

Seminaries and Institutes of Religion
Policy Manual Excerpts

Stake Seminary Teachers

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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Information Management

DATA PRIVACY

The records of the Church and Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) contain confidential information, whether on paper, in computers, or in other electronic media. It is the responsibility of each employee, stake seminary and institute of religion teacher, or S&I missionary to protect that confidential information by handling, storing, and disposing of the information in an appropriate manner. Confidential information may be defined as any information that may jeopardize a person's identity or personal dealings when obtained by unauthorized sources.

General Privacy Guidelines

- Confidential information available through the Church or S&I is to be used for S&I business-related purposes only. Such information should never be shared with anyone that has not been authorized beyond the scope listed herein, to have access to it and is not to be used for personal, political, commercial, or advertising purposes.
- Confidential information may not be given to individuals, agencies, or third parties that may be conducting research or surveys. S&I personnel should not provide priesthood leaders with lists of individuals in wards and stakes outside of the priesthood leader's stewardship. These leaders have processes in place to obtain this information through authorized Church systems. Any request for confidential information must be directed to the assistant administrator responsible for your area.
- Printed reports that contain confidential information or directories must be shredded before being discarded. Electronic media that contains or has contained confidential information must be deleted, erased, or made unreadable before it is discarded.
- All requests from the news media for confidential information must be directed to the local Church Public Affairs' representative.
- Usernames and passwords should be kept confidential and should not be shared with anyone.

Potential Student Information

The recruitment of potential students is a primary business operation for S&I. Personal information about students must be protected. If an instructor requests that student leaders assist in contacting potential students, a printed list of the names, addresses, and/or phone numbers may be shared for this purpose. Any questions or concerns about sharing potential student information should be directed to Information Services in the central office.

Printed seminary and institute recruitment lists should only contain the student's name, address, phone number, and email address. No other information should be included on these reports.

Enrollment Information

Information about students must be protected. No information about students should be given to any person other than their parents or legal guardians (if under 18 years old), current priesthood leaders, authorized S&I employees, stake seminary and institute of religion teachers, or S&I missionaries. Limited contact information (name, address, phone number, and/or email address) may be shared when an instructor requests that student leaders assist in contacting other students (for example, for fellowshipping, assignments, devotionals, activities, and so forth). Any questions or concerns about sharing enrollment information should be directed to S&I Information Services in the central office.

- Information on students of other faiths should not be shared with anyone beyond the immediate S&I program in which they are enrolled without the individual's permission.
- Pictures of students should not be published, shared, or used for any publication other than the teacher's picture class roll unless an institute student or the parents of a seminary student has given permission by accepting either the Institute Registration Agreement form or the Seminary Registration Agreement form.
- Personal information, such as social security numbers or other government identification numbers, for students and stake seminary and institute of religion teachers should never be collected outside of S&I applications.
- Enrollment or performance information of a student in class should never be shared with anyone that has not been authorized to have access to it.
- Summarized data, such as the total number of students enrolled, should be taken from the annual S&I report.

Priesthood Leader and Church Organizational Information

Information about priesthood leaders and the organization of the Church is owned by the Church and not S&I. Although S&I employees, stake seminary and institute of religion teachers, and S&I missionaries have been granted permission to use this information for S&I business-related purposes, it does not grant permission to share the information with other parties.

The website cdol.lds.org/cdol/outsideConditionsOfUse.jsf contains the complete data privacy agreement for priesthood leaders and Church organizations.

Any questions or concerns about sharing priesthood leader information should be directed to the Church Member and Leader Services' office in the Church Office Building.

Information obtained from the Church Directory of Organizations and Leaders (CDOL) is to be used for legitimate S&I business purposes only.

Note: When it is necessary to contact a priesthood leader, it is recommended that this contact be made at the priesthood leader's home rather than contacting him at work.

COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

There are inherent challenges and potential liabilities when using copyrighted audio, visual, and written materials. Copyrighted materials may be used in the classroom under certain conditions but cannot be distributed in any form to others unless approved through the appropriate process. Distributing copyrighted materials without the permission of the

copyright owner is both illegal and dishonest and may open the Church and the individual employee to unnecessary liability.

