

MEETING PRESIDENT CLARK:

AN INTERVIEW

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Editor's note: President Clark offered to expand on his three remarks in the press conference of 6 June 2005 and also on the two classroom stories in his devotional address on 7 June. He spoke with Perspective on 24 August.

Perspective: Thank you, President Clark, for acquainting us more fully with your thoughts and experience relative to learning and teaching. On June 6 you said, “BYU–Idaho has a great mission to educate generations of young people who will bring strong values, competence, and character to their families, their church, their communities and indeed, the world.” What experiences did you have at Harvard University that will help you accomplish this mission of BYU–Idaho?

President Clark: Some things in the realm of teaching and learning that I bring with me will be valuable in pursuing the mission. I don't yet know whether they're already in practice at BYU–Idaho; that's something we'll have to discover. Some traditions I've been associated with, I think are very powerful but have never been applied to undergraduate education. They are only applied in a few places in graduate education. But I think we have the possibility of applying them here.

The general name of this approach to education is the Case Method, but that doesn't quite capture what it is really about. It's fundamentally about student-centered learning. It's about discussion-based learning. It's very much focused on an inductive approach to discovery. It's about learning how to teach by asking questions, learning to put responsibility on students to learn by teaching one another. It is a system for learning and teaching in which there are many elements; it's not just a pedagogy that a faculty member uses.

One element of the system is the material. You have to have materials that get the students engaged. You can't pull them off a shelf; you have to have a process in which they are created. Materials are crafted as the starting point for discussion, sometimes by the teacher, sometimes by students. Typically they are problems that require some kind of decision or action.

In history, it could be a particular historical episode unfolding. I'll give you an example. At Harvard we teach a course called *The Coming of Managerial Capitalism*. It examines the emergence of capitalism in its managerial form in the United States and goes back to the eighteenth century. It has cases like that of John D. Rockefeller and Standard

Oil. It puts the students in the position to respond to questions like: “Here’s the circumstance. What do you think we should do?” You can imagine applying this in English or math or whatever. In math it could be a problem of application of a certain mathematical principle.

The second element of the system is that students have to be prepared when they walk into class. There has to be an expectation that students come in well prepared, ready to participate. Then the faculty have to know how to teach discovery. It is much more difficult to teach this way; it’s much easier to just talk for 45 minutes. It’s harder to go in and talk very little and get the students to talk, for there to be real, effective learning in the class. You learn how to listen, how to ask good questions, how to follow up. There’s a whole bunch of stuff you learn about how to orchestrate a class that works in this manner.

But the reason I think it’s important is that it has a lot of wonderful consequences. The students are deeply engaged. They learn a set of skills that are incredibly valuable: problem solving, methods of discovery, things about themselves. They learn more. You can teach deeper.

Students are not only participating in their own education but they are putting themselves on the line. They’re exposing themselves to more learning because they are participating in the process. I believe such action by students is an important part of learning by faith. It is riskier for students because they could be wrong. So you create an environment where it’s okay to take risks and say, “Well, this is what I think.” That is why charity is such an important part of learning in this way. Doing all of this opens the opportunity for faculty to teach more deeply and for students to learn a lot more about themselves.

I hope we’ll explore this together over time and see if there’s some application that might work here. To my knowledge it has never been done extensively in undergraduate education. It might be done here or there, but I can envision BYU–Idaho becoming known for an approach to teaching and learning that would be path-breaking.

Perspective: To your way of thinking, what is the difference between training and education?

President Clark: On this campus we are doing some of both. Training, I think, is more specific, much more task-oriented, where you are teaching certain skills and helping people develop skills. I think education is much deeper. It’s broader. It’s much more about the whole person, and we are definitely about that. But we are also doing some training.

