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TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM: A STUDY OF PROFESSIONALISM FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS IN THE SEMINARY AND INSTITUTES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE CHURCH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

by

Michael L. Cottle

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Education  
(Curriculum and Instruction)

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Logan, Utah

2014

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**ABSTRACT**

Teacher Professionalism: A Study of Professionalism for Religious Educators in the  
Seminary and Institutes Department of the Church Educational System

by

Michael L. Cottle, Doctor of Education

Utah State University, 2014

Major Professor: Dr. Michael K. Freeman  
Department: Teacher Education and Leadership

This qualitative study investigated the perception of professionalism of principals and directors of seminary and institutes (S&I) programs along the Wasatch Front. In particular, this study sought to answer the following question: “What is the perception of seminary and institute teachers and leaders regarding professionalism”? To examine this question, a life history approach was used to explore what experiences and events have shaped the participant’s view of professionalism in seminary and institutes. The primary sources of data came from multiple one-on-one interviews that described the personal experiences and perceptions of three full-time seminary and institute teachers and leaders along the Wasatch Front. Hall’s attitudinal attribute model of professionalism guided the analysis and interpretation of data and findings. Findings indicated the following: (a) loyalty to the organization is a key attribute for professionalism; (b) positive associations with peers and administrators strengthen professionalism and foster a culture of unity; (c)

observation and feedback are critical elements in developing professionally; (d) content mastery is a prerequisite for teachers seeking to be professional; (e) years' experience practicing appropriate skills, attitudes, and behaviors deepens the professional attributes; and (f) experience in many different assignments builds confidence, efficacy, and trust in teachers. Based on these findings, it is recommended that further research be done to explore the following: (a) How do S&I teachers cultivate an attitude of loyalty? (b) What significance does observation and feedback have on the professional development of a teacher? (c) Is there a difference between teachers who actively pursue the Professional Growth Plan and those who seek their professional development on their own? (d) What impact do graduate degrees have on the professional development of an S&I teacher? (e) Would extra preparation time make a difference in teachers' knowledge of the content? (f) How can an administrator more effectively provide experiences for more teachers to grow and develop professionally? (g) What types of assignments lead to greater teacher efficacy, and loyalty to the organization?

(230 pages)

**PUBLIC ABSTRACT**

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This qualitative study investigated Seminary and Institute teachers' perception of professionalism. To answer the question "What is the perception of seminary and institute teachers and leaders regarding professionalism," a life history approach was used to explore what experiences and events shaped the participants' view of professionalism in seminary and institutes. Findings indicated the following: (a) loyalty to the organization is a key attribute for professionalism; (b) positive associations with peers and administrators strengthen professionalism and foster a culture of unity; (c) observation and feedback are critical elements in developing professionally; (d) content mastery is a prerequisite for teachers seeking to be professional; (e) years' experience practicing appropriate skills, attitudes, and behaviors deepens the professional attributes; and (f) experience in many different assignments builds confidence, efficacy, and trust in teachers.

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Michael L. Cottle

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Over 100 years ago The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) launched the seminary program at Granite High School in Salt Lake City, Utah. A few years later the institute program for the LDS Church, the college-level equivalent of seminary, commenced in Moscow, Idaho. While the seminary program began essentially as an experiment in a local congregation for the LDS Church, it has matured into a global program providing religious instruction to high-school-aged members of the LDS Church worldwide (Griffiths, 2012). According to Griffiths, the Seminary and Institute (S&I) program grew from these insignificant beginnings “to become the primary educational entities in the Church, with a larger enrollment than any other LDS educational venture and a wider reach than almost any educational organization worldwide” (p. 13). Currently the S&I programs are found in 150 countries and teach over 750,000 students worldwide. These students are taught by nearly 50,000 full-time, part-time, and volunteer teachers and administrators (Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, 2014).

Since these early beginnings, S&I has sought for highly qualified teachers, and implemented programs to help teachers become more effective. Professional development in S&I has been the emphasis of many discourses both written and spoken. Despite the proliferation of literature focused on professionals, professional development, and professionalism, few answer the question, “What does teacher professionalism in the Seminary and Institute (S&I) program for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) mean?” although many insinuate or claim they have. Too often descriptions tend

to focus on checklists, generalities, and personal preference and disregard the sociocultural context in which people, communities, and seminaries and institutes exist together.

### **Purpose Statement**

Though there has been a tremendous amount of literature written on professionalism over the years (Abbott, 1988; D'Amico, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Edwards & Nicoll, 2006; Freeman, 1994; Glickman, 2002; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2007; Hall, 1968; Hargreaves, 1997; Houston, 1990; Locke, Vulliamy, Webb, & Hill, 2005; Richardson, 2001; Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005), there have been minimal studies on professionalism among full-time instructors in the S&I program of the LDS Church. Part of the challenge is that there is no real clear definition of professionalism. Each person has their own perception of what professionalism means. E. W. Johnson's (2008) research demonstrated this problem as he interviewed S&I principals. For one principal, professionalism meant having a culture of discipline. For another, it was giving teachers autonomy, and expecting teachers to be "professional in [their] demeanor" (p. 60). Overall, S&I teachers in Johnson's study believed professionalism to be related to a code of professional conduct oriented towards the 'good' of the profession. However, each principal has his own code, and as Glazer (2008) noted, these specific behaviors and practices that constitute professionalism within an educational setting can vary depending on a number of factors including such things as culture, size, and needs of the school (Glazer, 2008). Strader (2009) pointed out that while core documents and other

educational sources identify key attributes of S&I teachers; administrators, teachers, and students view the relative importance of the attributes differently. This lack of understanding teacher professionalism may be problematic for future hiring and training of quality teachers in S&I. E. W. Johnson observed:

While the principals agreed with many of the identified characteristics of professionalism, each principal still seemed to favor certain aspects of professionalism that they deemed more important behaviors or attitudes. Additionally, I also observed that the teachers recognized their principal's preferences in professionalism and were quick to adapt their behaviors and attitudes to meet the focus of their principal. (p. 131)

Professionalism is a concept that appears to be important and yet its meaning is vague making it difficult to have any confidence in its usefulness. One way to view this dilemma is to consider the idea of professionalism as what Franklin (2010) referred to as a floating, or empty signifier. An empty signifier is a word without a particular or precise referent. Similar to Franklin's (2010) study of community, professionalism is an idea that has become what it is today through a series of discursive formulations as it has weaved through a variety of meanings and societal structures throughout history. The purpose of this study was to consider the concept of professionalism as it was perceived by S&I teachers along the Wasatch Front and what it tells us about the S&I teaching profession.

To fill the void in this area of research, I acquired the life history of three full-time S&I teachers along the Wasatch Front and their perception of professionalism and what influences the development of professionalism after teachers begin employment with S&I. In seeking an understanding of this phenomenon this research was guided by three general questions: How do seminary teachers perceive professionalism? How do seminary teachers acquire this understanding of professionalism? What are the challenges

to teacher professionalism in S&I? Answering these questions along with generating a pragmatic definition for professionalism will help clarify, for teachers and administrators, professional expectations. Greater levels of professionalism will, in turn, effectively guide teachers in creating more powerful instruction for students.

The following contents of this chapter include six sections. First, I will frame the professionalism problem in S&I by presenting the current practice and misunderstanding of what it means to be professional as a basis for this research. Second, I will provide an historical background of the beginnings of the S&I program. Third, I will present a rationale for doing this study in S&I. Fourth, I will review the significance of the study by highlighting the potential benefits that the investigation and findings have for S&I policy, practice, and research. Fifth, I will present the overarching questions that will drive this study. Sixth, I will identify terms that will be used throughout the study.

### **Problem Statement**

The current lack of a clear definition of professionalism between S&I instructors leaves them confused regarding expectations of how to be a professional religious educator. As S&I has grown, so also have expectations for S&I employees. Addressing this change in growth has brought about the formation and revision of policies and procedures regarding professional religious educators. Administration expects S&I religious educators to be professional. According to the Church Educational System (CES) handbook, *Administer Appropriately* (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003), as professional religious educators for S&I each individual is personally

responsible

For the effort and progress he or she makes in personal development.... Individuals are responsible to learn their duties, act in their assignments in all diligence, improve upon their talents, and seek to gain other talents.... S&I employees have a contractual obligation to develop professionally by becoming better teachers and leaders, by striving to meet the objective of religious education and fulfill their commission, and by following policies and guidelines established by the Church Board of Education. (pp.15-16).

To foster professionalism the focus has been primarily on twelve-month contracts and handbooks describing administrative duties. The handbooks briefly outline the expectation that teachers should take the initiative to seek for development of skills and abilities to contribute to the profession. *Administer Appropriately* explains that personal development, or professionalism, “results from learning and applying gospel principles, acquiring desired skills, reflecting on current assignments, and trying new ideas” (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003, p. 15). The problem is in communicating to teachers the expectation, and providing ways and ideas on how to proceed in becoming more professional.

Another aspect of S&I that lends itself to differing ideas of professionalism is the variety of educational backgrounds and training each teacher receives prior to becoming a religious educator. Requirements for becoming an S&I teacher include a bachelor’s degree (in any subject), and two pre-service classes designed to train the individual on how to be a professional religious educator. Following these courses, and based on recommendation, the applicant student-teaches for approximately a year with observations and evaluations occurring frequently. The wide expanse of experience and training results in vast differences in perceptions of professionalism in S&I, contributing

to the current lack of understanding concerning expectations of professionalism between local teachers (S&I teachers, principals and directors, and coordinators), and S&I administrators.

There are, assumedly, expectations upon which administrators base teacher evaluations, but teachers do not understand the expectations. Consequently, teachers feel insecure concerning their ability to accomplish their perception of administrations' view of professionalism. A few local administrators have evaluated teachers without an explanation as to what to do to change or fix the situation leaving teachers confused and frustrated. In fact, some administrators have told teachers that an individual teacher needs to figure "it" out for himself with administration providing little explanation of what "it" is.

Among public school teachers this is a different matter. For example, searching Wilson Web data base one finds numerous articles on teachers and professionalism. Myriads of researchers have studied and written about how to improve teaching. Most of this research was focused on helping teachers in specific areas of curriculum for public schools such as science and mathematics. In addition, many studies were international in their focus, coming from Britain and the Middle East. Many describe deep concern with the current school systems and call upon teachers to fix schools and make them work (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Glickman (2002) went to great lengths to point out how teachers can be more professional; he wrote about supervision and leadership principles that can be applied to improve teachers' professionalism. It is the opinion of many administrators and researchers that the most significant factor contributing to greater

student achievement is teacher professionalism (Timperley, 2007). Darling-Hammond and Berry (1998) argued that the factor that matters most for student learning is teacher quality. Geringer (2003) reiterated this same idea arguing that not only is teacher quality a critical factor for student achievement, but it also outweighs other factors such as funding, standards, or class size. Teacher professionalism is the logical and pragmatic approach to increasing teacher quality (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Meaning, that helping teachers be more professional will effectively lead to better teachers.

An inherent characteristic in most people is the desire to improve and seek to be better. It is an attitude embedded from the time children are very young. A child who crawls wants to learn to walk, or infants want to learn to feed themselves. For educators, this notion for improvement is entrenched starting from teacher preparation programs in college. Edwards and Nicoll (2006) pointed out that it is “difficult to be against the notion of professional development itself” (p.116). Public school teachers know that professionalism is an important factor for improving teaching, but all do not necessarily act on that knowledge. Often, teachers are under the threat of sanctions in order to persuade them to act and become more professional (Edwards & Nicoll, 2006).

In comparison to teacher professionalism in public schools, relatively little has been written about teacher professionalism in religious education, and even less research has been done for teachers in S&I. Litchfield (2006) proposed the idea that religious education should follow contemporary educational practice by seeking greater improvement through professionalism. In relation to research specific to S&I, Christensen’s (1969) dissertation focused on teacher education and professionalism.



However, since 1969 S&I has undergone significant organizational changes and philosophical changes outdating this research, and has, therefore, little applicability for teachers today. E. W. Johnson's (2008) dissertation from Utah State University on S&I principals includes data based on a few questions he asked teachers regarding professionalism. However, it is minimal and his study is geared toward administrators and not professionalism among teachers. In all, little has been done on my research interests and the questions for my study.

### **Historical Background**

The Seminary program was created from humble beginnings. Around the turn of the century, Joseph A. Merrill, a young professor at the University of Utah and a member of the Granite Utah LDS Stake Presidency, sat in the evenings with his children listening as his wife, Annie, recounted stories from the scriptures. "Her list of these stories were so long that her husband often marveled at their number, and frequently sat as spellbound as were the children as she skillfully related them" (Merrill, 1938, p. 55). Annie Merrill had learned these stories as a child attending the Salt Lake City Academy, a Church owned school. Captivated by the experience with his family, Joseph Merrill began considering how all the youth in his stake (an LDS church unit based on geography and made up of multiple congregations) attending public schools could receive the same religious instruction as his wife. After a few weeks of reflection he presented to the Granite Stake presidency his rough plan for a new religious education program as part of the school day for all students (see Tuttle, 1949).

The LDS Church began formal religious education during a time of experimentation and pedagogical change in the world of education. In 1888 the Church established the Church Board of Education. This group served to oversee the numerous schools of the Church (Griffiths, 2012). When names such as John Dewey, Caroline Pratt, and Francis Parker were becoming household names, LDS youth were also beginning to hear tenets of their faith on a daily basis (Fowles, 1990). Secular education was becoming more widespread in the state of Utah bringing with it more scientific, materialistic, and empirical ideology. Church leaders concerned about children attending public schools without including religious instruction influenced the Church to set up a system of private schools called Academies. These academies spread throughout the intermountain west (Griffith, 2012). It was one of these academies that Annie Merrill attended as a youth and received her religious training. For students unable to attend the academies, Church leaders devised a series of religious classes for students held outside of school hours to supplement their public education (see Dowdle, 2011)

However, with the growing number of public schools the ability to support academies and the after school religion classes became difficult for LDS families. In time, LDS students began to attend more public schools than the academies and by 1911 enrollment in public schools had surpassed the academies (Griffiths, 2012).

Joseph Merrill was interested in finding a way to make public education and religious education work cooperatively rather than compete with each other. He came up with the plan of constructing a separate building near the public school where students could attend religious courses during the regular school day. The Granite Stake

Presidency gave their approval and the local school board granted permission for students to be released during the school day. The school board even agreed to give school credit to students for studying biblical topics (Griffiths, 2012). This marked the beginning of the weekday religious education program for high school and, soon to be, college-age students.

Finding the right teacher for this new religious education system became an important endeavor for Joseph Merrill. He wrote a letter outlining the attitudes and attributes wanted for this new position:

May I suggest it is the desire of the presidency of the stake to have a strong young man who is properly qualified to do the work in a most satisfactory manner. By young we do not necessarily mean a teacher who is young in years, but a man who is young in his feelings, who loves young people, who delights in their company, who can command their respect and admiration and exercise a great influence over them.... We want a man who is a thorough student, one who will not teach in a perfunctory way, but who will enliven his instructions by a strong, winning personality and give evidence of a thorough understanding of and scholarship in the things he teaches.... A teacher is wanted who is a leader and who will be universally regarded as the inferior of no teacher in the high school. (Merrill, 1938, p. 55)

The man selected to be the first teacher at Granite Seminary was Thomas Yates. Thomas was a graduate of Cornell University and at the time of receiving this assignment he was working as an engineer on the construction of a local power plant. He lacked any specific training in religion or religious education, and the only experience he had in teaching came from a 1-year period at the LDS Church academy in Millard County, Utah (Griffiths, 2012). What Thomas did have, however, was dedication, faith, and a desire to do what he was asked. Describing Thomas Yates, the Granite Stake President at the time exclaimed that “Brother Yates always reminds me of Joseph who was sold into Egypt; he

is a tower of purity and strength” (Yates, 1949, p. 42).

Together, Joseph Merrill and Thomas Yates organized the curriculum for the new undertaking and put into practice the seminary program. They offered three courses. One on the Old Testament, one on the New Testament, and one on the Book of Mormon and Church history (Merrill, 1938). This third course was offered without credit from the school. In addition, construction began for the new seminary building. It consisted of three rooms: a classroom, office, and cloak room. This remained the only seminary in the Church until 1915 when a new seminary opened up in Brigham City, Utah (Tuttle, 1949). Within the next 10 years the seminary program spread throughout Utah, Idaho, and Arizona.

Yates left a large impact as the first teacher. Even though he only taught for 1 year, his influence was felt a century later. President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency of the LDS Church spoke of the legacy of Thomas Yates in his own family. Struggling and feeling inadequate for the new assignment as Deputy Commissioner of Church Education, he recalled:

My assignment to help such a vast number of teachers seemed overwhelming until someone handed me a small roll book. It was for the first class of seminary taught in the Church. It was for the school year 1912–13....

In that roll book was the name of Mildred Bennion. She was 16 years old that year. Thirty-one years later she would become my mother. She was the daughter of a man we would today call “less active.” Her mother was left a widow the fall of the year after that first seminary class began. She raised and supported my mother and five other children alone on a small farm. Somehow that one seminary teacher cared enough about her and prayed fervently enough over that young girl that the Spirit put the gospel down into her heart.

That one teacher blessed tens of thousands because he taught just one girl in a crowd of 70. (Eyring, 2010, p. 5)

The seminary program continued to gain prominence throughout the west. In 1916 the Utah State Board of Education officially granted high school credit for Old and New Testament courses taught in the seminary program (Tuttle, 1949). In addition, with the rapid expansion of public schools, the academy system had reached its limits. The academies were expensive to maintain, and the seminary program offered religious education in a more affordable way that could reach more students than the academies (Griffiths, 2012).

The training of teachers took a more prominent role in the 1930's. Criticism was aimed at the S&I program for mistakes made by the untrained teachers that were hired (Griffiths, 2012). As a result, the scholarship of teachers became a point of emphasis. Scholars from the University of Chicago Divinity School were brought to provide the needed training during the summer. In addition, some teachers were asked to go back to Chicago to receive more concentrated divinity training. However, by 1936 the leaders of the Church were alarmed that the S&I teachers had swung too far towards a secular approach to religion classes (Griffiths, 2010).

On August 8, 1938, J. Reuben Clark, the First Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, gave a discourse to S&I teachers of the LDS Church (S&I). This landmark speech charts the course for all religious educators in S&I to follow. It is the standard with which all S&I curriculum and professionalism is aligned. Since that time, S&I administration has tried different ways to promote professionalism among teachers. Teachers have been encouraged to seek advanced degrees; salaries have been increased; health benefits extended, characteristics of an ideal teacher have been studied (Pyper,

1995); professional development programs have come and gone; apprentice teacher programs have evolved and transformed; and even teacher training and education programs have been dramatically changed over the years (Christensen, 1969). Despite all that has transpired there is currently limited writing on what it means to be professional in S&I.

### **Rationale for this Study**

In October of 2009, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan spoke to educators gathered at Teachers College, Columbia University. Duncan called for “revolutionary change” regarding the teaching profession. “To keep America competitive,” he warned, “we need to recruit, train, learn from and honor a new generation of talented teachers” (Duncan, 2009). According to Duncan, the trail to more effective education is contingent on cultivating a new highly qualified teacher.

Duncan is not alone in making these assertions. Throughout the twentieth century there has been a consistent call for better teachers, more professional teachers. Positioning Duncan in the milieu of this consistent call is yet another chapter in the historic debate encircling teacher professionalism. Although across the nation there is a call for more qualified teachers, yet each of these petitions arise in singular and unique communities. From this perspective, rather than being a consistent exact definition, professionalism takes on a new and varied meaning in each specific community, and more specifically for each individual. Precisely what teacher professionalism means—what such a person looks like and what attributes and attitudes reflect this phenomenon—

shifts based on the social, cultural and economic backdrops of the individual (D'Amico, 2010). Even more importantly, across the Wasatch front among S&I teachers and administrators, professionalism takes on a variety of meanings based on the expectations and understandings of each individual.

There are multiple reasons why professionalism is a desired quality among educators. Changes in the profession have led to higher expectations for teachers (Whitty, 2006). According to Whitty, teacher professionalism leads to increased expectations for both teachers and students and promotes greater accountability. It helps teachers take personal and collective responsibility for improving their skills and subject knowledge. Professionalism seeks to base decisions on evidence on what works in schools rather than relying on biased assumptions. In addition, teacher professionalism encourages collaboration with faculty, administration, and others outside the school that can contribute to making school a success.

Using a life history approach to study teacher professionalism will produce data aimed at capturing the deep and rich insights into the S&I teaching profession through the lived experience of the individual. Stories are one way that we can begin to “make sense of a complex human condition: to create some order out of the chaos of competing and contradictory experiences; to bring into dialogue the world of the real and the world of the imagination; to stand Janus headed, looking backwards and forwards into past life experiences and anticipating the future” (Dhunpath & Samuel, 2009, p. 3).

Telling stories about one's life is not about telling exact details of events. Rather it is the process of relating how the teller sees themselves in a broader picture. In this case

it is how the teacher perceives professionalism in S&I. It includes the capturing of the past, present and future. The story teller can portray themselves in the story how they perceive and interpret the events in their life (Dhunpath & Samuel, 2009). Too often, research is aimed at generalizing or searching for the universal truth and either minimize or dismiss the unique and in the process “strip away the wholeness of human life” (Luce, 1993). Essentially, generalizations disclose little about the varied meanings of professionalism by those in S&I who participated, supported and maintained it. Affirming this perspective, Luce stated that “when we are dealing with reality in terms of concrete human experience...the most dangerous thing we can do is ‘thin’ it out” (pp. 1-2).

Hall’s (1968) professional model represents the theoretical lens for this study. Hall argued for a combination of structural and attitudinal aspects to serve as the model for professionalism. The structural and attitudinal aspects are, respectively (a) competent practice in a given field or discipline, and (b) the level of commitment one feels or exhibits towards his or her profession.

For the purposes of this study, I focused on the attitudinal aspects of the professional model. The attitudinal attributes of professionalism reflect the “manner in which the practitioners view their work” (Hall, 1968, p. 93). Two assumptions are important to point out. First, S&I has met the structural prerequisites for professionalism; and second, there is a positive correlation between attitudes and behavior (Hall, 1968).

With this in mind, there are five attitudinal attributes to reflect on during this study.

1. The use of professional organization as a major reference—this involves both the formal organization and informal colleague groupings as the major sources



of ideas and judgments for the professional in his work.

2. A belief in service to the public—this component includes the idea of indispensability of the profession and the view that the work performed benefits both the public and the practitioner.
3. Belief in self-regulation—this involves the belief that the person best qualified to judge the work of a professional is a fellow professional, and the view that such a practice is desirable and practical. It is a belief in colleague control.
4. A sense of calling to the field—this reflects the dedication of the professional to his work and the feeling that he would probably want to do the work even if fewer extrinsic rewards were available.
5. Autonomy—this involves the feeling that the practitioner ought to be able to make his own decisions without external pressures from clients, those who are not members of his profession, or from his employing organization. (Hall, 1968, p. 93)

When coalesced, the lack of research on teacher professionalism among S&I teachers, unclear expectations and multiple definitions of teacher professionalism, and the impact and desirability of teacher professionalism on creating more effective teachers, there was a current need to study the perceptions of professionalism among S&I teachers.

### **Significance of the Study**

There are many ways in which this study will help to further professionalism among S&I instructors. A clear definition of professionalism in S&I will provide S&I instructors with direction on what professionalism means and how to accomplish it. This increased understanding will help S&I instructors be better able to provide enhanced learning experiences for students. Even though research has been done on the field of teacher professionalism in the public school settings, relatively little has been done to define professionalism for religious educators in S&I. This research will provide an

historical view of professionalism in the life of a few instructors, with an in depth, personal, perspective on how individuals perceive professionalism in S&I. As expectations for S&I employees have been raised, this study will inform S&I on ways that teachers can increase their level of professionalism.

There is a misalignment of expectations between S&I administration and the local teachers. Even between local principals and their faculty, expectations are a moving target. In a setting where principals and directors are expected to ensure “faculty professionalism,” perceptions of what professionalism means need to be clarified (E. W. Johnson, 2008, p. 58). Teachers are left frustrated, angry, demoralized, and feeling they are not doing a good job in their assignment. Most teachers want to meet or exceed expectations to do well and perform their best. However, for various reasons, some teachers do not know how to meet the raised expectations. Using the methods of life history research as defined by Tang and Choi (2009), Goodson and Choi (2008), and Goodson and Sikes (2001), I intend to gather information to define professionalism and seek to understand what influences the development of professionalism after teachers begin employment with S&I.

### **Research Questions**

In this research study, I assembled, analyzed, and report the life history of teachers who are viewed as being professionals in S&I. The study was guided by the following research questions

1. What is the perception of seminary and institute teachers regarding

professionalism?

2. Does Hall's model of attitudinal professionalism fit the reality experienced by S&I professionals?

3. What is the catalyst that ignites greater professionalism among religious educators once they are hired?

### **Limitations**

The qualitative methodological approach of this study was designed to tell the story of the perception of professionalism among full-time teachers in S&I. As such, this study approach did not lend itself to generalizations or descriptions of causal relationships. Instead, one of the chief characteristics of this qualitative study was to examine and understand in a more deep, and reflective manner the social relationships, interactions, and historical constructions in which the perception of professionalism of S&I teachers has been embedded (Goodson, 2013). Life History research is an interpretive process that seeks to explore how individuals or groups of people, who share specific characteristics, personally and subjectively experience, make sense of, and account for the things that happen to them (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Built on a framework of a hermeneutic perspective, life history research is reflexive in nature, and where reality is socially constructed (Cole & Knowles, 1993). This type of research focuses on meaning that arises through the stories participants tell and the life histories that researchers, in collaboration with participants, construct. Denzin (1997) argued that this type of research is a narrative production where the researcher becomes a mirror to

the world under analysis and represents the subject's experiences through a complex written text.

Therefore, this study examined people's experiences and perceptions about professionalism in S&I. These narratives, and other research, can be used to help inform and increase the overall understanding of the complex and varied aspects of the lived experiences of teachers and their perception of professionalism in S&I. However, it does not assert that the knowledge gained from this individual qualitative study will reflect the same outcomes of similar research with other individual's in different contexts. Patton (1990) argued that data from in-depth interviews may be influenced by several factors such as: the emotional state of the participant at the time of the interview; reaction of the participant to the researcher; self-serving responses; and distortions of the participants own reality.

The data, analysis, and conclusions of this study were based within the context of full-time S&I teachers currently employed in the Wasatch Front of Utah. The life stories were unique to the context of each individual's lived experience. Therefore, this data, the descriptions, and recommendations may not reflect the experience of other S&I teachers with different backgrounds and lived experiences.

At the center of all of this, it must be understood that not only do life history researchers re-present life stories they are told, but they do so within the context of their own frames of reference and the particular stories they wish to tell based on what their participants say (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). In other words, the researcher acts as the instrument negotiating between different meanings of the participants lived experience

(Glesne, 2006). While the researcher is a major component of this type of research, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested that the researcher and participant collaborate throughout the research process seeking to lessen the potential gap between the narrative told and the narrative reported. This type of assumption is fundamental for effective qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

### **Definitions**

The exclusive nature and setting of this qualitative research of teacher professionalism for full-time teachers in the S&I program of the LDS Church necessitates the use of terms and language possibly unique to readers unfamiliar with the culture, context, environment, and surroundings of the LDS Church. In addition, there are terms adapted from the literature dealing with teacher professionalism that will aid the reader in understanding. Included is a list of terms that will reoccur often throughout this study.

*Church Educational System:* The Church Educational System (CES) operates under the direction of the Board of Education of the LDS Church. CES consists of Seminaries and institutes of religion (S&I), Elementary and secondary education (in some areas outside the United States), Institutions of higher education (in the United States only; i.e. Brigham Young University). Within this study, CES will refer to the governing body that specifically oversees and employs the administrators and teachers who provide religious instruction in seminaries of instruction worldwide.

*Seminary:* The seminary program of the LDS Church is a 4-year religious education program for youth ages 14 to 18. In released-time seminary students and their

teachers meet to study the Holy Scriptures. This curriculum consists of *The Bible (Old Testament and New Testament)*, *The Book of Mormon*, and the *Doctrine and Covenants*. These classes are held in buildings adjacent to a public high school or junior high. The class periods correspond with the public school hours and class periods. During one period of the day, students are granted permission to leave school property and attend a seminary class, and then return to the school to complete their school schedule. Seminary is administered locally by a seminary principal, a support specialist (secretary), and a faculty of teachers sufficient to accommodate the size of the student enrollment. A seminary is not a training facility for future professional full-time clergy as the term is commonly used in other religious settings.

*Institute*: similar to seminary, the S&I program of the LDS Church provides religious education for young adults ages 18 to 30. It is administered by a director, a support specialist, and a faculty of teachers sufficient to accommodate the size of the student enrollment. In addition to the curriculum similar to the seminary (on a more advanced level), institutes can include classes like marriage and dating, world religions, and church history. Institute is viewed as a safe haven from the pressures, trials, and challenges of the secular world.

*Seminary and Institute program (S&I)*: Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) is part of the CES operated by The LDS Church. From its earliest days to the present, leaders of the Church have encouraged education as a foundation for life. In 1888, the Church Board of Education was established to direct the education programs of the Church. In 1912, the first seminary class was taught to a small group of high school

students in Salt Lake City, Utah. This was the beginning of what would become an extensive seminary and institute program for students in many countries and territories throughout the world. These programs exist to offer weekday religious instruction and spiritual fortification for youth and young adults who are often exposed to increasingly secularized education.

*Stake:* In LDS culture, a stake is a group of congregations or wards, generally about three thousand to five thousand members in 5 to 10 congregations. These members reside in a geographic area and are presided over by three local leaders called the Stake Presidency.

*Granite Stake Presidency:* The ecclesiastical leaders of a group of congregations in the Granite, Utah area. The Stake Presidency consists of a President, a first counselor, and a second counselor. They meet in council together and administer to the needs of the members that live in their stake. They receive guidance, support, and are subject to General Authorities for the entire Church.

*First Presidency:* Under the direction of Jesus Christ the LDS Church is led by 15 apostles who are also regarded as prophets, seers, and revelators. The man who has been an apostle the longest is the President of the LDS Church, and by inspiration he selects two other apostles as counselors. These three function as the First Presidency, which is the highest governing body of the LDS Church.

*Commissioner of Church Education:* This is an ecclesiastical position and is appointed by the First Presidency of the LDS Church. They are a member of the LDS Church Board of Education and administer all the elements of CES.

*Religious education:* When referencing studies that are representative of a religious education setting, the term religious education is most commonly used to describe private schools that are overseen by a religious body. These private religious education schools are not focused to provide instruction only in religious teachings as are the seminaries within S&I, but are indicative of schools that provide secular education in a variety of subjects (i.e., math, science, social studies) and are sponsored by a religious organization.

*Secular education:* This refers to the knowledge obtained in public schools that is separate from, or devoid of, any religious training and education. In this study it refers to the knowledge gained without any religious instruction informing the students in the curriculum.

*S&I administrators:* Within this study, S&I administrators will refer to the governing body that specifically oversees and employs the administrators and teachers who provide religious instruction in seminaries and institutes worldwide. It consists of the Administrator of S&I, and his assistant administrators who direct the S&I program globally. They are located in the LDS Church Office Building (COB) in Salt Lake City, Utah. The number of assistant administrators varies at different times, but typically there are five or six.

*The Book of Mormon:* The Book of Mormon is accepted by the LDS Church as a sacred record of peoples in ancient America and was engraved upon metal plates. It teaches of the dealings of Jesus Christ with his prophets in the America's. This course, as taught in S&I, uses *The Book of Mormon* as the text and helps students understand the



doctrines and principles contained in the book.

*Church history:* LDS Church History is a course taught in S&I and helps students understand the doctrines and principles that are taught throughout LDS history. The text is *The Doctrine and Covenants*, a collection of divine revelations and inspired declarations given for the establishment and regulation of the LDS Church.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

This study examined the life histories of three successful S&I teachers from the Wasatch Front area of Utah to gain an understanding of the perception of teacher professionalism in S&I, while capturing the events, experiences, and situations involved in their development and eventual success in the S&I system.

