that each degree program at BYU, to prepare for accreditation, defined a set of program objectives. If these were thoughtfully conceived, they ought to provide good starting points for program learning outcomes.

We will begin to respond to recommendation 1 by publishing these program objectives within a month or so, recognizing that they are works in progress toward program learning outcomes. We will provide training for programs that need help under the auspices of the University Curriculum Council, the Faculty Center, the Center for Instructional Design (CID), and a university task force. We also encourage you to learn from programs that are already doing assessment well, both here at BYU and at other universities. In the last analysis, however, ownership for this work cannot be outsourced to consultants, task forces, the Faculty Center, CID, or colleagues in other colleges. Deans, chairs, and faculty must be responsible for the effort to define and improve learning outcomes for their own programs. This will require some refocusing for many of us: from teaching to learning—or, better, to teaching/learning—and from "my course" to "our program."[8]

So, folks, welcome to the radically altered landscape I alluded to last year. This brave new world has been partly shaped by forces external to the academy—such as legislatures, accreditation bodies, parents, and employers—all of whom are demanding greater accountability and transparency regarding the value colleges and universities add to their students. In addition, the shift from teaching paradigm to learning paradigm is being fueled by forces from within the academy. Driving this paradigm shift is a large and growing body of research about how people learn and what undergraduates actually do learn in college. I'll describe in a moment some of this literature in the hope that its scholarly bona fides will persuade you that the learning movement is not simply the result of bothersome bureaucrats.

A Plea to Make a Virtue of Necessity

First, however, let me address up front the potential resistance some may feel toward these tides of change. Some of you may think that what we are being asked to do is a bad idea; others may just instinctively resist being required to do it.

As to the first objection: I find it difficult to argue that it is unreasonable to ask BYU to define what we expect our students to learn; how we know if they learned it; and whether we are getting better at helping them learn it. Indeed, regarded in these broad terms, this requirement seems both reasonable and potentially helpful. True enough, there are potential pitfalls in actually implementing assessment. And it must be admitted that the effort to define, measure, and improve learning does not always result in genuine improvements to learning. But I believe it can be done well. Moreover, I believe that it must be done well at BYU—that is, done in ways that both improve learning and justify the cost of the incremental improvements from measuring learning.

As to the second objection: I admit we do not have a choice about whether we develop and use demonstrable learning outcomes. We are under a mandate to do so. Each program, without exception, must define and publish learning outcomes, determine appropriate evidence for measuring these outcomes, and develop feedback loops to improve. The failure of any program to comply could jeopardize the accreditation of all programs. However, this necessity does not obviate choice. We still have choices. We can choose to do this in ways that actually help us get better along dimensions that really matter to us or we can choose to do a half-hearted, perfunctory job.

Let us choose to do this well. Let us make a virtue of necessity by building an even better house of learning. I beg you not to erect in your wing of our house Potemkin façades, designed merely to impress rather than improve. Such "whited sepulchres" might "outwardly appear righteous unto men."[9] They might even satisfy our accreditors. But I greatly fear that engaging in widespread institutional insincerity would disqualify BYU for the Spirit, upon which learning in this house so crucially depends.

As I said in my first address to you, at BYU we must always choose to pursue excellence in ways that keep alive the highest motives that brought us here. We must therefore never sacrifice being good in order to seem great. For surely, in God's eyes, while it is good to be great, it is greater to be good. So let's *do what we must* in such a way that we actually *become what we should* in the eyes of God—whose accreditation, as President Samuelson said this morning, must always be our overriding concern at BYU.

A Paradigm Shift to Learning

Well, enough exhortation. I am sorry to go on at such length, but I worry that the Northwest deadline and emphasis on assessment may tempt some to do the wrong things for the wrong reasons rather than the right things for the right reasons. Now let me briefly describe developments within the academy fomenting a sea change from what has been called an "instruction paradigm" to a "learning paradigm."