In my field I used to tell students, “We want you to be leaders. But you need to know how to read a balance sheet, and you need to know how to calculate certain measures of things.” You need to know how to do that, or if you are in engineering we want you to be able to look at a design and evaluate its characteristics and assess the stress on a particular beam—will it hold the weight that’s on it? We want you to be able to do the calculations and know the principles, so there’s training involved. We also want there to be education of the person, and I think the greater weight should be on education. We are about educating the whole person more deeply. But we also must do a good job of training people to be useful. It’s an element of education.

Perspective: You mentioned in faculty meeting yesterday that education is a developmental process. I’ve been thinking about that—that we are here to teach, to help students become who they want to be and, more important, who the Lord wants them to be. Since it’s more important who you are than what you know or what you do, my question is: How do we assess that, both in the classroom and at the university level? What are the kinds of assessments? Can they be measured and tracked and put on a spreadsheet?

President Clark: We should be careful about assessing and measuring with spreadsheets because certain good indicators of progress or lack thereof are measurable but are not numbers. They are more indicative of the direction you are going. You can count things and reduce them to numbers, but that’s not really what we’re about. I think it is useful to pursue how we would assess the Spirit of Ricks. I think we’d find out it has multiple dimensions, and therefore there must be many different measures including the spirituality of the students and their spiritual growth. Sometimes you can assess that by someone’s behavior and things they end up doing.

And sometimes the measure of the school is what happens after they leave, so you have to track and see where they go and what they do. We need to focus on changes that take place. We need to focus one year out, five years out, eventually ten years out. The Church has recently done a major study on exactly this issue. They were able to ask people questions about spiritual dimensions as well as their families and work and other things they’ve done, and they learned some very interesting things about the students who graduate from this University. I think there are some systematic ways to do that. We can track other indicators of the things we’re interested in about the quality of the educational experience in terms of the way students go and how they have been educated and trained and how they’ve stepped

up in the world. It's multidimensional. It's definitely something we should spend time thinking through.

Perspective: Your second point on June 6 was the importance of "great learning and great teaching" at BYU-Idaho, when you mentioned "ongoing innovation in programs and pedagogy, including innovation in the use of technology." Given that investment in computers does not guarantee better education, what are some examples from your experience where technology has made a significant impact on learning and teaching?

President Clark: I believe strongly that technology is going to have a profound influence, a very profound effect, and is already beginning to. But we are kind of at the Kitty Hawk phase of flight. It's very early in development, but I think it will be profound. There's a lot of garbage out there, a lot of really bad stuff. One of the reasons most people don't complete online courses is because they are terrible. They are terrible experiences for the students, a lot of them. Technology is still at a very early age.

Let me give you an example where the technology allows you to pursue an educational objective that you could do in no other way. It comes from a case, the Columbia shuttle disaster at NASA. The faculty went to the public record of hearings on the disaster. This is the one where the foam hit the wing and the guys didn't take the pictures, and the shuttle came back through the atmosphere and disintegrated. The public record was extensive. So they designed this experience for the students based on the public record and also on some interviews with people who had worked at NASA or who were on the commission that studied the disaster and were willing to be put on tape.

The student experience works like this: You go on a system like *Blackboard* to find your assignment for the next day, and it says, "Go to this website." So you go to the website. Up pops this screen and it is a picture of the shuttle and the space program. It says, "Here's a bit of background to read, and when you're finished with it, click on this." So you click and up comes a profile of one of the senior people at NASA. Six of them are profiled. And you go through one person's experience in the shuttle disaster, beginning on day one, and it goes through about 16 days.

You click on day one and up comes your calendar for the day. All of a sudden the phone rings. You click on the phone call and hear a voice say, "Cindy, we got this report of such and such, and we just want to make sure we raise this item at the meeting." Next comes a meeting, so you click on it and go into a simulated meeting, and because they

have some videotape from NASA that was on television you can watch yourself in action. So your preparation for this class, which probably takes about an hour and a half, is to go through the shuttle disaster as this person experienced it in the form of meetings, phone calls, memos, and emails. You get a perspective based on the information that person had. All this leads up to a meeting that was held at a crucial point in this saga when some key decisions were made.

