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Designing and Developing a Program  
to Promote the BYU Aims

Kimberly D. N. Christensen

A selected project submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science

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Department of Instructional Psychology & Technology  
Brigham Young University  
April 2012

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## ABSTRACT

### Designing and Developing a Program to Promote the BYU Aims

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Master of Science

This paper details the design and development of a self-directed character education program based on the Aims of a BYU Education. Specifically, the program was intended to meet the following objectives: (a) increase student awareness of the BYU Aims, (b) provide opportunities for students to recognize and understand principles of good character, (c) engage students in enriching application of character values, and (d) lay the foundation for lifelong learning, service, and good character. The design process followed a modified systematic approach and resulted with a pilot trial of the BYU Aims Program. The selection of design model, preliminary analyses, and formative evaluation appear to have particularly contributed to the success of the pilot. While participant feedback did suggest that involvement in the pilot helped participants meet the intended objectives, the program suffered a high participant attrition rate over the course of pilot. Participant feedback also suggested that modifications to program delivery, interface, and duration and requirements of challenge activities would be necessary to improve or maintain participant engagement in future iterations of the program.

Keywords: character education, college students, self-directed learning

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Many thanks to Michael Johnson for supervising and supporting my work with the BYU Aims Program and many other projects. He inspired this project and provided innumerable opportunities for me to apply my burgeoning design skills. His example, direction, and experience have improved my abilities and helped me come to a better understanding of the purpose of education.

My gratitude also extends to the faculty and staff in the Department of Instructional Psychology & Technology and the Center for Teaching & Learning. Their examples, resources, and instruction have provided the foundation of my academic and professional development.

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## Introduction

Brigham Young University (BYU) is committed to “assist[ing] individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life” (BYU, 1981, para. 1). To support this mission, BYU has identified that a BYU education should be (a) spiritually strengthening, (b) intellectually enlarging, and (c) character building, culminating in (d) lifelong learning and service (BYU, 2007). While intellectual and spiritual development is frequently emphasized in curriculum and discussion, character development is not given the same focus. The *BYU Aims Program* is intended to promote purposeful character building experiences through self-directed challenge activities comprised of a foundational reading or experience and subsequent goal setting. A pilot test of the *BYU Aims Program*, comprised of four series of challenge activities designed to promote the understanding and application of character traits, was tested with undergraduate and graduate students at BYU and focused on establishing the viability of the program.

This document outlines the design and development of the *BYU Aims Program* pilot. It reviews the origin of the project, narrates the design process, and documents the design of the *BYU Aims Program*. The author then reviews and critiques the implementation and evaluation of the pilot program, recommending possible modifications and future directions for the program. This project and pilot suggest that while the prospect of an Aims-based character development program is promising, substantial considerations must be made in order to engage students and transform the institutional attitude toward the role of character development at BYU.

## Project Origination

This project was commissioned by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at BYU. The purpose of the *BYU Aims Program* is to improve student understanding of the *Aims of a*



*BYU Education* and increase the likelihood that the included character traits and behaviors will become integral parts of students' current and future lives. Michael Johnson, Instructional Designer at the CTL, conceptualized the idea for a student program based on the *BYU Aims*. Michael functioned in the capacity of mentor and supervisor. I served as the designer and developer of the *BYU Aims Program* and the sole manager of its pilot test.

Research in preparation for the project began in February 2011. Design and development of the pilot program occurred between June and August 2011. The pilot ran from September to December 2011.

### **Rationale**

According to its mission statement, BYU seeks “to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life” (BYU, 1981, para. 1). As perfection is not merely academic, this necessitates a broader focus on what students should learn during their time at BYU. As a broader focus would include learning activities that extend beyond academics, this presents the challenge of ensuring that curriculum does not sacrifice academic and intellectual rigor for the sake of moral, physical and spiritual development. The *Aims of a BYU Education* specifically identifies the expected outcomes of a BYU education, namely that the BYU experience should be spiritually strengthening, intellectually enlarging, character building, and ultimately fostering habits of lifelong learning and service (BYU, 2007).

While BYU encourages colleges, departments, and programs to provide experiences that address these outcomes, the degree to which outcomes are met beyond the *intellectually enlarging* aim is unclear. My examination of the program-level outcomes for all graduate and undergraduate programs at BYU, at the inception of the project, demonstrated that approximately half of all programs did not address any BYU Aim other than *intellectually enlarging*. Less than

one quarter of programs addressed *spiritual strengthening* in their outcomes. *Character building* was referenced by nearly half of all programs; however, this was almost exclusively in reference to professional and ethical behavior and practice. Over half of all programs addressed *lifelong learning and service*, but largely in the context of continued professional development beyond graduation. These data suggest that most academic programs do not provide a consistent curricular structure or breadth of experience addressing spirituality, character, and lifelong learning and service. Given the stringent requirements of academic accreditation and the large amount of content that programs must cover within their curriculum, it is not entirely reasonable to expect that individual departments and programs provide the resources for total student development. While a range of organizations within the BYU campus community provide resources for service opportunities and some personal development, BYU has, with the exception of mandatory ecclesiastical endorsements, no framework for addressing, guiding, and gauging the spiritual and character development of its students.

Higher education has been historically perceived as a public good, an investment in citizens and their communities (Rivers, 2004). Over the past several decades, however, public and private perceptions have largely viewed higher education as a private benefit. Chickering (2010) identifies decreased state funding in higher education as an indicator of this paradigm shift. Concern over economic stability and employability shifted institutions' focus to short-term goals (i.e., getting a job), perpetuating student and public perceptions that higher education is primarily economically driven and largely self-serving (Chickering, 2010).

The BYU Mission and Aims state that the BYU experience, while preparing for future employment, is much more than a career preparation program. BYU promotes “an education that helps students integrate all parts of their university experience into a fundamentally sacred

way of life—their faith and reasoning, their knowledge and conduct, their public lives and private convictions” (BYU, 2007, para. 31). In order to combat inaccurate perceptions about education and increase the likelihood that students will develop this “way of life,” students require additional opportunities to realize the characteristics and behaviors of a truly educated person and practice those skills and traits that will help them to become better students, employees, citizens and parents.

### **Circumstance and Constraint**

The CTL’s expectation for this project was the design of a character development program based on the *BYU Aims* that could be piloted with current BYU students. Additionally, the CTL specified that the program needed to be voluntary. The CTL also set resource constraints, including a personnel budget of approximately \$5,000, based on estimated person hours required to complete the project. Materials expenses were expected to total less than \$1,200, including production materials and small incentive prizes for pilot participants.

### **Analyses**

Prior to beginning the project, I completed two analyses to better understand the nature and needs of current BYU students: (a) a target population analysis and (b) a current training and resource analysis. These analyses particularly focused on students’ characteristics and access to resources that would promote or hinder personal and character development. Additionally, preparatory analyses included the previously mentioned study of learning outcomes for all undergraduate and graduate programs, minors, and certificates.

**Target population.** A target population analysis was completed for the project’s target audience, primarily BYU students (Appendix A). A target population analysis is intended to identify the gaps that exist between the target learner’s current knowledge and skills and the

level of knowledge and skill that is desired (Romiszowski, 1981). Additionally, the target population analysis orients the designer to the target learner's characteristics, interests, and environments (Dick & Carey, 1990). For the purposes of this project, this analysis needed to identify not only who BYU students are and what they are interested in, but also what aspects of their personalities, resources, and daily lives would support or challenge their engagement in a character development program. I relied on my own experience as a BYU student and former staff member as a primary source of information. Additionally, to better understand BYU students' current understanding of the *BYU Aims*, I spoke with several current students in informal conversations. Focus groups, interviews, or surveys may have also served as possible resources for the target population analysis. These methods were not used for the analysis primarily due to time and resource constraints placed on the project.

***Demographics.*** This demographic is predominantly Caucasian and Latter-day Saint young adults. However, as the student body of BYU includes racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, program activities and materials must avoid being exclusive to the majority groups and emphasize the relevance of the *BYU Aims* and their values to a variety of beliefs, practices, and cultures.

***Resources.*** As college students, prospective program participants have limited resources available to invest in the program. Consequently, program learning materials and activities needed to be sensitive to these limitations and avoid being an undue burden on time or money.

***Preferences and tastes.*** The prevalence of instant and easy access to information and resources was expected to influence the student's desire for activities or materials that are convenient, engaging, and accessible. To address these preferences, the program design needed to be engaging and retain engagement over time without losing its efficacy. The program's

visual design and online functionality were also considered as elements that could increase student interest and promote student progress within the program.

***Perceived value.*** Some students already feel that their educational needs are met through academic work. Students may also lack an understanding of the comprehensive nature of a BYU education, as espoused by the *BYU Aims*. As the program is optional, it is unlikely to engage students with absolutely no interest. The program would need to not only engage highly motivated students but help all students catch a larger vision of the BYU experience, regardless of their degree of individual interest in personal or character development. Additionally, the program would need to help students develop a broader understanding of their responsibilities beyond their coursework.

***Idea and value formation.*** In order for positive behavior change to be lasting, the students will require some time engaged in practical application before they internalize the values identified within the program. Due to the natural variance in the time and intensity of work required for each individual to reach this internalization, students should be able to progress through or return to activities according to their personal needs. This was considered in determining the overall length of each challenge.

***Responsibility taking.*** Successful participants will be motivated by a personal desire to make the most of their BYU experience and will likely find monitoring and reporting their progress and completing activities tremendously rewarding. As the program will be optional, it is unlikely to attract or retain students who are not highly self-motivated.

***Current training and resource analysis.*** A current training and resource analysis was conducted to examine BYU's existing programs and resources intended to address the non-academic *Aims* (Appendix B). Additionally, a current training and resource analysis seeks to

identify existing products or programs that satisfy (or intended to satisfy) the proposed need, as well as the resources required to support the product being designed (Smith & Ragan, 2005). For this analysis, I focused on BYU's in-house resources that either addressed character development or could possibly serve as sources of support for a new program. As with the target population analysis, I relied on my own extensive experience within BYU to provide an initial survey of resources. Michael Johnson also directed me to additional possible resources. Existing resources for character development information or opportunities included the BYU Student Service Association (BYUSA), the Center for Service and Learning, the Honors Program, and the newly launched Student Wellness Program. While each of these programs provides opportunities for character building in both events and resources, no program provides the content or framework required to scaffold student's purposeful personal and character development. The *BYU Aims Program*, therefore, would be well advised to work with these programs and utilize service opportunities, such as those available through BYUSA or the Center for Service and Learning, in challenge activities. The Honors Program, with its appended service emphasis, could be a viable resource for possible test runs of the *Aims Program*. Programs such as BYUSA and Student Wellness are well positioned to support or promote the *BYU Aims Program* in the case of a larger release.

Additionally, the resource analysis identified the potential need for the *BYU Aims Program* to integrate with BYU's Central Authentication System. This would provide both convenience and security to users in managing their progress within the program. This would also provide possible options for data management.

### **Design Goals**

The *BYU Aims Program* was initially developed to meet the following objectives:

- Increase student awareness of the *Aims of a BYU Education* (BYU, 2007a).
- Provide students with opportunities to recognize and understand principles of good character.
- Engage students in enriching application of character values.
- Lay the foundation for continued character development and lifelong commitment to service, learning, and good character.

The measurement of these objectives was based on self-report items in participant surveys. Overall, participant responses to these surveys suggested that the program and its challenges were largely successful in achieving these outcomes. However, it is important to note the high attrition rate over the course of the pilot, with 84% of participants leaving the program over the two phases of the pilot (with only eight of the original 50 participants following the program to completion). Consequently, the survey responses are limited and interpretation of these results is only representative of the reduced sample, rather than the target population overall.

**Increase awareness of the BYU Aims.** Of the eight participants that completed the pilot, six reported that participation in the challenge activities increased their awareness of the *BYU Aims*. Those who did not report an increase in their understanding of the *BYU Aims* also reported being unable to complete the challenge activities due to forgetting which challenges they selected to complete.