Professionalism is a multifaceted topic that has been debated and studied for decades. In fact, as many researchers noted, “professions seem always to have existed and, in recorded times, to have been the subject of informed commentary” (Houle, 1980, p. 19). Professions are found everywhere in our society and throughout the world. As one writer noted, professions “heal our bodies, measure our profits, and save our souls. Yet we are deeply ambivalent about them” (Abbott, 1988, p. 1). In this review of literature, a broad description of the historical roots of professionalism is presented from a social and cultural perspective. This review also explores what teacher professionalism means today, provides a context for what it means to be professional in S&I, and describes what has been written about how teachers can increase their level of professionalism. To conclude this review, a case is made to expand the teacher professionalism in S&I literature. This will be done by examining the life history of three successful S&I teachers to understand the intersection of the individual life with the social structure, culture, and organization that leads to a perception of professionalism.

## Concept of Professions

To discuss a topic as large and complicated as professionalism it is helpful to begin with defining key terms, to understand how the terms have evolved over time, and how these key terms will be used throughout the work to follow. Despite the widespread use of the term, professionalism is a contested topic with little common agreement for its meaning (Cogan, 1955; D'Amico, 2010; Evans, 2008; Evetts, 2013, Freeman, 1994; Freidson, 1994; Hargreaves, 2010; Locke et al., 2005; Roiphe, 2013). The debate surrounding the definition of professions, and which occupation should be called professions, can be traced back as early as 1915 with Flexner (Freeman, 1994; Freidson, 1994). As Richardson (2001) noted, the terms professional, professionalization, and professionalism have no conclusive agreement as to their meanings. Even teachers themselves, as a large-scale research survey revealed, “Clearly do not have a single integrated view of ‘professionalism’ .... There is too wide a diversity among teachers in their thinking about professionalism” (Swann, McIntyre, Pell, Hargreaves, & Cunningham, 2010, p. 566). It is an empty signifier, or an “elastic concept” serving multiple purposes over the years (Franklin, 2010; Roiphe, 2013).

For some, its purposes result in negative and harmful impacts, justifying the restrictions of newcomers to the profession, especially women and ethnic and racial minorities. It has been used to create class distinctions and strengthen monopolies (Roiphe, 2013). For others, however, professionalism has been more beneficial. According to one historian, professionalism serves “as a repository for a certain version of the American Dream. It has stood for the ability of individuals on the outskirts to make

their way, in one generation at most, to the inner circles of American society” (Roiphe, 2013, p. 102). Houle (1980) pointed out that many feel that the old concept of professionalism is “no longer suited for our times” (p. ix). While some authorities agree that the old concept needs to be replaced, nobody can say what to replace it with. With such a contested and comprehensive topic it is important at the outset to clarify definitions and provide historical background for professions, professionalization, and professionalism.

What are the differences between doctors and mechanics, attorneys and construction workers that justify that we label one a professional and deny it to the other? Traditionally, the ministry, law, and medicine were the original professions of western society (Larson, 1977; Wilensky, 1964). Today, the list of professions and professionals is immeasurable. We categorize occupational groups and label them as a profession without defining specifically what it means. The line between profession and occupation can be blurry, and there are a growing number of theorists that argue for no distinction at all between them (Evans, 2008; Evetts, 2013). However, it is generally accepted that professions are a special type of occupation. It is work organized and controlled by experts. The term creates distinction from amateurs and tradesmen, and generally is associated with mental services rather than physical labor. Most societies value someone competent and skilled in a particular discipline, and seek their advice, help, and service. They are labeled professions.

Not all full-time, often life-time, specialists are professionals. Some see a distinction between the crafts and those considered professions. Crafts are blue-collar

workers. While they are credentialed and work for a life-time in their field, they rely on practical, on the job training, have little association with higher education, and it is assumed generally that any normal adult can be expected to perform the labor, or be trained to do so after brief instructions (Freidson, 1994). Even among those occupations believed to be professions, there is some disparity. This adds to the debate about professions. It is clouded by “unstated assumptions and inconsistent and incomplete usages” (Freidson, 1994, p. 169). Abbott (1988) argued that many so-called professions do not “look like our images of them” (p. 8). He asserted that medicine and law today, the prototypical professions, do not fit the traditional characteristics of professions. For example, few today are self-employed and a majority of their work is simply repetitive and predictable. There are some occupations that are pronounced as professions, but do not look at all like medicine or law. Some occupations deemed a profession do not have an ethic code. For some writers, calling an occupation a profession simply makes it one. In the culture of the United States, for example, we generally shy away from calling an automobile mechanic a professional. It is not that it does not follow the characteristics of a profession, but simply a result of the status of the work and those who do it. As a result, most writers today do not draw a hard line between professions and occupations (Evetts, 2013).

At a fundamental level, a profession represents a “kind of work that people do for a living” (Freidson, 1994). Abbott (1988) found that most writers agreed that a profession is an occupational group with some special skill. Most often, this skill was an abstract skill, one that needed special training and instruction. Each occupation required its own

critique to determine its relevance as a profession. Evetts (2013) defined profession as a particular occupation, or institution with special characteristics. She added that professions are “regarded as essentially the knowledge based category of service occupations which usually follow a period of tertiary educational and vocational training and experience” (p. 782). It is a vocation established with specialized training allowing the expert to give objective counsel and service to others for direct compensation. In addition, professions claim exclusive right to control specific work activities based on the specialized training and education its members receive (Abbott, 1988). These individuals provide intellectual and conceptual services in a personal, responsible, and independent manner in the interest of the client and the public. Vollmer and Mills (1966) further defined profession as “an ideal type of occupational organization which does not exist in reality, but which provides the model of the form of occupational organization that would result if any occupational group became completely professionalized” (p. vii).

Though few professions existed before the 19th century, some can trace their early roots to the guild system during the middle ages (Abbott, 1988; Albrecht, 2006; Larson, 1977). During these times, skilled laborers often sought association with other similarly skilled laborers, each of whom controlled the “secrets” of their trade, dictating how and to whom the technology of their craft was imparted. These occupational groups controlled the acquisition and application of various kinds of knowledge, gaining power and influence in society as they fought for exclusive rights to practice their trades as journeymen, and to engage unpaid apprentices. Most importantly, when a professional occupation came to be associated with status as an educated upper-class gentleman, it

conveyed on the practitioner a sense of honor and dignity. It provided a sense of authority from the intellectual labor of their work—which did not require productive effort, entrepreneurial drive, or physical labor or prowess. The professional’s mastery of specialized knowledge and employment in highly structured and hierarchical settings provided a superior position in society. However, changes began to occur. For example, apothecaries began taking on the tasks of the physicians, and chemists and pharmacists invaded the turf of the apothecaries. New professions evolved and emerged during this process, though it was not swift (Carr-Saunders & Wilson, 1933), and took on a civil servant quality (Abbott, 1988).

The general form of professions as we know today began to appear in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and evolved in rapid succession. Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) described this phenomenon as “a wave of association.” Not only were surgeons and physicians separating from the apothecaries and pharmacists, but there was a rise in the new professions like the legal profession, the growth of university professional schools, and the appearance of surveyors, architects, accountants, and clergy. These new professions all gave evidence of the change taking place, and were parallel to the increasing industrialization of the Western world (Larson, 1977). Goode (1960) penned, “An industrializing society is a professionalizing society” (p. 902). The industrial revolution brought advantages especially to the middle class. Instead of value based on one’s birth status, religion, or patronage, what mattered instead was a person’s intellect and moral fiber (Larson, 1977; Roiphe, 2013). There emerged a pattern for professions and the possibility that a person could gain status through work. It was a judgment based

on merit, rather than social position based on birth or family connections (Larson, 1977).

Professions enjoy power, prestige, high income, high social status and privileges (Evans, 2008). Individuals in professions make up elite groups with political, economic and social power (Roiphe, 2013). This elevated position is conferred upon them by society, and arises from the higher social function of their work. Their work is considered vital to society. Tocqueville, Reeve, and Spencer (1839) observed the elite status of lawyers at the time of the founding of the United States and remarked that lawyers were an American substitute for the aristocracy. All professions involve technical, specialized and highly skilled work often referred to as “professional expertise” (Freidson, 1994). Training for this work involves obtaining degrees and professional qualifications without which entry to the profession is barred. Training also requires regular updating of skills through continuing education. A person wanting to become a professional must gain the approval of members of the existing profession beforehand and only they could judge whether he or she has reached the level of expertise needed to be a professional. Official associations and credentialing boards were created by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but initially membership was informal. A person was a professional if enough people said they were a professional.

Historically, there were two leading methods in the study of professions. One method characterizes varying occupational groups and their particular role in society, and their characteristics and attributes. This is professionalism, or the structural attributes of an occupation. The second method centers on the process of how an occupational group becomes a profession. This is professionalization, or the process of moving toward the



status of professional. In the 1930s, some of the earliest social scientists that studied this concept, notably Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) and Marshall (1939), claimed that professions are an occupational group with particular features or traits. As many occupations fall short of the “ideal” profession, it became more helpful to describe the characteristics of an occupation in terms of professionalization. This is where many occupations fall somewhere on the spectrum between the “ideal” type on one end and the completely unorganized “non-professions” on the other end. A decade later, authorities concentrated more on the process of becoming a profession. However, writers like Parsons (1951) and Wilensky (1964) continued to focus on the attributes of professions.

Often people confuse the terms professionalism and professionalization and use them interchangeably, making it unclear as to the appropriate use of the terms (Vollmer & Mills, 1966). Vollmer and Mills defined professionalization as “the dynamic process whereby many occupations can be observed to change certain crucial characteristics in the direction of a profession” (Vollmer & Mills, 1966, p. viii). Again, the focus is on the process as the foremost element. On the other hand professionalism is an “ideology and associated activities that can be found in the many and diverse occupational groups where members aspire to professional status” (Vollmer & Mills, 1966, p. viii).

Houle (1980) agreed that differentiating between professionalism and professionalization is important, and is in general alignment with Vollmer and Mills (1966). He argued that professionalism is a structural and static concept based on multiple structural attributes. Professionalization, conversely, is a dynamic concept focused on process. Houle added clarity to the two terms suggesting that professionalism

is the older of the two terms, and that it is a static idea founded on numerous structural attributes of a profession identified by a multiple theorists. Houle also defined professionalization as an active concept. It is a focus on process and the degree to which an occupation follows a defined set of characteristics.

A shift in focus from professionalism to professionalization began to emerge in the 1960s. Houle (1980) asserted that this difference shifted the focus of study, replacing the discovery of attributes of professions with identification of the degree to which a profession has progressed along the spectrum of characteristics that represent professionalization. Wilensky's (1964) more classic definition is in agreement with Houle. He advocated that professionalization is a process which all occupational groups follow, in somewhat similar sequences, as they move toward the ideal status of professionalism, also focusing on the status of the profession.

The over-all tone of theorists up until the 1960s regarding professions was neutral, neither critical nor congratulatory. In addition, there was a general agreement in the definitions as put forward by Vollmer and Mills (1966) and Houle (1980), that professionalism is the characteristics, or a structural status, representing a profession while professionalization is a process by which an occupation moves toward the ideal status of a profession (Freeman, 1994). However, during the 1970-80s scholars began to look at issues involving conflict and power. This led scholars such as Freidson (1994) and Larson (1977) to focus on the role of professions in the community and its association to the government. They took a "power" approach rather than a "trait" approach to studying professions (Freidson, 1994). They shifted from the importance of

attributes of a profession to what they deemed as more important, the ability to be recognized by the government and to control the market for their services, with control being the principle element. For Freidson (1970), the foundation on which the analysis of a profession must be based is its relationship to the ultimate source of power and authority in modern society—the state. Freidson (1970) emphasized the role of state recognition and the delegation of power that gives the profession a high degree of autonomy, and making it different from other occupational groups. Similarly, Abbott (1988) found that professionalization is primarily about jurisdictional control or power. He denounced the practice of concentrating on characteristics like associations, licensure, and ethics codes, and not focusing on who was doing what and to whom and how.

The study of professions can be categorized by a multitude of approaches by those who have studied the problem. There are those who have studied professionalization as a process. Others have focused on professionalism, or the structural attributes of a profession. Still others have argued that the professionalization process is based on functional attributes (Parsons, 1939) or attitudinal dimensions (Brown, 1987; Hall, 1968).

Freeman (1994) afforded an overview of the various approaches to the study of professions, suggesting that they are grouped into these same categories of structural, process, functional, attitudinal, and power. Flexner (1915) wrote that a profession is distinguished by the varying number of structural traits exhibited. Theorists like Caplow (1954), Greenwood (1957), and Wilensky (1964) embraced professionalization as a process, studying how an occupation moves along a spectrum between the unprofessional

occupations towards the ideal status of a profession. Freeman (1994) noted that Parsons (1939) adopted a functional approach, identifying a series of dimensions which appeared to be quite similar to the process occurrences identified by Wilensky, Caplow, Greenwood, and others. Championing the attitudinal approach, Hall (1968), Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985), and Morrow and Goetz (1988) submitted that the status of the profession is a reflection of the attitudes of practitioners within the profession. Brown (1987) believed this approach to be assuring based on observations supporting the theoretical understanding of the concept.

Despite the terms professionalization and professionalism being used interchangeably by some, the use of the term “professionalization” is becoming more consistent in the literature. Professionalism is the older term, and is structural and static. Professionalization is dynamic and refers to the process of becoming fully professional. This distinction is used throughout this study. To further differentiate between the two terms, Cervero (1987) put forward that professionalization refers to the occupation or profession while professionalism refers to the individual. In this instance, how competent and committed is the individual. Another slight difference was noted by Morrow and Goetz (1988), who addressed professionalism as a semi-professionalization of the *individual* rather than the *occupation*. Expanding the attitudinal approach, Morrow and Goetz defined professionalism as “the extent to which one is committed to one’s profession” (p. 94). This view defines professionalism not in terms of the profession, but of the relationship between the individual and his or her occupation or profession (Freeman, 1994).

The conceptual model used in this study was based on the work of Hall (1968) and Morrow and Goetz (1988) in which the focus is on the individual, as opposed to the occupation, and his/her attitudes relating to the professionalism of the field.

### **Process Approach (Professionalization)**

One of the most universal themes of past work regarding professions is that they tend to develop in a common pattern, called professionalization (Abbott, 1988). Wilensky's (1964) writings have been accepted as setting the ground work in the study of professionalization. Hall (1968) claimed that Wilensky "intensely examined" the structural side of the professional model (p. 92). However, others have found that it fit better with the works identified as process oriented (Abbott, 1988; Freeman, 1994). Although there is no strict line of demarcation separating the structure approaches from the process, generally the structural approaches address the characteristics of a profession, while the process oriented approaches place greater emphasis on the steps an occupation might follow as it progresses toward that structural status.

Comparing a group of primarily American occupations, which Wilensky (1964) believed to be clearly recognized and organized as professions, he suggested a process that he found consistent among the studied professions. Abbott (1988) extended Wilensky's work, noting the evolving nature of professions. This process is depicted in story form first told by Wilensky but summarized here by Abbott:

Professions begin when people start doing full time the thing that needs doing. But then the issue of training arises, pushed by recruits or clients. Schools are created. The new schools, if not begun within universities, immediately seek affiliation with them. Inevitably, there then develop higher standards, longer training, earlier commitment to the profession, and a group of full time teachers.

Then the teaching professionals, along with their first graduates, combine to promote and create a professional association. The more active professional life enabled by this association leads to self-reflection, to possible change of name, and to an explicit attempt to separate competent from incompetent. Reflection about central tasks leads the profession to delegate routine work to paraprofessionals. At the same time the attempt to separate competent from incompetent leads to internal conflict between the officially trained younger generation and their on-the-job-trained elders, as well as to increasingly violent confrontations with outsiders.... Finally, the rules that these events have generated, rules eliminating internal competition and charlatanry and establishing client protection, coalesce in a formal ethics code. (p. 10)

The first step in Wilensky's (1964) professionalization approach is that practitioners begin to be employed on a full time basis in the occupation. At this early stage, these workers generally come from other occupations. The second step is the initiation of required specialized training for practitioners. The stimulus for this comes from a combination of the first practitioners who received their training in other fields, a client public, or sometimes through a professional association. However, Wilensky did advocate that professional association usually follows the need for specialized training. In the more established professions, those that have progressed further on the spectrum of being professional, this is generally the case. In the less-established professions, the reverse pattern is more representative. Wilensky indicated that the training usually occurs in a private, or less formal manner at first, followed later by always seeking contact with universities. This allows for a constant development of standardized study requirements, academic degrees, and research programs to increase the foundation of knowledge. There always follows in this process a select group of people who teach rather than practice to further substantiate this foundation of knowledge. These first practitioners are "enthusiastic leaders of a movement, or protagonists of some new technique" (p. 144).

The third step in the professionalization process is the formation of a professional association. Generally the first activists, or the first graduates, in the association engage in deciding the types of training that are necessary, and how to increase the quality of the recruits. They also tend to change the name of the profession. For example, newspaper reporters become journalists, or relief investigators become caseworkers. Although not always successful, the aim is to create distinction from the previous, less professional practitioners. There exists in the association a tendency to continue to refine, and redefine training and tasks for the profession, and the allocating of certain tasks to less trained workers. By assigning their less technical or less rewarding tasks to lower level workers, practitioners maintain control over the profession, limiting entry to those willing to go through the training. A tension exists between the old timers and new comers. The old timers view themselves as learning the hard way and feel protective of the establishment against the “upstarts” (Wilensky, 1964, p. 145). The newcomers feel the old establishment blocks successful professionalization. Decision makers must resolve the conflict between old experience verses new training.

The fourth step in Wilensky’s (1964) professionalization process is obtaining the support of law to protect the occupation territory and to sustain its code of ethics. In other words, it is the licensing and certification step in the process. Wilensky contended that licensing and certification are “weapons in the battle for professional authority” (p. 145). Wilensky noted that this is the least important step in the process. Although this step often occurs in the professionalization process, it is not unique to professions. It also occurs in occupations not vying for professional status, like plumbing or notaries public.

Wilensky's (1964) final step is the formation of a code of ethics. The impetus of this step is to control and maintain the profession by eliminating those that are unqualified and unscrupulous, reducing internal competition, protecting clients, and emphasizing the service ideal. Some have criticized the code of ethics, claiming that it results in the professions operating as self-regulating monopolies. Cogan (1955) observed that some of the most persistent criticisms of a profession is that too often practitioners fail to live up to the code of ethics. Sometimes this code can also serve as pretense of ethical practice occurring or service to the public when they, in fact, may not (Freeman, 1994).

These five steps represent what Wilensky (1964) determined as the typical, or general, professionalization process. While he did concede that sometimes professions deviate from the sequence outlined, there is a consistency in the steps and the variations are marginal. For the marginal variations, he advanced an explanation. Freeman (1994) added that there are multiple recognizable similarities between Wilensky's approach and other professionalization theories.

Another process oriented approach to professionalization was offered by Caplow (1954). While both Wilensky (1964) and Caplow agree on a clear sequence, Caplow asserted that the sequence is "quite definite, and even the sequence is explicit" (pp. 139-140). He defined the first step as the establishment of a professional association, with definite membership criteria to keep out the unqualified. Step two involves a change of name of the profession, which serves to reduce identification with the previous occupational status and provides a title which can be monopolized. The third step dictates



the development and promulgation of a code of ethics, which asserts social utility of the occupation and sets up a public welfare rationale, further eliminating the “unqualified and unscrupulous.” The last step is described as “prolonged political agitation, whose object it is to obtain the support of public power to create barriers for the previous occupation” (Caplow, 1954, pp.139-140).

The process approach has a powerful effect upon nearly all occupations. At some time most occupations will strive for professionalization and at any given time lie at different points on the professionalization continuum. Caplow (1954) suggested the pull to be professionalized is so powerful that even occupations that are the least skilled, those that have little or no characteristics of a profession, tend to be drawn into the process.

Abbott (1991) claimed that the “aim” of Wilensky (1964) and other process-oriented theorists like Caplow (1954) was good (Abbott, 1991, p. 361). However, it had serious flaws in that they focused more on the order of the steps rather than the steps of the process themselves. Not everyone agrees that professionalization is a goal to be sought. Critics often see it as a shift from the notions of altruism and service to the pursuit of power and prestige. With a somewhat distrustful view of professionalization, Abbott (1988) indicated that professionalization grew from a monopolistic impulse—a way to lay claim to a jurisdiction and protect against the intrusion of other professions and occupations. He argued that selfishness, not altruistic reasons, often drive the process. Abbott (1991) suggested that the ordering of occurrences in the professionalization process may be subject to bias of the researchers’ definitions of the occurrences as much as by their actual order. As an example, Abbott (1991) put forward

that Wilensky considered separate professional schools to predate university-affiliated schools simply because he believed the university-affiliated schools to be a subset of separate professional schools.

Abbott (1991) found in his research “events of professionalization.” He proposed that the first event to be discussed, but not necessarily the first to occur, is the rise of the professional association. Unlike Wilensky (1964) and Caplow (1954), who asserted that professional association was for distinction from less professional occupations, Abbott (1991) wrote that the value of the professional association in the professionalization process is a way for information exchange; it can also provide mutual support, assist in lobbying, and aid in the control of both practitioners and work. In addition, he pointed out that professional association is a prerequisite to numerous other events in the professionalization process. In short, professional association is “required for the profession to accomplish anything” (Abbott, 1991, p. 361).

The second event identified by Abbott (1991) is each profession attempts to “dominate its area of work” (p. 362). Abbott asserted that this event stems from the desire on the part of practitioners for professional and personal status, and economic security. He also expressed that this may also denote a desire to protect against “dangerous quacks” (p. 362). The most visible evidence of this “control of work” occurring is the adoption of state licensing acts and the issuing of fee bills. (Abbott used the medical profession as an example.) The fee bills represented an observable documented attempt by formal and informal groups to assign and control the value of services provided by the profession.

The third event discussed by Abbott (1991) is the concern for professional education. The formation of medical schools is the most evident result of this event. In addition, there is the development of internships, residencies, and reformation of current low level schools. Abbott suggested several motivating factors for this event. First is the necessity of having well trained practitioners who are competent in their field. This serves to protect the public by distinguishing between the “officially competent from the unofficially competent as well from the officially incompetent” (p. 363). He also submitted that this aids in the specialization within the profession, and it allows the specialized practitioners to charge more money.

The fourth event of importance for Abbott (1991) is the concern for professional knowledge. He maintained that professional knowledge serves as cultural capital, and that a profession will gain income and power through this event. It does permit effective practice in the profession, but professional knowledge may serve more to defend the profession’s jurisdiction and the potential to seize the jurisdiction of other related fields. Visible occurrences include the growth and spread of new journals, books, and articles which legitimize and provide a broad popularity to the knowledge of the profession.

Abbott (1991) presented as the fifth occurrence the development of profession-dominated work sites. In the medical field this took the form of different kinds of hospitals. These work sites deliver services more effectively thereby increasing the efficacy of the body of professionals. In select fields they centralize and concentrate research and teaching, and they also can generate more income as a result of fixed fees.

In summary, instead of asking whether or not a particular occupation is or is not a

profession, it may be more productive to ask how professionalized, or more specifically, “how professionalized in certain identifiable respects” a given occupation may be (Vollmer & Mills, 1966, p. v). The process oriented approaches insinuate that at some point most occupations will attempt professionalization, and at any given time may lie at different points along the professionalization continuum (Freeman, 1994). Thus, between the two extreme poles (fully professional and lacking any organization) are the “emerging” or “marginal” professions (Greenwood, 1957, pp. 10-11).

### **Structural Approach (Professionalism)**

As noted earlier, Houle (1980) helped to define the structural approaches, or professionalism, as the structural or organizational characteristics of a profession which make it distinct from an occupation. Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) was one of the first to analyze the professions as they evolve from occupations. He indicated that a profession develops when people practice an explicit skill or method based upon specialized training. He added that a profession has “specialized intellectual study and training” (Freeman, 1994, p. 35). Carr-Saunders and Wilson suggested that a major purpose of professional organizations is to supply skilled service for a fee, or salary. Freeman (1994) finds many implications from Carr-Saunders and Wilson’s work regarding the characteristics which represent a profession. Freeman (1994) reasons that specialized intellectual study and training and an explicit skill imply a level of preparation, education, authority, or certification stemming from the training. Carr-Saunders and Wilson put forth that to qualify as a profession, specialized training must form the basis of the organization. In addition, he holds that the salary or fee for services

must be direct and definite.

Greenwood (1957) addressed the question of what common attributes professional occupations possess that distinguish them from the nonprofessional ones. He first lists occupations classified as professional within the United States Census Bureau in 1957. These include, among others, the following: accountant, architect, artist, attorney, clergyman, college professor, dentist, engineer, journalist, judge, librarian, natural scientist, optometrist, pharmacist, physician, social scientist, social worker, surgeon, and teacher. His review of the literature revealed a consensus of five elements that constitute the distinguishing attributes of a profession. They are as follows: (a) systematic theory that serves as a base for operations, (b) authority recognized by the clientele of the professional group, (c) sanction of the community and approval of this authority, (d) a code of ethics regulating relations of professionals with clients and with colleagues, and (e) a professional culture sustained by formal professional associations.

Cullen (1978) argued for two main propositions. First, he showed that jobs with the greatest task complexity and intellectual difficulty are the most likely to be rewarded monetarily the most, and to have the highest level of association activity. Therefore, they are indicators of professionalism. This led to the second proposition, that the major indicator of professionalization among occupations is the role and status of the professional association. In Cullen's research study structural characteristics of professionalism were used in the context of the relationship between practitioners and the professional association. Freeman (1994) noted that Hall (1968) and Cullen were similar, in that Cullen concluded from that relationship the professional status of the occupation

which it represents in much the same way that Hall used the attitudes of practitioners to infer the status of the occupation.

Continuing his work on attributes of professionalism, Cullen (1983) analyzed the work of multiple theorists studying professionalism. He reasoned that most theorists' lists of structural attributes are subjective and somewhat random in both the selection of attributes and in the magnitude of an attribute considered necessary for professional status. However, he denoted that there is a general consensus that the professions are based on the following: (a) complex relationships with people, (b) the professions themselves are complex in nature, (c) most professional practitioners are self-employed, (d) professions are organized suggesting the presence of professional associations, (e) professions require some sort of competence testing, (f) most professions require licensure or certification of those practicing in the field, (g) professions tend to require long or significant training of practitioners, (h) practitioners are rewarded with relatively high income compared to society in general, and (i) practitioners in recognized professions enjoy a high level of prestige.

### **Functional Approach**

Parsons (1939) advocated what he termed a "functional specificity" approach to professionalism. He submitted that technical competence is one of the principal defining characteristics of professional status, and is always limited to a particular "field" of knowledge and skill. For example, a doctor is more competent than his patient only in matters relating to health—the doctor's area of functional superiority. The professor is only superior in areas that touch his academic specialty. The functional specificity gives

the practitioner authority and professional status. Parson's professional model is categorized into five separate elements:

1. The relation of the profession to society focuses on how professions serve the society literally and symbolically.
2. Professionals develop their own set of values, norms, and symbols,
3. A community forms within a profession to which members are bound and in which they agree upon certain roles.
4. A profession trains and socializes future practitioners of the profession, and
5. The development of an expertise takes place which is recognized by the society as significant.

The elements of the functional specificity approach were mentioned often throughout the literature. However, it was only included into an empirical study by Brown (1987). Generally, this approach is regarded as part of the structural approach (Freeman, 1994).

### **Attitudinal Approach**

The attitudinal approach to professionalism emphasizes commitment to the profession. Morrow and Goetz (1988) suggest that professionalism is the extent to which one is committed to one's profession. Beginning with Gouldner's (1958) work of connecting commitment of one's career aspirations to an organization and a profession, studies have repeatedly demonstrated a link between the two (see also Morrow & Goetz, 1988). Hall's (1968) work was one of the first to focus on attitudes towards the profession and the organization.

Hall (1968) used a combination of structural and attitudinal aspects to define professionalism. Drawing extensively from Wilensky's (1964) work, Hall viewed the attributes of the professional model as two distinct types; the structural, and the attitudinal. The first are those characteristics which are part of the structure of the occupation, including such things as formal educational and entrance requirements. The second aspect is attitudinal. This aspect includes professional attributes like a sense of calling of the person to the field and the extent to which he uses colleagues as a major work reference.

Hall (1968) suggested that professionalism centered primarily on how practitioners view their work, not only on the structural characteristics of the profession, as suggested in the structural models, or on the processes occupations take leading towards becoming a full profession. Hall's model came about as the result of a rigorous examination of the literature. His model's attributes are:

1. Use of the professional organization as a major reference.
2. Belief in service to the public.
3. Belief in self-regulation.
4. Sense of calling to the field.
5. Autonomy.

It is the structural and attitudinal attributes of this model, Hall (1968) claimed, that "distinguishes professions from other occupations" (p. 92). In addition, he asserts that many "marginal professions" are working diligently to increase their status as fully professional, instilling in their members the attributes Hall used to describe



professionalism (Hall, 1968).

Hall's (1968) first attitudinal attribute is the use of the professional organization as a major referent. For Hall, this could include both formal organizations, and informal colleague groupings to impart ideas and judgments related to the professional's work. Freeman (1994) noted that this attribute included a consistent reading of professional journals, attitudinal support of the professional organization, and attendance at professional meetings.

The second attribute Hall identified focuses on the belief in service to the public. This attribute captures the idea that the profession is essential to the public, and that both the public and the practitioner benefit from the work performed by the profession. Goode (1969) indicated that the belief in service to the public assumes that the profession is deserving of professional status. In addition, there is a trust granted by society that evaluation by those in the profession, or fellow peers, rather than clients or employing organizations comes with the understanding that professionals would not exploit the public, even though they have the ability to do so.

The third attitudinal attribute is a belief in self-regulation. This means that only an equivalent professional in the field is qualified to assess the work of the professional. It deals with the idea of colleague control, and is strongly associated with licenses or certification. Parsons (1939) and Greenwood (1957) both addressed the idea of the professional having superior skill or knowledge than the client. This functional specificity makes the professional more competent than the client and in the professional relationship can dictate what is good or evil for the client who has no choice but to agree

to his professional judgment. Greenwood argued that the client of the professional lacks the theoretical background to make decisions without the help of the professional.

Hall (1968) drew upon the work of Goode (1969) where he supported that the public is not capable to judge if the work of a professional is properly done. It is incumbent upon the professional organization, or association, therefore to ensure the ethical practice of fellow professionals—judging the competence of practitioners, and creating a community of practitioners. In addition to the professional association, self-regulation is founded on the idea of the professions being responsible for developing and upholding ethical standards, or having a code of ethics.

Fourth, Hall proposed that a profession is characterized by a sense of calling to the field. This attribute indicates a sense of dedication to the profession. Hall felt that a professional would probably want to do the work regardless of the extrinsic rewards available to them. In practical terms this results in the professional generally being more dedicated to the profession than to the employing organization. Greenwood (1957), referring to a profession as a career, claimed that professional work is essentially a “calling,” a life devoted to “good works” (p. 53). For him, a professional performs his work primarily for the personal satisfaction of helping someone in need or for the affinity of the work, and not for the monetary compensations or other self-serving motives. It is a complete absorption in the work, where his work becomes his life. Greenwood compared entering a professional career to entering a religious order, in terms of being transformed permanently by the culture and social values of the occupational group.

Hall’s (1968) fifth attitudinal attribute is autonomy, or the feeling that a

professional is qualified to make work decisions without external pressures from clients, the employing organization, or anyone outside of the profession. In more recent professionalism studies, many have used Hall's definition of autonomy as a key element of their focus. Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) aligned with Hall's view, that autonomy is an attitudinal concept, and is a fundamental attribute of professionalism. They took autonomy a step further and distinguished between two aspects of autonomy, autonomy from the client and autonomy from employing organizations, as the cornerstone of their power model of professionalism. Hall's work has continued to shape more contemporary work focusing on the individual, power, commitment, and autonomy (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985; Morrow & Goetz, 1988).

Benveniste (1987) accredited Hall's (1968) work as the classic treatment of the attitudinal approach. Hall's approach to professionalism has shaped more recent work focusing on the individual, power, commitment, and autonomy (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985; Morrow & Goetz, 1988). For example, Benveniste took 20 different sets of defining characteristics of professions and refined them into six elements. These elements overlap many of Hall's attributes.

1. Application of skills based on technical knowledge.
2. Requirements of advanced education and training.
3. Some formal testing of competence and control of admission to profession.
4. The existence of professional associations.
5. The existence of codes of conducts or ethics.
6. The existence of an accepted commitment or calling, or sense of responsibility

for serving the public.

Morrow and Goetz (1988) also used Hall's (1968) professional model, examining the degree to which professionalism overlaps with measures representing other work commitment variables, and assessed how closely professionalism corresponds with participation in professional behaviors. These five work commitment variables are:

1. Value focus—work ethic endorsement.
2. Career focus—career salience.
3. Job focus—work as a central life interest/job involvement.
4. Organization focus—organizational commitment.
5. Union focus—union commitment.