Each student gets one of the six perspectives—but only one. The technology allows the teacher to randomly divide the class into six groups and tells who is in each one. When the class meets, you say, “How many of you are Cindy?” and you get several hands. You pick one of them. A representative for each person profiled comes down and you say, “Okay, your job is to run this meeting.” Each student comes in prepared with one background, but they don’t know what the other people know. So they begin this meeting and you tell them, “We want you to be in character, so you play this role the way you learned about this person and watched her or him in action.”

You let them play this meeting for a while, and then you stop the meeting and ask the class, “What did you think of this meeting, and what you do think of the way these people are playing? Why did they play these roles this way?” You start fleshing out why the organization is behaving the way it is. The fundamental issue is that there was a group at NASA who wanted to have the Air Force turn its satellite cameras on the shuttle and take pictures so they could see the wing, and that request got turned down. It went all the way up to the top and it got turned down. So this meeting is about this issue.

There’s a lot of tension because the students already know what happened; there’s a lot of tension. But they’re trying to figure out why these people behave this way, and eventually in this class you get to the deeper issue, which is, Why do organizations fail to see, or fail to take action to avoid, things that are disastrous for the organization yet are right there to be seen if they have the eyes to see? Why do they become blind? How do organizations...what happens? Why are these people unable to see this?

The students said it was one of the most powerful educational experiences they were ever in, and it is completely impossible to do without the technology. The technology allows you to create media and bring information to bear without which it’s impossible—you couldn’t do it.

I’ve seen this happen in lots of different subjects, like in art. You’re teaching an art history class, and the technology is incredibly powerful

in taking you into the art you're studying because it allows you to do things you can't do, to go into the Vatican and actually look at these pieces of art with vantage points you can't get. And also, to have right at your fingertips deeper information about the artist, or about a particular work and its relationship to others. So you're diving in, getting more input. You just can't do that without technology.

So I think the answer is to get creative about using the technology to do things you can do in no other way. There should be some rule, like Ockham's razor in philosophy, to find the simplest way, the best, simplest way, the lowest-cost way, to achieve our educational objective: that should be our goal. And we should have the technology to allow us to do things we can do in no other way. It will be powerful.

Technology also does some things that allow you to break the connection between location and time. That can be very powerful. We can have kids off campus getting great educational experiences because they're locked into a system that we have created. It's really powerful. We've seen a little bit of that. We've experimented with teaching people quantitative methods, probability, and so forth, and it's really powerful. I don't know how many of you have taken probability courses. You watch someone teaching kids what a distribution is, and you watch a distribution emerge on the screen. You watch how it's created and then what an average is and why. You use visuals and graphics and simulation.

It's very powerful. Kids come away and they really know what a distribution is. They really understand variance; they really understand what you're talking about because they've seen it in action. The more senses you get engaged in learning a thing, the more you can learn it. I think that's what technology is about.

Perspective: Who creates all this technology?

President Clark: Somebody once said to me that you need people who are instructional designers, software developers, people who know how to write stuff. What's really cool is that it's getting to be really, really cheap. That is, in this kind of thing there's nothing very complicated from a programming standpoint. It is just custom assembly of different pieces and organizing it. The magic is in the instructional design, not in the software. We need a few who are real magic guys for making things look pretty and dance around and stuff. We had a group of about four people who did a lot of this.

We've got 12,000 kids on this campus; I'll bet you a thousand of them are hot shots at this stuff, really good at it. You get them

engaged. Today in the press conference, the press asked me, “What is the untapped resource of BYU–Idaho?” I said it was the students. We’ve got to harness them, put them to work. It’s going to be part of their educational experience, and part of their ability to learn is in doing work.

Perspective: How do we faculty concentrate our efforts to serve the students better?