**Provide opportunities to recognize principles of good character.** While participant survey responses indicated an increase in their understanding of character, they also indicated that challenges were more effective in helping them recognize character in practice, rather than what character is. While the difference between understanding character and recognizing it in

practice may seem trivial, it may suggest that the program did not fully achieve its goal of helping participants better understand principles of good character.

**Engage students in enriching application of character values.** Most pilot participants reported that their participation in the challenge activities helped them to apply character traits in their daily lives. Focus group discussion supported this result and further indicated that participants felt that character values translated across *Aims* rather than being limited just to *character building* challenge activities. This suggests that the program was at least somewhat successful in its focus on character.

**Lay the foundation for lifelong service, learning, and good character.** All participants who completed the pilot reported that their participation increased both their commitment to lifelong learning and service and their desire to continue in character development in the future. While this result may be amplified within the reduced final sample and not generalizable to a large population, participants increased commitment and desire may be the result of their participation and not merely the individual traits or circumstances that kept them in the pilot.

### **Design Process**

The design was developed and carried out using primarily a systematic model. However, as the objective was to develop a preliminary program to pilot with current students, this is a portion of a larger iterative design process for a possible future, larger-scale program.

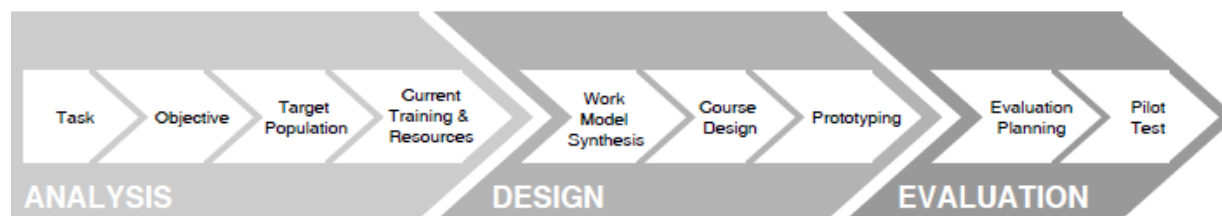
#### **A Systematic Approach**

At the inception of this project, I was primarily familiar with two design process models: (a) systematic, such as an ADDIE approach, and (b) layered, where elements of the design are constructed in independent layers (Gibbons, 2003; Gibbons, Botturi, Boot, & Nelson, 2008). A



systematic approach was selected for the design and development of this project. While other approaches, such as the layered model, offer a greater degree of flexibility in both design and development, I selected a systematic approach in order to better understand the advantages and disadvantages inherent in a systematic model (Gibbons, 2003; Schiffman, 1986). I also found a systematic model to be appropriate for developing a more comprehensive understanding of the many considerations that should be made in the design process. My primary reason for not adopting a layered design model was that I did not feel this approach provided the procedural structure I felt I needed as a novice designer. Additionally, I did not feel my understanding of each layer of the model was sufficient to effectively guide my design.

This project's particular design model and process was based on a systematic instructional design model for pilot development and testing (Figure 1). Typically, systematic models include five phases: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (van Merriënboer, 1997). All five phases were included in the approach I used, with development and implementation phases being integrated with the design and evaluation phases respectively.



*Figure 1.* General model used to plan the design project, based on a systematic approach.

The preliminary analysis phase included task and objective analyses, as well as the target population and resource analyses discussed previously. The design phase included work model synthesis (i.e., designing individual instructional events), course design (i.e., structuring the order of events and the program overall), and prototyping (i.e. developing materials for the pilot). The

third phase included evaluation planning and conducting the pilot test, which subsumed implementation and both formative and summative evaluations.

### **Narrative**

The design and development schedule originally proposed phases of research, program and curriculum development, program review and preparation for launch, and two phases of both pilot testing and evaluation (Appendix C). The design process, as enacted in this project, matched the proposed schedule. However, elements of the design process diverted from the proposed design model.

**Research.** Prior to completing task or objective analyses, I needed to develop a better understanding of character, character education, and potential approaches to character education. Specifically, I wanted to answer three questions:

- what makes a character education program effective?
- what is the nature and approach of character education programs at other colleges and universities?
- what character traits ought to be included in the *BYU Aims Program*?

To answer these questions, I engaged in three phases of preliminary research.

***Effective character education.*** I first searched both EBSCO databases and Google Scholar using the Boolean phrase: “character education” AND “higher education” OR college OR university. Articles that did not address at least one of my three research questions were removed from the literature pool. I then increased the scope of my study to include commonly cited authors or source articles.

This review identified four key requirements of effective character education programs. First, students must be engaged in learning activities that foster the direct application of character

values (Boston, Pearson, & Halperin, 2005; Dalton & Crosby, 2010; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006; Keefer, 2006; Lickona, 1993; Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2003; Johnson, Osguthorpe, & Williams, 2010). Second, students need to critically reflect, both on these learning experiences and on what they learn about character traits (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Boston, Pearson, & Halperin, 2005; Bryan & Babelay, 2009; Gehrke, 2008; Johnson, Osguthorpe, & Williams, 2010). Third, students should perceive that they are making valuable contributions to their community and their individual lives (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2006; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006; Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2003). Finally, students need to engage in discussion with their peers about character and their character building experiences (Johnson, Osguthorpe, & Williams, 2010; Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2003).

***Current character education programs.*** To find current character education programs at other institutions, I first searched the Templeton Foundation, a common funding source for character education programs. I specifically reviewed previous or current research projects and grant awards involving character and institutions of higher education. I then used Google to search for other character programs, using terms such as *character education*, *character program*, *college*, and *university*.

The results of these searches included programs at United States Military Academy, College of the Ozark's Keeter Center, Carthage College, Georgia Military College, Arkansas State University, and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics' *Champions of Character* program. The structure and implementation of these programs varied. For many, participation was compulsory, either for new students or for those participating in an athletics program (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics; Offstein & Dufresne, 2007; The Keeter Center). All programs included a reflection component, either written or verbal

(Carthage College; Georgia Military College; Khramstova, 2008; National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics; Offstein & Dufresne, 2007; The Keeter Center). Some programs also included a community service component (Carthage College; The Keeter Center). While the rigor of each program varied and the implementation ranged from a series of lessons to multi-course programs, these examples reinforced the importance of critical reflection and application in character education.

**Character traits.** Finally, I needed to identify which character traits should be considered for inclusion in the program. Among character education scholars, the support for inclusion of various character traits varies widely (Davis, 2003; Khramstova, 2008). The most commonly accepted collection of character traits was presented by Peterson and Seligman (2004), who identified six “core virtues”—wisdom/knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence—and 24 specific “character strengths” of which the larger virtues were comprised (Khramstova, 2008; Park & Peterson, 2009; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). Because I wanted the program to closely align with the *Aims*, I also considered the character traits provided within the character building aim: “integrity, reverence, modesty, self-control, courage, compassion, [and] industry” (BYU, 2007, para. 21). As these traits appeared to align with Peterson and Seligman’s (2004) character virtues and strengths, I adopted the BYU definition and its seven traits as the foundation for the program.

**Program development.** The proposed nature of the *BYU Aims Program* itself proved to be a challenge for the preliminary analyses. While a task analysis (and the subsequent objective analysis) can help identify the range of skills to be taught, I found it difficult to express the objectives of the *Aims Program* overall in terms of a skill or task. Additionally, based on my research, I had already gained a clear idea of the program’s general structure from my research.

Because the program would be voluntary and would need to engage a diverse set of interests and levels of understanding, I wanted participants to be able to tailor the program requirements and activities so they were personally meaningful. One possible option was for participants to select personally relevant goals from a rotating series of challenge activities based on each of the *BYU Aims*. This would enable the participant to not only select the general activity, but to tailor the activity to their interests and needs. I therefore completed the target population analysis (TPA) and current training and resources analysis (CTRA) and omitted the task or objective analysis. My rationale being that understanding the target population and context for the program were the most critical prior to designing the program overall. I also anticipated that the designing of challenge activities, which would span would require further analysis specific to each activity's objective and tasks.

Following the completion of both the TPA and CTRA—and having already decided on the overall structure of the program—I began my design by considering how challenge activities could address specific *Aims* while simultaneously promoting character development. I created a matrix to assist me in mapping out and developing challenge activities, drawing each of the selected character traits across each of the *BYU Aims*' domains (Figure 2).

	Spiritually Strengthening	Intellectually Enlarging	Character Building	Lifelong Learning & Service
Integrity				
Reverence & Respect				
Modesty				
Self-control				
Courage				
Compassion				
Industry				

Figure 2. Challenge activity development matrix including character traits and BYU Aims.

This matrix not only provided a framework for developing ideas for challenges, but also helped me to create a variety of possible challenge activities for each trait. It also helped me to avoid creating challenges that were too similar or repetitive.

*Designing challenge activities.* In order to develop a sufficient pool of potential challenge activities, I planned to create three challenge activities for each trait-Aim pairing (e.g., *integrity* and *spiritually strengthening*, *courage* and *lifelong learning and service*). The development of challenges began with reviewing any research notes pertaining to that specific character trait. Next, I would brainstorm possible tasks or activities that would promote that trait. These ideas were then reviewed, eliminating any that did not appropriately address the accompanying Aim.

*Learning objectives and task analysis.* Once I had a sufficient pool of possible challenges for that trait-Aim, I worked on fleshing out each challenge. First, I would write the general learning objective for each challenge, specifying the behavior and product. In order to better understand what the participant would be required to do, I completed an analysis of the skill or task involved in the activity. This included breaking down the learning objective into specific tasks and sub-tasks. I then estimated the minimum time required to complete each task or sub-task. In order to ensure that challenges did not place an undue time burden on participants, challenges whose tasks totaled over six hours were reviewed and refined, limiting the scope of the activity.

*Gathering supporting materials.* I then began gathering the supporting materials for the challenge. Most challenges included an existing foundational reading, perhaps a relevant article or devotional address. This process included searching the BYU Speeches and Devotionals archive, as well as the Gospel Library on lds.org. Google searches were also used to find

relevant op-ed or news articles. Ultimately, readings were selected for their relevance to the specific trait-Aim and the degree to which they offered opportunities for critical reflection. BYU Independent Study also offers an array of free, personal enrichment courses and, in order to expose students to these opportunities and broaden the range of challenge activities, I drew upon Independent Study's existing instructional materials for the foundation of some challenges.

*Writing challenge instructions.* Finally, I would write the instructions for the challenge. I found the results of the TPA and CTRA to be particularly useful at this stage. The resources included in the CTRA helped me to develop ideas for meaningful activities, incorporate existing materials, and find sources for relevant readings. The results of the TPA, which emphasized the busy schedules of and limited resources available to prospective participants, frequently required me to limit the requirements of each challenge. This also necessitated that activities or readings included in challenges were carefully evaluated by the designer and felt to maximize the participant's experience. While there was no standard measure of challenge activity or reading quality, I did "walk through" all challenge activities and complete all foundational readings. I specifically looked for any elements that appeared unclear or did not contribute to meeting the learning objective. Additionally, I tried to carefully consider how a typical student would understand and complete each challenge.

*Designing overall program structure.* Once I had developed at least the minimum three challenges per *trait-Aim*, I began to consider the specific structure for the program pilot. While I could have only included two *Aims* in the pilot, one for each six-week period, I wanted to gather feedback on challenges associated with each of the *Aims*. Additionally, I only had one semester available to complete the pilot. In order to maximize the time I had to test the program, I decided that the pilot would include two six-week phases, wherein participants would select and

complete two challenge activities per phase. This would allow participants to complete four challenges, each associated with one of the *Aims*, over the course of the semester.