Use of Copyrighted Materials

S&I teachers and administrators may use copyrighted material in their individual classrooms as long as the use of the material is in harmony with each of the following principles (for additional information, see “Guidelines,” “The Use of Church-Produced Material,” and “Use of Non-Church-Produced Material in sections 5.10.1–3 of *Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* ([2012], [72-74](#)):

The use of copyrighted material must:

- Help the students learn what is important.
- Directly contribute to the purpose of the lesson.
- Be used sparingly.
- Be worth the time it takes to prepare and present.
- Be appropriate and in keeping with Church standards.

Copyrighted material, for example, should not be used if it:

- Is used as a time filler.
- Is merely used for entertainment purposes.
- Is controversial or sensational in nature.
- Contains undesirable or potentially offensive features.
- Comes from a questionable or inappropriate source.

Classroom use of copyrighted materials includes all forms and types of face-to-face presentations including but not limited to classrooms, assemblies, firesides, and inservice meetings.

If a question arises about whether or not the potential use of copyrighted materials is in harmony with the above principles, the teacher should consult with his or her immediate supervisor. If it cannot be resolved, the immediate supervisor may contact the area director for a final decision.

Distribution of Copyrighted Materials

Distribution of copyrighted materials in any form requires the authorization of the Church Correlation, Intellectual Property Division (IPD). (Distribution is defined as sharing copyrighted material with anyone else, including students and S&I teachers and administrators.) Those who distribute copyrighted materials without IPD authorization will be held personally liable.

Unless otherwise noted, authorization has been given for distribution of excerpts from written Church publications.

The S&I Publishing Product Management Division has been given the responsibility by S&I to work with copyright owners in obtaining the necessary permissions and approvals. S&I teachers and administrators are not to contact or negotiate with individual copyright owners.

A [Clearance to Distribute Copyrighted Materials](#) form (00289SI) is available on the S&I website for use when requesting authorization prior to distributing copyrighted materials. This form

Stake Seminary Teachers (Outside the United States)

must be submitted through the appropriate S&I channels well in advance so that authorization might be obtained.

Electronic Communication

Under the direction of priesthood leaders and parents, stake seminary teachers may communicate electronically with seminary students.

Seminary

INTRODUCTION

Seminary programs provide weekday religious instruction for youth who attend public, private, or home schools. Students may enroll in seminary if they are at least in the ninth grade (or equivalent) and will turn 14 years of age or older during the school year.

ESTABLISHING SEMINARY PROGRAMS

Seminary is intended to be a weekday religious education program. Factors to consider when establishing the appropriate type, or types, of seminary include (1) adherence to Church Board of Education policies; (2) LDS population density; (3) Church financial and physical facility constraints; (4) travel (distance, expense, and safety); (5) legal constraints; and (6) local school policy and calendars. With the approval of the area director, adaptations may be made for eligible students with disabilities. There are two types of seminary programs available:

Released-time seminary programs. Released-time seminary programs are established adjacent to a specific school. They are generally held in Church-owned seminary buildings. With the approval of the Church Board of Education and in cooperation with local Church school boards and adjacent school administrators, released-time seminary may be established in some areas of the United States and Canada. Released-time seminary classes are taught by, or under the direction of, full-time S&I teachers and administrators and are held during school hours according to the class schedule at the adjacent school.

Stake seminary programs. Stake seminary programs are established in stakes rather than adjacent to a specific school. They are established under the direction of local stake priesthood leaders in counsel with the S&I coordinator. A stake seminary class may be taught in a Church meetinghouse, the home of a stake teacher, or another location convenient to students. Stake seminary programs offer daily, home-study, online, special education, and deaf education classes. They are taught by stake teachers and supervised by full-time S&I administrators. When an existing seminary program is divided or reassigned, the appropriate records should be transferred to the new administrator.

Area offices ensure that each stake within an area is assigned an agent seminary program to assist with seminary operations. Additionally, where necessary, area offices ensure that the schools adjacent to each released-time seminary are assigned to the correct S&I program.