President Clark: It’s hard, but I have a couple of ideas. There’s a focus in this institution, which is absolutely wonderful, on undergraduates. That will be very helpful. I think there may be a way to develop what you might think of as component processes, component building blocks of educational experience that are so powerful they can be applied in many different disciplines. In other words, you don’t have to have a separate set of things going on in every single department. There can be some central kinds of tools developed or templates created to be reused and applied.

And then, about Health Science or something, you say, “I want the content to be this, but I can put it in this framework, and I can use these modules to do what I want to do. I have to change the content, but the underlying technology, the kind of systems that make it work, are just the same as those guys are using over there in English.” We have learned to create kinds of tools that are very flexible, so you focus your development work on tools and modules and so forth.

I think technology lends itself to do that quite nicely. You have a tool kit, and you write it in such a way that pretty much all that the faculty has to do is point and click and maybe type. You say “Well, I’ve got this thing I’d like to do.” And you say, “Well, here’s a library of stuff you can choose from, and here’s a template you can work with, and here’s some other stuff.” And you assemble it: point and click. And then the computer system, the software, assembles it all, bang! And there you go; you’ve got a great thing.

Perspective: I do that with *PowerPoint* sometimes.

President Clark: The technology is going that way, and we’ll figure out how to take the principle even deeper so it can be used with video or simulations. You’ll have this simulation engine, and it’s got a little interface, and you just tell it what you want to simulate, and then it builds you a simulation. You don’t need a thousand programmers running around because the technology is embedded in the simulation engine.

Perspective: What about BYU–Idaho faculty maintaining academic currency and engaging in research and publishing?

President Clark: There is a dilemma we face, and it's one we have to confront head on. The dilemma is this: To get where we want to go, we may well need the faculty to be creating materials and doing what Elder Bednar called “inspired inquiry and innovation”—doing stuff that is really in the creative domain. But if we do that and fall into the practice (I think it's a trap) of the faculty placing so much importance on that kind of work that they begin to neglect their students or begin to feel that somehow “This is my work, and my work is more important than my students,” then we will completely fail.

We may need to do this, but we can't let it be for our benefit and for our glory, if you know what I mean. If you want to teach with a student-centered theme, if you want to give these kids something to work with and not just pull a textbook off the shelf, you've got to create it. So you create material, whatever is needed—we need a lot of that; we may need a fair amount of that. People are probably going to have to be willing to create that kind of stuff and get no personal credit for it.

I'll give you an example. When cases were being invented at the Harvard Business School back in the 20s, there was a decision made that turned out to be a master stroke. I don't even know if they knew what they were doing, but it was a genius decision. The decision was that when a case gets published it doesn't have the faculty member's name on it. You look at the case and it just has a title, and down at the bottom it says: This case is intended purely for classroom use and is not intended to represent anything real. And that's all there is; there is nothing about who wrote it. They produced maybe three or four hundred of them a year, and the faculty spent a lot of time writing them, and some were a lot better than others, and no one knew who the writers were. The faculty knew who did it, and the publishing operation knew because the faculty member had to give permission to publish. So we knew internally who had written the cases, but the world didn't know. Some put their cases on their résumés, and that was fine, but the world didn't know.

I wonder if we could do something like that where, if you pursue inspired inquiry as Elder Bednar indicated; and if you develop something and write something, you do it for your students. You do it to make the classes work better. You do it so their learning will be more effective, and you don't do it for your own glory. You don't do it so you can have a big résumé; you don't do it so your name will get

known in the world. You do it for the benefit of your students, and you may even publish it so it could be used in other places, but no one will know who wrote it.

Perspective: We actually do it that way with the Church curriculum, where there's no name. If you go back to earlier publications, they have names attached.

President Clark: Not anymore, unless it is the President of the Church.

Perspective: The material is all true and carefully looked at. But there's no name, so it's the same type of thing...