I first became aware of this in the mid-nineties when I read an article in *Change* magazine by Robert B. Barr and John Tagg entitled "From Teaching to Learning—A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education."[10] The article went on to become one of the most frequently quoted essays on higher education in recent times. In this article the authors announced and gave a name to a so-called paradigm shift occurring in the academy. The article begins:

> *A paradigm shift is taking hold in American higher education. In its briefest form, the paradigm that has governed our colleges is this: A college is an institution that exists* to provide instruction. *Subtly but profoundly we are shifting to a new paradigm: A college is an institution that exists* to produce learning. *This shift changes everything.*[11]

Barr and Tagg went on to explain how this shift could potentially change everything. Here is a redacted version of some points of contrast they enumerated:

The Instruction Paradigm	**The Learning Paradigm**
Mission and Purposes	
Provide/deliver instruction	Produce learning
Transfer knowledge from faculty to students	Elicit student discovery and construction of knowledge
Offer courses and programs	Create powerful learning environments
Improve the quality of instruction	Improve the quality of learning
Criteria for Success	
Inputs, resources	Learning and student-success outcomes
Quality of entering students	Quality of exiting students
Quantity and quality of resources	Quantity and quality of outcomes
Teaching/Learning Structures	
Grading within classes by instructors	External evaluations of learning
Private assessment	Public assessment
Degree equals accumulated credit hours	Degree equals demonstrated knowledge and skills
Learning Theory	
Knowledge comes in "chunks" and "bits" delivered by instructors	Knowledge is constructed, created, and "gotten"[12]

Now, while the paradigm shift that Barr and Tagg identified in 1995 has not yet changed everything, it does explain the shifting of the plate tectonics underlying the landscape of higher education. Barr and Tagg's seminal essay is still worth reading. It may help you understand, as it did me, why the ubiquitous focus on assessment and outcomes as well as why the term *learning* figures in virtually every higher education conference nowadays in addition to so many current movements such as learning communities, community-based learning, collaborative learning, mentored learning, and on and on.

If you are interested in a fuller exposition of what a learning university might look like, you might want to check out John Tagg's book *The Learning Paradigm College,* published in 2003.[13] A number of faculty read this in connection to Tagg's campus visit a couple weeks ago for a GE seminar.

It would be easy—but unfair, in my view—to dismiss this so-called paradigm shift as simply the newest educational fad to sweep the academy. No doubt there are faddish elements about the learning movement, including the term *paradigm shift* itself. But there is more to this change than trendiness or the misguided meddling by external agencies. A large body of scholarship about how people learn informs the shift from instruction to learning. If you are interested in a comprehensive review of this research, I suggest you consult the 1991 and 2005 volumes by Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini: *How College Affects Students: Findings and Insights from Twenty Years of Research*[14] and *How College Affects Students,* vol. 2: *A Third Decade of Research.*[15]

Pascarella and Terenzini summarize and assess hundreds of scholarly studies. Among the most sobering conclusions they draw is that

> *on just about any outcome, . . . after taking into account the characteristics of the students enrolled, the dimensions along which American colleges and*

universities are typically . . . ranked . . . , such as . . . size, and selectivity, are simply not linked with important differences in . . . student learning.[16]

No wonder that higher education is being asked to measure value added, or that *Time* magazine recently raised questions about the cost/benefit of pricey Ivy League undergraduate education in a feature article entitled "Who Needs Harvard?"[17]

Speaking of Harvard, let me conclude this section by mentioning two highly readable recent books from Harvard University Press—both of which I gave to the deans this spring in our retreat.

In *What the Best College Teachers Do,* Ken Bain, a professor at New York University, reports on his extensive qualitative research about professors who have had "a sustained, substantial, and positive influence on how . . . students think, act, and feel."[18] Although the results were not surprising, I was grateful to have them so richly documented and discussed. Here are Bain's conclusions:

1. What Do the Best Teachers Know and Understand?

Without exception, outstanding teachers know their subjects extremely well. They are all active and accomplished scholars, artists, or scientists. . . .

2. How Do They Prepare to Teach?

Exceptional teachers treat [all] *elements of teaching as serious intellectual endeavors as intellectually demanding and important as their research and scholarship. . . .*

. . . They begin with questions about student learning objectives rather than about what the teacher will do. . . .