To capitalize on students' fresh starts with a new semester, the *intellectually enlarging* and *character building Aims* were selected for the first phase of the pilot. I also planned to select challenge activities for this phase that would be most relevant at the start of a semester, such as setting performance goals in a class or forming a study group. Challenge activities were selected from the design matrix across multiple character traits, creating a pool of challenge options that included a variety of character traits. Four challenge options were selected per *Aim*, in order to give participants a range of experiences to choose from, but not so many as to make their decision unduly difficult.

***Planning the pilot.*** The next task was to develop the overall pilot plan, including evaluations. Because I wanted to gather feedback on challenges across all *Aims* and gather this feedback as close to challenge completion as possible, the plan included two evaluation periods. Following the first phase of challenges, participants would be evaluated regarding their experience with their challenges, as well as their experience with the program overall. Another evaluation would follow the second phase of challenges and would solicit feedback regarding the challenges, experience with the second phase, and overall experience with the program. In order to gain additional insight into participant experience with the challenges and program, I also included two focus groups in the evaluation plan. Focus groups would allow me to engage participants in more in-depth discussion of their experiences than I would be likely to obtain through an additional survey. I then developed the surveys that would be used for the evaluations, as well as program registration. These were submitted for IRB approval, along with informed consent and focus group recording release forms. Following receipt of IRB approval, I



developed the electronic versions of the surveys using Google Docs form surveys. I selected Google Docs as a platform for the surveys for both its ease of access and the ability to embed the surveys directly into an email or a website.

***Developing the pilot website.*** As resources allotted to this project did not allow for the development of a full website, I developed a Google site to serve as the primary face and location of the *BYU Aims Program* pilot<sup>1</sup>. I selected a Google platform for the pilot for three reasons: (a) it was free, (b) it would be accessible to all participants, and (c) I could easily embed surveys or instructional materials. While the lack of a fully functional site meant that pilot participants would not be afforded some of the ideal features of the *BYU Aims Program* (i.e., the opportunity to track their progress online), the Google site would meet the needs and purposes of the pilot. Primarily, the pilot site would serve as a source of information on the program, allow challenge registration and selection, and host supplementary materials for the challenges.

**Preparation for pilot launch.** Preparing for the pilot included two major activities: participant recruitment and quality checks for both surveys and the *BYU Aims Program* pilot site. The client originally proposed to include only student employees at the CTL. However, to minimize any effects of participation from those who were already committed to CTL projects, the prospective participant pool was expanded to include students across campus. Most participants were recruited through a Facebook event for the *BYU Aims Program* pilot, where CTL employees and their friends were encouraged to invite as many of their BYU friends as they could. Unsurprisingly, not everyone who was invited to participate in the pilot did, with 60% of those who originally indicated interest signing up for the first set of challenges. Facebook did,

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://sites.google.com/site/byuaimsprogram/pilot/>.

however, offer us more exposure and a higher degree of attention than I have previously gained through recruiting via mass emails. Thirty participants eventually registered for the first phase of the pilot.

Quality checks consisted of me and two other CTL student employees completing the electronic surveys and checking all links on the pilot site. Given the constrained timeframe between program development and the launch of the pilot and the lack of personnel resources allotted to the project, this appeared to be adequate quality control. The results of these checks identified minimal issues with the site (i.e., a few broken hyperlinks) that were easily resolved.

### **Lessons Learned**

While this design project was intended to develop a pilot program based on the *BYU Aims*, the process of designing and developing the program yielded a variety of insights about both the nature of this program and the design process itself.

**Limitations of an ISD approach.** My experience following a systematic model for the *BYU Aims Program* suggests that one model does not fit all products. The endurance of a systematic model use among designers attests to its value in efficiently creating satisfactory instructional products. Indeed, the meticulous and ordinal structure of a systematic model lends itself well to scaffolding the design process and helping new designers understand the wide array of considerations necessary in any given design. However, the rigidity of movement and function within the model did not appear to be a natural fit for this project. My original model for the design process was an adapted systematic model and, even then, it did not always serve the design well. Conflict with the process model began early, when fitting character education and the *BYU Aims* into task and objective analyses was at best unnatural and, at worst, unproductive. Where the instructional tasks were specific, such as the challenge activities, a

systematic approach provided great insight and a sense of confidence that I was addressing what I should be addressing. Where the design was broad, iterative, and plastic, the systematic model was inflexible or did not offer directions on design considerations I felt were needed. However, following a systematic model did help me to develop a better understanding of all the steps and components requisite in a good design.

**Designer's log.** My biggest regret regarding the design process for the *BYU Aims Program* was that my designer's notes were not as organized or thorough as they could have been. This would have been an asset in writing the final project report and a way to foster more deliberate design decisions. There were some instances during the design process where I had to retrace my design steps to earlier design decisions. More often than not, my notes did not provide specific details regarding my choices or even enough contextual information to jog my memory. Had my design log been more organized and complete, I can only assume my design might have been more cohesive and powerful.

### **Design Document**

The *BYU Aims Program* pilot is an online program comprised of goal-based challenge activities available to BYU students to promote personal character development and increase awareness of the *Aims of a BYU Education*. This section details the preliminary version of *BYU Aims Program*, pilot tested between September and December 2011.

### **Physical Description**

Deliverables for the pilot of the *BYU Aims Program* included an online site (<https://sites.google.com/site/byuaimsprogrampilot/>) and the content and supplementary materials associated with each available challenge.

**Media elements.** A public Google site was developed for the *BYU Aims Program* pilot.

This site included the following:

- An introduction to the *BYU Aims Program*
- Phase One Registration survey
- Intellectually Enlarging Challenges: *Class Preparation and Performance, Study Group, BYU Devotionals and Forums, and Ten Characteristics of an Educated Person, Respect*
- Character Building Challenges: *Responding to Correction or Criticism, Self-Discipline, Respect for Diversity, Self-Evaluation, and Appropriate Zeal*
- Phase Two Registration survey
- Spiritually Strengthening Challenges: *For the Strength of the Youth, Modesty, To Learn and to Teach More Effectively, Moral Courage, and Integrity and Values*
- Lifelong Learning and Service Challenges: *Increasing Performance at Work, Service and Respect, Respect for Diversity of Faiths, Personal Finance, and My Community, My Responsibility*
- PDFs: *Ten Characteristics of an Educated Person* (Pinnock, 1980), *How to Organize and Conduct Effective Study Groups* (Center for Teaching & Learning), *Who Will Bear Reproof?* (Thompson, 2002), *No More Strangers* (Morrison, 2000), *Appropriate Zeal* (Samuelson, 2010), *For the Strength of the Youth* (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011), *Modesty: Reverence for the Lord* (Hales, 2008), *Honor Code* (BYU, 2011), *To Learn and to Teach More Effectively* (Scott, 2007), *Moral Courage* (Eyring, 2010), *Integrity and Values: A Discussion with Elder Robert D.*

*Hales* (Hales, 2005), *Respect for Diversity of Faiths* (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2008), *Eleventh Article of Faith* (Smith, 1978)

- External links: BYU Devotional and Forum Schedule, Career and Academic Support Center, Y-Serve, BYU Independent Study, Center for Teaching & Learning, BYU Homepage

**Packaging of learner materials.** All instructional materials are available online via the *BYU Aims Program* pilot site (<https://sites.google.com/site/byuaimsprogrampilot/>). Learners encounter three possible types of learning materials in the *BYU Aims Program*: (a) challenge instructions, (b) foundational readings, and (c) mini-courses. Challenge instructions consist of a challenge title and specific directions for completing the challenge activity. Foundational readings vary by challenge and are available in both HTML and PDF format. Some readings, such as those drawn from BYU devotionals, are also available as video or audio recordings. Mini-courses are developed and hosted by BYU Independent Study. These courses vary in both content and supplementary media.

**Site requirements.** In order to increase accessibility and program flexibility, the *BYU Aims Program* is available online, allowing learners to access information, challenges, and materials almost constantly from any location where computers and internet access are available.

**Implementation hardware.** Participation in the *BYU Aims Program* requires a computer and Internet access. The pilot site may be accessed via any standard Internet connection.

**Implementation software configuration.** The *BYU Aims Program* pilot site is accessible on any major browser (e.g., Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Opera, etc.). Because

the pilot site does not utilize additional scripting programs, there are no requirements for site plug-ins or additional software.

### **Structural and Conceptual Description**

The *BYU Aims Program* is structured to present challenge activities addressing the *Aims of a BYU Education*. Challenges are offered over a period of six weeks and may be customized to the individual learner's interests and available time.

**Goal structures.** The *BYU Aims Program* has four primary objectives:

- Increase student awareness of the *Aims of a BYU Education* (BYU, 2007a).
- Provide students with opportunities to recognize and understand principles of good character.
- Engage students in enriching application of character values.
- Lay the foundation for continued character development and lifelong commitment to service, learning, and good character.

In order to promote character development and increase understanding of the *BYU Aims*, the program offers challenge activities that address specific Aims and character values. Specific instructional goals are associated with each challenge activity and specify the trait and behavior to be learned.

**Event structures.** Each *BYU Aim* is addressed over a six-week period. Challenge activities are selected for each period that specifically pertains to that *Aim*. Therefore, each challenge not only promotes the program's four overarching objectives, but a specific *Aim* and character trait.

**Elements.** The *BYU Aims Program* consists of challenge activities, small self-directed, goal-driven learning experiences. Over eighty challenge activities were developed for potential

use by the *BYU Aims Program*, but only sixteen were selected for the pilot (Appendix D). Each challenge activity is small in scope, addressing one specific trait, habit, or skill.

***Micro-strategy type and use.*** Each challenge follows a similar instructional model. First, learners complete a foundational reading or activity. Next, the learner engages in critical reflection on this experience. The learner then sets an individual goal related to the trait addressed in the challenge. The remainder of the challenge consists of the learner monitoring and reflecting on his or her progress toward that goal over the six-week duration of the challenge. The activities involved in this portion of the challenge self-determined by the learner as they work toward their goal. Some challenge activities depart slightly from this model (i.e., participating in a weekly service activity instead of setting an individual goal), but all include critical reflection over the course of the challenge.

***Macro-strategy.*** The pilot was divided into two six-week challenge phases. The first phase included challenges associated with the character building and intellectually enlarging aims. The second phase consisted of spiritually strengthening and lifelong learning and service challenges. This instructional order was selected to place challenges pertaining to academic performance near the beginning of a new term and introduce character as a foundational component of the program.

***Style and tone.*** As the *BYU Aims Program* is intended to promote and inspire students to improve, program materials and site are intended to be inspiring, accessible, and motivating. While instruction is minimal, it is designed to be simple and encouraging. Any student should be able to read the directions for a challenge and feel like he or she could take on the challenge.

## **Operational Description**

The *BYU Aims Program* consists of challenge activities, small self-directed, learning experiences based on a foundational reading and individual goal setting. While the availability and selection of challenges is predetermined, the program offers learners a tremendous degree of latitude in their challenge selection, progress, and learning experience.

**Modes of use.** All learning events in the *BYU Aims Program* are self-directed.

**Social environment.** While some challenges contain social components (i.e., visiting a museum with a friend), learners complete challenge activities independently.

**Use scenario.** The learner visits the *BYU Aims Program* pilot site and clicks on the *Current Challenges* tab. He or she then reviews the challenge options for this phase of the pilot. To register, he or she may click on the *Registration* link, which will open a survey requiring a RouteY/Net ID and allowing the learner to select the challenge(s) he or she wants to complete. After registration, the learner may visit the page associated with their *Aim* challenge (e.g., Character Building). This page hosts all materials (or links to the materials) necessary to complete the challenge. For most challenges, the learner then completes the foundational reading, works on setting an individual goal pertaining to his or her reading, and develops a plan to achieve that goal. Over the next few weeks, the learner keeps a journal log of his or her progress, including reflections on his or her experience. Periodically, the learner receives emails from the program with reminders of the challenge finish date and helpful tips for achieving personal goals. At the end of the challenge, the learner receives a completion survey via email, confirming whether he or she completed the challenge and reviewing his or her experience.