They believe that loyalty, or commitment, toward a number of these variables will result in a person being more motivated, more satisfied with his job, and less likely to leave the organization. For Morrow and Goetz (1988), professionalism is the extent to which one is committed to one's profession, and they extended the attitudinal approach to define professionalism as a relationship between the individual and her occupation, not the organization. From their study, Morrow and Goetz identified Hall's (1968) attribute of self-regulation as a predominate attribute in the overall concept of professionalism.

Others have also identified similar characteristics of professionalism derived from the Hall model (Morrow & Goetz, 1988). These characteristics include professional identification, ethics, collegial maintenance of standards, professional commitment, and autonomy. While these studies are helpful, Hall's study is preferred because of its "focus on the attitudes of individuals as the indicator of the professionalism of the occupation"

(Freeman, 1994, p. 76). Freeman observed that more recent studies of professionalization like Morrow and Goetz (1988), Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985), and Brown (1987) support the use of Hall's approach because it centers on the individual and not the occupation. Hall contends that the attitudinal approach increases understanding of the structural characteristics of professionalization, the steps of the process towards professionalization, and the individual attitudes of practitioners which reflect the overall mindset of the occupation. These individual attitudes shift to the profession, then establish the work as an occupation or profession (Hall, 1968).

In summary, Hall's (1968) attitudinal attributes continue to shape professionalism research as it evolves in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It informs the emerging themes of control, commitment, and service in the professionalization literature (Freidson, 1994). Hall's model centers on how practitioners view their work, not simply on the structural characteristics of the profession. It is particularly appropriate for this study in S&I as its focus is on the individual, as opposed to the occupation, and his/her attitudes relating to the professionalism of the field (Freeman, 1994; Morrow & Goetz, 1988).

### **Power Approach**

The 1970s and early 1980s saw an increase of historical studies dealing with the structural and process approaches to professions, but things have slowed since. Hall and other observers have seen a similar decline in work on the attitudinal approach to professions since 1980. More recently, the "power position" has gained traction and become itself hegemonic. Sociologists have performed much of the initial work on professions (Durkheim, 1957). Consequently, they studied professions in relation to their

social function, their role in the economy, and the ways that professional status was able to leverage power. Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) put forth that of these major theorizing perspectives dealing with professionalization, the power approach held the most promise.

Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) defined professional power as the “power held by practitioners in their social exchanges with society and individual clients” (p. 60). It was not, as some theorists’ view, the power of an occupation’s formal structure, or the power wielded by a professional organization. While some organizations do wield incredible power, Forsyth and Danisiewicz were more interested in the power exercised by individual professionals. This view can be linked to Hall (1968) through the attitudinal attribute of autonomy.

Seeing contradictions in many of the prevalent theories of professions, Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) developed their own model for investigating professions. In their view, Hall’s (1968) professional model, and more specifically Hall’s concept of autonomy—power exercised by individual members of an occupation—is the beginning of the power approach. They argued that the distinction between a profession and an occupation is the power it holds, and the main gauge of that power is demonstrated by autonomy (Freeman, 1994). Hall defined autonomy as “the feeling that the professional is qualified to make work decisions without external pressure from clients, the employing organization, or anyone outside the profession” (Hall, 1968, p. 93).

Two types of autonomy are of particular interest to Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985). First is the autonomy from the client. Second is the autonomy from the

employing organization. Braude (1975) shares this ideology maintaining that the degree to which a worker is constrained in the performance of his work by the controls and demands of others, that individual is less professional.

Phase I of the Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) model concentrated on the potential of an occupation to establish a claim to the status of a profession. In order to establish this assertion two considerations were important: predisposing characteristics and image-building. In establishing the first, a profession's service needed to be characterized as essential, exclusive, and complex. Second, a profession is characterized by what Forsyth and Danisiewicz referred to as image-building activities. These activities refer to efforts made to advertise the service to the public as essential, exclusive, and complex. Image-building activities are often under the jurisdiction of the professional association.

Phase II comprises the evaluation by the public to the occupation's claim to professional status and the formation of professional autonomy. This evaluation is largely a response that the profession was successful in convincing the public that its services are essential, exclusive and complex. Successful public acceptance of the profession—perhaps more important than legal recognition or licensure—equates to the granting of autonomy to the profession. Occupations that do not convince the public, and are not granted autonomy, Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) refer to as mimic professions. Freeman (1994) noted that Hall's (1968) definition of autonomy was significant in that mimic professions may *look* like a profession—have all the traits or characteristics—and yet lack “the power that provides substance to the claim of professionalism” (p. 44). In

other words, mimic professions “have built an image that exceeds credibility” because the predisposing characteristics are not actually essential, exclusive, and complex (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985, p. 65). Freeman also pointed out that Forsyth and Danisiewicz focused on autonomy relations to the profession, while Hall applied the concept of autonomy in terms of the individual practitioner. Hall addressed autonomy in relation to the profession with the attribute of self-regulation—the idea that the work of the professional can only be judged by others in the profession.

Phase III described the stabilization and maintenance stages of the professionalization process. Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) proposed that in this phase true professions exhibit autonomy from both clients and employing organizations. If an occupation failed to exhibit power in one of the dimensions, they were labeled semi-professional, and mimic professionals if they failed to display both power dimensions.

Other professional models founded on the power approach were put forth by Freidson (1970, 1994, 2001) and Larson (1977), emphasizing the role of professions in the community and its connection to the state for control. Instead of the focus on attributes, these theorists recognized that in order to preserve a level of autonomy, they had to be recognized by the state. While some claim that professions are in a state of decline and becoming subject to stronger forces of power in the labor arena, nevertheless, Freidson (1994) claimed that “professionalism is being reborn in a hierarchical form in which everyday practitioners become subject to the control of professional elites who continue to exercise the considerable technical, administrative, and cultural authority that professions have had in the past” (p. 9). However, to succeed in the changed political and



social environment of today, professions will be obliged to reestablish the rationale and justification for the privileges they enjoy.

According to Freidson (1994), a profession's power is related to their specialized knowledge, altruism, and importance to the social welfare. Because of their special knowledge, professions will take on dominant roles in the formulation of state policy. Freidson (2001) outlined the "ideal type" of professionalism as a method for controlling work. He contrasts the professional model with the free market (consumer control) and bureaucratic form (managerial control). In a postmodern society, autonomy is being eroded by these other forms of control (Milliken, 2004). Freidson's (2001) model consists of five elements: (a) professional knowledge and skill—specialized body of knowledge that is inaccessible except to those who have the training and experience, and it cannot be standardized, or rationalized; (b) division of labor—represents the organization and coordination of the relations between workers performing different but interconnected specializations; (c) labor markets and careers—they organize the exchange relationships between workers and labor consumers by requiring training credentials for entry and career mobility; (d) training programs—the method of maintaining control by the occupation which produce the credentials which demonstrate the successful training in a specialized, exclusive school usually associated with a university—this professional school produces new knowledge and skills; (e) ideologies—the belief that the profession serves a higher purpose and asserts greater devotion to doing good work than to monetary reward.

Freidson (2001) found a link between control and responsibility, between

occupational autonomy and the responsibility to use it. From the description of Freidson's model, one can see the connection with Hall's (1968) elements of autonomy and self-regulation, demonstrating the central feature of autonomy in many of the current models of professionalism.

In some respects, the organizing principles of the professions can be seen to model a balance between the individual interests and the interests of others by interaction with fellow professionals and by the desire not to lose the good opinion of other professionals' selfish exploitation of others or abuse of power. Numerous critical writers have observed that often greed and abuse of power overshadow any altruistic motives inherent in professionalism. However, as these authors point out, the professional models using attitudinal and power approaches can be a powerful influence for good.

### **The New Professionalism**

Professionalism, it is generally believed, is not what it once was. The concept is being applied to work and workers in modern societies. Yet the conditions of autonomy, trust, discretion, and competence which historically have been deemed to be necessary for professional practice are continually being challenged, changed, or regulated (Evetts, 2003).

In today's world there is a "new" professionalism on the rise (Evans, 2008). Fournier (1999) foresaw that the notion of professionalism was "creeping up in unexpected domains" (p. 280), which lends support to Wilensky's (1964) prediction that everyone with any degree of specialized knowledge or practice will eventually embrace the concept of professionalism. In current occupations there is an increased use of the

*discourse of professionalism* in a wide range of professional workplaces (Evetts, 2013). The discourse of professionalism is used in advertising and marketing to find new participants or customers (Fournier, 1999). It is used in mission statements and company purpose and objective statements to motivate employees. The discourse of professionalism has infiltrated policy manuals, management handbooks, and has been exemplified in training manuals. Even company regulations and controls are now justified with the aim to improve professionalism in work (Evetts, 2013). Hoyle (2001), shifting from earlier held positions, recently emphasized that the new professionalism focuses on improving the quality of service, rather than the enhancement of status (see also Sockett, 1996). This new concept of professionalism has an appeal to and for practitioners, employees and managers in the development and maintenance of work identities, career decisions and senses of self.

Evetts (2013) argued that this new professionalism is a “discourse of occupational change and control” and is utilized more frequently by managers in work organizations. It embraces elements of the Freidson’s (2001) power model and Hall’s (1968) attitudinal model, including occupational value through specialized knowledge and expertise, and ideological elements. Evetts (2013) and Fournier (1999) suggested that the use of the discourse of professionalism indoctrinates workers in the professional culture, like work identities, conduct, and practices. According to Fournier, discourse of professionalism is a “disciplinary logic which inscribes ‘autonomous’ professional practice within a network of accountability and governs professional conduct at a distance” (p. 280).

How the discourse of professionalism is employed varies between different

occupational groups. Two different forms of professionalism in knowledge-based, service sector work are emerging in the work place today: occupational and organizational professionalism (Evetts, 2013). Evetts suggested that professionalism can be enforced “from within” the organization and “from above” (p. 786). The former incorporates collegial authority and uses the professional organization as a major reference. This ideal type requires relationships of trust between the practitioner, the employer and the client, and centers around autonomy and discretionary judgment and assessment by fellow professionals in complex situations. Occupational professionalism requires high levels of education and specialized knowledge and training, and features strong occupational identities and work cultures. Practitioners control the occupation but are guided by professional codes of ethics which are monitored by professional institutes and associations (Evetts, 2013). The discourse is used to protect the occupation and the practitioners’ interests, as well as to protect the public’s interest. Occupational groups latch onto the discourse because it is perceived as a way to improve the occupations’ status and rewards collectively and individually. Becoming and being a professional worker is a powerful ideology and appeals to many practitioners in the modern work place.

For those occupations where professionalism is being constructed and imposed from above, which Evetts (2013) believed is most public service occupations today, the reality of professionalism is different. Instead of occupational control by the workers themselves, organizational employers and managers generally enforce the professionalism in organizations in which these professionals work. It incorporates

rational-legal forms of authority and hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision making. It involves the increased standardization of work procedures and practices and control by managers. It relies on externalized forms of regulation and accountability measures such as target-setting and performance review. Critics of professionalism avow that this takes away from the appeal of professionalism by reducing autonomy, self-regulation, and the altruistic attitude of giving dedicated service. While autonomy and occupational control of the work are reduced in this approach, the discourse of professionalism is used to promote “occupational change and as a disciplinary mechanism of autonomous subjects exercising appropriate conduct” (Evetts, 2013, p. 786).

In reviewing these two forms of professionalism, one can see the influence of earlier theorists like Hall (1968) whose attitudinal attributes inform the description for these new professional models. Describing one aspect of this new model Burchell, Gordon, and Miller (1991) suggested that it is a powerful motivating force of control at a distance. Organizational professionalism is becoming more relevant in public management occupations and especially in educational institutions.

In many of the new occupational contexts, where professionalism is being imposed from above, this standard of professionalism is being used to facilitate occupational change. Evetts (2013) contended that the fiscal crises of recent years have prompted government to take a more involved approach. In short, Hanlon (1999) explained that the state is engaged in trying to redefine professionalism so that it becomes more commercially aware, budget focused, managerial, and entrepreneurial.

The foundation of most studies of professions center on the structural and process approaches. More recently, attitudinal and power approaches have emerged to integrate and better understand the concept as it relates to more modern views of professionalism. The various approaches represent different perspectives and ways of communicating about a similar concept that are useful in understanding the topic. While this research study appreciates the legitimacy in each approach, the attitudinal approach introduced by Hall, and extended in power and new professionalism contexts by Forsyth and Danisiewicz, Freidson, and Evetts, forms the basis for this study.

### **Ethical Practice**

The importance of ethical practice is unquestioned. Furthermore, virtually all research studies dealing with professions require, in some form, a formal code of ethics. Wilensky (1964) implied that a profession implements and upholds rules of conduct outlining the moral and ethical practice of fellow practitioners. He asserted that a formal code of ethics eliminates unqualified practitioners and protects clients. Conversely, others have branded ethical codes as one of the “great evils” related to professionalization, operating as self-regulating monopolies (Sork & Welock, 1992, p. 116). Cogan (1955) observed that some practitioners fail to live up to the code of ethics, and Freeman (1994) noted that the code of ethics may even serve as a smoke screen hiding what a practitioner is actually doing.

As demonstrated earlier, when viewed from a process model of professionalization, the formation of a code of ethics is an important step (Abbott, 1991;

Wilensky, 1964). A code of ethics regulating relations of professionals with clients and with colleagues provided an important structural attribute for those who espoused the structural perspective (Carr-Saunders & Wilson, 1933; Cullen, 1983; Greenwood, 1957). Parsons (1939) included a code of ethics in the functional approach with the element that professionals develop their own set of values, norms, and symbols. In the attitudinal approach ethical codes were encompassed in the attitudinal attribute of self-regulation (Hall, 1968). The power approach captured the essence of a code of ethics during the first phase of Forsyth and Danisiewicz's (1985) model which emphasized obtaining legitimacy through predisposed characteristics and image building. For teacher professionalism, there is a mixture of ideas regarding the importance of a code of ethics, but in religious education it is a major element of the organization and the profession itself.

It is assumed that by establishing teaching as a profession that the public will recognize teachers as an expert group which possesses specialized knowledge and skills acquired through their training and experience. A code of ethics serves to reinforce this image including the knowledge of how to teach the specialized knowledge to others. Askvik and Quddus (2005) articulated the underlying assumption that teachers' possession of specialized knowledge will provide them autonomy and prestige as an occupational group. As a result teachers will benefit by having more control over their specific discipline, who is hired, working conditions (including salary), and more significant career opportunities.

A code of ethics serves to enhance the public image of teachers. The improved

public image gives the teaching occupation professional status implying that the public perceives that teachers, to some extent, have achieved control over certain tasks, and they are competent and skilled. Some argue that the teaching profession fits more with what Toren (1969) described as the semi-professions. She argued that to claim a higher status among occupations, a profession had to demonstrate a balance between specialized knowledge and “professional norms” like autonomy and service (p. 147). A code of ethics helps the teaching profession to show members and the public that it has a strong command of specialized knowledge and skills and that it is ethical (Freidson, 1970). However, teaching as a profession departs from the full-fledged professional perspective in that teachers as an occupational group may or may not receive high prestige and total control over their working conditions (Toren, 1969). The code of ethics helps to make up the difference in the public image with what is lost in autonomy by being more concerned with having teachers who are competent and capable of solving their tasks in a proper way.

Another way that the professionalization of teachers is being challenged is the claim that it inhibits professionalism. Critics argue that the process of professionalization creates a distance between teachers and their clients. There is an inverse proportional relationship between the strength of the profession and the commitment teachers demonstrate for clients. The more professional teaching becomes, like medicine or law, the less concern teachers will demonstrate for students and their families, and become less competent in stimulating learning (Askvik & Quddus, 2005). In contrast, professionalism may be viewed as an “ideology or a rhetorical strategy of teacher



associations to gain legitimacy and claim exclusive control over the education system because they are more competent than other groups, not only to conduct classroom teaching but also to manage the system” (Askvik & Quddus, 2005, p. 3).

Darling-Hammond (1997) called for a code of ethics, or a professional standard, as it will bring more attention to competence and commitment. Governments, local communities, parents, and teachers all have a legitimate claim for the control of the profession. A code of ethics balances the need for governance and accountability with allowing teachers to practice professionally in the interests of students. Because of the code of ethics, stake holders in education can have confidence the teaching profession is competent and committed.

The Association of American Educators (AAE), a nonunion professional educators’ organization, have formulated four principles in establishing a code of ethics. The first principle is an ethical conduct toward students. The professional educator accepts personal responsibility for teaching students character qualities that will help them evaluate the consequences of and accept the responsibility for their actions and choices. Although they strongly affirm the role of parents as the primary moral educators of their children, they believe all educators are obligated to help foster civic virtues such as integrity, diligence, responsibility, cooperation, loyalty, fidelity, and respect—for the law, for human life, for others, and for self. The second principle of the code of ethics states that the professional educator assumes responsibility and accountability for his or her performance and continually strives to demonstrate competence. Third, the professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, accords just and

equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The final principle states that the professional educator pledges to protect public sovereignty over public education and private control of private education (<http://aaeteachers.org>).

The National Education Association (NEA), a national labor union for public schools, also developed a code of ethics for educators to increase the public's confidence in teachers and public education. Their code of ethics provides standards by which to judge a professional teacher's conduct. It is comprised of two general principles, commitment to the student and commitment to the profession (<http://www.nea.org>). The first principle designates that the teacher strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. To accomplish this the teacher works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

The second principle, the commitment to the profession, is about the trust and responsibility vested by the public in return for the highest ideals of professional service. The teacher seeks to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions that attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In order to meet federal and public expectations, teachers' knowledge and skills need to be strengthened to certify that every teacher is capable of teaching increasingly diverse learners. To do this a professional standard, code of ethics, or principles of good practice can be used to implement professional development practices (Brockett, 1988;

Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). The result is that teachers can become more competent and committed to the profession.

### **Code of Ethics in Seminary and Institutes**

In S&I the code of ethics is viewed a little differently. Most professions differentiate between professionalism as it relates to the organization and to the profession (Morrow & Goetz, 1988). As a private, religious organization, S&I is both the profession and the employer or organization. A code of ethics is embodied in the profession in S&I. An employee, missionary, or other volunteer in any way affiliated with the LDS church is expected to live by a standard of conduct. The LDS' "Our Standards of Conduct" is a 25-page document detailing ethical behavior and practice for Church associates. To help familiarize LDS church workers with these standards, all are invited to complete the internet learning module entitled "Following Our Standards of Conduct" every 2 years. In addition, Church workers must certify their compliance with these policies by completing the online certification entitled "Our Standards of Conduct Annual Compliance Certification" every year. Aimed for the general employee of the Church, the training is not specific to teaching in S&I. While the principles are helpful, they are intended for a broader audience.

A code of ethics has been an element of significant discussion related to professionalism in education. It is not yet clear that agreement is reached related to the issue. Regarding a code of ethics in religious education, specifically in S&I, it is embodied in the profession itself, but there is no explicit code of ethics specific to S&I.

## Teacher Professionalism

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, administrators and educators have called for better teachers and more professional teachers (D’Amico, 2010). Reformers past and present are calling for change, wanting to cultivate a new “highly qualified teacher,” a teacher that can help America be more competitive (Duncan, 2010).

Themes commonly associated with teacher professionalism—accountability, reform, leadership, and subject specific characteristics of professionalism—make up the content of most of the articles. *The Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, edited by Houston (1990), demonstrates that a majority of research done on professionalism is tied directly to teacher education programs—those programs in colleges and universities that are preparing future teachers. These researchers believe that “the best way to improve schools is to improve the quality of teachers” (Houston, 1990, p. 205). He argued that the quality of teachers is directly tied to teacher education programs which in turn are inextricably interwoven with the teaching profession itself. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Association of Teacher Educators, and many other similar groups advocate teacher education reform to promote greater professionalism (Houston, 1990).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) distinguished between professionalism and professionalization in teaching, centering the difference on five characteristics:

- (a) Teachers’ credentials—skills, intellectual functioning, and knowledge combined with the degree or certification credentials that ensure their expert status;
- (b) teachers’ formal and informal induction or follow-up to pre-service

training to help inductees adjust to the everyday realities of school life and dealing with students; (c) teachers' professional development or the expectation of ongoing inservice training to update skills and knowledge; (d) the degree of teachers' authority over their workplace; and (e) teachers' compensation or to what extent they are well-paid for their knowledge and skills. (Richardson, 2001, p. 820)

According to Darling-Hammond (1997), occupations become professions when they take responsibility to establish a common knowledge base for fellow professionals and for transmitting that knowledge through education, licensing, and continuing peer review. "A profession seeks to ensure that its members understand and use standards of practice that put the interests of clients first and base decisions on the best available knowledge. In exchange for these assurances, societies grant professions substantial autonomy from government regulation and defer to them when making technical decisions" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 298).

To establish safety standards for structures like bridges or buildings, policymakers will turn to engineers and architects. To set standards of knowledge and practice for physicians, policymakers ask the medical profession itself to determine these guidelines. In the field of law, the professional lawyers set the standard for practice. Policymakers, however, do not ask teachers to set the standards for their chosen field as "they do not expect teachers to have the knowledge to do so" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 298). While law and medicine are accepted as the standard pattern for professionalism, teaching is considered by many to be semiprofessional, falling short of the pattern. According to Houston (1990), teaching falls short of the pattern because it lacks a specific core, or technical knowledge, and the public has not granted the individual teachers the autonomy needed in their sphere of practice. As stated earlier, some regard

teaching as a semi-profession (Forsyth & Danisiewicz, 1985; Morrow & Goetz, 1988; Toren, 1969). Regardless of the position one takes, nearly all occupations strive for professionalization and at any given time lie at different points on the professionalization continuum (Caplow, 1954).

Houston (1990), agreeing with Darling-Hammond, suggested two principles that inform the idea of professionalism. They are teaching knowledge—what teachers know, and teaching practice—what teachers do. She asserts that professionalism starts with pre-service teacher education programs in colleges and universities, and calls for reform in those programs. She proposed pairing new teachers with more experienced, professional teachers so that there is guidance and supervision in those first, most difficult years of teaching. Houston contends that one cannot be a professional without first having spent many hours with a supervisor's guidance.

Freeman (1994) offered two different views of professionalism. First, professionalism is being a competent, dedicated worker. Second, professionalism is the relationship of a person's attitude towards her occupation. In other words, it is the ideology of workers in a specific arena seeking professional status, and how committed they are to their respective occupation.

Similar to the attitudinal relationship of professionalism, Richardson (2001) suggested that professionalism is a function of commitment to the occupation. She asserts that commitment to teaching is “the degree of positive, affective bond between the teacher and the school that reflects the degree of internal motivation, enthusiasm, and job satisfaction teachers derive from teaching and the degree of efficacy and effectiveness

they achieve in their jobs” (p. 820). The assumption is that greater commitment to teaching will lead to greater professionalism.

Richardson (2001) also claimed that to be professional means to take control and lead the charge for reform. Professionals do this in many ways such as establishing and attending teacher improvement programs like peer collaborations; performing formal evaluations, but rarely, if ever, performing summative evaluations; and expanding decision making roles. In addition, professionalism is enhanced by and promotes more shared decision-making abilities. The hope of sharing the decision making ability is that it “may improve professionalism, morale, and commitment” (Richardson, 2001, p. 931).

For Abbott (1988) and Wilensky (1964), professionalism happens as a series of steps starting from the structural component and moving through the attitudinal attributes of professionalism. It begins with the idea that “people who are doing something full time want to do it well, or see a need to do it well, or begin to know what it is to do it well” (Abbott, 1988, p. 10). Professionalism becomes even more impactful with cultural legitimacy—when the profession aligns itself with structures and processes that the culture generally acknowledges as justifiable and important. The mind-set prevalent across society at present frequently does not regard teachers as professionals (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). Tichenor and Tichenor argued that the reason for this is the attitude prevalent in American society that anyone can teach, an attitude not shared in other professions.

Public opinion determines in many ways whether an occupation is viewed as professional (Freidson, 1970). Therefore, changing the attitude of the public is one of the

keys to becoming professional for educators. In addition to public opinion, Richardson (2001) offered that the prestige an occupation enjoys in society connects directly to the salaries of the occupation. “If teachers are treated like professionals instead of executors of somebody else’s orders, the status and funding of teacher education will improve. Every aspect of teacher education is influenced by the public view of the importance of teaching” (Houston, 1990, p. 205).

The current societal mindset about professionalism in education pushes teachers into industrial management models with pressure to be more accountable, efficient, and “effective in producing quality learning” (Day & Smethem, 2009). The current trend, according to Day and Smethem, focused on the following:

[T]he “new vocabulary of performance”...which changes teachers’ thinking as they work with measurable outcomes of “performance indicators,” “performance data,” “targets,” “benchmarking,” and the new managerialism inherent in “management teams,” and “financial management.” Teachers in many countries, it is argued, are being “squeezed into the tunnel vision of test scores, achievement targets and league tables of accountability” and spend precious time producing and dealing with “a baffling array of figures” within cultures of compliancy. (p. 142)

Amid the debates of school reform today, professionalism remains one of the most significant attributes of education (Vallicelli, 2009); and yet, there still remains an ambiguity of what it means to be professional in education (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). Leading researchers espousing the need for greater professionalism in education include Darling-Hammond (1997), Glickman (2002), and Hargreaves (1997). Speaking about what teacher professionalism means, Darling-Hammond stated that “[t]he invention of the 21<sup>st</sup> century schools that can educate all children well rests, first and foremost, upon the development of a highly qualified and committed teaching force” (p. 5). This



professional teaching force is needed in schools and in religious education today.

However, simply to speak of professionalism without defining what it means to be professional teacher would be imprudent. Glickman (2002) defined professionalism in education in the following way.

[T]eachers have both a high level of commitment and high level of abstraction. They are the true professionals, committed to continually improving themselves, their students, and their faculty members. They can think about the task at hand, consider alternatives, make a rational choice, and develop and carry out an appropriate plan of action. Not only can they do this for their classrooms but with the faculty as a whole. Others regard them as informal leaders, people to whom others go willingly for help. Not only do these teachers provide ideas, activities and resources, but they become actively involved in seeing any proposed plan through to its completion. They are both thinkers and doers. (p. 89)

Current research places professionalism into two main camps: (a) competent practice in a given field or discipline, and (b) the level of commitment one feels or exhibits towards his or her profession (Darling-Hammond, 1997). According to Korthagen (2004), competency means an integrated body of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that if put into practice will lead to professional behaviors. Writing of commitment as a tenet of professionalism, Richardson (2001) cited Rosanholtz's study and identified three characteristics that lead to professional fulfillment and commitment: (a) teacher autonomy—that a teacher's actions could lead to positive change; (b) psychic rewards that outweigh frustrations with work; and (c) ample opportunities for professional development. When these criteria are met, teachers feel optimistic, empowered, committed, and challenged. There is greater career satisfaction and greater teacher efficacy as teachers become more professional.

Using focus group interviews of inservice teachers for their study, Tichenor and

Tichenor (2005), explored on a practical level what teachers believed about professionalism. These researchers classified their findings into five main categories. They are (a) character, (b) commitment to change and continuous improvement, (c) subject knowledge, (d) pedagogical knowledge, and (e) obligations and working relationships beyond the classroom. This is in line with Richardson's (2001) findings that teachers that were willing to change experienced a greater commitment level to the occupation, and therefore, were more professional.

Korthagen's (2004) research on workshops has led to the formation of what he calls the "Bateson model" or "the onion" (p. 79). This model shows the relationship between six professional characteristics working in circular fashion from the outer levels to the inner circle. Starting with the outer level they proceed inward with environment, behavior, competencies, beliefs, identity, and mission. Each layer builds on the previous layer. According to Korthagen, ultimately the professional is one whose "behavior, competencies, beliefs, identity and mission together form one coherent whole matching the environment" (p. 87).

Current cultural trends, some argue, have put teacher professionalism in jeopardy (Storey, 2007). Historian Tyack (1974) analyzed education in America and noted the change from the locally controlled system to a centralized, bureaucratic, scientific system based on the corporate model of social efficiency. Over the past 20 years, the changing nature of society and the economy have caused educators to exist in survival mode rather than development. Cries for school reform have demanded new expectations from schools. As one writer noted, "hardly a year has passed without some reform being

mooted, negotiated or imposed in the name of raising standards (appraisal, inspection), increasing ‘user’ participation (open enrollment, local financial management) and pupil entitlement (a national curriculum)” (Day & Smethem, 2009, p. 142). Some claim that the new trends of standardization and market driven education models have in effect, “deprofessionalised” teachers (Hilferty, 2008).

In order to meet the new demands society has placed on educators, researchers have looked at the organizational structure of schools as a means of giving legitimacy to the profession and professionalism (Thompson, 2007). The spectrum of research ranges from leadership and supervision techniques to professional learning communities (Helterbran, 2008; Hulse, 2006; McMahan, 2007; B. D. Miller, 2003; Servage, 2009; Wills & Sandholtz, 2009; Wood, 2007; York-Bahr & Duke, 2007). In addition, another branch of the research includes studies of professional preparation practices versus real world teaching (Thompson, 2007).

Polk (2006) argued, “It is the teachers’ responsibility to grow as practitioners, stay current in their field, and continually evolve as professionals. It is this professional development that is considered paramount to successful teaching. Continuing to develop as an instructor, with support and guidance, is necessary for improvement” (Polk, 2006, p. 23).

Freeman (1994) found in his research a positive correlation between the level of education a person has and the level of professionalism a teacher exhibits. Freeman also asserted that the autonomy of an individual to make decisions free from pressure from the public, employers, or clients leads to a more powerful professional occupation. Related to

this, Tschannen-Moran (2009) concluded that two key components of teacher professionalism are: (a) The professional orientation of the school leaders (how the administrators exercised their authority), and (b) the level of trust the faculty placed in colleagues. Schools with less bureaucratic orientations to leadership provide teachers with more autonomy, which leads to greater trust among faculty and greater professionalism among teachers.

In a narrative study, Terwilliger (2006) showed the conflicts teachers face in professionalism. Her conclusion suggests that gender, race, and class distinctions, in addition to the impact of the standardization model, now define professionalism. These often opposing facets of professionalism, Terwilliger suggested, serve to forge teachers' identities. For example, she states that placing teachers in the dilemma of straddling what comes naturally and normally for a teacher versus society's expectations will serve to legitimize the professionalization of teachers. The current masculine approach to teaching values knowledge over experience; however, assumedly, teachers are "caring and nurturing, attributes associated with traditional norms of femininity and that emphasize a woman's experience, while simultaneously positing teaching as work that is natural and easy" (p. 157). She continues, stating that "[o]n the other hand the standards movement has shifted this understanding of teacher professionalism in its attempt to emphasize the need for teachers to be trained and to become experts in content and technique, while simultaneously devaluing the role of experience, class, and race" (p. 157).

Richardson (2001) added that the standardization movement also has limited the scope of what it means to be professional. For example, the teacher attribute of caring is

not viewed as professional. First, caring is a feminine characteristic, placing priority on relationships and personal understanding of one another. Second, some feel that a teacher who cares ignores poor behavior and low achievement in students and instead focuses on feel good practices. Both of these views are in direct violation of standards of professionalization that expect a professional distance from students, and encourage communication that is more technical and aloof rather than warm and inviting. In the *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, Richardson (2001) asserted that caring “implies a continuous drive for competence” and is, therefore, professional (p. 101).

Goodson and Choi (2008), who based their research on the general concern that educators are neither living up to societal expectations nor being professional, used life history methods to find out what contributes to the development of teachers’ professionalism after they enter teaching as compared with their concept of professionalism at their time of being hired. They found that by combining both life history and collective memory methods they were able to get a deep and clear picture of the melding of the relationship between the workplace and biographical contexts of the teachers. This study produced a deep and broad knowledge base, and provided a foundation for understanding the relationships between the persons and the systems both at an individual and at a collective level. Tang and Choi (2009) conducted a similar study using life history to understand teacher development and how teachers entering the teaching profession at different times over the last five decades made sense of their continuing professional development.

Wills and Sandholtz (2009) used a case study method to look at professionalism

among teachers and the effects of high-stakes testing. They concluded that professionalism is evolving into “constrained professionalism.” Teachers have autonomy in their classroom practices but contextual pressures and time demands limit the decisions teachers are able to make, which further devalue professional experience, judgment, and expertise.