3. What Do They Expect of Their Students?

Simply put, the best teachers expect "more." But given that many professors "pile it on" their classes without necessarily producing great learning results, . . . to stimulate high achievement . . . they avoid objectives that are arbitrarily tied to the course and favor those that embody the kind of thinking and acting expected for life. . . .

4. What Do They Do When They Teach?

While methods vary, the best teachers often try to create . . . a "natural critical learning environment" [in which] *people learn by confronting intriguing . . . problems, authentic tasks that will challenge them to grapple with ideas, rethink their assumptions, and examine their mental models of reality. . . .*

5. How Do They Treat Students?

Highly effective teachers . . . reflect a strong trust in students. They usually believe that students want to learn, and they assume, until proven otherwise, that they can. . . .

6. How Do They Check Their Progress and Evaluate Their Efforts?

All the teachers we studied have some systematic program . . . to assess their own efforts and to make appropriate changes. . . . The assessment of students flows from primary learning objectives.[19]

The second book I want to call your attention to is *Our Underachieving Colleges* by Derek Bok, the former president and now current interim president of Harvard. It was just released this spring and is already receiving lots of attention. Bok draws on both his experience and that large body of empirical evidence I've already mentioned to raise fundamental questions about

how much progress college students actually make toward widely accepted goals of undergraduate education [such as] *writing, critical thinking, quantitative skills, and moral reasoning.*[20]

I was particularly struck by a very simple question Bok asked. After all the investments over the past 50 years in new buildings, new faculty, new courses, and new technologies, Bok asks:

Has the quality of teaching improved? More important, are students learning more than they did in 1950? Can they write with greater style and grace?

Do they speak foreign languages more fluently, read a text with greater comprehension, or analyze problems more rigorously?

The honest answer to these questions is that we do not know. In fact, we do not even have an informed guess that can command general agreement.[21]

Student Learning at BYU

Now to the next section of my talk: Student Learning at BYU. What do we know about student learning at BYU? The short answer for our accreditors was obviously "not enough." This surprised me. After all, we have lots of evidence that our graduates do well, don't we? Isn't this enough? Well, not quite, for three reasons: (1) we have to sort the data by program; (2) we have to measure value added against stated program and university objectives; and (3) we have to use our findings to improve student learning in *each* program. Some of us do all these things well, but it is not done well *consistently* across the campus.

Furthermore, many programs rely solely on secondary or indirect evidence, such as placement data and student and employer surveys. This is important evidence but incomplete. The Northwest Commission calls for BYU to develop more *primary or direct* assessments of the value added by each degree program toward the realization of stated outcomes. Direct forms of assessment include such measures as regionally and nationally normed exams and student portfolios. Some programs, like nursing and education, are already collecting and using direct evidence very effectively. But most programs are going to have to think about this carefully. We will provide seminars and materials to help.

Fortunately, BYU has collected a great deal of survey data on our students that is rich and ready to be mined. I call your attention to four sources of information: the *Alumni Questionnaire,*[22] the *Senior Survey,*[23] the *Employers of BYU Graduates Survey,*[24] and the *National Survey of Student Engagement* (NSSE).[25] We have just aggregated five years of Alumni Questionnaire data. This now gives small programs a large enough "N" to draw valid inferences. The NSSE is nationally normed. It provides important comparative data on students, albeit mostly from inputs. Every dean and each chair should have received copies of these four studies. Ideally, both direct and indirect evidence should be used to triangulate assessment of student learning, and then we must make changes where needed.

My deepest fear regarding assessment is that faculty will tailor objectives to measures rather than the other way around. That is, that we will define learning outcomes based on what is easy to measure. This would be a huge mistake because there is often an inverse correlation between what is easy to measure and what is important. For example, it is easy to measure if Latter-day Saints go through the temple. It is much harder to measure if the temple goes through us. But the latter is what we ought to care most about. So, please, as you develop learning outcomes, first determine what you really want your students to know, do, and become. Then figure out appropriate measures that flow from this. Otherwise, assessment may do more harm than good by causing BYU to lower its vision of the good.