**Learner roles and responsibilities.** After registering for a challenge, the learner is responsible for completing any foundational readings or activities, setting a personal goal, and



making a plan to achieve that goal. The learner is also responsible for monitoring his or her own progress over the challenge period.

**Learner control.** Two elements of instruction that are predetermined by the program. First, the timing and availability of specific *Aims*. Second, the number and type of challenge activities available. Learners are free to select from ten available challenges during each phase of the pilot. Additionally, most challenges encourage learners to tailor their experience by setting their own goal related to the challenge. This enables learners to create a relevant personal and instructional experience regardless of the *Aim* or challenge activity options.

**Learner control dynamic.** Because the order of *Aims* addressed by the program and specific challenges available for selection were determined prior to the start of the pilot, learner control does not change over the course of the pilot.

**Management.** Given the self-directed and largely offline nature of challenge activities, there is no management system in place to monitor or control learner progress through each challenge activity.

**Navigation rules.** Only available challenges are predetermined in the *Aims Program* pilot. The learner's path through the program begins with challenge selection and ends with the completion survey.

**Movement between events.** The learner does not move between challenges over the six-week period. The learner moves to new challenge activities with the subsequent, second phase of the pilot.

**Movement within events.** The learner is free to advance through challenge activities at any rate he or she chooses. Most events consist of the foundational activity/reading, goal-setting, critical reflection, and an extended period of working toward that goal. Learners are free to

move between these events at will and in the direction of their choosing (e.g., learners may return to foundational readings at any point during the challenge).

***Entering and exiting events.*** Challenges begin with a registration survey, wherein the learner selects the challenge(s) he or she wishes to complete. Challenges end six-weeks later, when the learner completes an additional survey marking challenge completion and offering experience feedback.

### **Assessment**

Assessment within the *BYU Aims Program* pilot is formative, consisting primarily of self-report measures. Learners are only assessed in regards to whether or not they completed the challenge(s) they selected. This assessment is delivered via email at the end of the six-week challenge period.

**Data recording and reporting.** Survey data is recorded and stored via Google Docs forms and spreadsheets. Challenge completion is reported to the program administrator for the purpose of awarding incentives.

**Data security.** Survey results, along with identifying information, are stored in a private Google spreadsheet.

## **Design Rationale**

### **Content Plan**

Character development is a three-fold endeavor, where individuals must not only learn the elements and meaning of character, but also gain a love for specific traits that motivates them to then demonstrate those traits in their daily lives. Helea (2005) put it simply, that character education requires learners to “know the good, love the good, and do the good” (p.68).

Therefore, a character program must include conceptual, affective, and procedural knowledge.

The *BYU Aims Program* bases its conceptual understanding of character on the elements of character defined in the *BYU Aims*: integrity, respect, modesty, self-control, courage, compassion, and industry (BYU, 2007). These align with core virtues identified in character education literature and maintain relevance across religious and cultural background (Bohlin, Farmer, & Ryan, 2001). The *BYU Aims Program*'s challenge activities are design to include a brief conceptual introduction to the trait, followed by critical reflection, goal setting, and practice.

**Analysis and capture.** Content for individual challenge activities was primarily drawn from existing sources, many from BYU devotional addresses, publications from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or op-ed articles in news forums. Content for the challenges was collected during the research and design phases of the *BYU Aims Program*. The process for obtaining content was similar for each challenge: a literature search in Google, ldg.org, and speeches.byu.edu specific to the character trait for that challenge. Some challenges were developed specifically from an article.

**Theories.** The purpose of foundational content for challenge activities, in addition to providing a conceptual introduction to the trait, was to provide a foundation for individual critical reflection. Character education, from a constructivist paradigm, asserts that individuals can only develop character, or the knowledge of what character is, by engaging with those traits (Keefer, 2006). To launch this engagement, individuals must be able to recognize and critically reflect on the trait (Bohlin, Farmer, & Ryan, 2001; DeVries, 1998; Davidson, Lickona, & Khmelkov, 2008; Keefer, 2006; Shapiro, 1999). Providing a foundational reading is one way to introduce an element of character and promote critical reflection (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Bohlin, Farmer, & Ryan, 2001; Noble & Henderson, 2011). In order for the reading to promote

either activity, however, the reading must be carefully selected. When selecting readings (or other content sources) I specifically looked for articles that clearly addressed the traits, were concise and well-written, and encouraged self-reflection.

**Application with other layers.** Critical reflection is only one component of effective education. The conceptual understanding of character must be followed by mindful practice and experience if the trait is hoped to translate into habits (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Carr, 2006; Laming, 1993; Lickona, 1993). Each challenge was designed to promote this experiential learning by helping the learner make a trait-specific goal that is relevant to them and then track their progress with that goal over the duration of the challenge.

While the processes of conceptual introduction, critical reflection, and practice experiences are corroborated by the literature, it is only one step toward promoting overall character development. Contextualizing character within social and personal behaviors is critical to promoting conceptual understanding to meaningful change in attitudes and behaviors (DeVries, 1998; Lickona, 1993; Schwartz, Beatty, & Dachnowicz, 2006). The social element of the *BYU Aims Program* challenges most frequently integrated into the experiential requirements, such as participating in a service activity. Future iterations of the *BYU Aims Program* should incorporate a greater degree of the challenges' content and contingent experiences within social experiences.

### **Strategic Plan**

The strategic layer of the *BYU Aims Program's* design was characterized by two fundamental objectives: (a) to allow learners the flexibility to select character-building experiences that were interesting and personally relevant and (b) to design learning experiences in a way that mirror and prepare the learners for independent character building in the future. To

accomplish these objectives, program participation was largely self-directed and instructional support was minimal. Strategy decisions formed the foundation of the design and underpinned participant experiences in the pilot, occasionally to the extent of influencing the content and message layers of the design.

**Use of learning goals.** There were two levels of learning goals associated with the *BYU Aims Program*: general and specific. The general objectives for the program were developed under the direction of Michael Johnson, who wanted the program to not only (a) increase student awareness of the *BYU Aims*, but also (b) engage students in application of character values that would (c) form the foundation for a lifetime of service, learning, and character development. Specific learning goals were also associated with each challenge activity. These goals were not explicitly stated to the learner, but were used to align activities with the character value pertaining to that challenge. The decision to not specifically outline the value-centric objective for each activity resulted from the desire for the program challenges to enhance understanding of the *BYU Aims* and their relevance to the BYU experience, rather than a conceptual understanding of a character trait.

**Use of assessments.** Assessments in the *BYU Aims Program* were strictly formative, comprised of student self-evaluation and self-report. Character is difficult to measure accurately, so traditional assessment techniques do not yield useful information about a student's progress or the efficacy of the program. Because character education pertains to highly personal beliefs, values, and behaviors, many character education programs refrain attempting to externally assess character development, which has been shown to reduce student motivation (Bohlin, Farmer, & Ryan, 2001). Consistent with character education's emphasis on self-reflection, the *BYU Aims Program* considers students as stewards of their own development. Challenge activities were

designed to encourage students to frequently and honestly assess their own progress. In the pilot, the concluding surveys following each challenge required participants to identify what challenge they completed and briefly evaluate their experience.

**Use of setting and siting.** The selection of an online instructional platform for the *BYU Aims Program* was largely predetermined by the resources available for the project. Given the self-directed nature of the program, an online siting allowed for content and activities to occur in the environment most convenient for the learner. Additionally, individual challenges were designed to include activity in the settings most relevant to the value trait, such as home, school, or work. Because character is not limited in application to one setting, character-building activities should not be limited to one setting either. Character development is most likely to occur and endure when presented and practiced in a social context (DeVries, 1998).

**Choice of learner as initiator.** Participants in the *BYU Aims Program* were viewed as their own teachers. While some foundational materials were provided for each challenge, participants were responsible for determining their own progress. The efficacy of character development activities is reduced when learners feel that they do not have control over their own learning (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Schwartz, Beatty, & Dachnowicz, 2006). Additionally, if the overall objective of the program is to promote lifelong character development, then challenges should be designed to place the learner as the initiator and director of his or her own development.

**Use of content/performance scope.** All challenge activities were designed to be scalable according to an individual's available time and specific needs. The directions for each challenge specified similar minimum requirements (e.g., complete a reading, set a goal, track progress). The content scope of each challenge was fairly narrow, but the opportunity to set a

personally relevant goal expanding the scope of application. The need to keep challenges small and scalable resulted primarily from the target population analysis and the desire to attract students with diverse interests and available resources.

**Selection of instructional task/activity.** As detailed in the design narrative, the selection and development of each challenge activity was associated with a *trait-Aim* pairing. The selection of instructional approach for each challenge was a variation on one instructional model: reading, reflection, goal setting, practice, and reflection. This model was intended to promote the critical reflection and mindful application that had been suggested in character education literature (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Any departures from this foundational model were tailored to the nature of the challenge. For example, a challenge focusing on developing and demonstrating respect for individuals with disabilities required volunteering with an individual with a disability.

**Support for learning processes.** The self-directed and independent nature of challenge activities, as well as a lack of personnel resources, necessitated a reduced degree of instructional support. Originally, the only instruction that was offered to pilot participants was the instructions for the challenge itself. Following the first phase of the pilot and at the suggestion of pilot participants, supporting instructions, primarily in the form of tips or reminders, were periodically sent to participants. Other character education models were more socially oriented and implemented a greater degree of instructional support to scaffold discussion or activities (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Irwin, 1988; Laming, 1993). The lack of structured social activities in the *BYU Aims Program* and the desire to not inundate participants with materials influenced the decision to include minimal instructional support.

**Variation of instructional support.** The *BYU Aims Program* design did not include any dynamics in instructional support. Because the nature of program is fairly modular, where individuals could do only one challenge and hopefully still benefit, I had not planned for the degree of instructional support to change across the program or even across the challenge.

**Adaptations for multi-cultural fit.** The character value traits included within the *BYU Aims Program* curriculum were deliberately selected for their universal relevance. Bohlin, Farmer, and Ryan (2001) developed a list of core virtues that accommodated a variety of cultural or religious views. The values selected for the *BYU Aims Program* aligned with this list.

**Strategic features and qualities aimed at increasing engagement.** The fundamental purpose of this project was to establish the viability of a character education program based on the *BYU Aims*. The flexibility in challenge duration and requirements, the focus on individual goal setting, and the variety of challenge options were all designed in order to attract a diverse array of students, according the results of the target population analysis. Additionally, program content, such as challenge instructions, was written in a semi-conversational manner in the hopes that it would be more attractive and accessible to students.

**Use of narrative.** Narrative techniques were included only minimally in the design for the *BYU Aims Program*. Occasionally, narratives were a component of the foundational reading or activity for a specific challenge, but narratives were not considered as an overall element of the program.

### **Control Plan**

Appropriately, the control philosophy for the *BYU Aims Program* mirrored much of the strategic philosophy and emphasized self-directed experiences. Learners would encounter one set of program controls, determining which challenge activity they wanted to complete. After



they selected their challenge, their progress through the challenge was entirely self-determined. Particularly for the pilot, where the technical interface was limited, this was the extent of controls built within the program. Ideally, an online interface would provide additional controls, allowing learners to track their progress and move through supplementary materials for their challenge at will. These considerations were not viable within the technical resources available for this project.

### **Messaging Plan**

The only instructional messages encountered by participants during the pilot were the introductory instructions for each challenge and, later, the periodic tip or reminder emails that they requested. In writing both the instructions and reminders, I tested the instructions on others, usually student employees at the CTL, to ensure that the instructions were clear, understandable, and free of unnecessary jargon. Given the limited communication within the *BYU Aims Program*, there were no other considerations made in regards to the message layer of the design.