Local Priesthood Direction

The stake presidency should encourage and monitor the participation of eligible youth in seminary programs in their stake. Stake leadership meeting agendas should regularly include Church education matters. At the invitation of the stake presidency, a local S&I representative may attend the portion of the meetings when these items are discussed. To be most helpful, a local S&I representative should submit agenda items to be considered for each of these meetings. Items that might be considered during these meetings could include:

Stake Seminary Teachers (Outside the United States)

- Plans for enrolling youth in seminary.
- Correlating and approving seminary calendar items.
- Reporting on enrollment, attendance, and completion.
- Planning seminary graduation.
- Discussing the challenges facing the seminary program.
- Calling and supporting stake teachers.

For more detailed information on seminary matters under the direction of local priesthood leaders, see “Responsibilities of Priesthood Leaders” (*Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops* [2010], 11.1).

Online Seminary in Released-time Areas

Online classes may be organized as a replacement for home-study classes in released-time areas. They are not intended to replace face-to-face classes. Students are considered for online seminary in the same way they are considered for home-study seminary in released-time areas. For example, students who cannot meet each weekday because of limiting factors (for example, school credit concerns, social needs, learning needs, and so forth) could be considered. To participate, students must receive approval from the stake president or his designee, parents, and the seminary principal and have access to the required technology.

When fewer than 10 students from a given program require an online class, they should be combined with a class from another seminary program in the area.

Stake Seminary

Stake seminary is offered through (1) daily classes that meet outside of school hours when local schools are in session, (2) home-study classes, or (3) online classes. Classes are usually organized within the ward or stake depending on the number of students available and the distance students must travel as well as security, availability of technology, and local economic conditions. Preference is given to classes where students meet face-to-face. The type of class offered and the students who may participate (including students from other stakes) is determined locally by the stake president in counsel with the S&I coordinator. Classes are not held on Sunday unless the Church Board of Education has given specific approval. Where possible, seminary classes should be organized with the same number of terms as the schools the students are attending (two to four terms per year). Where this is not feasible, seminary should be organized with at least two terms of comparatively equal length per year.

On occasion, daily, home-study, and online seminary students within a stake may meet together in person for instruction under the direction of the S&I representative. Under the direction of stake Young Men and Young Women leaders, an activity could be held in conjunction with this instruction.

Facility and Equipment Support for Stake Seminary

Facility support for stake seminary classes is the responsibility of the local stake. Stake presidents can request approved equipment and furnishings through the local facilities management group. The rental of facilities for daily or home-study seminary classes is not authorized. It is the responsibility of each participant (the teacher and the student and his or her

family) to provide his or her own technological hardware and internet access to participate in online seminary. Additional computer technical support for online teachers and students may be requested from the ward or stake technology specialist.

Daily Seminary Classes

Daily seminary classes should meet each day school is in session either before or after school. If a school holds classes six days a week, seminary classes should be held on five of those days. The recommended class length is 50 minutes with a minimum of 40 minutes of instruction. Classes are generally taught by stake seminary teachers.

Online Seminary Classes

When students cannot meet each weekday because of distance or other compelling factors, online classes can be organized at the ward, stake, or multi-stake level. Online classes are not intended to replace established daily or released-time classes. Online seminary is preferred to home-study classes when students and teachers have daily access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection. With the approval of stake president(s) and in counsel with S&I coordinator(s), students from multiple stakes may participate in an online seminary class. In order to participate, parents must submit a completed Seminary Registration form (PD50048392) and have daily access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection.

Under the direction of a stake teacher, online students complete online assignments four days each week. Additionally, the teacher and all students meet together in one face-to-face class each week. In locations where this is not possible, the weekly class may be held virtually (using web conferencing tools).

Home-Study Seminary Classes

Home-study seminary classes can be organized in places where students cannot attend a daily class because of distance or other factors such as a disability. Students are provided with S&I-prepared materials to assist in their daily (weekday) study at home. Students participate in one or more classes each week under the direction of a stake teacher to discuss their studies.

Home-School Students

Home-school students who desire seminary credit should attend the regular released-time or stake seminary class available in their area. Home-school students and others not attending adjacent schools may enroll in seminary if they will turn 14 or older during the school year and they are at least in the ninth grade or its equivalent. Seminary credit will be granted for participation in programs that are approved and offered by the stake under the direction of the stake president and an assigned S&I teacher. These teachers are expected to adhere to the criterion specified above under "Home-Study Seminary Classes."