Let me now mention one learning objective that I care about deeply: it is captured in the idea that a BYU education should enable students to give "a reason of the hope that is in" them—to borrow a phrase from 1 Peter that is also found in *The Aims of a BYU Education.*[26] This objective relates to several Aims, including "spiritually strengthening," "sound thinking," and "effective communication." It also roughly corresponds to writing, thinking, and moral reasoning skills discussed by Derek Bok and widely embraced in the academy as core to undergraduate education. To work on this objective would require us to develop better measures than we now have for assessing our

students' ability to think, communicate, and integrate their knowledge.

I think it would be worth focusing on this core goal as a university. I say this based on things I see in the surveys we do of our students and their employers, as well as on years of experience trying to help our students learn to think, communicate, and integrate knowledge better.

For example, I was surprised with the response to this question on critical thinking in the Senior Survey. Students were asked:

Did you ever participate in a major course in which instructors engaged students in critical reflection, integration, application or other forms of "critical thinking" about the specific content of the course?[27]

One would think no student would answer "never," but a tithe did, and others suggested that this doesn't happen in virtually every course. Maybe the respondents simply misunderstood the term *critical thinking.* I hope so. But I'd like to find out.

Similarly, students were asked:

Did you ever participate in a major course in which instructors discussed course content in a way that meaningfully included a relationship between course content and gospel principles or that placed course content in a context of gospel principles?

Sixteen percent said "never."[28] And, again, some also answered that integration seldom occurred.

I noticed that our student's employers, while overwhelmingly positive, suggest that some of our graduates need to improve writing skills, presentation skills, and the ability to interact with others who do not share their values. Again, these are relatively minor blemishes in an overwhelmingly positive picture, but perhaps they are matters we should attend to if we want our students to be able to communicate effectively the hope that is in them to the larger world.

The last piece of evidence suggesting to me that we have room for improvement comes from my experience giving mock interviews to candidates for major scholarships like the Rhodes Scholarship. Sometimes even these students have trouble explaining not simply *what* they believe but *why* they believe it and *how* their views on matters such bioethics, war and peace, affirmative action, etc., cohere with everything else they believe. They stumble a bit when one gets to the second or third follow-up question or when one asks integrative questions like "How does what you know about the second law of thermodynamics relate to what you believe about the Resurrection and the renewal of the earth?"

All of this suggests to me that we can do a better job preparing our students to be able to express reasons for the hope that is in them. I want our students to be able to stand on Mars Hill, before the wise of the world, empowered to give articulate reasons for the hope that is in them. I want them to better understand the implications of their ideas—which I regard as a defining trait of an educated person. I want them to be supremely well disciplined in the rigorous task of learning both by faith and by study so that they truly may go out into the world "prepared in all things."[29]

Faculty Learning at BYU

Obviously, for us to help our students achieve these ends, we must model great learning ourselves. We must be rigorous thinkers. We must be effective communicators. We must be disciplined, not only in the methodologies of our disciplines but also in the disciplines of discipleship—such as learning by the Spirit, by faith, by worthiness, by fasting, and by prayer. And we must be able and willing to integrate truth in the quest to understand how it ultimately coheres in a great whole. So far I have focused almost exclusively on student learning,

but I am also committed to improving faculty learning as an essential element of making BYU a better house of learning.

You will recall that Ken Bain concluded: "Without exception, outstanding teachers . . . are all active and accomplished scholars, artists, or scientists."[30] Last year Brent Webb gave a powerful and persuasive talk at the faculty session of this conference entitled "A Learning Environment at BYU" that made the same point. In it Brent argued compellingly "that faculty who are good teachers, and those who are productive scholars, are really energetic learners. They create a learning environment where they are passionate about discovery."[31] I invite you to reread Brent's talk, which is available on the academic vice president's Web site.

Our success at BYU depends on our hiring and promoting faculty who are themselves great learners and who are prepared and able to involve students—especially undergraduate students—in "a period of intensive learning," to quote from BYU's Mission Statement, "where a commitment to excellence is expected."[32] Therefore, we need a faculty with a passion for learning, because outstanding teaching and great research are kindled by this same flame.