### **Representation Plan**

The representation layer of this design is limited to the online interface and existing materials. The look, feel, and functionality of the online *BYU Aims Program* site were entirely determined by the technical resources available for the pilot. In designing and developing the organization and appearance of the program site, my design choices were largely predetermined by the available functionality of the Google site. My two primary objectives for developing the pilot site were to (a) organize information in a way that is both intuitive and accessible and (b) to maintain a consistent, clean appearance. My lack of usability and visual design experience limited the degree to which the site met either objective, but the final product appeared to meet the needs of the participants across the program.

**Media-logic Plan**

The availability and schedules of the target learners was a major consideration in selecting both instructional strategies and administration. The program needed to create a desire to engage in character development, but needed to do so within the time and resources available to students. In order for students to value the character traits and develop the desire to enhance their own character, there must shift their frame of reference. Unlike academic skills, character is not generally perceived as a set of skills or habits that must be consciously developed (Lickona, 1993). Reframing our understanding of character to be the result conscious and purposeful effort occurs through critical reflection (Mezirow, 1997). Character development, in order to be lasting, must also be contextualized in the settings where character will be used (DeVries, 1998). A self-directed study model would allow learners to both engage in the program at the frequency and depth of study they choose and incorporate these learning experiences into their daily lives (Candy, 1991).

**Data Management Plan**

The data that was captured from the *BYU Aims Program* included participant demographic information, self-reported challenge completion, and feedback on the participant's experience in the program. This data was collected via Google Doc survey forms and stored in a private Google spreadsheet. Google Docs was selected as the platform for the pilot due to its availability, ease of use, and sufficient functionality. Similarly, Google Docs also served as the platform for data management due to its accessibility and ability to integrate with the pilot site.

## **Pilot Test**

### **Production Plan**

Following the development of program curriculum, the only instructional products to be developed were the pilot site and the electronic registration surveys. These were developed over a period of two weeks by the designer (see Appendix C for schedule). Website development began with a flow plan for the site, determining the hierarchy and organization of information. The site was then developed using Google Sites and all program and challenge information and materials were placed on the site. The electronic surveys were then developed using Google Docs forms. These surveys were embedded in the pilot site.

### **Implementation Plan**

Both the site and surveys were quality tested, by the designer and two other CTL student employees, prior to launching the pilot. As the program does not require engagement with the website following the selection of challenge activities, little or no maintenance or set up is required during the six-week challenge period. Between the two phases of the pilot, the organization of the site was altered, moving the two new *BYU Aims* to greater prominence. The registration survey embedded in the site was also switched out for a new registration survey for the second phase. The designer served as the sole developer and administrator for the *BYU Aims Program* pilot.

### **Formative Evaluation Plan**

The *BYU Aims Program* pilot included a three-part evaluation, including both surveys and a focus group. The driving questions behind the evaluation of the *BYU Aims Program* aligned with initial objectives identified for the program:

- Are participants more aware of the *Aims of a BYU Education* after participating in the pilot?
- Did the participants develop a better understanding of what character is and how it applies in their daily lives?
- Do participants feel that their experience was helpful?
- Do the participants feel motivated to continue character development throughout their lives?

Additionally, it was necessary to gain an understanding of participants' concept of character, the role they thought character plays in education, as well as what motivated them to participate in the program. These questions and others were incorporated into the surveys used for registering and indicating completion of challenges. Participants completed three surveys over the course of the pilot. The first was completed with registration for the first phase of the pilot and included demographic items and their reason for participating (Appendix E). The second survey included the completion items from the first set of challenges, several items addressing their experience thus far, and registration for the second set of challenges (Appendix F). The final survey included the completion items for the second set of challenges and items examining their experience with the second phase of the pilot and their feedback on the program overall (Appendix G). All surveys developed using Google Docs and were distributed via email, although surveys were also available on the pilot site. Data from these surveys is stored in a private Google Docs spreadsheet.

Participants were also invited to attend a focus group focusing on their overall experience in the program (Appendix H). Data from the focus group, which included written and recorded verbal feedback, is stored on the designer's computer in a password-protected file. All data

obtained from focus groups and surveys is intended to establish the viability of the *BYU Aims Program* and provide information for potential further development.

### **Projections**

The budget and resources allotted to this project were scaled for a pilot of the *BYU Aims Program*, under the funding and according to the policies of the CTL. Personnel costs, including both the developer and the CTL pilot participants, were expected to total approximately \$5,000, based on the estimated person hours. No travel expenses were expected to result from this project. Materials expenses were projected to total less than \$1500, including production materials and incentive prizes for the participants. All personnel and materials expenses for this project remained within the projected budget.

While the CTL plans to further develop the *BYU Aims Program*, any wider release or test of the program would require greater technical, financial, and personnel resources than the CTL has available. Therefore, it would be necessary to solicit support from other BYU departments or services. Possible sources of support for a larger-scale version of the program include BYUSA, Student Wellness, or the Honors Program, as they share similar objectives to those driving the *BYU Aims Program*.

### **Project Outcomes**

#### **Production**

While production costs remained within the projected budget for the project, the limited resources allocated to the project may have limited the visual appeal and functionality of the program.

**Actuals.** The actual costs incurred by the pilot fell within the projected budget (Figure 3). The number of CTL student employees participating in the pilot was less than originally

anticipated, which resulted in far less personnel and incentive costs than originally projected.

Upon reflection, the budgeted materials, travel expenses, and participant incentive costs appear to have been accurate projections. The projected personnel costs may have been generous enough had the project been more technically taxing.

	Projected Cost	Actual Cost
Designer wages	\$4000	\$4000
Other personnel costs	\$1000	\$460
Travel expenses	\$0	\$0
Participant incentives	\$1250	\$150
Materials	\$200	\$56

Figure 3 Projected and actual expenses for the *BYU Aims Program* pilot

**Issues and insights.** While the design and development of the *BYU Aims Program* pilot were made in direct consideration of the available resources, this consideration may have limited the efficacy and appeal of the pilot itself. There were no resources allocated to this project in terms of marketing or the visual design of the program, each of these may have contributed to a more efficacious pilot product.

### Implementation

The implementation plan appeared to run well technically and theoretically, but struggled with communication delivery and participant attrition.

**History.** Implementation of the *BYU Aims Program* pilot consisted of five main stages: participant recruitment, a phase of challenge activities, mid-pilot surveys, a second phase of challenges, and summative surveys.

**Participant recruitment.** Implementation of the pilot began with the recruitment of participants. The original plan assumed that pilot participants would be recruited from CTL student employees. However, in order to gain a wider sample of participants, recruiting was done among student employees at the CTL, as well as with BYU students at large via a Facebook

event. The Facebook event appeared to be moderately effective spreading information about the pilot, garnering moderate interest in registering for the pilot. Seventy-six students registered interest in participating in the pilot, via either Facebook or the pilot site. Of these, thirty registered for challenges during the first phase of the pilot.

***First phase of challenges.*** The first phase of the pilot appeared to run without any major issues. Participants that registered for a challenge using Independent Study's self-discipline free online course reports issues registering for the course. These issues were resolved and no further issues were reported.

***Mid-pilot surveys.*** As indicated by the number of participants that completed the second survey, a significant number of participants dropped out of the pilot. Only eight participants completed the survey and registered for the second set of challenges. One participant reported not completing her challenges because she could not remember which challenges she had selected. Participants indicated at this point that reminder emails would be helpful in staying on track with their challenges.

***Second phase of challenges.*** Over the second phase of the pilot, I delivered biweekly email reminders that contained hints or strategies for achieving goals. Other than the drop in participants, the second phase of the pilot did not report any implementation issues.

***Summative surveys.*** The final survey responses, however, report additional attrition with only five participants completing the survey.

**Issues and insights.** Participant feedback and the high attrition rate highlighted several implementation issues. First, the Google site, while functional, appeared to be difficult to find. Additionally, while individual logins and access to challenge activity was not available due to resource constraints, this may have been enough of a factor to prevent or demotivate challenge

participation and completion. The electronic delivery of the electronic surveys via email may also have influenced the attrition, as emails are easy to dismiss or lose among a continuous flow of new messages. There is a possibility that, even after several reminder emails, the electronic surveys were either lost or ignored due to lack of motivation.

### **Formative Evaluation**

While the evaluation was significantly influenced by participant attrition, the evaluation methods appeared sound and resulting data offers insights into both the efficacy of the *BYU Aims Program* pilot and the nature of the participant sample and target population.

**Production.** Formative evaluation during production was comprised of quality analysis of the pilot site and surveys. This review did not experience any complications and reported only minor issues with site content and hyperlink functionality. While this evaluation did not precipitate any unexpected changes and the nature of the evaluands was fairly simple, it is important to note that the formative evaluation plan was possibly insufficient. In retrospect, a more robust evaluation, perhaps including additional external review of challenge activities, might have revealed the site access and survey delivery issues discussed previously. This, in turn, may have resulted in reduced participant attrition rate. These implications, while speculative, are important considerations for further development of an *Aims*-based program.

**Implementation.** Given the pilot objective of establishing the viability of the *BYU Aims Program*, evaluation was an important component of the implementation process. These evaluations were markedly affected by participant attrition. The dwindling number of responses to the second and third surveys resulted in a much smaller amount of data than I had originally anticipated.



All participants were invited to a focus group between the first and second phases of the challenge, regardless of whether they were continuing with the program. Unfortunately, there was not a sufficient number of participants to schedule a focus group. Because the lost participants were likely sources of insight into serious issues with the program, I constructed an email specifically for those who had dropped out of the pilot, inviting them to share the issues or obstacles that influenced their decision to discontinue their participation. I received no responses to that email. I also invited all participants to join a focus group luncheon, hoping to still get some feedback on issues with or obstacles encountered in the pilot. Twenty participants volunteered to attend. Of these, only five attended. Four of the attendants were CTL employees; the fifth was my husband. While the focus group turnout was undersized, the attendees did offer valuable insights into improvements for the program.

I learned one primary lesson from the pilot evaluation: incentivize. First, given the overall lack of responses to any of the surveys, I may have overestimated the ease with which participants could complete the surveys and underestimated participant indifference toward completing surveys. Despite the fact that pilot participation was incentivized, providing an additional small incentive for survey completion may have resulted in a higher response rate. Additionally, focus group turnout may also have been influenced by incentives, or lack thereof. The first attempt to hold a focus group offered snacks and drinks, but did not garner more than two responses. The final focus group offered a pizza party, but still only resulted in five attendees. Both focus groups were scheduled on Fridays around typical lunch hours when students would be most likely to not have class. It is possible that the incentive for focus group participation was not substantial enough.

### **Evolution of the Design**

While there have not been any tested subsequent versions of the *BYU Aims Program* to date, there are many implications for the future of an *Aims*-based program at BYU.

#### **Design Versions**

The *BYU Aims Program* did not undergo any design evolutions prior to or during the pilot. The *BYU Aims Program* developed following the initial design is the same version that was tested by student participants. However, as there are plans to continue pursuing the development of an *Aims*-based program, I will address the insights gathered from the pilot and potential modifications and changes to the design of the *BYU Aims Program*.

#### **Design Modifications and Insights**

While there have not been any tested subsequent versions of the *BYU Aims Program* to date, there are many implications for the future of the program. First, attempting to test two sets of challenges at once may have overwhelmed and therefore demotivated participants. Some participants expressed that “taking on two at once is way too much.” While this model was selected in order to include all the *Aims* during the pilot, this reinforces that more than one challenge per period may decrease motivation and the subsequent likelihood that a participant will engage in or complete challenges. Future versions of the program should present one *Aim* at a time.

Similarly, some participants expressed that the challenges “just felt like an extra assignment or obligation that added to my plate” and, therefore, they did not feel motivated to complete the challenge. While this does not offer any specifics as to why challenges made participants feel that way, it does imply that there is something in the nature of the challenges that is not engaging students. One possibility, as expressed by another participant, is that “the

Duty to God format is a big turn-off.” This may suggest that there is something in the challenge format or phrasing that is not attractive to students: “I felt like I’d already had to do this before.” Other participants expressed that the challenges took too much time to complete. One participant suggested that the challenges should be reduced to smaller tasks. Future versions of the *BYU Aims Program* would benefit from increased formative evaluation of the challenge activity curriculum.