SEMINARY OPERATIONS

Courses

The following one-year courses are taught in seminary:

- Old Testament

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- New Testament
- Book of Mormon
- Doctrine and Covenants and Church History

They are taught on a prescribed four-year repeating cycle so students will have the opportunity to complete all four courses during the four years of their secondary education. Teachers should carefully pace lessons each year so they finish the course by the end of the school year but do not run out of lessons before the school year is over.

Materials

Selected teacher and student materials are provided by S&I. Many of them are available in multiple formats and are available for order and download at store.lds.org. Students and teachers are encouraged where possible to use digital versions of these materials, which can be found online at lds.org/manual. Before ordering printed materials, the following questions should be considered:

- How many students are likely to be enrolled?
- How many printed copies of each item does the unit already have available?
- How many teachers and students use digital versions of materials rather than printed copies?

Seminary students are responsible for obtaining their own scriptures. Students unable to afford scriptures should turn to their families and priesthood leaders for assistance. In cases where students or parents don't want or don't care to ask, an S&I representative may counsel with priesthood leaders about the need and possible solutions. Personnel may assist in identifying a scriptural format appropriate for a student's needs (large print, electronic, Braille, ASL, audio, and so forth). A limited number of inexpensive scriptures may be purchased for common area or classroom use but are not to be given to students or considered a substitute for students bringing their own scriptures. Released-time programs may purchase these scriptures with S&I funds. Stake programs may purchase them if priesthood funds are available.

Priesthood-Leader Participation

Priesthood leaders are always welcome in seminary and may participate as speakers at their request. Out of consideration for their busy schedules, however, teachers and administrators should not invite them to speak in seminary other than for morning devotionals or special devotionals approved by the local Church board of education.

Fund-Raising Activities

Seminary fund-raising activities are not authorized. Seminaries should not participate in fund-raising for other entities. Although the collection of cash donations for service-based activities is not allowed, it is permissible for released-time seminaries to collect items from students, faculty, and volunteers (for example, for Sub-for-Santa and food drives). Budgeted funds may not be used to purchase finished goods for donation.

Transportation

Parents have the primary responsibility for student safety and transportation to and from seminary. When parents are unable to provide transportation, priesthood leaders may assist. Generally, employees and stake seminary teachers should not provide transportation or ask students to provide transportation. Those who assist students who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices should receive appropriate training to encourage student safety. Students should not ride in Church-owned vehicles. To minimize safety risks and travel difficulties in stake seminary areas, bishops may arrange for a seminary class to be held in a home or other safe and convenient location.

Enrollment

Seminary enrollment includes working with priesthood leaders and parents to identify all eligible students, determining program potential, completing registration information, scheduling students into classes, and recording attendance.

LDS Youth and Seminary Enrollment

All eligible youth should be invited to enroll in seminary. S&I personnel from the seminary program assigned to work with the stake should work closely with priesthood and auxiliary leaders of the wards or stakes they are assigned to work with and make themselves available to assist with enrollment. Enrollment should be a continual process throughout the year, with special emphasis being given at critical times, such as the beginning of a new term. All eligible students, including investigators and new converts, should be invited to enroll regardless of the time of year.

Non-LDS Youth and Seminary Enrollment

Youth not of our faith but of similar age to those attending seminary are welcome to participate, register, and enroll but are not counted as potential seminary students.

Stake and Ward Potential

Youth in a specific ecclesiastical unit are eligible for seminary if they (1) are at least in the ninth grade (or equivalent) and (2) turn 14 years of age or older during the school year. Students are typically eligible to participate in seminary through 12th grade (or equivalent).

Students with disabilities who are eligible to attend school beyond the traditional age, however, may continue to participate in seminary programs as long as they continue to attend school (usually not past age 22). Individuals who have been deemed “not accountable” by their priesthood leaders or are otherwise disabled are eligible to participate in seminary programs.

Program Potential

Released-time seminary. Youth attending an educational institution that is assigned to an S&I program are potential students in that program. Students not attending an educational institution are potential for the program that is assigned to work with the stake in which they live.