A new wave of professionalism is fostered by professional learning communities (PLC; Wood, 2007) and professional development programs (Servage, 2009). Servage concluded from her study that “PLC learning presently embraces the technical and managerial dimensions of teachers’ work at the expense of craft knowledge and critical perspectives, resulting in narrow and impoverished understandings of teacher professionalism, and limiting potential contributions of PLCs to teachers’ professional growth and learning” (p. 149).

Differences in opinion leave the field open in regards to professionalism. At present, the literature also leaves room for debate on whether professionalism is even desirable in education. Professionalization has a tendency to lead to standardization and exclusionary knowledge practices, and for some occupations, professionalization tends to limit the access of the knowledge of professionals to a small group of individuals. This result is opposite the very nature and purpose of education, which is to give “access and intelligence” (Sizer, 2001, p. 12) to every citizen.

### **Teacher Professionalism in S&I**

Professionalism of teachers is a complex issue with deep implications. The same may be said for professionalism in S&I. As a religious education organization, S&I

relates to other education organizations like public school. However, S&I does have many unique characteristics imbedded within its organization which limit the amount of generalization possible between public school research and research specific to S&I. However, relatively little has been written for teacher professionalism in religious education, and even less for teachers in S&I. Most teachers want to do well and perform to their best ability, but do not know how to meet the raised expectations administrators place on them.

The objective statement for S&I declared, “We continually seek to improve our performance, knowledge, attitude, and character.” Every teacher in S&I would likely agree with this statement, yet the pragmatic interpretation and implementation of it varies from one teacher to the next. Over the last few years, structural changes have been implemented in S&I to affect the professionalism of teachers. For example, instead of the traditional 10-month contract extended to most public school teachers, S&I applied a full twelve month contract with a limited number of days teachers could use for vacation, utilizing the professional business world model of contracts. S&I also instituted the TLE and other changes to create more professionalism among the teachers. Even with all these structural changes, S&I still lack a clear and concise definition of what it means to be professional.

Unlike professionalism in public education, professionalism in religious education provided minimal material to research, and even less material resulted in the search for professionalism in S&I. There are thirteen master’s thesis papers and dissertations that have a connection with professionalism in S&I. Of the dissertations that I found, many

emphasized an historical look at S&I, like Fowles (1990), with minimal material regarding professionalism in S&I. Christensen's dissertation (1969) focused on teacher education and professionalism in S&I but is too outdated to be of any use for teachers today with the TLE. E. W. Johnson's (2008) study on S&I seminary principals includes a short survey on teacher professionalism. It gathers information about the time a teacher should spend in the seminary building, being honest with their reporting of time, and numerous other rudimentary aspects of professionalism. It does little to describe what makes S&I teachers professional, or, in other words, what behaviors or attitudes actually define professionalism in S&I. A study of professionalism in religious education for S&I teachers would be valuable research to promote professionalism and to illuminate areas for further research.

In summary, the concept of professionalism has been widely studied from multiple perspectives. Hall's attitudinal attributes inform many of the current models and applications of the research. The purpose of this study was to expand the current literature and seek to describe how full-time teachers perceive professionalism in S&I, how they acquire this understanding, and the challenges to teacher professionalism in S&I. Qualitative methods are appropriate to study this influence, because these methods are used to understand some social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved and to contextualize issues in their particular setting (Glesne, 2006). This research examines the life history of three successful S&I teachers to understand the intersection of the individual life with the social structure, culture, and organization that leads to a perception of professionalism. Hall's (1968) framework will be used to provide a lens to



describe and define how S&I teachers perceive professionalism. This framework will allow development of themes for discussion as well as interpretation of data. The next chapter describes this methodological approach.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the qualitative approach to this study. The first section of this chapter explains why a life history approach is warranted. The second section discusses why Hall's attitudinal attributes of professionalism are an appropriate framework for studying professionalism in S&I. As suggested by Creswell (2007), the role of the researcher is described in the third section of this study. The fourth section presents an explanation of the methodological approach of this life history study including: sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation, textural descriptions, and the essence of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Lastly, issues of trustworthiness of this study are addressed.

#### **Life History**

In order to understand how teachers perceive professionalism in S&I, this study uses a qualitative approach known as life history. The aim of the life history method is to gather, analyze, and report detailed descriptions of individuals' perceptions of their own lived experience relating to their professionalism and how that professionalism has developed during the years of their employment in S&I (Creswell, 2007). The following section will provide a description of life history, a brief overview of life history's development, present several advantages of its implementation, and conclude with

arguments that substantiate its application to this study.

Life history, when boiled down to its basic form, is about stories. Stories are a fundamental ingredient in what it means to be human, and in determining what kind of human people may become. As soon as a child learns to read, they begin to realize that literate people are dependent on stories (Goodson, 2013). Booker (2006) illustrated this:

At any given moment all over the world hundreds of millions of people will be engaged in what is one of the most familiar of all forms of human activity. In one way or another they will have their attention focused on mental images which we call a story.

We spend a phenomenal amount of our lives following stories: telling them; listening to them; reading them; watching them being acted out on the television screen or in films or on the stage. They are far and away the most important feature of our everyday existence. (p. 2).

Life stories, as told by the teachers, are memories, and the memories constitute teachers' interpretations of their individual identity. In addition, recalling the stories helps to shape identity, positioning the teacher as part of the larger community in which a person associates (Goodson & Choi, 2008).

However, life history research is more than merely telling a story. It is understanding the life story against a backdrop of the historical context. Life stories focus on the story whereas life histories seek to understand the story alongside their historical and cultural backgrounds (Goodson, 2013). To obtain this kind of story, a researcher interviews a participant multiple times collecting data to create a narrative of a life (Glesne, 2006). These narratives can then be used to represent a larger group or culture.

### **Life History Overview**

The life history approach first came into renowned position in the 1920s in the

field of sociology. It evolved following the publication of Thomas and Znaniecki's study of Polish peasants migrating to the United States. In this study, Thomas and Znaniecki relied on migrants' autobiographical accounts, diaries, and letters to analyze the experiences of a social group and the social phenomena of American immigration during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Goodson & Sykes, 2001). Life history was strengthened and enhanced by researchers at the Chicago School of Sociology where this method of inquiry was first characterized by thinkers who were interested in how social structures and physical environmental factors shaped the mind and identity of people (Castillo, 2012; R. L. Miller, 2000, p. 4). Some of the most important life history studies were conducted at the Chicago school (Goodson, 2013). Books that employed a life history method during these early years include *The Hobo* (Anderson, 1923), *The Ghetto* (Wirth 1928), and *The Jack-Roller* (Shaw, 1930). Over the years the popularity and acceptance of life history methods has fluctuated. However, since the 1980s, educational studies have used life history methods extensively (Castillo, 2012).

Although first established by sociologists, life history has been a major methodology of anthropological field work (Tierney & Dilley, 2001). Creswell (2012) claims that anthropologists engage in life history research to learn about an individual's life within the context of a culture-sharing group. Goodson and Sikes (2001) argued that a life history approach "offers a way of exploring the relationship between the culture, the social structure and individual lives" (p. 9). Richardson (2001) described a life history as a "narrative or life story" that interprets experiences or events that reflect a more general understanding of similar experiences and events from a cultural perspective (p.

884). For example, Wolcott (1983), an anthropologist, was one of the first researchers to employ life history interviews to investigate the educational experiences of students (Tierney & Dilley, 2001). In his study he describes the educational difficulties of a student he calls “Sneaky Kid,” and shows particular aspects of how education both functions and does not function in the United States (Wolcott, 1983, p. 8).

### **Life History Rationale**

Following the advice of Goodson and Sikes (2001), there are three reasons why life history methodology was best suited for this study of professional teachers in S&I (p. 2). To begin with, lives are a combination of experiences of who we are at home and at work. Every area of a person’s life has an impact on the others. The qualitative methodology of life history allows the researcher to examine the perception of professionalism in S&I while offering a voice to the participant’s experience. The rich data, or story, obtained about the participants’ experience provides a starting place for developing further understanding of the social construction of each person’s perspective of professionalism (Goodson, 2013). Castillo (2012) suggested that life history can broaden our understanding and increase depth to the study of professionalism. In brief, while a quantitative scale would be more convenient in reference to time spent in retrieving data, it seems obvious that a study of the perception of professionalism in S&I cannot be judged as an isolated aspect of a person’s life (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). The measurement of perception alone does not account for the influence behind the lived experience.

Secondly, it acknowledges the relationship between “individuals’ lives, their

perceptions and experiences, and historical and social contexts and events” (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). By capturing the life stories from successful teachers in S&I through a life history interviewing technique, this research will probe, analyze, and report on the data that was collected (Goodson, 2013). “Life history forces a confrontation with other people’s subjective perceptions” (Goodson, 2013, p. 33). Becker (1970) described this as “putting ourselves in Stanley’s skin” (p. 71). From this perspective the researcher can begin to ask questions about the phenomenon from the point of view of the individual being interviewed. By administering multiple interviews and examining varying individual perspectives, this study revealed additional perspectives on the culture of S&I as a whole, and offered a way to explore the relationship among culture, social structure, and individual lives. In short, life history research attracts those interested in the details of other people’s lives and in how people make sense of their lived experience (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). As Goodson and Choi (2008) argued, life histories are “probably the only authentic means of understanding how motives and practices reflect the intimate intersection of institutional and individual experience in the postmodern world” (p. 5).

The third reason for applying this methodology is that life history research demonstrates the evolution of an individual’s identity and experience, and how they navigate the societal expectations of the world in which they live (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). This matches the qualitative research assumption that reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing (Glesne, 2006). Glesne further explained that in this context what is “real” is relative to the specific location and people involved. Qualitative epistemology embraces the assumption that one comes to know realities

through interactions and subjectivist exploration with participants about their perceptions. Therefore, not only does this life history study give voice to participants, it allows them to be reflective and consciously represent their lived experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Life history methods are a good way to explore the complex, personal narratives of people (Goodson, 2013). It starts with a life story, progresses through “grounded conversations” which elicits information about the historical context and social location (Goodson, 2013, p. 40). These grounded conversations are the result of a collaborative narrative interview between the participant and the researcher. Both are an integral part of the life history process and demonstrate the importance of reflexivity in research practice (Cole & Knowles, 1994). Life historians re-present life stories they are told, within the context of their own frames of reference and the particular stories that they wish to tell via their use of what informants say (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Thus, the researcher recognizes that his communication and exchanges with participants throughout the interview process influences the way they construct meaning of their lived experiences (DavyDov, 1995; Vygotsky, 1981).

### **Attitudinal Attributes Framework**

Hall’s (1968) attitudinal attributes framework was the lens used to examine the perception of teacher professionalism among full-time S&I teachers. His study was based on the sociological theories of professionalization. Hall’s attitudinal model was selected because it focuses on the attitudes of individuals as a reflection of the professionalism of

the occupation.

Studies of professionalization like Brown (1987), Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985), Freeman (1994), and Morrow and Goetz (1988) have supported the use of Hall's model as it centered on the individual rather than the occupation or organization. More recently studies have borrowed principles from Hall to study professionalism (Freeman, 1994; Freidson, 1994). However, they tend to focus more on power and political influence that a profession has rather than on the individual attitudes of the practitioners (Askvik & Quddus, 2005; Freidson, 1994).

Hall's (1968) attitudinal approach increases understanding for both the structural characteristics and process steps of professionalization, and the individual attitudes of practitioners. When these attitudes are achieved and then portrayed on the profession itself, the prestige of the occupation rises, emerging as a profession. Freeman (1994) defended the use of Hall's model and associated instrumentation demonstrating that Hall had received a high level of acceptance in the literature.

Hall's (1968) professional model was developed by combining the structural model put forth by Wilensky (1964) with his own attitudinal dimensions. In a personal communication with Freeman (1994), Hall explained that the five attitudinal attributes of his model "were developed through exhaustive analysis of the professional literature" (p. 77). He developed a scale to measure the degree of professionalism among practitioners of different occupations. His scale used Likert scaling procedures with ten different questions to measure the five attitudes of professionalism (Snizek, 1972).

The first attitudinal attribute identified by Hall (1968) is the use of the



professional organization as a major referent. Professional organizations comprise both formal and informal associations that reinforce the values, beliefs, and identity of the profession, as well as judgments related to the professional's work. This includes practices of attending professional meetings, reading professional journals, and demonstrating attitudinal support of the professional organization.

Hall's (1968) second element of professionalism concentrates on the belief in service to the public. Snizek (1972) explained that professionals believe that their profession is "both indispensable and beneficial" to society (p. 109). While motivated by economic status, they are also committed to "service for their fellow man" as well as increasing the specific core of knowledge that gives them expertise. Questions on Hall's scale for this dimension imply that the profession is worthy of the prestige, and the trust that they can be evaluated by peers rather than clients and will not exploit the public.

Third, Hall (1968) suggested that a profession is characterized by a belief in self-regulation. Founded upon the idea of colleague control, this attribute included the idea that only a fellow professional is qualified to judge the work of another professional. Based on the work of Greenwood (1957) and Goode (1969), this dimension suggests that the public is not able to truly judge the work of the professional; therefore, the professional organization protects society by promoting and upholding the ethical practice of practitioners, and judging their competence. Embedded in this attribute is the concept of codes of ethics and ethical practice.

The fourth attitudinal attribute Hall emphasizes is a sense of calling to the field. A professional is totally devoted to his work. It is an attitude of personal commitment and

dedication. A professional performs his work primarily for personal satisfaction and efficacy and would probably continue in the field regardless of the monetary rewards. Hall compared being a professional to entering a religious order with its intendant permanent and complete absorption in the association.

Hall's final professional attribute was autonomy, or the ability to be free to make decisions about one's work. This ability should be free from pressure from the state, clients, or organization. This concept has been adopted by more current theorists as a central feature of professionalism. Forsyth and Danisiewicz (1985) used the concept of autonomy as the basis of their power model. Abbott (1988) adapted autonomy to fit his principles of jurisdiction which embody both social and cultural control. Fournier (1999) proposed that professionalism is a disciplinary logic which implies that autonomy is bound within a network of accountability and professional conduct at a distance. Freidson's (1994, 2001) ideal type included the ideology of autonomy. He argued that professions establish economic and social conditions which allow those with specialized knowledge and skill to control their own work. Evetts (2013) asserted that professionalism is a balancing act with autonomy being stretched between control from within the profession and control from above. Common to all these theorists is the agreement that autonomy is an attitudinal concept and a central principle of professionalism.

Hall's (1968) attitudinal approach to professionalism is the framework that was applied to examine the perception of professionalism in S&I. His five attitudinal attributes are accepted in the literature as an appropriate measure of professionalism for

an individual and organization.

### **Role of the Researcher**

All researchers, regardless of the approach being taken, are involved to a considerable degree in the write up of their research. Fundamentally, research is about “making ‘better’ sense of whatever is being studied” (Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 48). The construction of a life history is a joint creation between researcher and the participant. Participant realities are influenced by researcher interactions as well as the researcher being affected by the nature and content of the story which emerges which has implications for the future lives and understanding of them (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Denzin (1997) emphasized that the researcher becomes the “mirror to the world under analysis” (pp. 4-5). This is an important admission for the researcher in qualitative research, and particularly in life history paradigm. Peshkin (2000) contended that rarely can research be reduced to a simple matter of record keeping and summary. Instead, qualitative research involves interpretation, how a researcher intertwines with his or her understanding of the participant, and the participant’s culture and environment. Therefore, this research process is influenced by the lens of attitudinal attributes as well as the personal lens of the researcher as well. In addition, the dimensions of researcher rapport, subjectivity, and reflexivity influences interpretations of participants’ descriptions (Glesne, 2006).

### **Rapport**

For the purposes of this study, rapport is defined as a distance-reducing, anxiety-

quieting, trust-building mechanism (Glesne, 2006). In an effort to build this type of rapport, the researcher seeks to interact with the participants in a kind and open manner that fostered a positive and trusting relationship (Marx, 2006). Life history interviews are one-to-one conversations, or grounded conversations, where researchers are advised to share their own experiences and perceptions in order to establish common ground (Oakley, 1981). Marx emphasized that respectful researchers who are open and willing to share their own experiences can build a healthy rapport with participants. Emotional preparation as well as time spent developing a trusting, respectful relationship before the interview process is critical to obtain the type of data required by the study (Cole & Knowles, 1994).

### **Subjectivity**

While some researchers view subjectivity as a negative side effect of a narrative type of exploration, qualitative researchers maintain that subjectivity can be a contributing factor in understanding research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Wolcott, 1995). Glesne (2006) recommended that a researcher be attuned to their emotions so that they can be aware of their subjective lens. In this study, the researcher used his feelings to inquire into his perspectives and interpretations and to shape new questions through re-examining assumptions. Being aware of and using his emotions, the researcher was better able to recognize the emotional cues that ultimately helped him understand those he studied (Kleinman & Copp, 1993). It should be noted that monitoring for subjectivity is not the same as controlling for subjectivity (Glesne, 2006). The researcher for this study did not attempt to keep out any subjectivity in this study. However, he did monitor it, and

being aware of it increased the strength of this study.

In order to monitor subjectivity the researcher used a field journal to record and analyze his thoughts and feelings as he conducted, described, and interpreted the descriptions. A reflective section describing the researcher and the personal “subjective I’s” are included in Chapter IV (Glesne, 2006; Peshkin, 1988). Another way the researcher monitored his subjectivity was through the use of intersubjectivity. This term refers to the interactions of the researcher and the research participants over time and their combined subjectivities that guide the research process and content (Glesne, 2006). In this study, the participants used their subjectivity as they viewed transcripts, and discussed the descriptions and interpretations of the collected data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Myeroff, 1979). Intersubjectivity allows for the researcher’s subjectivity to be confirmed or refuted by others (Glesne, 2006). Glesne affirmed that as research relationships develop, negotiations of subjectivities continue as well. This allows for values, attitudes, and understandings of both researcher and participants to be changed through the research process.

### **Reflexivity**

A third way to monitor subjectivity is through reflexivity. Reflexivity is the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, or the “human as instrument” (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). It is a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent. Glesne (2006) asserted that reflexivity means that the researcher is just as concerned with the research process as he is with the data he is obtaining, it is more than simply being reflective. Goodson and Sikes (2001) explained that reflexivity is being

aware that interpretations, explanations, and analyses are shaped by multiple influences including the background and interests of the researcher. Patton (2002) referred to reflexivity as self-awareness, political and cultural consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective. To be reflexive in research Glesne suggested that the researcher ask questions of the process continuously as the research develops. Accordingly, the researcher asked questions of himself and others during the research process and recorded responses in a journal. Cotterill and Letherby (1993) implied that in life history work, where participant's lives are revealed, it is only fair that the researcher himself reveals his life as well. Reason (1994) explained that this is doing two research studies, one on himself and the other on the topic. Patton's list of reflexive questions were used to guide the type of questions asked in this process. Patton's questions are listed in Appendix A.

### **Methodological Approach**

The life history research paradigm guided the methodological approach used in this study. There are multiple ways of doing life history work properly (Sikes, Troyna, & Goodson, 1996). In fact, one of its defining characteristics is its individualistic and intensely personal way of approaching research. Different projects will have their own features and requirements and each researcher may have their own style and unique emotional engagement. The written research may even adopt a sequential approach in describing various stages involved in the study, yet, the research itself may not happen in a distinct and linear manner (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Therefore, describing organizational framework and clearly distinguishing the stages can help readers easily see

specific elements of the research. Following Goodson and Sikes, this study incorporated the following procedural steps of life history methodology: (a) identify an area of focus for the research study; (b) determine whether the research focus is best examined using a life history approach; (c) determine the research population; (d) negotiate access and participation; (e) collect data from individuals; (f) working with historical data (labeled as analysis and interpretation in this study); and (g) data presentation (comprised of two sections, the first labeled as a portrait of professionalism and the second as the story). The first two procedural steps have been discussed in prior sections of this study. Therefore, this section will focus on the last five steps.

### **Research Population**

Having decided on a focus and the appropriate approach, the next step for this study was to determine the appropriate sample. In order to understand how S&I teachers perceive professionalism, full-time S&I teachers were selected as participants in this study. The researcher determined a strategy to sample individuals that best informed him about the perception of professionalism in S&I. Such a selection represented “purposive sampling” (Goodson & Sikes 2001), or “criterion sampling” (Creswell, 2007). This type of sampling is appropriate as each individual has experienced the phenomenon being studied and can articulate their lived experiences.

Generally life history samples are quite small and are persons of deep interest to the researcher. In fact, life historians rarely talk in terms of samples or research populations, and almost never of subjects (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Rather, labels such as respondent, informant, participant, or just pseudonyms are preferred because of the

personal and unique nature of life history research. Many of the “original” life history studies were of one person, aimed to give detailed insight into one individual’s perception and experience of their life. Bullough (1989), Bullough and Baughman (1997), and Wolcott (1983), are some examples of the valuable research on one participant in educational contexts.

Goodson and Sikes (2001) asserted that it is impossible to say how many participants are needed in any project. It all depends on the aim of the study. Morse (1994) suggested that if the aim is to reveal patterns of experience or interpretation then the ideal sample size will be adequate when saturation occurs. Adequacy is not dependent on the number of participants but on the richness of the data and the nature of the aspect of the life being investigated. Thus, in selecting the number of participants for this study, the researcher selected three participants.

This life history study is complex and values the subjective and idiographic data obtained by interviewing the participants (Goodson, 1992). For the purpose of this study, having three participants allowed for examination of the rich data obtained throughout the study. Considering if saturation was reached, the researcher examined the data from each participant. It was determined that the data was saturated because no new information could be found that added to the researcher’s understanding of a particular theme or category in the findings (Creswell, 2007).

In order to determine which S&I teacher could effectively describe their perception of professionalism, area directors and S&I administrators were surveyed to identify teachers that exemplified a “professional” in the S&I context. An S&I area



director oversees and administers the S&I program over multiple seminary and institute programs in a geographic area. In Utah, an area is comprised of approximately 80-90 teachers. S&I Administrators direct the S&I program from the headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah. They are assigned to oversee multiple areas. Area directors and administrators each submitted names. They submitted names for teachers that had taught from 1 to 10 years, from 11 to 20 years, and for over 20 years' experience. Goodson and Choi (2008) suggested that categorizing participants by years' experience allowed for a description of the perception of the phenomenon to be strengthened as individuals in the same context can have different perceptions of events based on their experience. By comparing the lists of names from both the area directors and the administrators, three participants were identified, one from each category. Administrators then verified the names of three teachers selected.

### **Negotiate Access and Participation**

After potential participants were identified, the researcher contacted each individual to determine their willingness to participate in the study. This initial contact was made over the phone. In the initial contact the relationship between the researcher and participant was discussed as well as what could be expected from their mutual participation, especially the possibility of a considerable time commitment (Measor & Sikes, 1992). In addition, the researcher informed participants on common definitions of professionalism, particularly Hall's (1968) definition, to situate them in the context of professionalism in the literature. This helped the participants respond in the interviews making it possible for the researcher to collect meaningful data that could be analyzed

based on Hall's definition of professionalism. The participants confirmed their willingness to participate. In order to alleviate concerns, to protect against participants inadvertently influencing the data through their eagerness to please, and to provide clarity, the phone conversation was then followed up with a letter of information (see Appendix B for letter of information; Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

### **Data Collection**

One on one interview conversations between the participant and the researcher is the most common form of data collection in life history. Goodson (2013) referred to this as grounded conversations. Following the recommendation by Dilley (2004) and Seidman (1998), each participant was interviewed three times and each interview lasted approximately between one and two hours long. One participant extended it to over two hours on two of the interviews. These were relatively unstructured, informal conversation-type interactions. An important part of life history interviews is concerned with establishing and maintaining a positive and trusting relationship between the researcher and the participant (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Thus, in phone conversations and the first interview, considerable time was spent in developing this relationship. In addition, the participants were invited in the first interview to present a time-line of key events in their lives that relate to professionalism in S&I. This was designed to allow the participant to describe their lived experience leading up to being hired in S&I and their lived experience since being hired.

The first interview began with an unstructured format designed to get the participants to rehearse their story with the researcher. Open-ended questions in these

semistructured interviews allowed the researcher to delve deeply into the subject and explore new avenues of inquiry as they were generated by the participants' responses. As the interviews progressed even into the second and third experience, the researcher began to cross-question the participant, using other documentary historical data and the person's experience making the interview a progressively more two-way encounter.

Life history requires concentration, listening for the hints and clues about what might be a productive line of reasoning (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). To aid the researcher in giving total attention to the conversation and the social situation, each interview was audio recorded to ensure accuracy and dependability on data collection (van Manen, 1990). At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher reflected on the interview and recorded immediate impressions, concerns, and ideas for future questions on the recording device. These initial thoughts were fleshed out later with new ideas being added. In addition, the researcher reviewed the audio recording of the interview looking for additional clues and hints for themes, or areas to follow up. The researcher transcribed the audio-recorded interviews, and stored them in a password-protected computer file (Creswell, 2007). In addition, the researcher took field notes during and after each interview and recorded the subjective elements of the interview, paying attention to the emotions and reactions to the different elements of the interview.

Although interviews are the primary data collection source, there are other forms of data collection that are appropriate (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; van Manen, 1990). Observations, journals, and artifacts were collected by the researcher to search for additional insight into the lives of the participants. Therefore, in addition to in-depth

interviews, the researcher recorded observations during the interview process in the form of field notes which were recorded in a research journal (Glesne, 2006). Other items were also collected as data. These included a written philosophy of teaching, favorite quotes, and other professional development literature collected by the participant that seemed relevant to their perception of professionalism.

To protect the confidentiality of the participants, only the researcher was allowed access to the audio recording, the field journal, and transcripts. The transcripts are kept on a password protected computer, and are in a locked room. Digital audio files and field journals are kept in a locked room in a locked file. The audio files were destroyed when the writing process was complete. Pseudonyms are used in both the transcription and reporting process.

During the second and third interviews the researcher reviewed the previous interview data with the participant. The researchers summarized the main elements discussed, followed up with additional questions that emerged after the previous interview, and provided time for the participants to add any additional information or clarifications to the data.

Goodson and Sikes (2001) explained that the preference for life history interviews is for unstructured, informal conversation-type encounters. The key characteristic of this approach is that a researcher can never know for certain which experiences have been influential and relevant in a particular sphere of life. Therefore, too tight a structure may cause information to be lost. However, in order to examine the perception of professionalism, the researcher developed a list of questions to prompt participants as

needed. The questions used in this study were based on the work of Hall (1968) and Freeman's (1994) questionnaire that measured aspects of professionalism. The factor analysis of Freeman's professionalism study support Hall's research on the attitudes of professionalism providing validity to the attitudinal factors as a definition of professionalism. Freeman's survey questions were used to develop a script that included topical areas that either directly reflected our study outcomes, or that would provide insight into the influence of social context on these outcome categories (see also Denscombe, 1984; Powney & Watts, 1987). The interview scripts contained formal questions along with what Goldman and colleagues (2003) described as "question probes." These probes functioned as prompts related to professionalism to keep the interview exchange flowing toward increasing depth. However, the probes were not so rigid as to restrict the generation of relevant, new avenues of inquiry. Merriam's (1998) research on effective interviews, and A. S. Johnson's (2007) life history interview questions also helped in the formation of the interview questions. Further development and refinement of the questions were helped by the life history methodologist, Barry Franklin (personal communication, June 2011).

A pilot interview was conducted with the help of another full-time teacher in S&I to determine the effectiveness of the questions (Glesne, 2006). This allowed the researcher to eliminate and/or refine questions to ensure the questions were appropriate for this life history study. In addition, the pilot interview allowed the researcher to practice giving a life history interview. A general list of the questions for each interview is included in Appendix C.

## **Analysis and Interpretation**

The following analysis and interpretation section follows the guiding principles of life history research as explained by Creswell (2012) and Kvale (1996) and adapted from the method shared by Goodson and Sikes (2001). These methods were used before, during, and after the data collection. As Peshkin (2000) pointed out, interpretation happens at every step along the research journey. Interpretation is forming as the researcher determines the questions to ask. It is occurring the moment the researcher begins asking the question. The researcher brings certain inclinations from previous experience that shapes his interpretation. Therefore, being clear about the background and position of the researcher will help build credibility with the readers. Kvale offered six general steps of analysis for creating understanding: collecting the participant's descriptions; allowing for the participant's self-discovery; condensing and interpreting the interview event by the researcher; interpreting the transcribed interview by the researcher; conducting follow-up interviews; and observing if participants begin to act differently from the insights of being involved in the research. This study implemented these six general steps.

An important aspect of life history analysis is focusing on the participant, observing and listening for clues and hints about a productive line of questioning. Following Goodson and Sikes' (2001) suggestions, the researcher began looking for themes and ways to interpret the life experience as it related to the participants' perception of professionalism at the outset of interactions with the participant, and this continued throughout and past the data collection process.

Having made a recording of the interviews, the next stage involved the researcher making a transcription of the recorded interviews. The researcher performed all the transcription of the interviews, allowing him to be more familiar with the data. This also aided his analysis as ideas and themes emerged as a result of the repetitive listening and intimate engagement with the data (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Such close listening is crucial as the participants' intent and meaning are conveyed as much through how things are said as through the actual words that are used. Annotations were made describing the tone of voice, the deep feelings that were evoked, and the body language and gestures that were made during the interview. The researcher recorded these findings in a summary transcript after the interview. This summary transcript summarized what was said using key words and phrases to explain the phenomena observed in the interview.

Following the transcription, the next step is then to make sense of, or interpret, the information by sorting and storing data. Goodson (2013) described this as "bathing in the data" (p. 40). This means reading the transcripts in a slow, incremental manner. While doing this the researcher kept a "thematic notebook," marking out the main emergent themes in the margins of the transcripts. Coding is attaching labels to segments of data that depict what each segment is about. Coding distills data, sorts them, and offers researchers a handle for making comparisons with other segments of data (Charmaz, 2002). Similar to coding as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in the grounded theory approach, constantly comparing and analyzing the data help determine the broad categorization. It also served to formulate new questions for subsequent interviews and to create coding schemes. Saturation occurs when the themes occur often and are clearly

relevant. In this study, the researcher read and reread the data looking for statements that fit with Hall's (1968) five attitudinal attributes of professionalism. He marked these findings in the transcripts and in the research journal by labeling them in the margins. The researcher separated, sorted, and synthesized the data through qualitative coding.

Once the data had been coded, the researcher grouped them into larger units of information called themes. These themes were derived from Hall's (1968) five attitudinal attributes of professionalism. The researcher also engaged in the interpretive process during this step of the process. Reflecting and using reflexivity on the data, the researcher examined whether the lived experiences of the participants fit the framework of professionalism as described by Hall (Goodson, 2013; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Next, the researcher refined the general themes that emerged and began to present them in the form of a detailed individual portrait of a life narrative (Goodson, 2013). After the process of coding, the researcher created an Excel spreadsheet page for each of Hall's attitudinal attributes and then took chunks of data and organized them under a column for each teacher and in rows that indicated similar ideas from the different teachers. Only after the chunks of data had been recorded and sorted did the researcher begin to see the similar elements in each row of data that emerged from the interviews and observations. After the data were coded and organized this way, it was clear that they did speak directly to the questions asked in this study. The similar codes described the perception of professionalism each of the three participants shared, and what is the catalyst that ignites a profession attitude among S&I teachers.



## **A Portrait**

Once the themes were prepared, the researcher wrote a narrative portrayal, or a description of the experiences and perceptions of professionalism among participants regarding teacher professionalism in S&I. Creswell (2012) referred to this as restorying and is the process of gathering the stories, analyzing them for key elements, and then rewriting the story in the order of sequence, or organization of the key elements. The aim of the researcher was to represent and reflect as close as possible what the participant said in relation to their perception of professionalism in S&I. In developing this narrative portrayal the researcher explored the relationship between the culture, the social structure, and the individual life of the participant. The researcher also engaged in the interpretive process to describe how these portrayals fit Hall's model of professionalism. The purpose of the Portrait is to tell the story of professionalism in S&I. This represents the culminating aspect of life history research. The researcher wrote about how full-time S&I teachers perceive professionalism, how they acquire this understanding, and the challenges to teacher professionalism in S&I. The Portrait is contained in Chapter IV of this research.