President Clark: ...the same type of thing. I had this impression, one of these little floodgate things that happen to me. I had the impression: What if we were a Zion community—that this really was Zion? If this really were Zion, what principle would govern the creation of new kinds of materials? I think it would probably be this principle: that people would consecrate their time and talents, not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of the whole, the benefit of their students, the benefit of the institution, the benefit of the Church, and they wouldn't care at all whether they got any credit. They would know it was consecrated for the well being, the welfare, of the whole. They would have satisfaction and get joy out of the fact that they were part of a great thing and it was a wonderful place to be, but it wouldn't be for their own personal gain. It would be completely antithetical to academic life anywhere else...

Perspective: ...as in the scripture: "...the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion..."

President Clark: ...right...

Perspective: "...for if they labor for money they shall perish" [2 Nephi 26:31].

President Clark: That's a great scripture. Maybe that's the solution that would help us avoid the trap of pride and the pride cycle, avoid getting caught up in individual stuff and stay focused on helping the students and helping the institution. We may need to develop a system and an approach where we're actually doing a lot more writing, a lot more scholarly creative work, so we can help our students learn better and more effectively. Not for any of our glory or anything, but for the students.

Perspective: You've been a teacher, a researcher, and an administrator. How does your experience in these roles influence your perception of each role in its place?

President Clark: Clearly my primary responsibility is as the leader of the University and as an administrator. But our work involves my other two lives, and I hope I'll be able to figure out a way to teach. I would like to teach; I love to teach. Elder Bednar was able to do it. If I teamed up with somebody, I hope we could do the same thing. I have lots of ideas about teaching and learning, and I have lots of ideas about research and so forth. I am sure that will come into the mix.

But my primary responsibility is in my administrative role. I actually don't like the word, but I have learned that my role is actually in ministering, not administering. It's working with people, it's trying to figure out what the Lord wants us to do. It's trying to live in tune and trying to work with people and get the right people in the right places doing the right things. It's a lot more about ministering than it is about administering.

Perspective: Your third comment on June 6 was about our inflection point in history, the spirit of innovation but also the legacy that ought to endure. You mentioned preparatory work you did at the Harvard Business School and your love for that kind of work. Will you elaborate on your phrase, "that kind of work"?

President Clark: It's the work of holding onto the thing and figuring out what ought to endure and be enduring in the institution, and figuring out what needs to change and then changing it. And "that kind of work" is this, trying to figure it out, and then figuring out how the two connect, because they have to connect.

I really enjoy trying to figure it out because it involves understanding in a deeper way what is emotional and symbolic about the past that people connect to, and it has meaning for people. And it's about creating meaning in what you do as a leader, so that people can draw on the strength and inspiration and power that come from the past but do it in such a way that they don't get caught there. They don't get stuck back there, but they are willing and prepared to go through the difficulties that come with change yet still draw strength from the legacy. So the legacy becomes a source of real power rather than a dead weight. That's the kind of work.

It's actually very interesting to try to understand that and articulate it and then tie it to the new stuff so that the whole thing feels like a whole, so that it feels good to people, and so that the organization can

move forward and be effective—because there’s a lot of change ahead for all of us, for me, for everybody. It’s just helpful to be able to draw on strength, and we have the Lord to help us, and the Spirit. It’s also really helpful to draw on that legacy and the values that have prevailed and ought to continue to prevail and tie them in, learning how to talk about it and articulate it so that people really relate to it.

Perspective: Can you give an example from Harvard where you did that?

President Clark: Yes. Historically there was a very strong ethic at the Harvard Business School around the classroom and making it a special place, even to the point that some of it was obsessive. For example in 1949, when they designed a new classroom building, they built mockups of classrooms and taught classes in mocked-up classrooms just to test what was better, and they argued over it, an inch here and an inch there, “It should be just this big”—just details. And those classrooms have been created and are very effective and very powerful. And so what went on in there was special, with a kind of mystique about it.