I think of Elder Eyring's father, Henry Eyring, as a model of this sort of teacher-scholar. He was devout in his faith as well as a world-class chemist who never lost his boyish enthusiasm for learning and teaching. His son described how his father, even late in his career, came to him one day excited about a new way to help freshmen learn math. On another occasion Henry Eyring announced to his chemistry class that he'd been wondering that morning in the shower why his body didn't dissolve in water. That's a great question! It engaged his students. It modeled for them how teacher-scholars are always thinking, always asking questions, always making connections. We, too, need to be such learners, inflamed with a burning desire to understand, for, as Yeats remarked, "Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire."[33]

Given how critical scholarship is to building a better house of learning at BYU, I am concerned that we do not seem to be getting better as measured by the scholarly productivity and activity indexes, at least as a university. I recognize that there are pockets in the university that have shown great improvement. Yet I remain concerned, especially about the university activity index, which measures the percent of faculty in any given year who produce peer-reviewed work. Our university activity index stands at a little over 60 percent. It has remained relatively flat for years. This flat trend line is puzzling because BYU has been hiring more research-active faculty and because we have mature policies and processes in place that should increase scholarly activity among our faculty. At our spring retreat I encouraged our deans to address this issue. I invite you to do the same in your units.

Meanwhile, we in the central administration will try to unpack the activity rate by determining what percentage of the faculty would be inactive if one expanded the time frame to two or three years. One would expect a somewhat lower activity rate in the book-culture disciplines than in those where publishing multiple articles a year is the norm.

In addition to raising the scholarly activity index, we need to raise quality. This is harder to measure and concomitantly more important. One college has set a goal of both reaching a 90-percent activity ratio and producing "enduring scholarship and teaching." They will look at things like citation indexes and other measures of impact; they will also look at what teaching really made a difference for their graduates five, 10, and 20 years after graduation.

I like this formulation: "enduring scholarship and teaching." All of us hope our teaching has a half-life in the minds and hearts of our students that outlasts the final exam. Similarly,

we hope our scholarship endures longer than the evening news. As I prepared to publish a book on Milton, I resonated to his yearning to "leave something so written to after-times, as they should not willingly let it die."[34]

I have obviously not succeeded as did Milton. Nonetheless, I am trying still to do my bit for learning. I am still publishing a little, including my first article with a student, and I recently signed a book contract with a university press. I want to fulfill my commitment to you that I would try to be an *academic* academic vice president. My challenge to all of us, as faculty, is to keep active in our scholarly and creative works. We should be having an influence for good on our disciplines. This will bless our students, the university, and the kingdom. So keep the flame of learning burning bright—even though, as I well know, this often requires burning the midnight oil.

Perspectives on Our House of Learning from Y Mountain

Finally, let me conclude by recounting an experience I shared with the deans during our spring retreat. We began our day by hiking up Y Mountain. The idea was to get perspective on BYU as a house of learning. It was also to commemorate the century mark of the block Y's construction. Climbing the Y connected us with a very old campus tradition and brought back memories for those of us who had been undergraduates here in the days when we used to whitewash the Y. We gazed across the campus, surveying the scene with the eyes of memory, noting how over the years the campus has steadily expanded from its beginnings in downtown Provo up to Maeser quad and on up "temple hill" toward the mountains.

As I contemplated this scene in the peaceful light of dawn, I saw our campus in a new light. From Y Mountain, BYU appears as one of three great LDS institutions of learning whose campuses are now contiguous: BYU, the MTC, and the Provo Temple. Each in a different way fulfills the divine injunction given by the Lord to His fledgling church:

Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.[35]

This vision from Y Mountain reminded me of an experience President Oaks described in an Annual University Conference address almost 30 years ago. Said he:

Often in the last three years I have stood at the window of my office, looking out across the northern part of the campus to the Language Training Mission and the temple. I tell the visitors who share this sight that these three institutions—university, mission, and temple—are the most powerful combination of institutions on the face of the earth. They make this place unique in all the world. Now, after studying the 88th section, I see even more clearly the common origins of all three institutions in a single great revelation.[36]