A lack of recoverability also appeared to be an issue for participants. While the program did not specifically state that participants could not miss a challenge and continue with the program, some participants may have felt that because they failed to complete one or more challenges during the first phase, they could not participate in the second phase. In a future version of the *Aims Program*, it should either explicitly discuss recoverability or perhaps adjust the duration or timing of challenge periods.

In their feedback, participants also lamented the lack of an individual login and the ability to track their progress online. The next version of the *BYU Aims Program* needs to address this issue, either in utilizing BYU’s Central Authentication System in the development of a BYU-hosted site or in finding an external platform that would allow this functionality.

Perhaps most significantly, the lack of support for the *BYU Aims Program* by other University entities appears to have influenced the success of the pilot. Research on effective character education identifies leadership buy-in and support as the foundation of successful character education programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Doty & Pim, 2007; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006). The support of the University is not only necessary to support the running and maintenance of the program, but to promote the program throughout the BYU community and provide motivation for students. It is possible that, as there was no individual or organizational

authority driving the program, there was less motivation for students to engage in and complete the program. While this project was intended to pilot the program prior to soliciting support from BYU administration and departments, there will need to be some degree of leadership support for any further trials of the program.

## **Critique**

### **Practical Insights**

This design experience reinforced the importance of two fundamental design practices. First, maintain a thorough design log. My design log for this project, as with other projects, was inconsistent at best. My design would likely have improved if I had been regular and consistent in my note taking. My design skills could also have been better developed throughout this project if I had incorporated critical reflection in my design log, evaluating design decisions through the design process and judging their value.

Second, do not be afraid to test your design ideas or decisions at any point in your design, particularly from your client or a potential target user. Looking back, I wish I had solicited more feedback from my supervisor, coworkers, and other students throughout the project. Seeking insight from other sources would have expanded my design concepts, identified flaws in my design that I may have missed, and provided a better understanding of whether my design was meeting its objectives.

### **Design and Development Insights**

The *BYU Aims Program* pilot underscored several crucial components of good design, including a clear understanding of the target learner, the importance of carefully selecting the design model, and the effort required to garner evaluation feedback.

**Analysis.** The high participant attrition rate would suggest that there were fundamental flaws in my understanding of the target learner. The target population analysis was completed using observational and anecdotal evidence. While this provided a general and largely accurate understanding of BYU students, did not develop a sufficient understanding of what interests and motivates students. Two possible options for developing this understanding are surveys and focus groups. Using a survey to gather student responses regarding their understanding of the *BYU Aims* and their perceptions of how character develops and the role of character in their BYU experience would help to develop a better broad understanding of target learners.

Additionally, holding a focus group would provide opportunities to meet with small groups of students and review the program and challenges activities with them. This would provide more detailed feedback on what elements of the program they found appealing and what would potentially prevent them from participating. Gaining a better understanding of student's academic and individual lives would also provide material for developing challenges that would build upon their current activities and be less likely to feel like an additional burden. Overall, an improved understanding of the target learner would also help me to better communicate the value and importance of purposeful character development to participants.

The pilot itself brought forth several insights about BYU students that I had not previously considered. Fundamentally, I learned that BYU students, while predominantly good people wanting to do good things, do not understand the significance and implication of the *BYU Aims*. For many students, the ultimate focus at BYU is their academic performance, with other activities being subsidiary, if not optional, considerations. It is tremendously difficult to shift these priorities. As evidenced by participant feedback, *BYU Aims Program* challenges became not only just another task, but also the first task that is going to be dropped in favor of anything

else. This may be partially attributed to BYU's highly competitive academic environment, but it is likely also grounded in an institutional culture that does appear to elevate academic performance above other personal, relevant lifelong characteristics. The *BYU Aims Program*, if it will ever be viable, is going to need to work much harder to engage student interest, demonstrate its value, and challenge this unbalanced cultural view. Again, a more in-depth target population analysis would provide insight on how this can be done.

**Design.** My choice of a systematic model was helpful in providing a basic structure for my work and helped orient me to important design considerations. It was not, however, a good fit for the nature of the project I was undertaking. I did gain a better understanding of why systematic models have been such a long-standing and efficient approach to instructional design. However, it did not offer the flexibility necessary to address all the elements of a character education program. The structure and flow of processes, which I had hoped would have organized my design efforts, occasionally became frustrating when the nature of my project did not fit what a systematic model indicated I needed to do. In the future, I would only use a systematic model if I wanted to develop an instructional product that was very simple. In retrospect, the project would have benefitted from modifying my design approach to a greater degree, either by supplementing task analysis processes into a systematic model or entirely changing my overall process model.

**Alternative task analyses.** In terms of task analysis, I have since discovered several alternative means of analyzing affective tasks or objectives. One method, presented by Wellesley Foshay (1978), suggest breaking the larger general learning objective down into tasks that address a range of domains (i.e., intellectual, emotional, social, physical, aesthetic, and

spiritual). For example, if the general learning objective was “students will develop respect and appreciation for individuals with disabilities,” the tasks could be broken down as follows:

- Intellectual, Social: Students will formulate and identify examples of phrases or terms that would be offensive or agreeable to individuals with disabilities.
- Emotional: Students will reflect, identify, and describe his/her own feelings toward individuals with disabilities.
- Social, Physical: Students will participate in a service or social activity where they will engage with individuals with disabilities.
- Spiritual, Intellectual: Students will reflect on their service experience.

Jonassen and Hannum (1986) suggest using Krathwohl’s hierarchical affective taxonomy to guide task analysis. This framework operates on the level to which an idea or value is internalized, ranging from merely being aware of an idea (i.e., “receiving”) to consistently acting in accordance with that idea (i.e., “characterization”) (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964). Following this model would be less specific to behaviors, but would allow the task analysis to consider the expected and possible levels of character trait development that would occur within the challenge activity.

*Alternative design process models.* While a systematic model did provide a detailed structure for my design process, other models may have been equally effective (if not more so) in guiding my design. As discussed previously, I did not choose to use a layered design model to guide my design given my level of expertise and familiarity with the model. If I were to repeat the project, a layered model might have provided a more open approach to considering design options and making design decisions. By isolating the program’s intended message and content from the delivery, media, and representation, I may have opened myself up to many more ideas

for how students would engage in learning and internalizing the character traits and Aims.

Another design process approach that may have worked well for this project would be design research. This approach is appealing because it integrates the target user so early in the design process and includes a highly iterative and user-centric development phase. If I had engaged with prospective learners at the inception of the project and consistently reviewed program ideas and prototypes to them, I could have not only developed a program and activities that were more personally relevant and interesting, but more easily integrated character development with their daily lives.

***Instructional theory and strategy.*** The selection of a constructivist approach to character education appears to have been an appropriate choice. An emphasis on self-directed learning and critical reflection is not only consistent with character education literature, but also appropriate given the resource and time constraints of the target learners. That is not to say, however, that the instructional approach of the *BYU Aims Program* could not be improved. One theoretical component of character education that was not adequately addressed in the *BYU Aims Program* was that of social learning. Modeling has been shown to be a key element of effective character education programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Helea, 2005; Laming, 1993; Lickona, 1993; Schwartz, Beatty, & Dachnowicz, 2006). Moreover, there is a developing discussion in character education on the need to develop communities of virtue. Just as Wenger's (1998) communities of learning unite individuals with a shared commitment to increasing knowledge, communities of virtue must be built to provide support, encouragement, and modeling of character traits (Helea, 2005; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006; Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2003; Noble & Henderson, 2011).



These theories of modeling and communities of virtue hold a couple of possible implications for the future of the *BYU Aims Program*. First, in order to build this community of virtue, the *BYU Aims Program* could be restructured to include an expanded, more interactive social component. This would not only allow students to share character-building experiences and promote character-centric dialogue, but also provide students with peer models of good character. Second, if an *Aims*-based program is going to survive in any form, the entire BYU community needs to promote becoming a community of virtue, not just a community of learning. While the campus-wide commitment to academic excellence is appropriate and commendable, there needs to be the same degree of enthusiasm for fostering, promoting, and developing good character. If “Brigham Young University has always cared as much about strong moral character as about great mental capability,” (BYU, 2007, para. 22) this community needs to be as deliberately constructed and fortified as BYU’s community of learning has been.

**Development.** Given the very basic technical requirements of the pilot, there were no unexpected events during the development of the *BYU Aims Program*’s materials, site, and surveys. However, I do wish that I had planned for a more rigorous formative evaluation of program content, specifically the challenge activities, during the development process. Participant feedback expressed both a degree of being bored or unimpressed by the challenge activities and feeling that the challenge activities were too demanding. This suggests that it would have been wise to test challenge activities with a student focus group prior to launching the pilot. This may have also helped develop a better understanding of how challenges could be tailored to attract and engage students.

**Implementation.** From a technical and procedural standpoint, the implementation of the pilot went very well. However, it is difficult to say the implementation was truly successful with

such a high attrition rate. With an overall attrition rate of over 90 percent, it is difficult to make any assumptions about either the implementation of the program or the program itself. This underlines the idea that evaluation is a central component of implementation and that implementation alone does not render useful information. One issue that may have had an impact on implementation and the inability to maintain participation is the incentive. It is likely that, for at least some students, a \$25 gift card was not sufficient motivation to complete the program. I am unconvinced, however, that an increased incentive is the best option for promoting lifelong character development. Another issue may have been that the delivery and platform of the pilot via Google were either not attractive or not accessible to the participants. A future test of the *BYU Aims Program* would need to utilize a platform that features both the functionality and professional aesthetic that the pilot site lacked, including individual user logins and tracking capabilities.

**Evaluation.** I felt that the evaluation plan was sufficient for the needs of the study. However, as with implementation, the attrition rate transformed the actual evaluation from examining whether the program was viable to trying to figure out what was not working with the program. Not only could I not generalize any information about participant experiences, but I could only speculate all of the possible weaknesses or issues with the program. This evaluation also demonstrated that surveys and focus groups, no matter how well prepared or seemingly accessible, are not the only components of an effective evaluation. The biggest obstacle to the success of this pilot and its evaluation was the lack of participant responses. In the attitude of full disclosure, the five participants that completed the entire pilot were individuals who had a direct relationship with me: two of my coworkers, a close friend, my husband, and my sister's roommate. I entirely underestimated participants' willingness or available time to provide

feedback. If I were to repeat the project, I would make a more concerted effort to engage participant feedback, whether it be budgeting more resources for incentivizing focus group attendance or altering the evaluation surveys.

### **Concluding Insights**

While pilot participation was not outstanding, this experience has yielded valuable insights into the design process. First, the selection of a design model is not so much about organizing your work, as it is the foundation for what you will create. My selection of a systematic model was adequate for the project, but it could have been better. The design model needs to be intentionally selected to meet the needs of the prospective design, the needs of your client, and your skills as a designer.

Second, thoroughly knowing your target learner is the linchpin of your design. Participant attrition and feedback may have demonstrated that there were issues with the program, but they also suggested some discrepancies between my assumptions about the target population and the target population itself. As instructional strategy, content, and delivery decisions are all based on the understanding of the learner garnered from the target population analysis, the project would have benefitted from more research and the inclusion of additional student perspectives. A design plan should allot more time and resources for the target population analysis than I did for this project in order to gain a more robust understanding of the learner.

Finally, a design and development project takes time, specifically for an iterative process of implementation, evaluation, and modification. While the pilot did provide some valuable insights regarding the future of a character development program at BYU, my design plan and

allotted timeframe may not have been sufficient for the scale of the program and its intended outcomes.