We felt that we wanted to preserve some of that, but we wanted to bring technology in too. So how do you do that? How do you get people engaged in the new stuff but don’t leave what’s terrific and should continue? It was a matter of finding some energy sources. It was a matter of framing the technology in ways, and figuring out where we get the first applications, and deciding what’s the first thing we try to work on: how do we couch it and how do we communicate it and how do we tie it to our old values and get it applied? We had to be pretty tough on some things and kind of flexible on others.

The other thing we learned is—and this is true at this University too, I guarantee it—if you give the students a taste of what you’re trying to do, they will grab it. The other value that we have, to be very strongly student-oriented, just overwhelms any resistance out there. So we put the technology in the hands of the students and developed some really effective applications that the students loved. And there was this sucking sound, just sucking the faculty forward because students wanted and demanded it, so if you were teaching and didn’t use the stuff, they would revolt. They would say, “Why aren’t you doing this? This is hurting our education. Why aren’t you putting your course up on the system? What’s wrong?” There was tremendous pressure that the students put up, and we thought that was great. You try to figure out how to implement things in a way that draws on the strength of the past without undercutting.

Another example was the library. The icon of the Harvard Business School is its library. I don't know if you've ever seen a picture of it, but it sits on the river and has a green space that comes up to this big neo-Georgian building. It has Doric columns in front, great white columns, and a triangular roofline. It's an absolutely spectacular building. It was built in 1926 and just needed to be renovated. There was a big issue about, "What do we need a library for? What's the deal because we've got Google? What do we need in a library? What's the library?" A lot of people worried about that.

This building was the icon of the school, so the dilemma was: How do you take a library into the 21st century and have it become what it needs to become but maintain its iconic structure and some aspects that need to be preserved? For example, we have a very strong commitment to historical collections.

So we launched the project and tried to figure out how to craft it, a huge project. It was a daunting undertaking, and you know, we didn't really tell everybody exactly what the project was going to do as we lopped off 60 percent of the building and dug a hole 30 feet in the ground and put all the stacks underground and then built a new library and renovated the old 40 percent, which was the part facing the river, and created this new building and designed it so that the old building and the new building were in the same style.

The concept, the architectural work, was to make this whole thing seamless so that the new building had a whole new set of functions in it, and in the meantime we were reinventing the library organization. We hired—this was just an amazing set of confluences; it was wonderful—we hired a woman from a background that was hardly what I think people had in mind when we advertised the position. Her previous job was in knowledge management at Microsoft. She had worked at Microsoft for a number of years and wanted to move to the east coast for family reasons. She applied for the job and we hired her and she is phenomenal. She is not a librarian, but she's all about managing knowledge. So the library is reinventing itself as the knowledge and information service on the campus, supporting the teaching and learning and research of its faculty and being the experts of information and knowledge management and creation on campus.

It's a completely different model, but we still have historical collections. The building became a way, a project, to articulate for the community the old and new. At the same time we had taken everybody out of the building and spread them all over creation for two years because we didn't have a library for two years. So we could change the organization,

and we brought someone in who is very creative at doing that. We ended up, now that it's finished, going into a new building with a new organization, a new strategy, and yet the building looks like it was built in 1926. The library organization is very different and is evolving.

You try to figure out what are the things you really want to hold onto, so you have the beautiful historical collections and a lot of investment in that, but we have this space-age woman running this thing who is creating a completely different organization...

Perspective: ...without any opposition, I'm sure. Can you tell us the meaning for you of such phrases as "the Spirit of Ricks" and "rethinking education"?

President Clark: Well, I've read a lot about these phrases, and I think they are really important and very, very meaningful. You can feel the spirit on this campus; you can feel the spirit of consecration that's here. You can feel the spirit of friendliness and warmth and willingness to help each other, a kind of devotion that's just wonderful.