## **Implications**

The last chapter of this research is to describe the implications of this study. Ultimately, the act of crafting meaning from interviews and building a product to convey meaning is an individualistic process, one filled with nuance. Dilley (2004) submitted that there is no common method for creating interview research. He describes it as an art. Goodson and Sikes (2001) agreed that there is no one right way to do this type of

research. In this final step, the researcher wrote a description of the phenomena reflecting the lived experiences of the participants. In doing so, he followed the suggestions by Seidman (1998) and kept asking himself questions like the following questions. What has been learned from doing the research, studying the transcripts, marking and labeling them, crafting profiles, and organizing categories of excerpts? What connective threads are there among the experiences of the participants they interviewed? How do they understand and explain these connections? What do they understand now that they did not understand before they began the interviews? What surprises have there been? What confirmations of previous instincts? How have their interviews been consistent with the literature? How inconsistent? How have they gone beyond? As stated earlier, this section is contained in Chapter V of this research report.

### **Trustworthiness**

For qualitative work, the standard of trustworthiness is reached if participants find researchers' interpretation of their perceptions and experiences credible (Gube & Lincoln, 1981). Additionally, Guba and Lincoln provided eight verification procedures to demonstrate trustworthiness. The following are the eight procedures applied to this examination. After each step is presented, there is an explanation of the methods used to address the validity issues. By addressing the trustworthiness of this study, elements of reliability, credibility, and validity are appropriately focused on.

1. *Prolonged engagement and persistent observation is needed to develop trust, learn the culture, and check out hunches.* To fulfill this element sufficient time was

allotted to observe, listen to, and develop trust with each participant. The researcher spent many hours selecting participants, and met with each participant three times for interviews that each lasted one to two hours or longer. The researcher continued to contact the participants, checking out hunches and following up through personal visits, emails, and phone calls. Furthermore, the researcher is completely immersed in the culture, having a father employed as a full-time teacher in S&I and being a full-time S&I teacher himself.

2. *Triangulation or multiple data collection methods.* Data was triangulated by using multiple interviews, member checking, research journal, observations, and participant's artifacts. More details concerning each of these methods is described in the subsequent sections.

3. *Peer review and debriefing provide external reflection and input on your work.* During each research step, the researcher worked closely with peers continually reviewing and giving input on this study. These peers are S&I teachers who had all received their doctorate degrees using qualitative methodology. This process provided continuous external reflection throughout the duration of the dissertation.

4. *Negative case analysis.* The researcher searched for elements of the data that did not support or appeared to contradict patterns or explanations that emerged from data analysis. The researcher worked with a purposive, or criterion, sample suggesting that all the participants had experience with professionalism in S&I as viewed by administrators. However, the researcher looked for contradictory descriptions of professionalism as he examined the data. The researcher did not find any negative case examples.

5. *Clarification of researcher bias.* A research journal was used to record the researcher's bias and his reflection of those biases. In addition, a detailed description of the background of the researcher was included to make clear the researcher's motivation and bias for performing this study.

6. *Member checking.* The transcripts, analytic thoughts, and interpretations and conclusions were tested with participants. Participants reviewed the transcripts for each of the interviews and were asked to share their perceptions of them. Going through this process allowed them to check for accuracy, make clarifications, and share additional insights.

7. *Write in rich, thick description.* As appropriate in writing life history research, the researcher wrote using a narrative reflexive voice that allowed the reader to enter the research context.

8. *External audit.* The researcher provided transcripts, field notes, analyses, and descriptions to Joseph M. Cottle, Esq., an attorney and editor, who examined and determined the trustworthiness of the researcher's interpretations and findings. This summary is contained in Appendix D

## CHAPTER IV

### A PORTRAIT

The object of this study was designed to answer the following question: What is the perception of seminary and institute teachers regarding professionalism? This chapter answers this question by describing and analyzing what three teachers have experienced concerning professionalism in S&I. The following descriptions of the life stories of these teachers serve to illustrate the “multiple realities” of each participant and their perception of professionalism during their employment in S&I (Creswell, 2007, p. 65). As suggested by Goodson (2013), the portrait of each participant’s experience was developed by combining data from multiple participant interviews, from personal observations, and other personal documents from the participants. In addition, biographical sketches were used to give authenticity to each individual. Using life history as the mode of inquiry in qualitative research allows for the specific focus to be on the stories told by individuals (Polkinghorne, 1995). It is a way to explore the paradigms of each individual and gives voice to their experience. Plummer (1995) suggested that individuals tell their story in a particular way for a particular purpose, guided by their perception of their situation, the image of themselves they want to present, and their assessment of how hearers will respond. While this happens in all social situations, in the context of life history research, it provides a unique opportunity for an individual to create an identity by linking together events, experiences, and perceptions (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

Dhunpath (2000) boldly asserted that “the life history approach is probably the only authentic means of understanding how motives and practices reflect the intimate

intersection of institutional and individual experience in the post-modern world” (p. 544). It is acknowledged that these themes are not isolated and independent events. They are complex, and interconnected. However, by studying them independently it becomes clearer what they are and their relationship with professionalism in S&I. Analysis of the description will come later in Chapter V, along with a discussion of the themes of professionalism in S&I emerging from this study and their connection to Hall’s frameworks of professionalism and grounded theory principles. This chapter will describe how professionalism is both perceived and developed in S&I among teachers along the Wasatch Front.

Building portraits assists in blending multiple sources of data into manageable and broadened descriptions of each of the participants. In the portrait, the information is organized into five categories: (a) use of the professional organization as a major referent, (b) belief in service to the public, (c) belief in self-regulation, (d) a sense of calling to the field, and (e) autonomy. These five categories emerged as themes during the coding process of the gathered information. Although they were not the initial codes, examination of Hall’s attitudinal attributes and the perception of professionalism in S&I sharpened the focus and these categories emerged. These emergent categories helped guide the writing of the portraits. They also proved helpful in outlining key ideas and allowed a natural, logical presentation of the participants (Creswell, 2007).

This chapter begins with a description of my background, aimed to clarify and reveal my position. Following the researcher positionality, the portrait of each participant will be presented. The portrait is organized using Hall’s (1968) attitudinal attributes that

emerged as themes in the data. As in most life history research, there is a general sequence, or chronology of the events, that the researcher included in the story (Creswell, 2012). The general sequence in this study has been adapted to fit with Hall's framework. Although the themes create a sense of structure, there is no rigid line demarcating Hall's attributes. Rather, there is considerable overlap between the categories. These categories provide a framework through which the reader can see elements of professionalism in S&I.

While the portraits include some brief background information of the participant's life prior to being in S&I, the majority of the chapter focuses on the individual life story of each participant since he has been hired in S&I. By narrowing the study, this research can have a specific contextual focus on the perception of professionalism in S&I (Creswell, 2007). However, it cannot capture the entirety of the participants' experiences. Direct quotations are used throughout the descriptions to give voice to the participants, provide clarity to individual situations, and in some instances place emphasis upon varying aspects of professionalism. The names of the participants and other identifying factors have been changed to protect participants' identities. This chapter will then conclude with a summary of the contents found within this chapter, which include the unexpected findings.

### **Researcher Positionality**

In this study, I applied a life history methodological approach to delve into the perception, experience, and growth of full time S&I instructors along the Wasatch front.

In doing so, I incorporated Hall's theoretical framework of professionalism to see the key historical events and experiences in the life of the teacher that created a perception of professionalism and what led to further growth and development. Professionalism in S&I has long been an interest of mine, stemming predominantly from my own career as a religious educator in S&I. The following section addresses my relationship to this study of the S&I instructors along the Wasatch front by examining my own life history as it pertains to the perception of professionalism.

My father was a religious educator in S&I for 33 years. From the time I was a young boy until adult age, I went to work often with my father. I felt comfortable and good in the environment. I enjoyed the atmosphere, the students, and faculty with whom my father associated. I always felt a part of the S&I "family" and knew at a young age that I wanted to be in S&I like my father. My father liked to share and was open about the teachers and administrators with whom he worked and often related experiences and insights he had learned. His associates were familiar to me, and seemed to enjoy having me visit my father at work as well. It felt natural, and it was easy for me to envision myself as a future employee of S&I.

Following my freshmen year of college, I served a 2-year mission for the LDS Church in Fresno, California. Like most S&I teachers, I loved teaching people and trying to help them have better lives. It strengthened my resolve to be a religious educator. In addition, my mission president was a religious educator. His example and teaching further inspired me to pursue employment in S&I upon my return. After my mission I attended Brigham Young University. While attending school I worked part time as a



teacher at the Missionary Training Center. This provided me another opportunity to practice and reflect on pursuing a career as a religious educator.

Upon completion of S&I's preservice program I was selected as a new employee and assigned to teach in a small rural community on the east side of the Wasatch front. The faculty consisted of three teachers and a support specialist. One of the other teachers was also new to S&I, and he and I had developed a great friendship prior to teaching together. The principal was a veteran teacher and had spent many years in his current assignment. I quickly began to learn about the situation that caused the previous teacher to be transferred which necessitated the need for me to come into this assignment. The principal and the previous teacher had not worked well together. They disagreed with one another on nearly every issue regarding the direction of the seminary. The previous teacher refused to accept the principal's authority on matters regarding the seminary, refused to develop working relationships with others, and lacked a general sense of loyalty to S&I. The contention escalated until the teacher was removed and assigned a new location. From the day I received this assignment, administrators began to inform me of the situation in this seminary. This information was not direct or clearly stated, but over time subtle hints were repeatedly given until the situation became clear to me. The principal was in need of personal reassurance and validation. He needed faculty members who would support him, and be able to have a trusting and loyal working relationship with him. I grew to appreciate the principal's work ethic, his sincerity, and generosity. I loved the students, loved being part of S&I, and felt a general unity with the faculty.

In the course of 6 years, five different teachers were assigned to teach in that

seminary with the principal and me. I enjoyed working with each of the five new teachers. In my sixth year in this first assignment, a new principal was assigned in addition to another new employee. This change came as a breath of fresh air for me. I had become casual in the assignment. With regard to personalities, I was much more like the new principal than the old principal. We connected immediately and enjoyed teaching together. During the first few months of his arrival the principal began to have financial difficulties. He was building a new home, close to my own. It was discovered that the general contractor was stealing money from my principal's building account. The principal fired his contractor. I used my experience in the construction industry to assist him in building his home which took six months. This added to the close personal relationship which we had developed.

Feeling comfortable in my situation, I was not pushing for professional development. I enjoyed the new principal; however, he did not push or lead the faculty to increase our professionalism. In addition, the culture of the community and the seminary in this small, rural town and the attitudes of the seminary personnel reflected a casual and laissez-faire mentality towards professional development. Feeling autonomous and successful, I remained content to get by on any natural charisma I had rather than pushing myself for improvement. Comparing myself to the other teachers around me, I felt that I was doing "good enough." I justified my lack of professional development on the perception that I was better than those with whom I was assigned to teach.

After 6 years in my first assignment I was transferred to Heber, a slightly larger community, to teach seminary. This move to a new location was a great change for me. I

began to see how I needed professional growth. I began to grasp the consequences and the implications of not seeking for greater improvement. I also observed the example of other faculty members that pushed themselves for greater content mastery and skill development concerning methodology. Feeling humbled at my lack of professional development, I began to look closely at what these teachers did to become better. The new principal was dutiful, responsible, and loyal to S&I. He was a leader that was not afraid to confront teachers if they were not performing their duties appropriately. Soon after arriving at the new seminary I began to see a power struggle between the principal and a seasoned, popular town favorite. This popular teacher was native to the community and had a friendly manner. However, he demonstrated a laissez-faire type of attitude, one who simply put in his time and then went home. Being new to the faculty, I felt recruited by the popular teacher to give him support. I enjoyed both teachers, but it was clear to me that I needed to be a better teacher. Rather than gaining the support and sympathy he wanted, the popular teacher was eventually transferred. For 2 years I studied, prepared, and observed great teachers. These teachers focused on knowing the content and on improving their teaching skills. Observing them provided a vision of what professional teachers do.

After 2 years on this faculty, I was asked to be the principal at the Park City seminary. Professionally, this was another great opportunity for me to grow. Park City was a two-man program. The previous principal followed in the same patterns of teachers in both the other buildings that I had taught in. They were fun, popular teachers but not loyal to S&I, and certainly not interested in professional development. Teaching was a

way for them to work, get benefits, and then have enough time after work to do the things they really loved (such as hunting and rodeo clubs). Starving for a close working relationship focused on improvement, the existing faculty member and I became instant friends. He was creative, possessed a high skill level, and had good classroom awareness. We held formal and informal discussions on teaching and how to help students. It was a time for growth for both of us.

A second assignment at the Heber Seminary came unexpectedly. After 2 years at the Park City Seminary I was asked to return to the Heber Seminary, this time to be the principal. At first I was not excited about the opportunity. I knew of the problems existing in Heber, but more importantly, I was enjoying Park City. However, I took the assignment in Heber and came back with a desire to really help the faculty unite on professional growth and development. This came at a time when the administrators of S&I implemented the “Current Teaching Emphasis.” The teaching emphasis was intended to simply be a focus on becoming better teachers, and being held more accountable for that improvement. However, teachers perceived it as a radical shift in S&I teaching and a rebuke by administrators for the teaching that had occurred in the past. Experienced teachers felt like their autonomy was taken away and that the “family feel” of S&I was replaced by the coldness of the corporate nature of a large organization. Teachers who had felt successful in the past now considered their efforts were wrong, or unappreciated. Tempers flared as principals and directors sought to observe and give feedback to teachers. Teachers perceived feedback as a critical assault on their teaching worth rather than the intended nudge to simply be a little better.

Coming to Heber in this type of an atmosphere caused me some consternation. I felt the pull to align with administrators, wanting to see teachers improve, and yet I could identify with the frustrations of many teachers regarding the implementation of the teaching emphasis. For 3 years as the principal I tried to navigate the divide. I tried to be loyal to S&I and loyal to the teachers on the faculty. I observed teachers and provided feedback but felt at a loss at how to really help. There was no standard of expectation. In fact, one administrator was heard saying, “I can’t explain [the teaching emphasis], but I am not seeing it.” There was no written standard of professionalism for teachers, no guiding formula for success in S&I.

In the spring of 2009, I received a call that dramatically changed my career. One of the administrators of S&I called and asked if I would accept the assignment to write curriculum for S&I in the COB in Salt Lake City, Utah. In this Central Office assignment I not only experienced growth in my understanding of the content, but I also gained a greater appreciation for teaching skills. I increased my understanding of the teaching emphasis, knowledge of the history and direction of S&I, and perhaps most importantly, I gained a vision of what it means to be professional in S&I. The other teachers with whom I worked communicated more clearly than any inservice training I had received about what it means to teach effectively and administer appropriately in S&I. This assignment provided me tools with which to help other teachers. It taught me how to give and receive feedback, and to communicate the needed information in an effective way.

Prior to enrolling in a doctoral program in Logan, Utah, I held the notion that professionalism was simply using one’s charisma to entertain a class. Now that I am in

my last segment of my doctoral studies, I look back at my ascent and feel that professionalism is not as easy as it seemed from the outset and acknowledge that it takes a great deal of effort, energy, and experience to grow and develop in S&I. For those teachers who sincerely desire to understand what professionalism is and how to develop it in S&I, there are some practices and habits that can help to carry out this goal. In my particular situation, this growth and understanding has come in many ways including coming from this research study, from personal experience, and from associating with others who emulate the character and attributes of professionalism that I desired.

### **David—Teaching Experience 10 Years**

David was a very confident young teacher with a full-head of thick, straight, short-cropped bright red hair, and extraordinarily thick eyebrows. His office was neat and orderly, a welcoming environment for a student. He had a large painting of a Fijian island with a smoking volcano hanging on the wall. In addition, there were wood carvings decorating his office. The painting and wood carvings all served as reminders of his LDS mission. David wore dress casual slacks, a white dress shirt, and a tie. He was intelligent and liked to give quick answers. His answers were short, clear, and concise. David gave the impression that he wants to say the right things. The conversations with him were cordial, but generally lacking a genuine warmth or interest in doing anything more than what was necessary. David's level of intensity rose noticeably when discussing his students. It was obvious that he loved his students, and would do anything to help them succeed in seminary.

David grew up outside of Utah but in a place that had a large population of LDS people. He attended released-time seminary in high school but never intended to become a seminary teacher. Serving a mission for the LDS Church, however, was a major “turning point” for him, and started to change his perspective. It was on his mission that David first began to love teaching people. Shortly after returning from his LDS mission, he was hired to be a counselor for Especially For Youth (EFY). EFY is part of the Continuing Education program of Brigham Young University (BYU). It is a week long program where youth ages 14-18 attend classes and have activities that help them develop spiritually, physically, intellectually and socially. Speaking of his experience David exclaimed:

I did that just coming off my mission and absolutely loved to see, the thing that just lit me up, was to see kids who didn't have answers, or felt lost, or felt they were struggling, have the gospel just literally light their life—give them some direction, with where they needed to go.... Just the more I was with the youth and those who were learning the gospel the more I loved them. And loved teaching them.

David's new desires to teach continued to grow with his experience as a counselor at EFY. As his summer experience with EFY ended, he felt that he would love to continue teaching. Acting on those feelings, he applied and got a job teaching at the Missionary Training Center (MTC) as a student attending BYU. For David, teaching at the MTC had a similar impact as being a counselor at EFY. He loved helping people and seeing the change that came upon them as he instructed them. After 2 years of doing EFY and working at the MTC, he felt that it would be the ideal if he could do something like this for the rest of his life. These experiences led David to explore the requirements for teaching seminary and then to enroll in the preservice program for S&I. After

successfully completing the preservice program, David was hired as a full-time religious educator and first taught full time at a Salt Lake Valley high school seminary for 5 years. Following his first assignment, he transferred back and forth between high school and junior high seminary programs, and is currently the principal at a high school seminary in the Wasatch Front area. He has been an employee of S&I for 10 years now.

### **Use of the Professional Organization as a Major Referent**

David relied heavily on the organization as a major referent. Throughout the interview process David continually drew from experiences with his first assignment. He loved his experience there, mainly because of the faculty. According to David, it was his first assignment that had a profound effect in shaping him as a teacher in S&I. He spoke of their example, their commitment, their support for S&I, their sacrifice, and their love for the students as some of the key attributes that strengthened him. Speaking with gratitude about this faculty, he said:

I was placed with a pretty phenomenal group of men and women that were extremely good. And I didn't know it at the time, I'd hear stories and things [negative experiences of other faculties] and it was as foreign to me. I can't even imagine that [that] would happen on a faculty for the mere fact that I was on a very good faculty.

Two faculty members were particularly helpful for David. He reflected with great fondness on their mentoring. He explained the experience of his first faculty this way:

There were two men that I specifically prepared with almost every single day.... We had all read prior and found doctrines and principles. And then we would come together and begin to talk about it. And talk of ways that we would engage [students] in a variety [of ways] that might be needed, or questions that could be asked, or applications, or involvement. It was really some of the most amazing years that I ever taught. Just for the mere fact that there was such a desire to work



together and to hear each other's thoughts and ideas.... That was a pretty phenomenal setting.

David pointed out that the lesson plans were not cookie cutter lessons, and the three of them taught three different lessons. However, as the thoughts and ideas each individual brought to the table were presented, they began to evolve and transform with the synergy created by the three teachers. Their discussions led to more powerful ideas on how to teach students. The three teachers working together felt that their collective ideas and eventual lessons were much better than anything they could have done on their own. These teachers he worked with he described as "master teachers," and "brilliant, wonderful, committed men." They were the kind of teachers "not content to teach what they had always taught." "They were always finding specific ways to better engage the student. And it was always being challenged." It was looked down upon on this faculty to pull out a lesson plan from prior years of teaching to use again. To do so, according to this faculty, was a demonstration of one's lack of commitment to improve.

David acknowledged that his first faculty created for him a vision of preparation and commitment as an impressionable young teacher. In addition, they helped him establish other good habits, attitudes, and practices that have led to teacher efficacy and improvement. The culture and traditions established by this first faculty made it easy for David to adopt and make them his own as he has since transferred to other faculties. The rest of this description of David is his reflection of the effects of his first faculty. It describes his commitment, attitude and desire to improve that were instilled at this first assignment and that he has since transferred to other assignments.

David served closely with administration on an area training council for 3 years.

(A training council in S&I is a select group of teachers assigned to work with an area director in planning and organizing instruction for inservice meetings and other formal area wide meetings and socials.) He enjoyed the opportunity to work with administrators and the teachers in his area. It gave him an appreciation for administrators and a desire to follow their direction. Shortly after being released from this assignment, David was made the principal of a high school seminary, which added to his admiration of administrators. There is a fine line in S&I between being an individual who is willing to do what is asked of him, being teachable and supportive, and being reflective and able to critically analyze directives coming from administration. This presented a conundrum for David. His espoused theory of professionalism was that teachers are autonomous, not prone to blind obedience. His theory in use, however, was to be submissive to administration (Korthagen, 2004). As a young teacher, he wanted to be “what S&I expect[ed] him to be.” However, he began to recognize a problem if this attitude is taken too far. He said, “We don’t question, we don’t give back, we don’t disagree.” Even when administrators sincerely want open and honest feedback, David felt reluctant to give it fearing that it might reflect on him poorly, that it might look to administrators that he is not “faithful, or committed” to S&I.

David has seen a few teachers that fought back when they were asked to do new things. When the Teaching and Learning Emphasis (TLE) was introduced as the philosophy of religious education, many teachers struggled to understand what it was and how to implement it. He often heard negative comments regarding the TLE and how it would not work in class. Rather than side with the negative group of teachers, David felt

“pushed” by an inner conviction to view administrations with a more positive attitude. David believed that the TLE “just verbalized the way [religious education] should be.” He did not have to wrestle to accept the philosophy. He loved it, and felt that he had been prepared to teach this way prior to being hired. In his mind, the TLE was the right thing to do, S&I had already been going “down that road” in his preservice classes.

When the Professional Growth Plan (PGP) was instituted, David had a similar reaction. Rather than being critical of administration, he viewed the PGP as another way for him to evaluate and set goals for improvement. He enjoys the feedback he receives from administrators concerning his goals. He feels this follow up is making him conscientious and more accountable for his continued growth and improvement. While David feels that the PGP has not been “hugely effective” in promoting professional development, time and training will make it so.

David’s entire career has been peppered with the idea of observation and feedback. However, there has been an increased emphasis placed on observation over the last few years. With great enthusiasm David described how his idea of observation has matured over the years. Instead of an evaluative, judgmental perspective, he now sees it as “getting out and talking...just growing from each other.” This changed perspective has helped him be more willing and even excited to observe and give feedback to others as well as to receive it. He has noticed that some teachers like to “stay in their cave.” Meaning, they do their own lesson preparation, and they go into their class and shut the door figuratively speaking, not letting anyone in to observe or going out to observe others. To David, this is a very isolated mentality. He acknowledged that there are some

good teachers with this attitude, but contended against this attitude saying, “you’re going to miss out on so much that is out there, if you’re not out there observing, and sharing, and asking: ‘What are you doing? How did that work? What would work here? This is something that I did.’” David said that observations are like having “a second set of eyes.” He claimed that observations do two things for teachers; first, a person who knows they are being observed will “watch” themselves better. They will prepare better, be more attentive to important things in the class, and just naturally be a better teacher. David even argued that if the observer were to leave and not observe the class, the teacher himself would still be better off because he had to view his teaching through another’s eyes for a moment. Secondly, the person observing is exposed to the gifts and talents of another teacher and may see something that can be of great benefit to themselves.

David enjoyed observing others teachers. He said, “There are so many good things that happen in other classes. So many powerful things that a teacher is able to create...it is neat to see how they do it.” Speaking of a recent observation he witnessed he remarked, “I went and watched my junior high teacher [a teacher he oversees as the immediate administrator] and he was so good. And I just [thought], I must be better. I’ve got to be better.” This is another benefit David saw when he performed an observation. In the process of giving feedback, he naturally reflects and evaluates his own teaching, and is able to make connections that improve his own teaching. In addition, David felt that having to do this verbally also helps because it forced him to be clear, concise, and well thought-out in his feedback.

David was excited when he was made a principal. One of the main reasons was

that it allowed him to have more opportunities to observe more teachers. He considered that this would be a great strength to his teaching. However, he did lament that little emphasis was placed on how to observe and give helpful feedback. “They definitely want you to observe,” he said, “And they give you a schedule of when they want you to. But there hasn’t been a lot of training on that I would say.”

Another reason David enjoys observing teachers is that it facilitates collaboration with other teachers. Since that first faculty, his attitude towards collaboration has only strengthened. He sees inservice meetings, both on a local level and area wide, as a critical place to work collaboratively sharing ideas and discovering new approaches to teaching. Stemming from his experience with his first faculty, David has witnessed firsthand the power of a united faculty that works collaboratively. In David’s words, the great key to a powerful faculty that works collaboratively is “you give a little.”

After his first assignment he observed other faculties that struggle. David noted that most faculties want to do their best, but one or two teachers who lack the attitude to give a little can sometimes kill the collaboration and limit the impact of inservice meetings. David has always found inservice meetings to be helpful and he has the attitude that there is always something that he can learn. Summarizing his experience participating in inservice meetings David said, “For the most part [inservice meetings have] been put together with thought, and with a desire to help.” He felt this way about inservice for both the local and area meetings.

Since David has been a principal, he has designed inservice meetings to be collaborative. Not only are the teachers expected to participate as learners, they also take

turns presenting the instruction. Each of the 4 weeks of a month is assigned a specific topic and a teacher on a rotational basis who is in charge of leading the discussion, or presenting the material. The topics include specific training received from higher administration, as well as content ideas and methodology skills. David believed that in a practical sense, there is power in allowing all teachers to have a chance to lead out in the training. One teacher may have greater skills in a specific area than another and by allowing that teacher to lead out on the specific topic or area will be a benefit for the entire faculty. In addition, David felt that “when you’ve got 5-6 other people to present and to share their thoughts...it gives ownership.... So I think it’s healthy to involve the faculty.”

At David’s current assignment, an atmosphere of unity and a desire to work together in both formal and informal ways has been created. David uses the time teachers normally get together, like at lunch, and has directed the conversation to be more of an informal time to share teaching ideas. It is quite common during lunch time to see all the teachers gathered together, talking about lessons, students, what went well, and what did not go so well. This is a daily tradition that he feels goes a long way in fostering a spirit of unity among his faculty. A typical full-time teacher along the Wasatch front teaches on an A/B type schedule which consists of six class periods of teaching, and two class periods for preparation over the course of two days. Between classes, during lunch, and during prep times, teachers like to mingle and visit. Sometimes this conversation can be inconsequential, but for David’s faculty, much of the time is spent in dialogue about teaching, both the content and the students.

During David's prep hours, you will often see him walking through the building looking for another teacher not in class with whom he is able to discuss an idea, or from whom he can glean new ideas. In addition, he often observes other teachers. As the principal he is obligated to do formative and summative evaluations based on his observations. However, he often observes other teachers simply to learn from them. David said he observes other teachers from a "selfish point of view" as his sole purpose is to gain ideas from another great teacher. As the principal he teaches one or two classes each semester. To prevent any ill feelings on the faculty, and because he really wants to improve, he invites all the teachers on the faculty to come and observe him. For him, the position of principal does not exclude him from being observed by those whom he oversees.

In the last few years David has also created a faculty Dropbox online. All the teachers have access to this online storage where teachers can dump thoughts, quotes, or other lesson suggestions that the entire faculty can draw from as they prepare. David pushes for all the teachers to follow the suggested pacing guide. He reasons that by so doing "our conversations will naturally turn to the same lesson so that no one's ahead and no one's behind." David enjoys being on a faculty where he feels that he is a resource for other teachers and other teachers are a resource for him. He witnessed this type of faculty in his first assignment, and has tried to implement that attitude in every faculty with whom he has worked. Speaking of his current assignment David said, "We reach out to each other quite a bit—just sharing...ideas, and thoughts [on] how things went. So it's been good."

As the principal, with a reduced teaching load, David estimates that he spends approximately three hours a day in collaboration with other teachers. When asked about the amount of time he spends in conversations with faculty members and how that accomplishes the objective of S&I, he explained the time is justified if that time ends up helping the students, then it is time well spent. He defended his position stating, “What better way than to learn from other master teachers, other great teachers. I think that helps you be better in all of the areas the objective touches.”

David noticed through his years being in S&I, that interpersonal skills are crucial for collaboration to flourish on a faculty. In his view this means having the ability to interact with others. “If you can’t, if you’re not able to, whether it be with a faculty, or with the students you’re teaching, or with the parents you’re going to be associating... you’re going to really struggle.” He feels that preservice trainers should be filtering out those that struggle in this area, and if they “get through the cracks,” then these teachers need to have additional training, modeling, and observation in order to learn this skill or art. Speaking of a problem he saw on a faculty, he labeled a teacher a hermit because he would come in and teach his class, have no association with the secretary, with the principal, or with other fellow teachers. David explained that this teacher would not share his material, nor would he ask for ideas from anyone else. In addition, this teacher failed to fulfill the responsibility to contact students that had been absent. He wanted to “stand in front of his class, and do his thing” and be done. Every other action was limited, even abrasive. This problem frustrated David, and imbued him with strong feelings for interacting with others and being willing to collaborate with others.



### **Belief in Service to the Public**

David believes that his occupation is of great value to his community and loves teaching and helping students. Multiple times he has heard how people would love to teach seminary because they “love the gospel.” His response demonstrated his feelings: “If that’s why you’re teaching [because you love the gospel], well good I’m glad you love the gospel. But, if you don’t love teenagers you’re going to hate seminary teaching. It’s going to be absolute misery for you.” When David was hired he took over mid-year for a teacher who “was done.” According to David this teacher “just didn’t love them to the degree that he needed to.” The teacher knew this about himself, and the students could feel it from him as well. This experience, and others like it, demonstrated for David that “it’s not just loving the gospel and it’s not just loving the kids. If you don’t love what you’re teaching and who you’re teaching, you’re really going to struggle in seminary.”

Reflecting on his EFY and MTC experience, David realized that it was this love for students that propelled him to seek out employment in S&I and is the motivation behind his continued improvement.

It was...loving EFY, the kids, and loving what changed them. Once I was in the MTC, it was loving who I taught and I loved what changed them. And so I think that really is what drove me here. And that is what helps a teacher to grow. Because if you really do love your kids you’re going to be the best teacher you can be. You’re not just going to be satisfied that you’re mediocre.

David noticed that his love for the student increased when he took time to learn about each student personally, not just what they were like in class, but what their life was like outside of class. David insightfully explained how personal knowledge of a student helped him love them more.

Anytime you find out about the life, especially if the kid's struggling...when you find the reality that his parents just got a divorce just two months ago [and] they're really struggling with anxiety. [Or] they're the only one active in their entire family. You know, things like that, all of a sudden, it just comes back that this is an individual. Not just a kid who is choosing to be a rebel, or choosing to go against the grain. There is something in their lives that is contributing to their behavior. And, the more I see them as an individual...anytime that I'm struggling with a kid, and I take the time to find out about him. And then seeing him as, wow, this is a child of somebody. And they need a little bit more help...[that softens the hearts].

He spoke of his students with great feeling. While he speaks of loving both the students and the content, it is loving students that he speaks about with great intensity. Loving the content is noticeably second on the hierarchy for him.

In addition to the good examples surrounding David, he commented on his own personal drive to improve. He felt in his heart a desire to change and improve, it was something within him regardless of the examples surrounding him. David observed that he would "never feel good" if he ignored that feeling within himself. He felt compelled to improve and frustrated when other teachers did not share that same desire. In one instance another teacher was speaking negatively about the TLE and the latest instruction their area had received from administrators. Frustrated with this teacher, David lamented that this teacher had not "paid the price to understand the principles of the teaching and learning emphasis." By "paying the price" David meant the effort and work necessary to study and learn. As David talked about paying the price, his voice intensified and he spoke about finding articles to read about the subject. He expressed that it included personal reflection and evaluation to find better ways to implement the TLE. He also shared that it involved observations. Speaking about observations, David explained, "That's also been one of the most powerful ways to see how others do it. I find that a lot

of those that kick against the system they never go watch people. They don't want to see how other people teach." In David's experience, paying the price was the total effort required to see the vision behind the TLE and how to implement it. He felt strongly about this personal effort that is required of each teacher. This stemmed from the responsibility he believed was placed on S&I teachers to help the students. In order to be "worthy" of his profession, teachers were obligated to put forth great effort.