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## Appendix A

### Target Population Analysis

<i>Findings</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Implications</i>
<i>Personal data</i>		
<i>Physical characteristics:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Participants will be predominantly between the ages of 18 and 30.</li> <li>· Participants will be both male and female.</li> </ul>	<a href="http://yfacts.byu.edu/viewarticle.aspx?id=292">http://yfacts.byu.edu/viewarticle.aspx?id=292</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Assumes a moderate level of reading comprehension and the ability to follow directions and self-directed effort.</li> <li>· Challenge instructions, as well as supplemental materials, should not demonstrate a gender bias in terms of either design or content.</li> </ul>
<i>Location:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Participants will primarily reside in Utah County, Utah.</li> <li>· The program will be accessed via the internet.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Challenge activities should not require movement beyond the Wasatch Front.</li> <li>· The program needs to be accessible in multiple browsers, possibly also in mobile formats.</li> </ul>
<i>Socioeconomic:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Target demographic is not race/ethnicity specific.</li> <li>· Most participants have limited finances available.</li> <li>· Participants may have children/dependents</li> <li>· Participants will be students, but may be employed in any field</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Program content should be either multicultural or generic and free from racial bias.</li> <li>· The program will have minimal viability if it imposes a financial burden.</li> <li>· Challenges and content should be family-friendly.</li> <li>· Challenges must not be discipline/occupation exclusive.</li> </ul>
<i>Self-image:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Participants will likely view themselves as academically and socially adept.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Some participants may have some limitations or insecurities regarding their social or academic performance. Challenges must present possible goals as being within the participants' zone of proximal development.</li> </ul>
<i>Motivation:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Prospective participants will vary in their interest in the program.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The program will need to demonstrate the value of the BYU Aims and provide sufficient incentives to attract individuals who are not as highly self-motivated.</li> </ul>

*Willingness to change:*

- Participants will have a moderately high degree of interest in self-improvement.
- While most students understand the value of self-improvement and character, their willingness to change may not overcome other demands on their time.

*Existing skills and knowledge**Skills in content area:*

- Participants will have moderate to high skill with operating computers and using web-based interfaces.
- The program needs to be accessible in multiple browsers, possibly also in mobile formats.

*Knowledge of content area:*

- Participants will have varying degrees of understanding of the Aims of a BYU Education.
- Participants will likely have had previous exposure to some of the Aims, particularly “intellectually enlarging.”
- The program will need to both introduce the Aims and demonstrate the value/relevance of each Aim.
- The program should focus more on developing traits/character within the context of the non-academic Aims.

*Existing experience:*

- Participants will likely have had previous exposure to character traits in both spiritual and secular contexts (e.g., integrity, reverence, modesty, etc.)
- Many participants will have previously participated in goal-oriented programs (e.g., Boy Scouts program, Young Womanhood Recognition).
- The program will not need to devote much content to defining traits, but will need to present multiple examples or challenges that illustrate the traits.
- The program will not need to focus on the mechanics of challenges or how to set goals, but rather what kinds of goals can be set (i.e. level of difficulty, domain, etc.).

*Self-directed learning:*

- Participants will vary in motivation.
- While some participants will be intrinsically motivated to participate in the program, significant considerations will need to be made to draw in others. This may include the length/difficulty of the challenges, the incentive, and an overt demonstration of the program’s value added.
- Participants will have varying degrees of engagement in the program and differing traits they wish to develop as part of the program.
- The program will need to offer some flexibility in the challenges, allowing students to tailor their goals to their available time and personal interest/need.

*Educational history and learning methods*

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*Level of education:*

- Participants will be predominantly undergraduate students.
- The program instructional content should be presented at least a high school-appropriate level of reading comprehension. Program challenges may also be applied to course work/experiences.

*Attitudes toward learning:*

- Participants may vary in their attitudes toward learning overall.
- The program will need to demonstrate the role of character in education and the purpose(s) of education itself.

*Preferred methods of learning:*

- Participant learning preferences may vary, but most participants will be comfortable/familiar with easily accessible, efficient delivery.
- The program will need to communicate content/messages in small chunks or modules in order to both maintain engagement and fit within time constraints.

*Ability to use in the future:*

- Users will differ in their ability to generalize what they learn in the program to their own lives.
  - The program will not only need to guide users through challenges, but present challenges that are directly applicable to “real life.”
- 

*Special needs*

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*Physical impairments:*

- Users will need to have the physical and cognitive capacity to operate computers and software.
- While this may provide some constraints for users with fine motor impairments or cognitive limitations, challenges should be able to be tailored to the individual abilities of each participant.

*Time limitations:*

- Users will likely be using this program during “free time” at home, school, or work.
  - This program will need to minimize the length of instructional units and exercises so users may fit learning into their varying schedules. Similarly, challenges should not be too time-intensive. A web-based format will help users to have greater flexibility in accessing the program and tracking their progress.
-

**Appendix B**

## Current Training and Resource Analysis

<i>Findings</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Implications</i>
	<i>Organization</i>	
<p><i>Organization:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This program will be available online and capable of handling multiple users. Ideally, the final product would use RouteY/Net IDs for accessing the program online.</li> </ul> <p><i>Location:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The BYU Aims Program site will be accessed anywhere where internet access is available.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program would need to integrate with BYU's Central Authentication System (CAS).</li> <li>The website will need to be supported by server that will support access from multiple locations/browsers. This will require funds to provide technicians that can ensure the server and web platform are maintained and updated. Users will be responsible for the maintenance of their own devices to ensure that the website will run properly.</li> </ul>
	<i>Product(s)/Service(s)</i>	
<p><i>Competing products/services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other BYU resources/programs that currently offer some student enrichment:</li> <li>Honors Program</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the BYU Aims Program is not intended to replace existing resources for, it will need to provide a structure and motivation using these resources.</li> <li>The Honors Program requires service opportunities, but does not emphasize Character Building. The Honors Program may be an ideal population and context for testing further iterations of the BYU Aims Program.</li> </ul>

- Student Wellness
- Student Wellness provides a hub of information about resources in a variety of wellness domains across campus. However, it does not provide a framework to scaffold purposive development. The purpose of the BYU Aims Program may be aligned with the purpose of Student Wellness, so their information may be an excellent source for challenge activities.
- BYUSA
- BYUSA hosts a variety of student events that promote character development. Their events may be integrated into challenge activities. The support of BYUSA would be vital in promoting the Aims Program.
- Center for Service and Learning
- The Center for Service and Learning (CSL) provides excellent resources for service activities, but no framework to motivate or track involvement. The BYU Aims Program could utilize CSL's resources for challenge activities.
- Reusable elements
- Challenge activities and supplementary materials may be reused after two yearlong cycles, addressing two Aims per semester.

*Overall course structure:*

- Most existing programs on campus provide resources, but no framework. This allows a high degree of learner control, but little motivation or draw for students who are already busy.
- The BYU Aims Program needs to maintain learner control within the program, but needs to provide a framework that is both encouraging and challenging. Essentially, the Aims Program needs to orient learners to the Aims and the idea of purposeful development in areas other than academics.

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*Developing Product*

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*Dimensions:*

- This program will be web-based. Content development will require video, programming, and writing technicians to develop and launch the product.
- While multiple media forms will enhance the learner's experience, this will place a greater demand on hardware, software, and development. Program media should not require excessive manpower to develop or maintain.
- The program will ideally support multiple simultaneous users.
- The volume of use will only be able to be determined after the program is launched (at least in a beta version).

- Product development will require some start-up funding.

*Delivery:*

- The bulk of instructional content will be text-based. Occasionally, existing multimedia materials provided by BYU, Independent Study, or LDS.org will be used.

- The use of CAS and hosting the Aims Program site via a BYU server should be adequate in handling this access.
  - To supply the necessary tools and manpower to create this Aims Program site, there will need to be an ample start-up fund. Possible sources for funds include BYUSA or a Templeton Foundation grant.
  - 
  - Some challenges will rely on a foundational text, so written instructions for challenges need to be as concise as possible.
-



## Appendix C

## Proposed Project Schedule

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>	<i>Est. Hours</i>
<i>Program and Unit Design/Development</i>	This phase will focus on the design and development of the Aims Program and each of the four Aim-specific challenges.	6/29/2011	8/15/2011	150
<i>Program Review, Testing, and Preparation for Pilot Launch</i>	The pilot program website will be tested and the challenge materials will be evaluated for consistency and quality. All instructional materials will be prepared.	8/17/2011	8/31/2011	40
<i>Program Pilot Phase 1</i>	A sample of CTL employees will complete an initial survey and complete one of two challenges.	9/1/2011	10/14/2011	30 + 4 per participant
<i>Pilot 1 Evaluation and Reporting</i>	Participants will complete a post-challenge survey/questionnaire. These results will be combined with feedback/troubleshooting records from the pilot	10/17/2011	10/21/2011	20 + max. 1 per participant
<i>Program Pilot Phase 2</i>	A sample of CTL employees will complete a second challenge; participants divided between the remaining two challenges.	10/24/2011	12/3/2011	30 + 4 per participant
<i>Pilot 2 Evaluation and Reporting</i>	Participants will complete a post-challenge survey/questionnaire. Additionally, participants will complete a survey examining their overall experience.	12/5/2011	1/6/2012	20 + avg. 1 per participant
<i>Final Evaluation, Report Writing and Presentation Prep</i>	Pre- and post- program surveys and pilot data will be analyzed. A summative evaluation report will be written. The results will be integrated in the final paper.	1/7/2012	1/20/2012	25

## Appendix D

### BYU Aims Program Pilot Challenge Activities

<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Intellectually Enlarging</i>	
<i>Class Preparation and Performance</i>	Review the syllabi for each of your courses. Identify what is expected from you in the course, both in terms of assignments and your individual preparation. Identify one area of your in class performance or prior preparation that you can improve (completing all assigned readings, establishing an effective system for taking notes, etc.). Write this goal on each of your syllabi. On a 3x5 card, write the goal and 3-5 specific steps that will help you meet this goal. Keep the card in your school notebook or in another place where it is easily seen and accessed. In your journal, record your progress and reflect on how your increased preparation or effort changes your experience in class.
<i>Respect for the Arts</i>	Visit an exhibit or performance on campus with a friend. Discuss how respect is critical to presentation and scholarly critique. How you can demonstrate respect for others' work, even if you may not necessarily agree with it or like it? How can you improve the degree to which you demonstrate this respect? Every week reflect in your journal on opportunities you had to demonstrate respect. Evaluate your progress.
<i>Study Group</i>	In one of your classes, form a study group. Read <i>How to Organize and Conduct Effective Study Groups</i> . Use the guidelines discussed to form your study group and to increase the value of your experience. In your journal, report on your study group's progress and how the study group helps you with the class.
<i>BYU Devotionals and Forums</i>	Attend all the BYU Devotionals and Forums. Take notes on each week's presentation and include reflections or ideas on how the principles taught can improve your academic and personal learning
<i>Ten Characteristics of an Educated Person</i>	Read Elder Hugh W. Pinnock's <i>Ten Characteristics of an Educated Person</i> . Select one characteristic he discusses and make a goal to apply it over the next six weeks. Record your progress and experiences in your journal.
<i>Character Building</i>	
<i>Responding to Correction or Criticism</i>	Read Michael P. Thompson's <i>Who Will Bear Reproof?</i> (BYU Devotional July 2002). Reflect on how you respond to correction, criticism, or guidance. From your supervisors? Church leaders? Parents? Friends? Spouse? Identify ways that your response could be improved. Make a goal to improve your response. In your journal, record your goal and specific plans for changing your behaviors and attitudes. Over the next six weeks, work towards this goal. Record your progress and experiences in your journal.
<i>Self-Discipline</i>	Complete Independent Study's free <i>Self-Discipline</i> personal development course. Follow all lesson activities. Record your responses to each reading and in your journal. Follow the three steps identified in the course summary to make a goal to improve your self-mastery. Record your plan in your journal. Over the remainder of the challenge, make sure to record your progress and experiences in your journal.