Elder Bednar used to say it was the Holy Ghost in action. That's how he used to talk about it: the Holy Ghost working on the campus. I think that's a really masterful summary. But it manifests itself in many, many different ways, and it's in the way people treat each other, a kind of dedication. And I think consecration is prevalent here, for people to be willing to invest in each other and spend time with people. There's a lot of love on this campus.

Perspective: We have some apprehension about dangers around us. Would you tell us some of your thoughts about what we should prepare for?

President Clark: I don't know for sure, but I think they come in the form of a paradox where you need to go down this road, and to get down this road you need to do some things and take some things with you. But the road has some tricky turns in it. We have to make sure we don't lose the Spirit of Ricks, no matter what. Elder Eyring said to me, "I am going to give you the same advice that President Kimball gave me when I went to Ricks College. His advice to me was, 'Don't mess it up.'" Elder Eyring said to me, "That's my advice to you. Don't mess it up." We have to be very careful.

We have to move quickly but be very careful we don't lose that. It's a very delicate thing that requires constant nourishment and constant attention. It springs out of the lives of the individual people on the

campus. We have already made some decisions in the last couple of days that any other school, even probably some of our sister schools, would just okay, saying, “That’s fine,” and we’ve not done that. We’ve turned some down, made other decisions, because we felt there was too much risk to the spirit here. It’s so important and we need to make sure we preserve it. It’s a delicate thing.

All the pressures in the world go exactly the opposite direction from where we have to go. To the extent that we get caught up in that or get attracted to it, we’ll run into some dangers. If we are conscious of it and if we talk to each other, I think we can navigate the road. The Lord will bless us. We can get where we need to go. It’s just like Elder Bednar said in 1998 about the ship of curious workmanship: it is curious and it’s not like anything else, but we can build it and the Lord will bless us.

Perspective: Our question included the possibility of assaults from off campus, maybe even a question about how students may come to us.

President Clark: I believe we have wonderful students at BYU–Idaho. As time goes on and the University’s reputation grows, we are going to start seeing better prepared kids apply here than have applied before. And we are going to have to be very clear about what we’re trying to do and whom we want on this campus. That’s going to be a challenge we face.

And the same thing will be true of faculty. We have to be careful because we could get attracted to some people who look really good but actually are the wrong people even though they look good in the world’s terms. But they’re not quite the right people to be here though they want to come, and we have to be cautious about that.

Perspective: There was a period when there was some restriction on admission, and now it’s more open. When there was restriction, it changed the classroom immensely. It just raised the level, and much more teaching could take place. Then admission opened up, and now it’s starting to be a little bit limited again.

President Clark: Here’s what’s going to happen. Over time we will get into a situation where we have to become selective in admissions. The scholastic quality of the young people coming to this campus will go up, and we just have to be careful that it goes up in the right dimensions, that we hit the right areas. But the quality of kids’ preparation is going to go up, I’m absolutely convinced of that.

Perspective: It's already wonderful compared to what it was twenty years ago.

President Clark: It is wonderful and it is going to get better because, first of all, the Church is growing, and second, this place is only five years old as a four-year option, and people are starting to hear about it. Word-of-mouth is starting to have an effect. In an important way it will be just like missionaries, where the Prophet said we need to raise the bar. Students will have to come better prepared.

I'll tell you about a letter I got, from a mission president whose daughter is fully capable, not only of getting into Provo, but probably into several other really top schools in the country. And he wrote me a letter and said, "You know, it's interesting but she has heard about BYU-Idaho and after some real reflection and prayer on her part, she's decided BYU-Idaho is her first choice." She wants to go here. I think she's starting this week. She got into BYU-Provo, and she decided to apply here as a backup. She got into Provo and then she decided to come here because she felt it was right for her. But she's the kind of student we'll get more and more of.

As time goes on, they'll see us as a real option: different from Provo, not the same; a little different setup, very different kind of thing; and as time goes on, really different from Provo but attractive to a certain kind of student. That's what we really have to be clear about and have discipline: we take this National Merit Scholar who looks phenomenal on paper, and we say, "No, because it's not quite right. There's seminary, there's the bishop's letter, and there are different things. It's not quite what we want on this campus."