### **Belief in Self-Regulation**

David believes that S&I is a self-regulating occupation, and that working with other professionals in S&I is critical for growth and improvement. David's love for his students is the motivation for his commitment to self-improvement, and his commitment to self-improvement is closely tied to the practice of observation and receiving feedback. David viewed himself as "one that tends to be very conscious of what I want to work on" and is committed to making that improvement. In order to improve, David felt a need to reflect at the end of every day. He described the process as "looking at yourself in a mirror." This self-reflection required him to be honest with himself and to see things that were neither comfortable nor flattering. However, he did not want to be content with his ability and skill level at this moment. By seeing his faults regularly he felt he had a greater ability to change and improve. And without the practice of reflection, he mused, "How are you supposed to ever be better?"

David wanted to be a problem solver, a self-starter, a person who went beyond the minimum required. Seeing other teachers who simply taught their six classes and then went home was unacceptable for him. He wanted to be like the teachers he saw that

reflected with questions like “how could I better reach that student? How can I help that struggling teacher? How can I be a better participant in things?” He noticed that good teachers actually give feedback when they were asked and they were generally “open and willing to do what’s being asked.”

It bothered David to see any teacher content to stay with the status quo. He felt that there were multiple tools to help teachers continually seek improvement. For instance, he mentioned the Student Observations and Evaluations (SOAS), PGP, and both formal and informal evaluations specifically. He attributed some of his growth and development to feedback from students and teachers he had invited them to give. By inviting feedback from others he was able to see things not apparent to him. He described it as having an additional mirror with which to see himself, and that without it, he was only seeing half of himself. The most animated he became in all the interviews, came when discussing a teacher that lacked a commitment to improve by having a negative attitude towards these tools.

There is [sic] plenty of teachers that hate SOAS’s. Why? Because I always feel so bad afterwards (speaking for others) so I’m just not going to do them. What an idiotic way to view an SOAS. I am not going to do it because I don’t like what they say? No way! If you don’t like what they say then do something about it. Because who are you teaching? It’s them! You’re not there to pontificate on your amazingness. If they are not being influenced, and uplifted, and changed, and feel safe and happy, and they express that to you, and you do nothing to change it?!.... Anyone that avoids that type of thing. I think that is a red flag. If you’re avoiding feedback from colleagues, from administrators, and from students that’s a red flag. That’s how you can better reflect. You’ll see your whole self instead of what you want to see.

David recognized that his strong feelings towards using feedback to see the whole self and then to make improvements stems from being around other teachers who shared

this same value. David felt that he had been placed on faculties with some amazing people and was inspired by their desire to be better. He witnessed the improvement these other teachers made, and noticed a greater power to teach, and more happiness and contentment in these teachers than others. For him it was simple, if he received those same types of rewards, then “why wouldn’t I seek for it?” Seeing this example in others has made a large impact on David’s motivation to do the same.

### **A Sense of Calling to the Field**

David has a strong sense of calling to the field of religious education. He is totally committed to his profession and to the organization. David observed that any organization will be successful if people are committed to what they are doing, and conversely, if people are not committed then the organization falls apart. David related that he has seen people who lack the commitment to improve and he called them “stagnant.” That fear of becoming stagnant influences David to continue to push himself to grow and improve.

Over the years of his career, David has come to place a top priority on being grounded in content and methodology, with more emphasis on the latter. David explained that “there’s got to be a balance” between content mastery and methodology. He stated that if teachers are not first “grounded” in “what” they are teaching, meaning they understand the content, then it does not matter how good they are presenting the material. For him, methods follow understanding the content. However, he has observed that most teachers get hired already knowing the content, but are weak in methodology, or in their skills to communicate and help students understand the content. Describing his position

he said:

It's all about application for me. It's obvious you need a base of content, or you couldn't do any of it. However, I think that's the lesser need. I think you're hired knowing you have pretty good hold on the content. And that just comes as you naturally prepare, and as you study.... But, I believe what's most lacking, and most needed is the way that you deliver it.

David's first assignment helped him stay grounded in the content, and pushed him to strengthen his skill level and methodology. Preparing lessons everyday with two other strong teachers helped David develop good habits that he has maintained through different assignments which he attributes to increasing his content mastery and his skills level in methods. He related some of these good habits he learned at his first assignment and said:

I would know your manuals. I mean, any teacher manual, student manual, any of those things that you're going to be looking at, go observing, associate with great teachers, see how it's done. See what a classroom can look like. Ask questions. When you're preparing, get insight and feedback from other people. Collaborate on things. If you're trying to be a one-man team, you will accomplish much less than you could if you stepped out and began to incorporate other successful techniques.

In his classes, David focused on helping his students live, or apply, the lessons they are being taught. In his words, he wanted to "inspire a kid to action." He did not feel like he was hired to simply present a set of ideas. Instead, he tried to help students live the principles, or apply what they are learning. One particular area of concern came to light as he described his college and graduate school experience. Attending the University of Phoenix, he was disheartened by the amount of philosophy and theory being taught. To him, this seemed pointless. He had little positive to say of his experience. The major frustration was the emphasis on theory, rather than practical skills

and methods of teaching. He wanted a hands-on experience, something that he could take and use in his classes immediately, something he could apply. David conceded that he developed a good work ethic from his graduate program, but it left him desiring more instruction on application, with an even greater desire to focus on improving skill level and methodology rather than on content mastery.

In addition to all the great influences David has experienced from faculty members, there is also an innate drive within David, as he expressed, “a spirit in me as well,” that pushes David for excellence. It is a feeling within himself that if ignored, he would “never feel good” with himself. David’s attitude was to not only do what was being asked, but to take it a step further and do a little more. He wants to improve and grow, and he feels that his experience in S&I has helped him to do that. He acknowledges that he has “been placed with some amazing people and it’s inspiring to see people who are so good, who want to be better.” Because of the good habits he has developed, the great faculties that he has learned from, and the direction of administration, he feels “more power,” “more happiness,” and “more contentment” in his career. He has tried to copy the example of his mentors in S&I and feels this has helped him tremendously to be a better teacher and employee in S&I.

### **Autonomy**

David believed he had autonomy to function in his profession with accountability. From David’s perspective, on the local level in S&I there is generally an open and very collaborative relationship among the teachers. However, David felt that the openness does not extend as liberally upwards through the hierarchy of administration. David

reported that another teacher had disagreed with some of the elements of the TLE, claiming that there were certain applications that do not perfectly fit in some classes. This teacher argued: “But I don’t feel I can give that feedback for the mere fact that, you know, others say, well this has been directed from the board of education because they have inspiration. This is something that we need to, kind of, just take and do.” Not wanting to sound negative about the openness of administration, David tried to soften this experience saying that this may not be how administrators actually feel. At times there are conversations that never make it out of a local faculty back out to administration. For David, it is not that the administration does not desire an open dialogue with teachers, but it is the teacher’s perception that administrators do not desire this open dialogue which causes this breakdown in feedback back up the administrative line.

Although David has not seen as much change in this area of openness and feedback as more experienced teachers, yet in his career, there has been a shift towards a more open dialogue between local faculties and administration. Recently, David’s faculty experienced this more open dialogue with an area director. David reported that the area director requested each faculty member to contemplate their view of S&I. He asked them to consider the culture of S&I and reflect on ways the culture could be improved. To reinforce this assignment, the area director extended placement interviews to 45 minutes, 15 minutes more than the typical placement interview held in the area. David felt like the area director wanted to hear everything he and his faculty desired to communicate with him. David noted the positive reaction of his faculty to the area director and described the experience as “very good,” or even “wonderful,” and the faculty appreciated how “open



the area director was.” David appreciated that instead of rebutting “and telling them that they’re wrong,” he began to write notes and reassured the faculty that administration would talk about the issues they raised and effort would be made to find solutions. David felt this more open attitude will help and bless the entire area in the future.

### **Scott—Teaching Experience 10-20 Years**

One of the first things a person notices when he meets Scott is his warm and inviting smile. He gives the impression of being a kind and gentle man. His shaved head creates an added sense of dignity, genuineness, and wisdom. His warmth and friendliness enable others to speak comfortably with him. He looks relaxed in a short sleeve white dress shirt and tie. His pants fit loosely around his waist, which he attributes to his recent loss of weight. Scott’s office is small, with room for only one or two chairs, and is neat and tidy. Scott decorates it with small, cartoon like action figures from some of his favorite movies like Star Wars. In the multiple interviews with Scott, he described five “turning points” he experienced throughout his life. The five main “turning points” that helped to shape him were (a) his LDS mission, (b) being hired by S&I, (c) receiving a new principal, (d) a new S&I assignment, and (e) becoming a principal.

Like David, Scott never intended to teach as a religious educator. As a high school student he wanted to be a computer programmer and use his talents in cartoon drawing with computers. He had dreams of being an animator for Disney. He said that “if those dreams had found fruition, I would probably be animating for Disney or Pixar right now.” Following his mission his desire to focus on computer science faded. Being

confused about what to do, he spoke with his mother and asked her for advice. He recalled her response, “Deep in your heart, what do you love to do the most?” This question began to turn his attention towards teaching the gospel. Scott said,

My love was to teach the gospel. That is where I found satisfaction. That is where I found joy. It was something I felt comfortable with....

I think that for me the mission became the turning point for me, that kind of pushed me in the direction of teaching. When I was in high school I would have never dreamed that I would be a teacher, let alone a seminary teacher, even as much as I enjoyed seminary.

Attending BYU, and knowing that he loved teaching, he sought employment and got hired to teach part-time at the Missionary Training Center (MTC) in Provo. His experience there solidified his love for teaching. Eventually, he was hired full-time at the MTC, which was an unusual opportunity for a student. That employment gave him experience in teaching and leadership. He continued to work at the MTC until a friend, by happenstance, invited him to attend a meeting to discuss seminary teaching. Scott termed this a “defining moment” in his life. He accepted the invitation and attended the meeting, which began the process of his being hired in S&I.

### **Use of the Professional Organization as a Major Referent**

Scott’s employment in S&I started off with an ominous and rather questionable outlook on the organization, but has since come to rely on it as a major referent. Scott was hired full-time by S&I in April of 1996; however, Scott was told “we don’t have an assignment for you yet.” So he went through orientation and the entire summer working without an office, or a faculty. This was a difficult first summer for him. When other

teachers were working with their faculties, decorating their classrooms, and attending inservice meetings together, Scott worked alone. He would go to the park and study, or he attempted to do work at home. With no place to go, and without a faculty to guide him, he did not have a strong direction of how to effectively utilize his summer employment hours. Approximately 2 weeks before school started he received a call from S&I in which he was informed of his first assignment. But even then, on the first day of class, after teaching his first class and working to memorize the students' names, his area director, who had waited for him outside of the classroom, made a change in his assignment. Scott was asked to teach an early morning class at another seminary nearby which required him to split time between the two buildings. He was eventually transferred totally to the new building. He accepted this change with refreshing new-hire enthusiasm. Scott's behavior reflected his attitude of "just tell me where you want me to go."

This first assignment was difficult for Scott. The first day at his new assignment he noticed that the faculty "was not united." He recalled, "Lindsay [his wife] was helping me set up the classroom and I [was] visiting with one teacher and I could tell from the way he talked about other people that they were not unified as a faculty." Scott spoke of a teacher on that faculty who was "kind of in it for himself and was really concerned about having the 'cool kids' in his class." This teacher would come to Scott, the new teacher in the building, and talk to him about the others. Being new and wanting to make a good impression, Scott felt obligated to listen, but did not enjoy the situation. He wondered why this teacher would speak so negatively about the other faculty members. As the year

progressed, Scott continued to hear this teacher spreading gossip among the students about the teachers. In addition to his gossiping about the teachers, he also spoke negatively about individual students to other students. This was a difficult situation for Scott to manage as a new teacher.

Adding to the faculty's lack of unity was the negative attitude among some teachers and their unwillingness to collaborate. Scott remembers that some "teachers would just...[do] their own thing," and one teacher in particular who did not like to share his lesson plans or ideas. It was a trying time for Scott. He lamented that he often felt "alone." He tried to get along with everybody, and had amiable relationships, but he always felt a "rift" among faculty members.

The attitude of disharmony among this first faculty affected other areas of teaching as well. He explained that there was a very "casual feel about" policies and procedures in the building. For example, Scott remembers that when he came to the building he noticed that nobody wore a suit coat while teaching as the policy mandates. Scott assumed that this was how things were done in S&I and, therefore, he fell into the same habits. To demonstrate how widespread the casual attitude was on the faculty, he reported that he had gotten used to not wearing a suit coat, but "one time...I wore a suit coat...and one of the students said, 'Are we having a special lesson?'" This helped to make Scott aware of student perceptions, and it impressed him with the importance of following policies. Another attitude Scott observed on this faculty was that faculty members rarely prepared their lessons together. It was a faculty where everyone was "on [his] own." Although Scott enjoyed the times the faculty came together for inservice, he

lamented that generally he was “left to...feel for [himself]” as he navigated through his first few years in this assignment.

With each passing school year, the situation improved for Scott. Members of that first faculty were replaced by teachers that wanted to be more unified and desired to follow S&I policy more rigorously. While this first assignment was difficult for Scott, he was quick to point out that he did have a good experience, that he learned many lessons, and the longer he stayed the better it became.

In Scott’s sixth year a new principal was assigned to administer in his seminary building. This principal was not someone “in-house,” meaning someone that had previously been on the faculty. He “was brand new” and had not been exposed to the traditions and culture present at this seminary. Scott expressed that this principal “had a very dignified manner about him,” a “professional way about him.” Scott perceived that this principal’s job was to “shake things up a little bit” and help the teachers become more professional and unified. As an example, Scott remembered the principal holding him accountable for the policy standards specifically inviting him to wear a suit coat when he was teaching. Rather than balk at this request Scott reported that “I did it...got comfortable with it and have done it ever since.” In Scott’s perception the effect this principal had on the faculty was profound. The faculty united behind him which unity changed the entire atmosphere at the seminary. They became much more concerned about and more closely followed the policy manual and directives given by administration. He contrasted his initial experience at the seminary with how he felt a few years later after the new principal arrived and explained that they all became close

friends, they were “150% united,” they even enjoyed doing things socially outside of seminary. Ten years later, the faculty still likes to get together on occasion as friends and families. This experience was a “turning point” for Scott. He explained that “it was a great experience to have” and that it “started changing my career” and “shaping my...professionalism.”

The new Objective of S&I has made a tremendous impact on Scott’s focus and development, and is the foundation for him of “putting it all together” in his current assignment. The Objective of S&I was magnified after his faculty read an article together titled “The Very Root of Christian Doctrine.” He exclaimed that this article is “phenomenal,” and has helped the faculty emphasize the objective in the classroom. He related a recent example where a ninth grade girl and her father came to enroll at the seminary. Scott asked her if she knew anything about seminary to which she responded in the negative. Scott then proceeded to explain with deep feeling the objective of S&I in terms of the article they had read as a faculty. Scott felt this student left with a better understanding of what to expect from S&I because of the new objective. He summarized his feelings stating, “I’m finding that the Objective is becoming part of...what I do, what we do as faculty, and is something that we focus on.... [It is] an important part of my philosophy.”

Scott’s personal evaluation of his effectiveness is directly tied to students’ ability to recite the objective. Recently he served as the advisor to the seminary council, which is a select body of students assigned by ecclesiastical authorities to represent the seminary in a leadership role. Scott was excited to hear the council members reciting the objective

statement to church congregations as they were given an opportunity to speak and encourage enrollment for LDS teenagers. Scott feels validated for his efforts when he sees students reciting the objective. In his seminary they have three feet by four feet foam poster boards hanging on the walls of the seminary on which the objective statement is printed. The faculty expends a significant amount of effort to help students understand the objective of S&I. When they can recite it, he said, "It [is] just fun to see." The objective of S&I has "focused" Scott's teaching efforts on those things that he feels are most important.

Similar to the effect of the objective statement for Scott is the impact the policy manual has made upon him. He readily admits that following the policy manual was not a high priority for him in the first few years of teaching. The culture of the faculty to which he was assigned had established a tradition of being casual about policies. He observed teachers being casual in their dress standards and not wearing suit coats while teaching. Other teachers were casual in their relationships with students. He was frustrated with one teacher, no longer employed with S&I, who "put his arm around a young lady and called her 'sweetie.'" However, over the last few years, he said, "I've seen less of that and...as a whole in S&I," there has been a more strict attitude that teachers and administrators "make sure that we're adhering to policy; let's make sure we're not casual about what we're doing." Pleased with the emphasis in S&I to be more strict in following the policy manual, Scott said, "this is important what we're doing, and we need to do it right and do it the right way."

Scott gave a summary description of a good teacher in S&I as "a teacher that

follows policy.” For him, the policies are the “fundamental expectations” of an S&I employee. He described how every year now he reviews the policy manual, specifically targeting areas such as student/teacher relationships, and other human resource areas of the manual. He believes that by reviewing these policies every year it “keeps [the policies] fresh in [my] mind.” Scott feels that reviewing the fundamentals in the policy manual and being held accountable for following those policies would have made all the difference in his first few years of teaching. As a result, Scott strictly follows policy. He related that one morning he had arrived before any other teacher. A student knocked on the window indicating he wanted to be allowed to enter the building. Scott explained the policy to the student that teachers cannot be alone with students in the building, and that the young man would have to wait outside until another teacher came. Scott asserts that this action came as a direct result of reviewing the “fundamental[s]” in the policy manual. Scott feels that “you can’t hear that stuff enough...even if you’ve heard it before; it’s nice to be reminded.” For him, it makes clear the expectations that S&I has of its teachers.

A few years after being hired in S&I, Scott determined to pursue a master’s degree. He applied to Utah State and was accepted in the master’s program for instructional technology. Scott felt the program was designed for public educators, but they had allowed approximately 10 S&I teachers to enroll in the program as well. Scott remembers that some things in the program the S&I teachers “just put up with because it was for public education,” and not relevant to what S&I does; for example, the courses on grant writing. However, overall Scott felt “[the program] was pretty good.” One course, the class on instructional design, stood out for him. The entire course was



“thought provoking” for him, but one lesson particularly stood out. They were discussing the art of design and the professor used the example of constructing Abravanel Hall and related that to instruction. What impacted Scott was how much thought and conceptual visualization needs to be included in every lesson. Scott enthusiastically reported that “the whole push of what [the professor] was trying to teach was the art of thinking through something particularly with your students in mind.” He walked away from class that day changed, and motivated to spend the time and effort thinking through every lesson, and visualizing how it might be perceived by each student. It cemented in Scott’s mind the importance of effectively preparing lessons with individual students in mind.

Early in Scott’s career, inservice meetings were not a high priority. Reflecting on his first faculty Scott reported:

[My] first faculty, honestly, kind of tainted my view of inservice and I had a pretty cynical view about it at times...I remember one...I was sitting there thinking, why are we doing this?... What does this have to do with anything?... We had an activity and we did something outside as an area, trying to make application to teaching. I leaned over to another teacher and I said, you know, with our group, we could go to Lagoon and find application at Lagoon.... But I’ve found that as the years have gone on that I’ve appreciated more the training and I think a lot of it is just my attitude that has changed. But the training has also improved, especially with the focus on the objective. Whereas before, sometimes it just seems that we’re just doing stuff just ‘cause we’re supposed to have eight hours of inservice that day and so let’s just fill some time. And so my attitude has changed a lot through the course of the years. I’ve gotten a little older and a little more experienced with things and realized...[that] I need to humble myself and grow up.

Scott believes that what has changed his attitude the most towards inservice, and what has helped him develop professionally the most has been his “experience with our principals meetings or administrative council meetings.” These are meetings that are held generally once a month for training on teaching improvement and other administrative

issues. As the principal, Scott attends these training meetings, and then in turn trains his own faculty. Not only does he hear the training, but he has to learn it in such a way that he can teach it to others.

Another form of inservice training that Scott has enjoyed is the Leadership Pattern training produced by the Human Resource department of the LDS Church. Recently he received an invitation, along with a few other principals, to attend a leadership seminar held at the LDS COB. He enjoyed the experience first, because of what he learned, but also because it made him feel like “S&I isn’t their own separate thing; we’re part of a bigger whole.” That vision compliments his desire to be unified, and amplifies his feelings to be a part of the Church collectively—that he is involved in doing something great, something much bigger than himself.

### **Belief in Service to the Public**

In addition to the leadership pattern training, Scott’s change of assignments has influenced his belief that teaching in S&I is providing a service to the public, that it is doing something great for the community. Scott was in his first assignment for 7 years. He then transferred to another high school seminary not far away for 2 more years. During that second year in this new assignment, he attended a seventh-grade orientation meeting for his daughter held at the new junior high school building she would be attending the following school year. Because it was a new junior high school building it occurred to him that this new school would necessitate a new seminary building being constructed adjacent to it. With real depth of emotion, Scott exclaimed that as he walked out of the building he “had a feeling that was...strong” impressing him to request the new

junior high assignment. He went on to explain that he had never experienced anything in his life that could compare to that moment. Scott said, “It wasn’t words, it wasn’t a thought, it was just a feeling, you know, that I had to go after.” Somewhat atypical for him, Scott approached his area director and requested the transfer. Scott appreciated the area director who was sensitive to Scott’s impressions. After some negotiating with other administrators, Scott was given the new assignment. It was a one-man assignment; therefore, Scott also became the principal of this new junior high seminary program.

There was one big problem with the new assignment—they did not have a seminary building. The school was being finished and students were scheduled to attend that fall, but the situation had fallen through the cracks on the part of S&I, and they did not even have property on which to build a seminary building. Scott, along with administrators of S&I, resolved the situation by hiring a bus company to shuttle students from the school to an LDS chapel a couple of miles away. With humor Scott described the everyday experience and said, “we’d pick the kids up...have devotional on the bus...go to the church building,” and hold seminary. By the time the students were in their classroom and seated, they had time for, at most, a 30-minute lesson. They repeated this daily schedule for 3 years. Feeling frustrated with the experience at the time, Scott now looks back on this time of his career with fond memories.

During the 3 years that they bused students over to the chapel, Scott, and many others worked diligently to get a new seminary building built for the program. Adding to the already difficult situation of transporting students, Scott remembered multiple roadblocks they encountered prior to getting the building built. It stemmed from not

getting the proper building permits, to having arsenic in the soil. Each situation pushed the building further back. What could have been a six month building process was lengthened into 3 years. The tension hit its climax the week before school was scheduled to start. All the permits had not been approved, particularly the fire marshal's approval. This seminary building has an elaborate sprinkling system controlled by an electronic monitoring system which is linked by telephone lines to the fire department in an emergency when the building is vacant. The problem was that the phone company was not scheduled to install the phone lines until 3 weeks after school started. Without the phones lines being connected to the electronic monitoring system, the fire marshal would not approve the permit, and therefore would not allow students to come into the building. S&I and the building contractor elected to go with a wireless monitoring system instead, but had been unable to get it functional all week. On Monday morning, students were lining up outside the building waiting for the doors to be opened for class. Scott was trying to assist the contractor to get the system working, and the fire marshal was standing by to insure that no students were allowed in before the monitoring system was operating. Class was scheduled to begin at 8:00 am. At 8:04 am the fire marshal finally signed the permit that allowed students to come into the building for class. "It was a miracle," Scott said.

Throughout our interviews, Scott was careful not to dwell on the negative. After describing this building debacle he quickly exclaimed: "It all worked out and there's a beautiful building there now." This assignment strengthened Scott's confidence, and provided a feeling of accomplishment for him, a feeling of being beneficial to his

community. One year after the building was complete Scott was transferred to another seminary. He remembers thinking as he drove away for the last time, that if he could handle this assignment he could handle any difficult situation that might come his way. He continues to look back on these days with fondness, and during difficult times the memories give him courage and a resolve to do his part, to do his best every day in his assignments.

The year prior to leaving the junior high assignment Scott was approached by his area director to accept an assignment to be the new principal at a struggling high school seminary. Scott responded that he wanted one more year at the junior high. He wanted a chance to enjoy the new building that had taken so long to be built. The area director agreed, but added “we’re coming for you next year.” When the following year came Scott accepted the new assignment with trepidation. He explained that there was a “stigma” about this assignment. The high school seminary was in a rough area, where violence and gang activity were a common experience. Illustrating the negative reputation of the new seminary Scott reported that when a friend heard about Scott’s new assignment he asked, “Did they give you your flak jacket yet?” If there was ever a place that needed a strong seminary program to benefit the youth of the community, this was it. Therefore, rather than be disheartened, Scott viewed this new adventure as a way to combine all that he had learned throughout his career in S&I and apply it in this new assignment.

### **Belief in Self-Regulation**

Scott believed that S&I is a self-regulated organization, and is more effective when there is unity within a faculty. In addition, Scott finds it easier to follow the policy

manual and have a “professional attitude” when there is unity. He insisted that students pick up on the unity, or lack thereof, of a faculty. They know when a faculty is unified and when they are not. The lack of unity and collaboration that Scott experienced in his first few years of teaching has resulted in making this a major emphasis in the administration of his duties now. Not only has he enjoyed rich and lasting relationships since that first faculty, but his current faculty is a tight knit group who enjoy preparing lessons together. According to Scott, they have a common preparation period every other day in which they meet as a faculty to plan lessons. Not only has this produced faculty unity but has also increased the content mastery of each faculty member. In Scott’s word’s, “it’s been a great thing; it’s been a great resource for all of us.” Scott said even on the area level, there is a “feeling of camaraderie” among everybody. In Scott’s view, this feeling of camaraderie is the result of changing visions in S&I and implementing them on the local level. He describes how in his first few years of teaching there was a general feeling among teachers and administrators alike that their individual assignment was all that mattered. Each teacher was only concerned about *his* own classroom. The principal was only concerned about *his* seminary, and the area director was only interested in helping *his* area. Scott believes that today there is more of a shared vision. The prevalent attitude among both teachers and administrators is that “this is not just *my* program, but it’s *our* program...we do this together.” Now teachers are not afraid to seek out help from each other. Teachers are not threatened by sharing their lesson ideas with another. Teachers are more willing to discuss and “make decisions together.” He hears of teachers calling to share ideas and discussing ideas both within and outside specific areas

in S&I. However, as he sees it, the strongest and most common forms of sharing and collaboration come within the local faculty. Making the effort to prepare lessons together and to have productive inservice meetings builds relationships and fosters a collaborative, unified attitude. Scott explains that the relationships he has formed at each seminary, he carries with him to the next assignment. Therefore, at the new assignment, he continues to share his ideas and get feedback from the former teachers with whom he has established a relationship.

Another element that has helped to change the culture into being more self-regulating has been leadership. Scott believes that the leadership at the area level and the local level have been an integral force in bringing about the change in culture. It was the principal in his first assignment that changed the feeling and attitude of the faculty. He sees leaders now that are continuing this change for greater collaboration, observation, and feedback. These leaders have asked to observe him, not in a summative evaluation type of way, but in an informal, instructional way. He said that they do not come with the attitude that they are looking for reason's to fire you, an attitude that may have been perpetrated in the past, but simply to help you improve. Scott admitted that it has taken some time, "but it's happening and, you know, it's becoming a regular, normal thing." Not only are administrators observing and giving feedback more often, but faculty are doing it with each other. Most often this takes place within a single faculty, but it is also increasing among seminary teachers from different faculties. Scott continued, "I enjoy going to sit in somebody's classroom and watching. In fact, just yesterday I was watching a teacher, and as soon as we were done, [he said] give me feedback...It's becoming a

natural thing. And I think a lot of that...is due to the leadership.”

Over the years Scott has observed that successful leaders led by example. They “were the ones who...didn’t expect things from those that they were leading that they weren’t willing to do themselves.” The administrators that followed the policy manual were the leaders that have helped to change the culture of S&I.

### **A Sense of Calling to the Field**

Scott felt a strong sense of calling to the field as a religious educator. Scott loves students, his job, and feels blessed to be hired in S&I. He tells his wife often that “I have one of the greatest jobs in the world. I get to come and enjoy the people I work with and I love what I do. It’s just a fun thing.” He remarked that in his view there are three different perspectives regarding employment orientation. Scott said that some people view their employment as a job, something you do for a paycheck at the end of the week. Others view their employment as a career, a deeper personal investment by which you mark your achievement through money and advancement. However, he views his employment as a calling. He did not mean this in an ecclesiastical or religious sense of word, but as a “passionate commitment to do work for its own sake.” Scott was genuine about his love for teaching students, and his commitment to do the work. He summed up his feelings when he said: “I do what I do because I love it...I love interacting with youth. I love seeing their faith...I love working with teenagers.”

Caring for students is not simply an attitude in Scott’s mind. He demonstrates his concern and interest in students by making the effort to call students’ parents. He is not afraid to talk with “mom and dad” if he needs to discuss a student’s behavior. Scott



suggested that calling the student's ecclesiastical leader can also be helpful to gain greater understanding of a particular student. Scott laments that at times in the past he has not made the extra effort to follow up on a struggling student when marking them absent. He asserts that a "teacher that's really interested in [the student] is always interested, even if they don't see them [in class]." Scott frequently attends student activities just to see students outside of class. For example, he makes the effort to attend some of their football games, an effort outside of the classroom experience, to reach out to them and demonstrate his interest in them.

In addition to the efforts outside of class, Scott does many things inside the classroom to demonstrate his care and concern for students. For instance, he takes the time to go through student transcripts, making sure that all are caught up and on track to graduate. He holds students accountable, and yet offers help to each student following up to make sure they are on track. He has a genuine interest in students and puts forth effort to help them through their entire experience

### **Autonomy**

Scott feels that he has the ability to make decisions about his work, an idea that has been strengthened by greater accountability placed on teachers in S&I. The culture of S&I has shifted dramatically over the years for Scott. When Scott was hired, he did not feel there was much accountability for teachers. He stated that the LDS Church is led by a lay clergy. This nonprofessional leadership concept has created among some in S&I an attitude of little accountability; a "do whatever you can do is sufficient" attitude. Scott believes that this attitude is slowly being eliminated among S&I employees. In his area

he has seen a push from the administration and the local area, for greater accountability, for feedback, and for a need to improve. This push is bringing in its wake a change in the culture of S&I. He remembered that a few years ago he was asked to do some training in the area on observation and feedback. He said, “I tried to share with them the principles and things that we did at the MTC to give feedback. We modeled it, we practiced it and I think it just short circuited some of the guys in the area.” Scott believed that he had “totally overwhelmed the area.” At that time there was an apathetic feeling about improvement, “not that the men weren’t trying to improve but there just wasn’t accountability in place for that.” Now, Scott sees a different environment. There are more observations being performed and more feedback given than ever before. He described a more gradual approach to observation and feedback in the last 10 years that has helped to change the culture in S&I.

### **James—Teaching Experience Over 21 Years**

There is a waiting area outside of James’ office. It is nicely decorated with pictures of faculty members and spouses hanging on the wall. This decorated waiting area elicits a more business-like atmosphere than is typical in a seminary or institute office. His office is arranged to project a more spacious feeling than other offices I have seen in S&I, and it is immaculately clean and organized. Nothing is out of place. It generates in every visitor the sense that attention has been paid to every detail. It is not a sterilized cleanliness, but a warm, comfortable, and orderly office. James has a large collection of books on the wooden bookshelves behind his desk. Every item on the shelves and in the

office appears to be of high quality, and is arranged in such a manner as to invite reverence and respect.

Anticipating James to be more stiff and reserved than the other interviewees, I was surprised to find him immediately personal, comfortable, warm and gracious, genuinely happy to see me, and eager to participate in the interview. This attitude continued in subsequent interviews with him as well. He never once acted annoyed, put out, or impatient with the interview process. In fact, he was the most willing of the participants to go overtime in the interview. Like his office, James was dressed neatly with a distinguished appearance and nothing was out of place. He wore glasses which added to the observer's perception that he was wise and kind. There was nothing in his office, or in his appearance, that might suggest that James was casual about anything. However, James' friendliness and warmth calmed any concern I had to the contrary and immediately made me feel comfortable in his presence.

As the interview began, James recalled that his favorite place to go as a child was the library. When he was 5 years old his family lived close to a library. Laughing about the different world back then in Los Angeles, he said, "My mom would let me walk around the corner to the library. I just loved looking at the pictures and the books. To this day, that's still my favorite place, just to walk through the stacks at the library." James believes that a book is an embalmed mind which preserves the author's thoughts and ideas for us. Because of his early appreciation for books, James has spent much of his life reading and seeking to learn, most often from his personal study.

As a freshman in high school, he took a drafting class and loved it. This "was pre-

computer days,” and required a lot of “pencil pushing”; nonetheless, he ended up taking 4 years of mechanical and architectural drafting then decided that he wanted to be an architect. However, his plans all began to change when he went to college. There, for an unknown reason, he began to feel uncomfortable with his decision to become an architect; consequently, he decided to postpone further educational opportunities until after he served a 2-year mission for the LDS Church.