I came to see and feel that May morning what President Oaks learned years ago:

To a Father in heaven who has given no temporal law and to whom all things are spiritual (D&C 29:34), the work of temple, school, and ministry must all be seen as the unified work of the kingdom.[37]

What a privilege and solemn responsibility is ours to be laborers in a house of learning that shares not only proximity with the temple but the same vision of learning as set forth in section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants. I count myself so blessed to be numbered with you, my dear colleagues, in this great work of education for eternity. God bless us all to become greater learners and more effective teachers this year. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. Mozart, "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" from *The Magic Flute,* English translation by Clayne Robison:

In these holy halls there is no vengefulness,
And thus in pleasantness, love leads on to duty.
Here we walk hand in hand with friends,
Satisfied and happy into a better land.
Within these hallowed walls we love one another.
No traitor lurks, since all foes are forgiven.
He who does not delight in such teachings
Has not yet learned to be human.

2. D&C 88:119.

3. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "Emily Dickinson's Letters." *Atlantic Monthly* 68, no. 408 (October 1891): 453.

4. *HC* 4:269.

5. John S. Tanner, "'One of the Great Lights of the World': Seeking Learning by Study and Faith at BYU," BYU Annual University Conference faculty session, 23 August 2005, 2.

6. Tanner, "Great Lights," 5.

7. Tanner, "Great Lights," 6; emphasis in original.

8. See Scott Evenbeck and Sharon Hamilton, "From 'My Course' to 'Our Program': Collective Responsibility for First-Year Student Success," *Peer Review* 8, no. 3 (summer 2006): 17–19.

9. Matthew 23:27–28

10. See Robert B. Barr and John Tagg, "From Teaching to Learning—A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education," *Change* 27, no. 6 (November/December 1995): 12–25.

11. Barr and Tagg, "A New Paradigm," 13; emphasis in original.

12. Excerpts from tables in Barr and Tagg, "A New Paradigm," 16–17.

13. See John Tagg, *The Learning Paradigm College* (Bolton, Massachusetts: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 2003).

14. See Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: Findings and Insights from Twenty Years of Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991).

15. See Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2005).

16. Pascarella and Terenzini, *A Third Decade,* 641; see also note in introduction in Derek Bok, *Our Underachieving Colleges* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 10.

17. See Nancy Gibbs and Nathan Thornburgh, "Who Needs Harvard?" *Time* 168, 8 (21 August 2006): 36–44.

18. Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5.

19. Bain, *Best College Teachers,* 15–19.

20. Dust jacket front flap of Derek Bok, *Our Underachieving Colleges* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

21. Bok, *Underachieving,* 30.

22. See *Alumni Questionnaire* (Provo: BYU Institutional Assessment and Analysis, 2006).

23. See *Senior Survey: 2004–2005 Graduates Report* (Provo: BYU Institutional Assessment and Analysis, 2005).

24. See Eric Jenson and Danny R. Olsen, *Employers of BYU Graduates Survey* (Provo: BYU Institutional Assessment and Analysis, 2005).

25. See Danny R. Olsen, *2005 National Survey of Student Engagement* (Provo: BYU Institutional Assessment and Analysis, 2005).

26. 1 Peter 3:15; see also *The Mission of Brigham Young University* and *The Aims of a BYU Education* (Provo: BYU, 1996), 4.

27. BYU, "Senior Survey," 20.

28. BYU, "Senior Survey," 20.

29. D&C 88:80.

30. Bain, *Best College Teachers,* 15.

31. Brent W. Webb, "A Learning Environment at BYU," BYU Annual University Conference faculty session address, 23 August 2005, 3; http://avp.byu.edu/documents/pdf/BWW-AUC.pdf.

32. *Mission and Aims,* 1.

33. Attributed to William Butler Yeats; cited in Evenbeck and Hamilton, "From 'My Course' to 'Our Program'," 17.

34. John Milton, *The Reason of Church Government* (1641), book 2, introduction.

35. D&C 88:119.

36. Dallin H. Oaks, "A House of Faith," BYU Annual University Conference, 31 August 1977, 8.

37. Oaks, "House of Faith," 8.