- Respect for Diversity* Read Elder Alexander B. Morrison's "*No More Strangers*" (Sept. 2000 Ensign). In your journal, reflect on the principle of respect for diversity. Use the discussion questions to guide your thoughts. Use your responses to the questions to guide you in making a goal. Make sure your goal is specific to you and represents an area in which you can work to build the respect Elder Morrison discussed. Record your goal and specific plans for making necessary changes to your behaviors and attitudes. Over the next six weeks, work towards this goal. Look for opportunities to identify diversity. Record your progress and experiences in your journal.
- Self-Evaluation* In your journal, complete a self-evaluation. Spend some time thinking through the different areas of your life, such as school, work, church, physical and emotional health, and social life. In your journal, list areas of your life where you may be currently struggling or particularly want to improve. For each item you list, identify a couple possible changes you could make that would improve the issue. Select one item and solution and make a goal. Over the next six weeks, record you daily efforts and progress in your journal.
- Appropriate Zeal* Read President Cecil O. Samuelson's *Appropriate Zeal* (BYU Devotional September 2010). Reflect on how you demonstrate your feelings about politics, sports, or controversial issues. In your journal, make two columns. In your mind, recall experiences where you have demonstrated intense feelings. In the first column, write down all negative behaviors you may have exhibited. In the second column, identify the issue or event associated with each behavior. Was it at a ball game? Where you in an argument with a roommate? Carefully, review these lists and look for patterns or themes. Identify one area where your behavior or attitude could particularly use improvement. Make a goal and plan how you change your behaviors to more appropriately and effectively demonstrate your feelings. Record your plan in your journal. Keep a record of your progress.

*Spiritually Strengthening*

- For the Strength of the Youth* Read *For the Strength of the Youth*. In your journal, evaluate yourself using the standards it outlines. Identify one section you feel you could improve on (e.g., Gratitude, Dating, Honesty, etc.) and make a specific, personal goal to work on for the next six weeks. Record your experiences and progress in your journal.
- Modesty* Read *Modesty: Reverence for the Lord* by Elder Robert D. Hales and the BYU Honor Code. In your journal, reflect on why modesty is important. How does modesty influence various aspects of your life (e.g., social, professional, spiritual)? Carefully examine your own dress and grooming choices using the standards outlined in the Honor Code. Identify one way you could improve. Record this goal in your journal and reflect on your goal each day, as you get ready. Record your experiences in your journal.
- To Learn and to Teach More Effectively* Read *To Learn and To Teach More Effectively* by Elder Richard G. Scott. Start a notebook specifically for recording spiritual promptings and experiences. For the next six weeks, take the notebook with you and record any impressions you have throughout the day. Each Sunday, review the impressions from the previous week and record your thoughts in your journal.

<i>Moral Courage</i>	Read <i>Moral Courage</i> by President Henry B. Eyring. Develop a lesson for use in Family Home Evening. In your preparation, record in your journal your thoughts about President Eyring's message. Reflect on opportunities you have had to demonstrate moral courage. Identify ways you could improve. Present your lesson in Family Home Evening. Record any thoughts or ideas that may have come up during the lesson in your journal. For the following weeks, look for opportunities to exercise moral courage. Record your experiences in your journal.
<i>Integrity and Values</i>	Read <i>Integrity and Values: A Discussion with Elder Robert D. Hales</i> (April 2005 Ensign). Select one of the "Helps for Home Evening" activities for use in your next Family Home Evening and carry it out with your family (or family home evening group). Alternatively, complete one of the activities with a friend or roommate. Record your experiences in your journal.
<i>Lifelong Learning &amp; Service</i>	
<i>Increasing Performance at Work</i>	Identify the responsibilities you have at work. Evaluate how well your performance meets the requirements of your position. Identify one area of your work that needs improvement. Create a plan that outlines specific behaviors or actions that are necessary to make this change. If possible, discuss this plan with your supervisor. Keep a copy of the plan clearly visible in your workspace. At the end of the challenge, reflect on your progress and how it has influenced your performance.
<i>Service and Respect</i>	Volunteer with an organization that serves the homeless, impoverished, elderly, ill, or individuals with special needs and engage in service at least three times. Following each service experience, reflect on how your service increases your respect for those you serve. Record your experiences in your journal.
<i>Respect</i>	Read the article <i>Respect for Diversity of Faiths</i> and the eleventh <i>Article of Faith</i> . In your journal, reflect on how you perceive and talk about faiths other than your own. Acknowledge how you feel when others talk about your faith, both positive and negative. Select a faith that you particularly do not understand. Make a goal to increase your understanding of that faith and appreciation for the positive influence it (or its members) may have on their communities. In your daily conversations or discussions, be conscious of how you discuss individuals of other faiths or their beliefs. Record your experiences in your journal.
<i>Personal Finance</i>	Complete Independent Study's free <i>Personal Finance</i> personal development course.
<i>My Community, My Responsibility</i>	Reflect on your role within your community. Read talks, devotionals, or articles that talk about community responsibility to help you develop a better sense of your responsibilities as a resident and citizen. What aspects of your community would you like to see changed or improved? How could you get involved to work toward those changes? Research community-based service opportunities and participate in at least one community service project. Following your service, reflect on your experience. In your journal, record your thoughts on your responsibilities toward your community. How has participating in community service changed how you view your responsibility? How do you plan to fulfill community responsibilities throughout your life?

**Appendix E**

## Phase One Registration Survey

First Name

---

Last Name

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RouteY/NetID

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Email (where you could be contacted regarding this study)

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Current BYU Affiliation

- A. Freshman (0-29.9 credit hours)
- B. Sophomore (30-59.9 credit hours)
- C. Junior (60-89.9 credit hours)
- D. Senior (90+ credit hours)
- E. Graduate Student
- F. BYU Faculty, Admin., or Staff

Program

If a student, indicate your program of study. If a BYU employee, indicate the department where you work.

---

Why are you participating?

Briefly indicate why you are interested in participating in the study.

---

Please indicate which challenge activities you have selected for this phase of the study.

Select one or more challenges per Aim.

Character Building

- Responding to Correction or Criticism
- Self-Discipline
- Respect
- Self-Evaluation
- Appropriate Zeal

Intellectually Enlarging

- Class Preparation and Performance
- Respect
- Study Group
- BYU Devotionals and Forums
- Ten Characteristics of an Educated Person

**Appendix F**

## Phase One Reporting and Phase Two Registration Survey

RouteY/NetID

Please indicate which challenge activities you have completed.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Character Building                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectually Enlarging                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to Correction or Criticism | <input type="checkbox"/> Class Preparation and Performance         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Discipline                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Respect                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respect                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Group                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Evaluation                       | <input type="checkbox"/> BYU Devotionals and Forums                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Zeal                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Ten Characteristics of an Educated Person |

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	D	SD	SA	A	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

Participating in this challenge increased my awareness of the Character Building Aim of a BYU Education.

This challenge increased my understanding of the principle it discussed.

This challenge helped me to better understand what character is.

This challenge helped me to understand character in practice.

This challenge helped me to develop my own character.

I feel this experience has helped me develop goal-setting skills.

Participation in this challenge was a waste of time.

This challenge did not help me with my personal life.

Did this challenge help you identify and achieve personal goals?

- Yes  
 No

Explain your response.

Please indicate whether you completed your selected Intellectually Enlarging challenge(s).

- Yes  
 No

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	D	SD	SA	A	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

Participating in this challenge increased my awareness of the Intellectually Enlarging Aim of a BYU Education.

This challenge increased my understanding of the principle it discussed.

This challenge helped me to better understand what character is.

This challenge helped me to better understand how knowledge is developed and applied.

This challenge helped me to develop my own wisdom/ knowledge.

I feel this experience has helped me develop goal-setting skills.

Participation in this challenge was a waste of time.

This challenge did not help me with my personal life.

Did this challenge help you identify and achieve personal goals?

Yes

No

Explain your response.

---

In your own words, what is the relationship between character development and education?

---

Do you believe that character development is an important part of education?

Yes

No

Why or why not?

---

Do you believe that character development is important in your life now and in the future?

Yes

No

Explain your response.

---

Please indicate which challenge activities you have selected for this phase of the study.

Select one or more challenges per Aim.

Lifelong Learning and Service

Increasing Performance at Work

Service and Respect

Respect

Personal Finance

My Community, My  
Responsibility

Spiritually Strengthening

For the Strength of the Youth

Modesty

To Learn and To Teach More  
Effectively

Moral Courage

Integrity and Values

**Appendix G**

## Phase Two Reporting Survey

RouteY/NetID  

---

Please indicate which challenge activities you have completed.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifelong Learning and Service   | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritually Strengthening              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing Performance at Work  | <input type="checkbox"/> For the Strength of the Youth          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service and Respect             | <input type="checkbox"/> Modesty                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respect                         | <input type="checkbox"/> To Learn and To Teach More Effectively |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Finance                | <input type="checkbox"/> Moral Courage                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My Community, My Responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity and Values                   |

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	D	SD	SA	A	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

Participating in this challenge increased my awareness of the Lifelong Learning and Service Aim of a BYU Education.

This challenge increased my understanding of the principle it discussed.

This challenge helped me to better understand what lifelong learning and service is.

This challenge helped me to understand how lifelong learning can be integrated into my daily life.

This challenge helped me to better understand my own interests.

I feel this experience has helped me develop goal-setting skills.

Participation in this challenge was a waste of time.

This challenge did not help me with my personal life.

Did this challenge help you identify and achieve personal goals?

- Yes  
 No

Explain your response.  

---

Please indicate whether you completed your selected Spiritually Strengthening challenge(s).

- Yes  
 No

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	D	SD	SA	A	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

Participating in this challenge increased my awareness of the Spiritually Strengthening Aim of a BYU Education.



- This challenge increased my understanding of the principle it discussed.  
 This challenge helped me to better understand the relationship between spiritual and secular knowledge.  
 This challenge helped me to better understand how I can become stronger spiritually.  
 This challenge helped me to develop spiritually.  
 Participation in this challenge was a waste of time.  
 This challenge did not help me with my personal life.

Did this challenge help you identify and achieve personal goals?

- Yes  
 No

Explain your response.

---

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	D	SD	SA	A	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

- The BYU Aims program was a good experience.  
 The BYU Aims program changed my perception of the purpose of education.  
 I enjoyed the BYU Aims Program challenges.  
 BYU Aims Program and individual challenge directions were easy to understand.  
 I liked being able to select challenges from a set of options.  
 I would be willing to participate in the BYU Aims Program again if it were officially launched by the University.  
 The BYU Aims Program has increased my desire to engage in Lifelong Learning and Service.  
 The BYU Aims Program helped me learn how to identify and meet my own personal goals.

Has the BYU Aims Program helped you?

- Yes  
 No

Explain your response.

---

What opportunities and benefits do you feel that the BYU Aims Program offers students?

---

What specific aspects of the BYU Aims Program overall do you like the most?

---

If you could change one thing about the BYU Aims Program, what would it be?

---

What could we do to make the BYU Aims Program better?

---

## **Appendix H**

### Focus Group Questions

On a scale of 1-10, what is your gut reaction to the BYU Aims Program so far?  
(1 = I hate it, 5 = getting warm and 10 = extremely awesome)

Why do you respond this way?

What simply doesn't work with the Program?

What one thing would you change?

What works with the BYU Aims Program?

What specific aspects of the BYU Aims Program do you like the most?

What could we do to make the BYU Aims Program better?

What is character?

Is character development necessary for education? Why or why not?

How is character development pertinent to your own life?

Are you more familiar with the Aims of a BYU Education after participating in the program?

How has your BYU experience thus far met the Aims of a BYU Education?

Has the BYU Aims Program offered experiences that help you meet these Aims?

In your own words, summarize what we have learned today.