James served his mission under the supervision of a man who had spent his life teaching and administering in S&I. James often heard his mission president talk about S&I which started him thinking about religious education as a possible career. In hindsight he believes that one of the reasons that he was called to that particular mission was to be influenced by his mission president toward teaching as a career. He “really opened my eyes to the scriptures...I’d read the scriptures before I went into the mission field, but being with him and sitting at his feet helped me see scriptures in a way that forever changed me...I fell in love with the scriptures.” In his final interview with his mission president, James was asked what he was planning to do or study when he got home. After responding that he did not know, James’ mission president planted the thought that Scott investigate the CES.

Following his mission and back in school, James still struggled to decide what he wanted as a career. James “bounced around various degrees” and changed majors about five different times before feeling a desire to teach religion. He began to take the seminary preservice courses and excelled in them. He was required to graduate from college before S&I would hire him. James had to select a major and settled on history and

Spanish teaching, but he never intended to teach public education as his heart, by now, was set on teaching religion. After completing the seminary preservice classes and graduating from college, Scott was hired to teach seminary full-time in Arizona.

James has had and continues to have an illustrious career in S&I. His career assignments have taken him from Arizona to numerous places in California, then to Colorado, and finally to Utah. His assignments have ranged from seminary teacher, to institute teacher, coordinator, assistant administrator, and director. Having experienced nearly every assignment available to a full time S&I teacher, his perspective of professionalism is detailed and descriptive.

### **Use of the Professional Organization as a Major Referent**

Throughout his career James has used the professional organization as a major referent, being infused in the culture, values, and identity of the profession. His first assignment was a four-man seminary in an urban community. James described the teachers with whom he worked as “very charismatic.” Comparing himself to the other teachers, James felt humbled by their personality and connection with the students. In a self-effacing manner James related:

“I’m not Mr. Charisma. I mean, I can’t stand in front of a group and, on my personality or storytelling, and make [the lesson] fly. And some of the other men of the building did.... Rocky movies were really big at the time, kids would come into [one teacher’s class] and he had a chunk of meat hanging from the ceiling, and the Rocky music playing. He’d come out with boxing gloves on and a big glass of raw eggs and drink it. And of course the students would say, hey, “James” why can’t you do fun stuff like that?”

James lamented that students were checking out of his class at the semester and

trying to get into one of the classes taught by other teachers on the faculty. However, he was able to laugh it off and exclaimed that he still had a great experience on this first faculty.

After 2 years in this assignment, the situation changed. S&I was closing down the released time seminary program in that part of Arizona and moving to an early morning program. This created an over-abundance of seminary teachers in the area and S&I needed to move teachers into other areas. James and his wife were originally from California and had expressed an interest in moving there at some point. In addition, S&I was experimenting in the 1970s and early 1980s with what they called day-time seminary. The state of California did not give legislative approval for released time at that period. Therefore, if there was a large concentration of LDS students at a high school with an open campus, and there was a home or church across the street for students to meet in, S&I would bring students over during the day for seminary. As a result, James was sent to California to start up the day time seminary program in one of the communities.

This turned out to be a very difficult assignment for James. He tried to “squeeze in” five classes sometime during the day. He taught a class around 6:00 am and one at seven. Then, he would try to hold a seminary class in a free period during the school day. He would also hold a class during lunch and sometimes one after school. James exclaimed that “it was a very odd schedule.” Adding to the difficulty of the assignment for James was that he was not in a seminary building; he was in a typical LDS chapel. Describing the situation James lamented:

The assignment there looked better on paper than it did in reality.... I couldn't afford to live there. We ended up living about an hour and a half away with my folks. So I commuted through Los Angeles traffic down to this church, sat in a chapel all day long. And there weren't quite the numbers they thought there were. And, I'm thinking, gee I got at least 4 years here? I felt so unprofessional...I thought, I don't know if I can do this.

Feeling discouraged, he began to compare himself to the other teachers he worked with on previous faculties. His self-doubt became more severe and he felt inadequate to help the students there. Mentally, he condemned himself for not being more charismatic like the former faculty with which he taught. In his third year in the assignment he felt so disheartened that he wrote a letter of resignation and gave it to his administrator. He explained that "I can't see myself doing this for 3 years. I can't put on this show every day." He added that he did not like the unprofessional nature of the assignment.

A month later he experienced a change of heart that perhaps he made the wrong choice to resign. Humbly, he approached his administrator and asked to be reinstated. Because the administrators had already assigned a new teacher to fill his assignment they transferred James to another location to open the seminary program in a small community called Hemet.

James described his experience at Hemet as "a wonderful 4-year stint." He started the program there, and it was there that he really found himself as a teacher, explaining,

It was a critical moment for me. [I learned that it] was not about selling me, but it was about the scriptures. That if I would really pay the price to know the scriptures, I didn't have to get up and [put on a show].... If I could find what it was that students were wrestling with, and we could go to the scriptures and find answers, then I didn't have to feel that burden [of putting on a show] on my shoulders.

During the course of his career, James has observed that a principle characteristic

demonstrated in good teachers is loyalty to the organization. The loyalty of a faculty is a powerful influence on individual teachers. James reported that often a new hire will descend to the faculty's level of commitment and preparation. Teachers trying to get hired in S&I are willing to go anywhere, do anything as long as they can be hired. However, soon after being sent to the new assignment they fall into bad habits, or they begin to embody the attitude and culture of the faculty with whom they are assigned. For example, the new teacher realizes, "wow, as soon as the bell rings, everybody's out of here. Nobody sticks around [to prepare for the next day]. I guess that's what you do." James explained that an attitude of loyalty is difficult to teach if the faculty is not loyal. The new teacher will soon habituate himself to the faculty he is around. This dilemma perplexed James. He felt that teachers owe it to the students and their employer to stay after and prepare the lesson, even if all the other teachers leave earlier.

James believes that helping other teachers cultivate loyalty is a principle effect of his leadership. Currently, James is the director of a large institute along the Wasatch Front. It is similar to being a principal of a seminary, but on the college level. After 2 years in this assignment James believes he was sent to that particular assignment to encourage teacher accountability and create a feeling of loyalty among the faculty. James was quick to point out that the teachers were not bad, but across the years, traditions and cultures had developed there that were not completely loyal to S&I. Some, in fact, were contrary to policy. James described how he implemented S&I policies at his current assignment.

I think administration needed somebody who could come in and understand that, it didn't necessarily need to be me, but I think somebody who had central office



view of things, that could come in and say, you know, we just can't. I mean, for example, there was somewhat of a tenure here that every year, when it came to putting in the schedule again, what do *you want* to teach and when do *you want* to teach it? [It was the tradition of the previous directors to let the most tenured employees make the schedule.] I had one man characterize it as, you had 26 programs operating under one building here. And you had some men who had been here more than 10 years who had only taught Book of Mormon and the Gospels. [Only two of the four main scripture courses of study.] They taught those same things every time. And they taught it when *they* wanted to teach it. They picked the prime time so they could have two hours for racquetball during the day. And when we said, no, we're going to rotate [the scripture courses] like the policy says, oh I had some...they read me the riot acts....

There were just some traditions that had developed here. They had a comp time program running here that...if you put in a twelve hour day, you could count four of the hours towards taking off time somewhere else. So what that meant was every 2 weeks, if you basically were here on Wednesday from seven to seven or if you came in at eight and taught a night class midweek until nine and put in thirteen hours, you could take four hours from each of those two Wednesdays and get another vacation day. And so, we had some men who were getting twenty more vacation days beyond the [allotted] twenty-two because of this.

In James' experience, the informal and formal associations helped reinforce the values, beliefs, and identities of the organization. He reflected on his experience with previous colleagues and contrasted them with the feelings in this current situation. He recognized the influence of a positive association with other professional teachers and inservice activities.

You got together [with colleagues] less frequently but when you did get together because of distances, you might stay for a night or two. You got to know each other in ways, I mean, we had, when I was in Northern California, twice a year we'd get together for like, three days. We'd have meetings during the day. We would always arrange to have a chapel nearby so that we could play basketball. And out of an area, maybe 30 men, there were maybe 10 or 12 of us that would get together. And you'd have young guys, you'd have guys just ready to retire. We'd play the game and then we'd stop on the way back, it was our tradition, we'd buy 7-Up and orange juice and mix it. Sit, sweating, dripping sweat in somebody's hotel and just talk until like 11:00 at night about gospel things. You were like this with those people and you ached for it because you were alone. This was your chance to now be with other people who did what you did. Once a

year wives came and the wives would get together and just, what do you do about this and how are you, you needed CES as your support system. It's very different here. This, it has more of a feel of work. We try to get this group together, let's say for...a potluck, bring the spouses together. We see each other all the time and we've got stuff at the church and it doesn't have the same kind of a feel and it seems a little different too in the sense that you're not alone. I don't want to say competition, because I've never sensed a competition here, but you end up comparing, well, gee, his classes always have like thirty, or forty, or sixty. How come mine only have fifteen? You can't help but ask some of those questions.

James has helped the faculty at his current assignment to be more loyal, less driven by tradition and culture, and more focused on the needs of the students. In an effort to help teachers be more accountable and focused on professional development, S&I has implemented the PGP. In theory this program is to enable leaders and employees to better accomplish the Objective of S&I. The process provides leaders and employees with an organized, consistent method for planning, tracking, and documenting individual goals and accomplishments. In principle, James is supportive of the PGP. Teachers ought to be setting goals and being held accountable, and these goals should be meaningful and contribute to the Objective. For example, James met with a teacher whose goal was to organize his files during the summer. For another, it was to know all the names of his students within the first 2 weeks of class. While important, these goals did not move the program forward and meaningfully contribute to the Objective. As a director, James believed that PGP [ate] up a lot of his time. He explained that with almost 40 teachers with whom he had to visit, conduct interviews, and observe teaching, "It's a lot of time that I think right now doesn't bring a lot of payback. So far as really moving this institute forward." He wondered that if they did not do it at all, how much would the institute change, or enrollments increase, or teaching improve? In his estimation, not much. In

principle, James believed the PGP is a good process. In reality, it still needs more work to make it measurable and meaningful. With his faculty, James has had lengthy discussions regarding the performance appraisals. James reported that nobody disagrees with the concept that as professionals it is expected that teachers are improving and developing and that accountability is necessary. However, James wrestled with this issue of performance appraisals because teaching is an ethereal and abstract phenomenon. He questioned how one really assesses a teacher's growth and development. How does one integrate system goals, area goals, institute goals, personal goals, accountability, and end of the year appraisals? How does a principal or director make it a seamless, natural kind of event and not a contrived, from the top down, imposed activity of the corporation?

A positive view and affirmation of the professional organization is key to being professional. His association with others in the organization, both formal and informal, has helped reinforce in him the values, beliefs, and identity of the profession.

### **Belief in Service to the Public**

James believed that teaching in S&I is a service to the public and a benefit to society. While working in the COB as an assistant administrator for S&I he came to appreciate this service more deeply. One event that changed his philosophy and perspective of the benefit of S&I was his assignment to write the objective statement for S&I. Prior to coming into the COB, his vision of teaching was to help students finish their 4 years of seminary with a well-marked set of scriptures that would be useful on a mission, in college, or in the future as parents. He did not expect them to be scholars, but at least to have a good general knowledge of the scriptures. James admits he was very

text-centered. He wanted students to feel good in class, and to have a fun experience, but he saw S&I as an academic arm of the church. For him, it was not just about “telling stories and helping [students] feel good about who they were.” Now his philosophy has shifted. James is sensing more and more that the “text is a means to an end.” During 1 year, most of his time was consumed chairing the writing of the new objective for S&I. They went through approximately 59 drafts, each draft changing radically, before it was ready.

For James, the process of writing was difficult. He explained that he began by being consumed with reading about how to write an objective, or mission statement. Focusing on reading material that emphasized the business world, he focused on questions like “what is S&I’s unique niche?” “How is it different from Sunday School?” Eventually, he realized that S&I can have the same objective as every other organization, but how they accomplish that objective may be different.

James recalled that going through that process changed what he does as a teacher. He still feels strongly that teachers ought to be true to the intent of the author, but now focuses even more on how to make the lessons apply. He has always felt that the core of teaching was questions. But now, the emphasis is to identify the question that will be most relevant for his students that is answered from the scripture text. James does many of the same things now as a teacher that he did before, however he spends less time with the structure, context, and background of the scriptures—information that he called the “scaffolding,” and more on what students will do with the information after they learn it—the “essence of the lesson.” He realizes now that it is what students do with the

material they learn that really makes the difference in the lives of students.

### **Belief in Self-Regulation**

James believes that S&I is self-regulated, that teachers themselves are the only people qualified to judge the competence of another. One example James shared came after he left Hemet. James thought that he might be in Hemet for a significant period of time, but after 4 years he was transferred again, this time to the Pleasant Hill Institute. There were three men at this assignment. One man was assigned the institutes in the San Francisco area. The other man was responsible for the institute in Pleasant Hills, and James coordinated all of the seminary programs in the area.

James worked 5 years in Pleasant Hills and while there he learned another lesson that blessed his life. At Hemet, he learned that it was about the scriptures, that he did not have to sell them or himself. In Pleasant Hills he learned of his obligation to make sure that he must be responsible in what he teaches. By this he meant that he needed to do his research and have sources for the information he taught. He lamented that he had fallen into the habit of quoting an authority without verifying the source and documenting the statement. He would say something like, “somebody once said,” and then proceed to make his statement. However, he had not found the exact statement, nor who said it, nor did he have any reference or citation for the claim.

One of the men in the Pleasant Hills assignment helped James learn this lesson. James became good friends with this teacher. He said, “we were in the same [congregation], we’d travel in together...we were very close.” James appreciated this teacher as a mentor for him. He recalled, “he really taught me about...researching and

studying, and making sure that you had sources, and that you weren't just quoting off the top of your head.... Which I think can happen to a, especially, a new seminary teacher. They've heard things, so it's kind of this patchwork quilt of doctrine that's in their head." He learned this lesson so well, in fact, that now he tells classes that if there is something he has taught that they are wondering about, they are to "call [him] on it," and ask, "what's your reference? What's your source?" James felt that it was a great blessing to be with this faculty, and particularly with this mentor. Appreciatively James said, "He blessed me immensely."

Even when it comes to the physical construction of a classroom, James believed the teacher is the best qualified to make decisions. During one planning meeting involving the placement of whiteboards in a classroom James was exasperated with a non-teacher who proposed changes solely based on cost.

For a while, I oversaw physical facilities as kind of a liaison. Well, sometimes I sit in meetings and they'd make decisions about classrooms that was based purely on dollars, and it made no sense for a teacher about the white board, or where you'd place something. And I'd say, why would you do that? Well, it would save us \$100 every classroom. Yeah, but it doesn't make any sense!

For James, teachers could make the best judgments regarding the classroom, and not groups from outside the profession.

In addition, James' experience in the COB gave him a greater vision and a broader perspective of what he perceived good teachers in S&I are like. A perspective that he believes could not have been obtained without the actual experience in the COB. It changed him. His philosophy, practice, and view of what teachers should do were all changed because of this assignment. When asked if others could receive that same

perspective without working in the COB he replied, “I don’t know how you would. I never would have not having been downtown.” He then followed up with “Now, should everybody have that? I don’t know. I think...[Administrators are thinking that] maybe we need to bring people in and then send them out. Because you could, at least in some ways you could infuse some of that thought [the perspective of downtown] in people who are elsewhere. I think that’s the direction [Administrators are] leaning.”

He reported that one major attribute of good teachers is their attitude based on habit. He shared what he meant by an attitude based on habit by reading a statement written by columnist Sydney Harris.

What young people often do not discover until it is nearly too late [is] that if you do something often enough you are able to do it, even when you don’t particularly feel like it. We speak of bad habits but rarely of good habits.... Does a pianist always feel like giving a concert on the scheduled night? Does the ball player always feel like striding up to the plate? Does the teacher always feel like giving yet another lesson? These people are properly called professionals. And the chief difference between an amateur and a professional is not so much talent or fame, as it is an attitude based on habit. The amateur participates when he feels like it. The professional has to do it.

James perceived good teachers in S&I as those who were reliable because of their habits. Good teachers are those that “habituate themselves, even if they don’t feel like it. They’re going to prepare a lesson and not say I’m just too tired, I’ll just wing it today.” James felt that S&I can have confidence in the teacher, because of their habits. They can have confidence that a teacher will show up on time, for example. Administrators can trust that if anyone walks into the building unannounced, the teacher assigned there will be dressed appropriately. Making a distinction between a Sunday School teacher and an S&I teacher, James declared that S&I teachers are being paid good money to perform,

even if they do not feel like it. And to do that means that teachers need habits where they discipline themselves to prepare. For example, they discipline themselves to get the room ready. Recalling numerous observations he had performed he said, "I was disappointed across my career as I visited teachers where you could tell the luster...had gone...the room was a mess. You could tell they had an idea, we were going to do the word of wisdom. I'll tell this [blank] story, and then I'll ask this [blank] question. I've got a little overhead or something. But you could tell they hadn't spent more than three minutes getting ready. And it showed." As an administrator, he advised new teachers to get into good habits immediately, especially to get into the good habit of being prepared. He strongly encouraged new teachers that even if it appears that others on the faculty do not prepare, they should discipline themselves and always prepare and be ready. Without demonstrating a condemning attitude, James did feel disappointed in teachers that he felt had not developed the habit to be prepared. Over the years James had many opportunities to be observed, and to observe and judge the work of fellow professionals. These experiences influenced his belief that only fellow professionals are qualified to make judgments of another professional.

### **A Sense of Calling to the Field**

James has developed a strong sense of calling to the field. Referring to his experience at Hemet, James expounded on what made the difference for him there. He laughed a little, with self-deprecating humor, claiming that parents and students had low expectations and did not know any better. He said that their experience had only been with early morning seminary. He was the first released time, or full-time teacher these



students had ever experienced. Similar to the previous assignment, his classes still convened in an LDS chapel. This time however, as compared with his first assignment in California, he had approximately 120 students. In addition, James taught a few institute classes in the evening in the LDS chapel. Another positive aspect of this assignment for James was the fact that he only lived 2 minutes from his work place instead of the hour and a half commute required in his former assignment. Most importantly he had experiences that helped him understand that teaching in S&I is really about the scriptures. With great feeling he exclaimed, “I really tried to pay the price as I prepared every day, to make sure that it was about the scriptures and not about me—not about me telling the stories, but about what do the prophets say. And making it relevant.”

James found success in Hemet as a religious educator. He believed that students liked his classes. In addition, parents liked him because there was “more continuity than obviously there is in an early morning program with teachers coming and going.” He also believed that the ecclesiastical leaders were pleased. All of this contributed to a “great experience” for James. After 4 years in Hemet he was transferred to Pleasant Hills where he taught for 5 years. While there he learned additional lessons of being professional by being committed to improve as a teacher including the element of being responsible in what he teaches.

James received his chance to “put all the pieces together” when he was transferred to Stockton, California. In this assignment he directed the institute for a university and a junior college there. In addition, he coordinated the seminary program for seminaries of four stakes. (A stake is an LDS unit comprised of multiple wards, or

congregations in a geographical area.) He explained that he came to this assignment finally starting to understand the scriptures, his role with scriptures, and the “idea of really studying and understanding the sources and research.” For 10 years he was the only person in this assignment. He had to teach all the institute courses, which required him to go through all the standard curriculum courses for S&I. He could not specialize. It provided an opportunity to be well balanced in all his study and preparation. It was here that he determined to religiously follow a regimen of study to help himself in his teaching. His plan, which he called “working around the room,” consisted of studying the scriptures, studying the talks given by LDS Church leaders, and reading a biography.

Describing this process he said:

I was teaching all of the institute courses, so I was able to go several times through the Old Testament, New Testament, or Church History. Nobody else, I couldn't specialize. I had to be the jack of all trades. I kind of disciplined myself to what I called working around the room, but I'd read a book about church history, and then I'd read a book on the New Testament, and then I'd read a biography, and then I'd read a book on the Book of Mormon. And I tried to do that pretty religiously.

James felt very strongly about teachers knowing the content. He explained that teachers, as professionals, should know their material. “[Teaching is] not just about entertaining, or just telling stories. I'm here to teach them the Old Testament [or any other book of scripture used by the LDS], I ought to know my stuff.” He recalled a conversation with an administrator after the Teaching Emphasis was presented regarding observations of teachers. In his visits, the administrator had noticed the lack of content mastery among teachers. James quoted him saying, “Well I didn't see any talking heads, but I sure saw a lot of empty suits!” In James' words, “they were not standing in front of

the class doing all the talking, but they were not saying anything either. They didn't have any content under their belt."

One reason for James' motivation for studying and preparing came from a reoccurring dream he had. James stated:

I was up in front of a class, and I didn't have anything to say. And I knew that I had like an hour and a half in front of me and they're all sitting there waiting. And I'm thinking, okay, we could do this, or I'm trying to get stuff ready, pulling the screen down, I've got chalk, but nothing, nothing! And pretty soon they're getting up and walking away and I'm thinking, wow, 20 minutes have gone by that we should have been doing something. And it happened often. And, it's maybe overkill, but between the scriptures, the conference reports and the files, I'm at a point in my life that after 32 years, I've got more than enough. I keep studying because I want to learn new things. If I was going to succeed in the classroom, I couldn't carry it. I couldn't sell me...I'm really not the kind that could stand up [and let my charisma carry the class], I just can't. I'm not the kind that can just stand up and wing it.... I have to make sure that I'm really prepared. It has to be the content for me, or I'll die.

James' reoccurring dream and his experience in Stockton solidified his desire to "dig in" and make sure he understood the scriptures. Over the past 25 years he has been working his way through the canonized scriptures for the LDS Church. Starting with *The Book of Mormon*, then *The Doctrine and Covenants*, *The Pearl of Great Price*, and *The New Testament*, he has studied each word. Verse by verse, he looks up words, taking great care to know what each verse is talking about. Currently, he is studying *The Old Testament*. At the time of this interview he had about 200 pages left to finish.

Demonstrating great dedication he exclaimed that he had been working through *The Old Testament* for approximately 13 years now. Laughing about his pace, he hopes to complete the text before he retires. Other teachers may accuse him of overkill, but he feels empowered that he can pick up any book in *The Old Testament*, or any other book

of scripture, and really understand the intent of the author. He understands the structure and the language used in each book. For him, it is about being faithful every day in studying. Sometimes he can only study for five minutes, other days it is forty minutes. Regardless of the time, he keeps himself moving forward. He loves his personal study because of the wonderful insights he receives. He points out that he may have missed these insights if he had only studied simply to prepare a lesson. Studying by preparing a lesson divides the studying time into two categories—what a teacher will teach and how they will teach it. James' study habits have helped him to understand the content and the intent of the author in a way that lesson preparation cannot. He loves the content and has a commanding knowledge of it which allows him to go in multiple directions during a class, according to the needs of the students.

Throughout the interviews with James, he kept coming back to understanding the content as the principle component of teaching. It was inspiring to hear about his study habits, and to see his study files. James humbly insists that his study habits were born out of self-preservation, as he could not be in front of the students unless he understood the content of the scripture block he was teaching.

At this time in the interview, the conversation turned to hiring in S&I. In response to the question of whether he believed that S&I was hiring charismatic individuals with a low level of understanding regarding the content, or hiring teachers with a high level of understanding of content, but low on the charisma end of the scale, meaning they have difficulty relating with the youth, James explained that S&I does not hire individuals based on scholarship. He said, "We don't want a specialist who is just on his way to BYU

or something.” However, James is concerned that many teachers being hired by S&I need a more thorough understanding of the content.

A major life event occurred for James and his family that demonstrated his commitment to the professional organization. This event began a cascade of other significant events to follow. It was spring of 2001, James recalls, when “Black Tuesday” came. This was the day when administrators of S&I called and asked him to move from Stockton, California, to Colorado to be the Area Director for the Northern Plains area. James and his family were “shocked” by the new request. His children now look back and say that it was great, but at the time, it was difficult for the family. James and his wife were from California, and their children had been born and raised there. He loved Stockton. He said, “It was like hand and glove for me. I loved the assignment, I loved the area. I thought I’ll be here for the rest of my career.” James spent eight days wrestling with the decision of whether to accept the assignment or not. He went to the institute building one Sunday afternoon wanting to be alone to ponder and pray about the decision. James called his assistant administrator seeking more guidance with his decision. James wanted to feel that there was a real need for him to be in Colorado, and not just a random moving of teachers around. The administrator reassured James that the decision to move James by the administrators was not a random act, but that he was specifically selected to fill the position in Colorado. It was not until after James accepted the new assignment that he began to feel at peace with his decision.

His move to Colorado only lasted 3 years until he was once again called by assistant administrators to move, this time to be an assistant administrator himself in Salt

Lake City, Utah. James was stunned before with his call to go to Colorado, but this call came as an even greater surprise. There are only six or seven assistant administrators at any one time in S&I. These assignments are rarely changed. It has been the pattern in S&I that once an employee received this assignment, they were expected to stay until they retired. This was his first assignment in Utah. In addition, it was his first opportunity to be in the COB where S&I administrators have their offices.

This assignment was different from anything he had previously done, and James struggled. James knew nothing of COB culture. The corporate nature of the COB was so foreign to him that he struggled finding his identity and sense of purpose. He recalled going to his first administrator meeting. James explained that they shuffled all the geographic assignments around and he was given the area of South America to supervise. James recalled that he had not used his Spanish in over 30 years. He even spoke to the administrator saying, “You know, if you’re getting me just because of my Spanish, it’s long gone.” Despite his protest, they continued to assert that he needed to accept this new assignment.

One of the elements of the culture of the COB that added to his struggle was the meetings. Lamenting his situation, James felt like he was sitting all day in 8-hour meetings. He said:

You’re just sitting in this room and you’re talking about everything from cell phone policies to FTE (Full-Time Equivalence) formulas, to, just, AHHHH!, nothing. In fact, I remember my first interview with the [chief administrator] and I’m sitting outside his office and I’m just reading my scriptures and he walked by and said, ‘Put those away. We don’t use those here.’ And he meant it jokingly, but I realized that you could go days without ever in a meeting talking about scriptures. You’re not preparing lessons. And there were days that I would, at lunch time, just take a walk. I’d go walk up by the capitol, or up in the avenues.

And sometimes just cry. I mean literally just cry. 'Cause [the chief administrator] said, 'you know you're going to be probably 10 years at least [here]. And I'm thinking, what happened to my career? Because I loved all of this [scriptures and files] and it's like I spent all this effort, tooling up and all of a sudden I felt so inadequate. When all of sudden you go back to your desk and there is [sic] piles of stuff in Spanish that, [are] about renting buildings in Argentina. It's not even missionary Spanish language. It was tough. It was tough. The more I got into it, it got a little easier. You know, you habituate yourself to it. So, I thought, okay, I'm in here for nine or 10 years.

At the end of his fifth year as an assistant administrator, another change came to James that he was not looking for. Placement is a lengthy process for administrators. People are discussed, places reviewed, and recommendations are made. Administrators were discussing one particular assignment, and they reviewed many names to fill a position as an institute director of a local university. However, one morning, the chief administrator came to James and said, "I want to make a change, and I want *you* to go!" Reflecting on his response James said:

I always thought I would do cartwheels and stuff when the time came to leave, but there was a reputation [at the new assignment] about how it was unique. It was different. It was complex. And I thought, oh, wow. Plus it was just more administration. And I was starting to at least settle in and feel like I knew what I was doing [at the COB].

Being an administrator and then being placed back out in the field is not the normal practice in S&I. James received numerous calls from other fellow teachers in S&I curious about the change. Some wondered if he had done something wrong, viewing the change as a demotion. Good naturedly, James said that even his wife wondered if he had complained so much about being in administration that they finally "cleaned house" and "got rid of" him. Of course, none of these assumptions were correct. The Administrator simply explained that "for some reason [he] just needs to be there."

This new and current assignment for James is to be the director of a large institute along the Wasatch Front. It is similar to being a principal of a seminary, but on the college level. He believes that it has been a good thing for him to be in administration in the last few assignments, but his love and desire is to be back in the classroom. He stated, "I would love to just be in the classroom again if I could, at some point. Just to teach. The last time I just had a full day of teaching without coordinating or administrative things was 1986." He includes in his placement interview every year now a request to be back in the classroom, to be able to finish his career teaching, and not having any administrative responsibilities. There are a lot of employees in S&I who say they just want to teach, that they do not want any administrative responsibilities, but James means it. One can sense that his desire is genuine. He would rather teach students than anything else.

James was a devoted employee. His personal commitment and sense of calling to the field was demonstrated by his willingness to change, both in terms of his skill, competence and content mastery, but also to change assignments and go wherever S&I has requested.

### **Autonomy**

James was the most adamant of the participants that autonomy is a strong feature of S&I. In his view, changes in the structure of leadership in S&I has fostered greater autonomy within a framework of accountability. James served as an assistant administrator at a time when S&I experienced some dramatic change. In 2001, the Administrator of S&I retired. He had served for over 20 years. According to James, this former administrator had fostered a "family feel" culture in S&I. James recalled that there



were a lot of things done that did not follow policy. It was leadership based on common sense. The administrator had his “finger on everything” in S&I. In addition, the September 11th bombings of the World Trade Center helped to set in motion a host of other changes to S&I. There was a “territorial” ownership among the assistant administrators prior to 2001. The world was divided into regions/areas and the assistant administrators were given assignments to oversee select areas. Assistant administrators focused solely on their individual areas, and did not collaborate with other assistant administrators to direct the work in their individual areas. They traveled approximately 130 days of the year, visiting their specific assignments. While there was a general family feel among S&I, each area was separate and distinct. One area might have rules and regulations that were opposite those from a different area, all based on the attitudes and beliefs of the assistant administrator assigned to that area.

After 2001 S&I completely changed. Assistant administrators were grounded. They could not fly as much to their different assigned areas around the world. Travel was reduced from 130 nights per year, to approximately 30 nights per year. Rather than one man being in control of all aspects of S&I, James described how the new administrator now defers to a “council” style of leadership. Being home more allowed them to be used in a council setting, “having more say” in the leadership of S&I worldwide than ever before. Beginning with administration, this style of leadership is spreading down, throughout S&I.

S&I is becoming more uniform and guided by policy rather than the subjective attitudes of the specific assistant administrator. James commented that this was a result of

both the new administrator, but also because of the growth of S&I throughout the world. Being a global organization, and society becoming more litigious, S&I has had to transform and be more policy driven. In addition, it is allowing S&I to be more trusting of teachers recognizing that teachers are guided by core principles and policies of S&I and are therefore more accountable.

Another change in S&I that has affected the perception of autonomy is the implementation of the TLE. In 2003, S&I instituted the TLE which was perceived by many teachers as a threat to a teacher's autonomy in the classroom. From administration's view, it was a small course correction. However, it was perceived by teachers as a fundamental course change. Teachers became defensive, feeling that S&I administration was not pleased and that the style of teaching was being radically changed. Teachers who had taught for many years perceived this as criticism of all their effort, sacrifice, and hard work. That administrators of S&I did not value the efforts teachers had been making.

While change in S&I has been difficult, it also has been good. James laments the loss of the "family feel." He misses the summer symposium and the yearly husband and wife conventions that were eliminated. However, James feels like there is more of a professional attitude and accountability now in S&I. He explained that prior to 2001 there was a feeling among teachers, administrators, and ecclesiastical leaders that an S&I teacher made great sacrifices to work in S&I, mostly because of the lack of monetary rewards. James sensed that people thought that S&I teachers deserved a "pat on the back" for being willing to work in S&I. This attitude led to a feeling of contentment and

mediocrity. James recalled one teacher struggling with the changing nature of S&I, particularly with the Teaching Emphasis, who complained, “Why can’t the [administration] just be happy we’re doing this?” James realized that this teacher’s complaint was that after many years of teaching without any substantive supervision, he was struggling with now being held accountable.

James described how S&I, which provides competitive salaries and benefits, has shifted toward greater teacher accountability:

I don’t think there’s this feeling anymore of patting you on the back, like, hey, thanks for making the sacrifice. No, [they are] paying S&I teachers a decent salary. You’ve got benefits that even some companies are cutting now. [Administrators] have a right to ask for accountability. Are we getting a bang for the buck? I think older teachers are kind of wincing under that. Because they’ve been used to ‘I can do whatever I want.’ When I was 10 years in Stockton I had the area director come maybe once a year, sit in a class, but I was so autonomous. Now, granted, if I wasn’t showing up for classes, that word would get back. But, you were pretty autonomous and nobody was looking over your shoulder. I think professional growth and all of that...[administrators] have a right to ask. [Administration] is laying out a lot of money for [teachers]. And you really see this internationally.