Perspective: In your devotional address on June 7, you spoke about the classroom experience, how after preparation and prayer you felt pure intelligence flowing from the Spirit as you took an exam, and how, in another setting, your students worked synergistically from the level of facts and theories to the level of solving problems and making decisions, then to a third level where they could learn about themselves. What did you learn from initial failures in your own university studies?

President Clark: I tried in that story to lay out some of the things I believe about education, about levels of learning and so forth.

I will say one thing about my failure. I learned a lot from the experience. My freshman year was a disaster. It was just an unbelievable disaster in all dimensions except spiritually. It was a great year in the Church. I had a great experience there in the Church, but academically and

socially it was a mess. One thing I learned from that experience is that you need to enjoy; there needs to be joy in learning. If there's not joy, you've got to withdraw. You should drop that class. Now you will have some things that are required and you have to take, but if you find yourself in all classes where every single one of them is a grind and it's labor every day, it's bad. You can't perform very well. That's one thing I learned.

Perspective: I'm thinking about some of the classroom scenarios that you suggested. Do you see more collaborative learning and maybe less lecturing?

President Clark: Much less lecturing, much less. I would say 80-20, maybe 20 percent of the time in lecture. In a class you might have this really great discussion going on, and it comes to some resolution and you say, "Let me just take a couple of minutes and share with you some ideas that might help summarize what we're doing." Or better, you might turn to Michelle, who's in the class, and say, "Michelle, how would you summarize this class?" And Michelle summarizes, and that's powerful. Or you might say, at the end of a module, "Let me share with you a few ideas that may help pull some of these ideas together," and you lecture a little bit. But a lot of the learning is really collaborative, and the students come prepared to teach one another. That phrase appears regularly in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Perspective: Thank you, President Clark, for your candor and generosity. Finally, as Latter-day Saints we follow the Prophet. As BYU-Idaho faculty we follow the Prophet. In a university setting this creates the paradox that we await top-down direction and at the same time try to innovate from the bottom up. What are your reflections on these competing models?

President Clark: I don't know enough about this, the way things work here, but I can tell you a little bit from my experience. An amazing thing happens. People can be faculty members for years, and they become administrators, and those who are still on the faculty don't think they're faculty anymore. They don't see them as "one of us." They see them as "one of them." The more we can get rid of the "us and them" and see that we have different roles but we're really all engaged in the same work—that really helps.

From what I can see and from what I've felt, this is just a great faculty. I think we're going to have a great time together. I think we'll learn how to work. We may have little issues here and there, but I think we'll have a great time together. We'll learn from each other, and I'll

share with you my personal philosophy about academics and faculties. And we'll try to figure out effective ways to do this, but sometimes, because of what we need to do, it needs to be a little bit like it has been in the last few years where we just need to take action.

But I think there are four things that people need who are in this kind of role, people who work in universities and have responsibilities of a professional kind, where they have really strong expertise that they bring to bear in their work. The first thing they need is opportunity to grow. They need opportunities to continue to develop and grow and stretch their capacity. Second, they need recognition. They need to be recognized for what they do. This is typically not public recognition and honors and awards, but it's recognition in the form of genuine gratitude on the part of their students or the people who work with them, the administrators, the leaders, for the work they do. Third, they need to be rewarded for what they do. Rewards come in many different forms, not just monetary, but in opportunity, in advancement, in responsibility, in whatever the coin of the realm is. People need to be rewarded: "You're doing a great job; you're doing well; you need to be rewarded for doing that." We have to figure out what the coin of the realm is. And the last thing people need is voice, to have some sense that they have a voice in what's going on in the institution, that they care about it deeply, that they're committed to it and they want it to be as great as it can be. There needs to be some opportunity for voice. ☺