For James, loyalty and autonomy go hand in hand. He explained that part of professionalism means being loyal to those paying the paycheck. He explained:

I wasn’t hired to run my own program. I think it’s an occupational hazard that you start to, because I think we have, by and large, some autonomy. Even if you’re in a big building, you’re given a lot of autonomy. We don’t mandate that they have to have devotionals here. Some do, some don’t. Some have class officers, some don’t. We give you a lot of latitude. So when they teach, well, let’s say the first half of the Book of Mormon, some lay it out and if I don’t get through the first eight chapters, we’re moving on ‘cause we’re going to get through the first half. Others will come back and pick up and they may not even finish the first half, but it’s kind of, look, it’s about getting them anchored in the Gospel, not about covering pages. So it’s very different approaches and I love that about CES, but it can lend itself unfortunately to feeling put upon if the administration’s asking anything and I think the longer you’re in this and the more you kind of settle in to this work. For me, we had a man here that has since

retired who everything he did was Power Point. He built his entire course, every course around Power Point. His classes were well attended. Some of the plusses to that, he didn't drift. I mean, he knew where he wanted to go and he didn't drift. And it wasn't all teacher centered. He had discussions, he had questions, but it was all there. The nice thing was if a student missed he could hand them a disk and say, here's the lesson, review it, tell me when you have and we'll [talk]. So his make-up was really well done.

One of the challenges was before I got here, they had a tradition here where you kind of picked what you wanted to teach, the longer you were here. So we had some men that in a decade had taught the Book of Mormon and the Gospels. That's what they wanted to teach and that's *all* they taught. Well the handbook is, you rotate through the scripture courses, so we said we were going to do that. Oh, I got some comments made to me that were, that people I thought were my good friends, I mean, they were, but they were pretty blunt about I was killing morale and what was I thinking and this one man in particular, we said, we want you to rotate often. He says, well I can't do that. It takes me 2 or 3 years to get a course ready.

And I thought, you know, part of the reason you're up here is because you worked through the seminary cycle enough times, the assumption was you could teach any scripture course. And you've had enough experience that you could go in and do that. When you're now telling me, well, I won't be ready for 3 more years, 'cause I've got to then get the quotes and put it all together and the bells and whistles of a Power Point? And he got so into how he did it that he wasn't as usable as he could have been here, in fact, balked then when we were asking him to line up with the policy manual.

And so, that's, I think, a challenge for us. And one of the things I think about professionalism, that I don't get so stuck in my way, that I'm willing to, if they point me in a new direction, I don't think it means I have to, as I hear some of the men here, I don't want to paint it like they're rebellious. They're not. They're very, it's a great faculty. It's one of the dangers of getting older in the system, when you're asked to change and do some things that, being willing to lay aside what has worked for you and try new things.

That's what the administration's asking. And not falling prey to thinking that administration, as I hear some say here, they want to turn us all into this same kind of a teacher. Not by a long shot.

James labeled some of these complaining teachers as "great teachers but lousy employees." He explained that there is a difference between being a great teacher and a

great employee. An employee might not get along with faculty, or they might have their own agenda even though in the classroom they function well. Some might balk at policies because they think they know better. James sees that some teachers develop a sense of entitlement. He said that they forget what they were hired for. In his estimation they were hired for their worthiness and loyalty and not primarily for their scholarship.

There is a fine line, according to James, between autonomy and accountability. He believes that S&I gives a great amount of autonomy to the teachers with the expectation that teachers will be loyal and accountable for what they do.

### **Summary of the Perception of Professionalism**

The object of this study was designed to answer the following question: What is the perception of seminary and institute teachers regarding professionalism? This chapter answered this question by identifying experiences in the lives of teachers that demonstrated a perception of professionalism. Special and spatial attention was given to the three life stories extracted from the life history interviews. These stories set the tone for the nuanced, context-based, naturally occurring conversations that allowed for the emergence of Hall's attitudinal attributes as themes demonstrating the reality experienced by S&I teachers. While all three men were unique, eloquent, and active in narrating their lives and experiences in S&I, there emerged in their stories similar themes. These themes align with Hall's attitudinal attributes, and provide evidence that reflect the professionalism of the occupation. Based on the emergence of these themes, this chapter also addressed the second over-arching question, does Hall's model of attitudinal

professionalism fit the reality experienced by S&I professionals? The following section provides a summary of the attitudes of individuals that reflect the professionalism of the occupation.

### **Use of the Professional Organization as a Major Referent**

Hall (1968) suggested that attitudes comprise an important part of the work of a professional. This is displayed in the stories told by the participants. Participants felt a strong connection and loyalty to the organization. Most professions separate the profession itself from the organization. As Freidson (1970) pointed out, in the field of medicine there is a distinction between the profession as an organization, and the profession as an occupation. One can be a doctor and be part of the profession as an individual doctor and one can work for a professional organization. S&I is unique in that the profession is the employer. All three participants were completely loyal to the organization and therefore to the profession. They each shared their firm commitment to do whatever the administration asked of them. They were loyal to the policies, loyal to the objectives, loyal to students, and loyal to ecclesiastical leaders.

Another aspect of this attribute that was discovered in the interview process is the value each placed on their association with their peers, and how the association helped to reinforce the beliefs and identify of the profession. Formal associations also comprised this element of professionalism. Each participant spoke of experiences with formal inservice meetings that helped establish a commitment to the organization. Closely associated with these formal and informal associations is the value each placed on having

a strong mentor train new teachers in the values, beliefs, and practices of the profession. Each participant was shaped, molded, and corrected at times by an individual whom they looked up to as a mentor. These were often unassigned, naturally occurring relationships in the setting in which they were assigned, but also included a principal.

One of the key findings instrumental in relying on the organization as a major referent is the practice of observation and feedback. After reflecting on the data, no other single element seemed to have as much impact on the participants and their growth and development as that of observing other teachers and being observed. Observations can be formative and summative. For each of these participants they were formative types of observation, one associate observing another and providing them feedback. This element also overlaps with Hall's third attribute of self-regulation.

The intentional practices of S&I to improve professional development had mixed results. The new Objective statement and policy manual served as major contributors to the vision and identity of each participant as an S&I teacher. However, little was said about the effectiveness of the PGP and PA programs as far as their effectiveness in reinforcing the beliefs and values of the professional organization. While all the participants agreed with the idea of professional growth and performance appraisals in theory, in practice they all felt that these initiatives fell short of moving the organization and professional forward in meaningful ways.

Overall, all three participants valued their association with S&I and the individual teachers they had worked with. S&I peers, principals, and directors all had an impact on shaping the participants' values, beliefs, and identity regarding S&I. They participated in

formal and informal inservice meetings, as well as personal study to reinforce S&I's culture and identity. Each participant expressed attitudinal support of the organization.

### **Belief in Service to the Public**

The heart of teaching for these participants is the belief in the service to the public. There is a collective view that caring for students is the major emphasis. Each teacher shared experiences demonstrating their desire to help students and to make a difference in their lives. Even changing assignments is viewed as an effort to make a difference in the lives of students. The objective of S&I teachers is to help youth and young adults. To be hired, one has to believe that their efforts are indispensable to their community. Their commitment to professional development, to helping other teachers, and to the organization is embedded in this belief in service to the public.

### **Belief in Self-Regulation**

Each participant demonstrated the characteristic of self-regulation in S&I, and exhibited this attribute by collaborating with other professionals. The participants all had experienced being observed and receiving feedback from fellow professionals, and being able to do the same to others. For them, this may be the strongest factor in promoting growth and improvement in S&I. Principals play a critical role in creating a unified feeling among faculty members and establishing a culture where a faculty can implement observation and feedback practices.

### **A Sense of Calling to the Field**

Within each participant is a sense of commitment, or a sense of calling to the



field. None of these teachers taught in S&I solely for the monetary rewards. In fact, the wage amount is rather low on their priority list. All three individuals describe learning to love and appreciate teaching as a profession on their missions for the LDS Church. That love for teaching has grown stronger with their concern for students. These participants are devoted to students and to the content they teach. They enjoy both working with students and teaching the curriculum. Working in S&I is not just another “job” for these participants. They do not just punch a time-clock, put their time in, and then go home. They put great effort in studying the content and enhancing their teaching skills. Staying late to prepare or perform another assignment is typical for these teachers. They have an inner drive to be the best they can be.

Being willing to change and accept different assignments is a reflection of their commitment to the organization. Each participant has been asked to change their teaching location, and in one instance, to move his family to a completely different state. These changes have not been easy, often requiring a level of sacrifice from each participant. However, each individual faced the difficult challenge with courage, persevered, and ended up having a positive experience. In summary, these teachers demonstrated a willingness to do more than what is expected in S&I.

### **Autonomy**

All three participants felt a sense of autonomy in their experience within S&I. This autonomy is closely linked with loyalty and accountability. Increased autonomy, loyalty, and accountability came in the wake of the changes in the culture of S&I. S&I became more global in its operations. Teachers described a more open dialogue with

administration, allowing for feedback going both up and down the organizational leadership hierarchy. Significant changes in S&I occurred after September 11, 2001. As such, leadership based on the charisma of the individual was replaced with the policy manual and other guidelines to make S&I more unified. The administration structure was affected, allowing for more accountability for individual teachers and seminary programs. Instead of having hundreds of different S&I programs, they were united, led by a council system rather than by the separate leadership of an individual administrator. Again, this allowed for universal policies to be applied across the face of S&I, rather than leadership based on the personal priorities of a single administrator or area director. In addition, the TLE was instituted as well as the new objective statement. Each element required more accountability and loyalty.

### **Unexpected Findings**

In describing qualitative research, Glesne (2006) compared it to a dot-to-dot exercise done with little children where one dot of information leads to another dot of information and the process continues until a pattern emerges. However, in qualitative research there are many ways to connect the dots. This ambiguity becomes clearer near the end. The process of getting to the end is the strength of qualitative research. Part of this process includes discovering unexpected elements of the research. Regardless of the researcher's initial assumptions, qualitative research inevitably leads to unexpected findings that are then used to lead the researcher on to additional information. This research study follows this pattern. There are some unexpected findings emerging in this study that may not have been discovered using other methods. The following section

includes these unexpected findings.

The first unexpected finding involves the element of content mastery. The teachers in this study placed a priority on understanding the content of the scriptures. They had all served 2-year missions for the LDS Church and had gained an admiration for the scriptures. This, however, was not enough. Each teacher had gone through the preservice training program for S&I teachers, however that program focused on teaching methods rather than content mastery, and therefore, was not enough. It is assumed in S&I when one is hired that they know the content of the scriptures already. According to Hall (1968), attitudinal professionalism accepts being competent in the skills and knowledge of the profession as prerequisites. Assumedly, being competent in knowing the scriptures is a prerequisite for applying the attitudinal aspects of professionalism. If a person is not competent in the content, then they cannot be professional.

Another unexpected finding that emerged in this process is the value of experience in professionalism. While all the teachers said many similar things regarding professionalism in S&I, there was a depth and richness to the story that increased with increased years of experience. This is not to say that professionalism in S&I simply arises with experience, that the longer a teacher is in the profession, the greater will be their professionalism. However, there is a distinction between the teacher of 10 years and the teacher with 30 years of experience. In the interviews with David, who has approximately 10 years of teaching experience, there was a sense of wanting to say the “right” things. He was more scripted, measured, and cautious in his descriptions. When questioned about this, he explained that he felt a need to protect the image of S&I. David was

protective of those whom he represented. He explained that he believed he represented S&I in general, but also administration, other teachers, and the local seminary faculty he was assigned to. He may have been concerned how his story would reflect on him as an employee in S&I, but denied that he was trying to please administration. This fits the reality addressed by Goodson (2013), that some participants may employ acceptable archetypes in telling their story. With each participant that had greater experience, there was a greater sense of genuineness in their story. James, with 30 years of experience, demonstrated the most willingness to share, and to engage for longer periods of time. Ironically, he had the most responsibility and lack of time to spend outside of his normal assignment. He was free and confident to share his story in great detail.

What adds to the surprise in this finding is that since 2001, and the changes S&I has implemented, the more experienced teachers have typically had the greatest difficulty in adapting. Hargreaves (2013) pointed out that public school teachers generally hit the peak of their commitment and capability around 8 to 10 years into the job. By this time they have approximately 10,000 hours of practice. According to Gladwell (2008), 10,000 hours of practice generally separates a professional from an amateur. Obviously, this does not mean that simply clocking in the number of hours will make one a professional. It depends on what the hours are like. Based on these unexpected findings, teachers may need more than the 8 to 10 years before they have had enough practice and experience to fully embrace professionalism in S&I.

Closely connected with years of experience is that experiencing different assignments strengthens a teacher's professional attitude. James has experienced nearly

every type of assignment in S&I. These assignments have given him perspective, confidence, and understanding. He had nothing to prove to anyone. The different assignments have given James a vote of trust from administrators. He felt free to share on everything. I felt like a learner, sitting at the feet of a sage in S&I.

Last, graduate degrees were not an element of high priority based on these interviews. It is a requirement that before being hired in S&I each teacher must have a bachelor's degree. A master's degree is strongly encouraged, and assistance is given for teachers who desire to receive one. Each participant in this study had received a master's degree. However, not one had completed a doctoral degree. While the master's degree experience was viewed as a positive, they did not feel they were crucial in promoting individual professionalism.

Life history methodology is an appropriate method for studying professionalism in S&I. Because of the life history approach, the findings, and more particularly the unexpected findings, have emerged from this study. A more experimental model or quantitative approach may have missed some of these personal, more complex elements of an individual's perception and experience.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter provided the overall story of the perception of professionalism in S&I (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). It fulfilled the major purpose of this type of study, which is to explore how full-time S&I teachers personally and subjectively experience and make sense of professionalism (Bruner, 1990; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Plummer, 1995). The

interviews with David, Scott, and James allowed them to present a narrative of career experiences that informed their perception of professionalism in S&I. From the interview data, themes emerged that aligned with Hall's attributes, and therefore reflect the professionalism of the occupation. The experience of these three teachers demonstrates that S&I fits the attitudinal model of professionalism described by Hall.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter IV concluded with a summary of important findings about the perception of professionalism section. These findings include the importance of the attitude of loyalty, having a positive association with peers and administrators that create a sense of unity, the critical role of observation and feedback, professional development initiatives, content mastery, the role of experience and practice in promoting growth, and the benefit of accepting changes to assignments. Chapter V is organized around these important findings. These implications are based on the previous findings section and include other additional findings to strengthen the implications. This study provided a baseline for professionalism in S&I. As a result of this baseline, any of the implications can serve to develop more quantitative research to explore more deeply into various relationships and levels of significance. Additional research will give greater understanding to the different relationships and significance of the elements of professionalism in S&I. Following the implications section, this chapter concludes discussing areas for future study.

#### **Implications**

One of the implications from this study is the importance of the attitude of loyalty to the organization. The attitudinal attributes are all affected to some degree by the attitude of loyalty. It is especially apparent in the use of the professional organization as a major referent, in the belief in service to the public, in self-regulation, in the sense of calling to the field, and in its connection with autonomy. Therefore, it is pertinent for

those who have influence in the different contexts of S&I to provide opportunities to cultivate an attitude of loyalty. New teachers especially need to experience associating with other teachers who share the same attribute of loyalty to the organization.

A second implication from this study is that teachers are more likely to experience the attributes of professionalism if there is a positive association with others in the organization. Association refers to both formal and informal associations. It appears that providing opportunities for teachers to be together to learn in an inservice training setting combined with a social element where teachers can relax and socialize together is helpful in creating and maintaining an attitude of professionalism. The inservice training must be worthwhile and include elements of methodology as well as content. In addition, less experienced teachers need a mentor, someone that already possesses and exemplifies the beliefs, values, and practices of the profession. This might be a principal or a director, or it can be another individual on the faculty.

Furthermore, positive associations with principals and directors help foster professionalism. The principal or director may have the most influence in establishing a culture of professionalism within a particular program. However, creating an environment of professionalism does not come down to one person alone. It is the collective function of how well the community works together as a whole (Hargreaves, 2013). The implication from this assertion is that S&I administrators should be reflective on whom they assign to be the principal or directors. This person may not be the best teacher, but someone who demonstrates the attitudes and beliefs of the organization, and they have the ability to encourage others to do the same. In addition, the same care and



concern should be given regarding others who will be assigned as faculty with a particular principal or director.

A third implication from this study is the critical role that observation and feedback play in being a professional. Regardless of the teacher they observe, just being out seeing other examples of teaching stimulates teacher reflection and improvement and promotes accountability. This raised consciousness of appropriate professional behaviors in S&I will lead to greater levels of professionalism. An implication from this assertion is that those who lead have an obligation to set forth an explicitly clear expectation, and provide training on how to be effective in performing observations and providing feedback.

A fourth implication from this study relates to professional development influences on professionalism in S&I. The data reveals that participants became conscious of the effects, or the lack of effects, that the PGP had on professionalism during the interviews. Participants report that the PGP's require large amounts of time to achieve a small outcome. Thus, there is an implication that teachers and administrators should address the PGP and do more to improve them, or change them all together.

A fifth implication from this study concerns content mastery. This study shows that knowing the content is invaluable in being a professional. In fact, being competent in the subject matter is vital. The implication is that preservice teachers and administrators should do more to increase the knowledge base of a teacher. This may take shape in a variety of ways. For instance, preservice training might include content knowledge classes, hired teachers may be given an additional preparation period during the day to do

more preparation, or faculties may be asked to do more studying of the content S&I teachers will be teaching at inservice meetings.

A sixth implication from this study is that people are more likely to experience professionalism as they spend time practicing proper attitudes, skills, and behaviors. This is not just about putting the proper amount of time in. Hargreaves (2013) suggested that for any profession, it is important to practice, to keep practicing, and to get the opportunity to practice. The data reveals that teachers with greater years of experience demonstrate greater levels of professionalism if they are practicing appropriate S&I skills, techniques, and behaviors. Therefore, an implication is that teachers, especially teachers between one and 10 years of experience, should be involved in learning, observing, and implementing appropriate S&I skills, attitudes, and behaviors. However, one of the motivations for this study is the lack of explicit instructions delineating appropriate skills, attitudes, and behaviors. In a recent search on the organization's website under seminary teacher responsibilities, there is limited help, and it is void under the topic developing professionally as a coordinator. Another related implication is that more needs to be done to teach and train specifically what is meant by being professional and professional development.

A seventh implication from this study is that teachers who are given different assignments and accept assignment changes generally experience a more professional attitude toward the organization. Assignment changes are perceived as a vote of trust, or confidence; that administrators value what the teacher can do. Loyalty to the organization, confidence, and perspective can be strengthened through changing career

assignments. Participants all reported difficulties in changing assignments, and yet felt a greater sense of appreciation for the organization, as well as personal sense of efficacy from the growth that came as a result.

### **Areas for Future Study**

These implications lead to further questions and other areas of research that may provide additional insights into the perception of professionalism. The following questions relate to further research needed for the implication about loyalty to the organization: What is the significance of loyalty as it relates to each of Hall's attitudinal attributes of professionalism? Second, how do S&I teachers cultivate an attitude of loyalty? Third, is there a way to predict whether new teachers will adopt an attitude of loyalty to the organization?

The following questions relate to further research needed for the implication about the influence of association: First, what is the significance of formal inservice meetings on professional development in S&I? What is the difference between a formally assigned mentor for a new teacher, and allowing the new teacher the freedom to choose a mentor? What is the significance of an S&I principal on the professional development of a teacher?

The following questions relate to further research needed for the implication about observation and feedback: What significance does observation and feedback have on the professional development of a teacher? What training is required to be effective in observation and feedback?

The following questions relate to further research needed for the implication about professional development: Does the PGP make a difference in the professional development of an S&I teacher? Is there a difference between teachers who actively pursue the PGP and those who seek their professional development on their own? What factors enhance S&I professional development? What type of follow up is necessary to promote professional development? What impact do graduate degrees have on the professional development of an S&I teacher?

The following questions relate to further research needed for the implications about content mastery: What does it mean to master the content? Would extra preparation time make a difference in teachers' knowledge of the content? What are effective ways that lead to stronger content knowledge for teachers?

The following questions relate to further research needed for the implications about experience: At what career stage does a teacher generally reach a peak of commitment and capability in S&I? How can an administrator more effectively provide experiences for more teachers to grow and develop professionally?

The following questions relate to further research needed for the implications about changing assignments: What difference does it make in the career of a teacher to accept career assignment changes? What factors lead to the selection of an individual for a career assignment change? Is there a negative effect on a teacher that declines a request to change assignments? What types of assignments lead to greater efficacy as a teacher, and loyalty to the organization?

Another area that might prove fruitful for future research is in the area of outcome

assessment. S&I has focused predominantly on input assessment. However, it may be helpful to examine S&I in terms of outcome assessment following more closely the public education emphasis today. Future studies that focus on the measurement of outcomes based on strategies and actions implemented in the pursuit of achieving the objective may help bring about needed change and improvement in the profession. While it is difficult to measure many hoped for outcomes in S&I as it is spiritual in nature, but closer examination in this area may be helpful.

Finally, as this study focused on a homogeneous LDS sample, it would be productive to explore professionalism from within the context of other religious denominations. In addition, because this study only investigated purposefully selected S&I teachers it would be informative to include a more random selection of teachers in future studies to understand a broad perception of professionalism among all S&I teachers. Also, as this sample only included male participants, it would be prudent to include the experience of professionalism from the perception of a female. A comparative analysis of a male and female perception of professionalism may provide additional insights and understanding of professionalism.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix A  
Patton's Reflexive Questions

## Patton's Reflexive Questions

### **Inquirer**

- What led me to this topic?
- What kind of relationship have I developed with research participants and why?
- What kind of relationships do I desire and why?
- What values and experiences shape my perspectives and my research decisions?
- As I analyze and interpret the data, what do I choose to include and what do I choose to omit and why?
- What became the important analytical themes and what is it about who I am that makes these themes important?
- What do I do with what I have found?

### **Participants**

- How do they know what they know?
- How do they perceive me? Why? How do I know?
- How do they respond to what I am writing?

### **Audience**

- How do they make sense of what I give them?
- What perspectives do they bring to my presentations?
- How do they perceive me?
- How do I perceive them?
- How do these perceptions affect what I say and how I say it?

Appendix B  
Letter of Information



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## LETTER OF INFORMATION

### *Professionalism in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion*

**Introduction/ Purpose** Dr. Barry Franklin in the Department of Education at Utah State University and Michael Cottle, a graduate student in the Department of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University are conducting a research study to find out more about teacher professionalism among Seminary and Institutes (S&I) teachers. You have been asked to take part because of your experience and professional conduct. There will be approximately one participant at this site. There will be approximately three total participants in this research.

**Funding** is not necessary for this study.

**Procedures** If you agree to be in this research study, the following will happen to you. Michael will conduct three interviews with you concerning your perception of professionalism in S&I. Each of these interviews should last approximately one hour. These interviews will be conducted at a time of your convenience during the months of July, August, and September. He is most interested in your definition of professionalism and how it developed throughout your career in S&I. The interview will be digitally recorded for eventual transcription. You will be asked questions such as: Prior to being hired, what led you to S&I? Give me a brief rundown of your career—where you have taught and what positions you have held? How did you get into seminary teaching? Briefly articulate your philosophy of teaching. How has your philosophy of teaching changed since being an S&I teacher? How would you describe a professional seminary teacher? What is the ideal professional religious educator in S&I? What do you feel has been the most rewarding experience in S&I? What are significant events that have shaped your development as a professional educator? How have these events affected you? What policies and changes in policy have affected professionalism for you in S&I?

**New Findings** During the course of this research study, you will be informed of any significant new findings (either good or bad), changes in the procedures, risks or benefits resulting from participation in the research, or new alternatives to participation that might cause you to change your mind about continuing in the study. If necessary, your consent to continue participating in this study will be obtained again.

**Risks** Participation in this research study may involve some added risks or discomforts. It is anticipated that this is a study with minimal risk to participants. There is no physical harm possible in this study. There is no economic or social risks that can reasonably be foreseen. Sufficiently reasonable measures are being taken to ensure the confidentiality of the participants at the interview phase of the study. Should that confidentiality be breached in any way, it is not anticipated that there would be any damage to the career of participants or any other damage of a similar nature. The data collected does not ask participants to expose attitudes or behaviors that would jeopardize them in any way. Some researchers have found that encouraging professional reflection can sometimes cause emotional or psychological conflict within a participant that can be classified as a potential risk of this study.



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**Research-Related Injuries** It is not anticipated there will be any injury. In the event of emotional or psychological conflict, there is not treatment or compensation available.

**Benefits** There may or may not be any direct benefit to you from these procedures. The indirect benefit may be an increased awareness and understanding of professionalism and what factors have influenced your professional growth in S&I. Doing life history research may also be therapeutic. As the participant reflects on life experiences it can have a positive mental/emotional benefit. The investigator, however, may learn more about professionalism among religious educators in S&I. There has been very little research done on professionalism in this particular educational cultural context. It is hoped that this understanding will enhance the individual and institutional understanding of professionalism within S&I, and what influences professional growth and development in a teacher throughout their career. Given the lack of research on this concept in this particular cultural field, it is also hoped that this research will be useful to increase understanding of and enhance professional development for other religious education contexts, or encourage further research.

**Explanation & offer to answer questions** Michael Cottle has explained this research study to you and answered your questions. If you have other questions or research-related problems, you may reach Dr. Franklin at (435) 797-1836 or [barry.franklin@usu.edu](mailto:barry.franklin@usu.edu)

**Extra Cost(s)** There is no cost to the participant.

**Voluntary nature of participation and right to withdraw without consequence** Participation in research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without consequence or loss of benefits. You may be withdrawn from this study without your consent by the investigator. In the event of emotional or psychological duress of the participant during the interview, the interview will terminate. If it ever becomes apparent that the participant is uncomfortable with the research process then participation in the research may be terminated.

**Confidentiality** Research records will be kept confidential, consistent with federal and state regulations. Only the investigator and Michael Cottle will have access to the data which will be kept in a locked file cabinet or on a password protected computer in a locked room. To protect your privacy, personal, identifiable information will be removed from study documents and replaced with a study identifier. Identifying information will be stored separately from data and will be kept. Personal, identifiable information will be kept for one year. All digital recordings of interviews will be destroyed after the transcriptions have been made.

**IRB Approval Statement** The Institutional Review Board for the protection of human participants at Utah State University has approved this research study. If you have any questions or concerns about



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your rights or a research-related injury and would like to contact someone other than the research team, you may contact the IRB Administrator at (435) 797-0567 or email [irb@usu.edu](mailto:irb@usu.edu) to obtain information or to offer input.

**Investigator Statement** "I certify that the research study has been explained to the individual, by me or my research staff, and that the individual understands the nature and purpose, the possible risks and benefits associated with taking part in this research study. Any questions that have been raised have been answered."

**Signature of Researcher(s)**

Barry Franklin  
Principal Investigator  
(435) 797-1836 or [barry.franklin@usu.edu](mailto:barry.franklin@usu.edu).

Michael Cottle  
Student Researcher  
(435) 654-0648 or [cottleml@ldschurch.org](mailto:cottleml@ldschurch.org)

Appendix C

Life History Interview Questions



### Life History Interview Questions

Adapted from Michael Freeman (1994) survey questions of professionalism. Not all questions were asked. These were used only when needed to prompt the participant.

#### **First interview—General view of Professionalism and life history of subject**

1. Prior to being hired, what led you to S&I?
2. Give me a brief rundown of your career, where you have taught and what positions you have held.
3. How did you get into seminary teaching?
4. Briefly articulate your philosophy of teaching.
5. How has your philosophy of teaching changed since being an S&I teacher?
6. How would you describe a professional seminary teacher? What would they look like? (not describing physical characteristics but attitudes, actions, behaviors that model a professional S&I teacher.)
7. What is the ideal professional religious educator in S&I?
8. What do you feel has been the most rewarding experience in S&I?
9. What are significant events that have shaped your development as a professional educator? How have these events affected you? (Both events that happened before you were in S&I and after you were hired.)
10. What policies and changes in policy have affected professionalism for you in S&I? (Remind them they are safe from anyone finding out about their identity).
11. Explain your use of the Professional Growth Plan and related interviews. How has that affected your professional development?

12. In your opinion, is professional development in S&I self-directed, or externally driven? Why or why not? How has that impacted professionalism for you?
13. In your estimation, do we need competent and managed professionals to work in S&I, or do we need transformative teaching professionals dedicated to religious education?

**Second Interview—thematic elements**

1. Describe your education experience; degrees obtained, where, attitudes and perceptions of seeking graduate levels of education. How does this impact professionalism?
2. What affect does your first (perhaps 2nd) assignment in S&I have on you and your attitudes and perceptions of professionalism?
3. How often do you read professional journals such as: BYU Studies, Religious Educator, and Teacher Education Quarterly? What journals do you read? How does this contribute to your professionalism? How has this changed over your career?
4. How do you feel your profession contributes to society: for the individual, for society, and for the world? Please explain.
5. How would you describe your capability or skill set or autonomy to make your own decisions, or autonomy, in regards to what you do in your work?
6. Describe your participation in inservice training meetings. Describe your attitude towards them. How frequently do you attend? How do they help you develop professionally?

7. How would you describe your professional relationship with other teachers in S&I? Are they a resource for you? Are you a resource for them? How do you feel your professional relationship has helped you and others accomplish the objective of S&I?
8. Since you were hired, what experiences have you had that gives you a sense of being “called” to this profession?
9. Describe your level of dedication to your profession throughout your career in S&I? What helps or hinders dedication to S&I?
10. Describe your institution granted freedom to make your own decisions and judgments in regards to your profession.
11. Explain how you feel about the professional organization of S&I. How supportive of this professional organization do you feel you are?

**Third Interview—thematic elements**

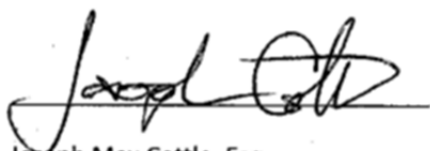
1. Do you feel that S&I is open and collaborative and that everyone has an understanding of what others are doing? What has helped to create this attitude? Or what limits this attitude from forming? How has it changed? What has prompted this change?
2. Do you believe S&I has a high level of expectation for teachers? What fosters this high level of expectation? Or what limits it?
3. What opportunities does S&I provide to help you grow professionally?
4. How does one judge the competence of another in S&I? What criteria or standards does S&I use to evaluate the competence of teachers?

5. How do S&I teachers learn or become aware of these standards?
6. If your compensations were reduced would you continue in this organization?  
Why or why not? What impact does your monetary compensation have on your attitude and willingness to do your work?
7. How do you get evaluated in S&I? What effect does this have on your work?
8. What opportunities are provided for you to evaluate and give feedback to others?
9. Are you your own boss? Please explain.
10. What has helped you develop a firm belief in the value of your work? What has happened that impacts how you feel about your work?
11. How does parenthood and family life influence your professionalism?

Appendix D  
External Audit Letter

## External Audit

I hereby attest that this study meets the validity requirements for qualitative inquiry. I have performed an external audit examining the audit trail which consists of raw data, analyzed data, records of study processes, and theoretical framework. In my opinion, the researcher has followed proscribed and recognized qualitative methodology for establishing trustworthiness.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Max Cottle", written over a horizontal line.

Joseph Max Cottle, Esq.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### MICHAEL L. COTTLE

#### Academic Degrees

Ed.D., Utah State University, 2014, Curriculum and Instruction–Education Leadership

M.Ed., Brigham Young University, 2001, Educational Leadership

B.S., Brigham Young University, 1996, History

#### Professional Experience

2013-Present S&I Coordinator, Washington D.C. Metro Area  
 2009-2013 Instructional Designer, S&I Curriculum Dept., COB Salt Lake City  
 2006-2009 Principal, Wasatch High LDS Seminary  
 2004-2006 Principal, Park City High LDS Seminary  
 2002-2004 Instructor, Wasatch High LDS Seminary  
 1996-2002 Instructor, South Summit High LDS Seminary

#### Related Experience

2012 Presenter, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Research Forum

2011-2013 Committee Member, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, Inoculation-Answering difficult questions

2009-2011 Committee Member, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, Professional Development

2009 Field-Writer, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Curriculum Services

2004 Presenter, CES Salt Valley East Area Summer In-service. *Teaching Emphasis*