Stake seminary. Youth in a stake are potential to participate in the seminary program for the stake in which they live. If youth attend a seminary program outside of the stake in which they live, they become potential for the program they attend.

Enrolled Students

Students are enrolled when they have registered, have been scheduled, and have attended at least one class session.

Registration

Seminary registration is an annual process for reaching out and inviting every potential student to participate. Local S&I personnel work with priesthood leaders on how to best encourage and invite potential new students and support parents during registration. Two things need to be completed for a student to be registered:

- The students' parent or guardian needs to accept the Seminary Registration Agreement.
- The student needs to indicate his or her intent to participate in the coming year.

During registration, students are invited to provide the location where they plan to attend seminary and verify or update their graduation year. Follow these steps:

1. Teachers should work with each student in their class to determine if he or she intends to participate in seminary for the upcoming year.
2. Bishops invite parents and guardians to provide, verify, or update registration and preferred contact information.
3. Local S&I personnel work closely with priesthood leaders and parents on how to best reach out to and invite students who are not yet committed to attend seminary during the upcoming year.

Attendance

Attendance Expectations

It is expected that students will attend seminary each day it is held. Teachers and leaders should teach principles and blessings associated with attendance in seminary.

Student Attendance

Student class attendance must be recorded in [WISE](#) before an individual is officially enrolled. Teachers are to ensure that a student's attendance is properly recorded by taking roll each day.

After two weeks of class, students who have registered but never attended can be removed from class rolls by program administrators after every attempt has been made to contact the student and encourage them to attend seminary. Parents, priesthood leaders, and school officials (where applicable) should be consulted prior to removing a student from seminary.

Attendance Rolls

Seminary teachers are required to keep an accurate attendance roll for each class. The attendance and academic performance of each student should be tracked and recorded in WISE. Paper attendance rolls may be used if the teacher is unable to access WISE. These rolls are official student records and should be given to the coordinator or seminary principal at least

monthly (more frequently if possible) so that they can be recorded. It is not necessary to retain and store paper attendance rolls once they have been recorded in WISE.

Makeup Work

When makeup assignments are required, they should be given to bless and not punish the student. Specific assignments are determined by the teacher and should generally be related to the work missed. The assignments should be meaningful, reasonable, and individually suited to the needs and abilities of the student. Please be aware of the following:

- Attendance above the minimum requirement in one term may not be used as makeup work in another term.
- Students not meeting the attendance requirement and not completing the makeup work should not be given credit for the course.
- Teachers should take the initiative to work with students who have not yet received credit to assist them in completing the course.
- Although institute classes can be taken for seminary credit for those who complete high school/secondary education early (see “Early High School/Secondary Education Completion”), institute classes are not to be used for seminary makeup work. Students should be encouraged to complete all four courses of study and receive a graduation diploma.
- Students are permitted to do makeup work during the years they are enrolled in high school/secondary education and up to one year after completing their high school/secondary education. Students who begin their mission service during this one-year extension period are allowed one year following their mission to complete the makeup work.

Tardiness

Tardiness is not to be equated with absences. Seminary credit may be withheld, however, for flagrant tardiness. Parents should be made aware of tardiness problems and must be given ample opportunity to help correct the problem before credit is withheld. In some cases, the parents or teacher may wish to ask for the bishop’s involvement. In each case, sensitivity to the student’s continued enrollment and success in seminary should be the foremost concern.

Credit

For all class types, in order to receive a Certificate of Completion or Graduation Diploma, students must also receive an ecclesiastical endorsement. This endorsement is designated by the signature of the priesthood leader on the Certificate of Completion or Graduation Diploma.

In order to earn credit each term toward seminary graduation, students must fulfill the requirements for each class type listed below.

Daily Classes

- Complete the assigned course scripture reading.
- Pass course learning assessments.
- Attend at least 75 percent of all classes held.

Online Classes

- Complete the assigned course scripture reading.
- Pass course learning assessments.
- Complete 75 percent of the online assignments. A student completes a day's assignment by completing all of the assigned activities for the day. Online assignments should be done each weekday. Teachers should consider individual needs and abilities when determining completion.
- Attend at least 75 percent of all classes held.

Home-Study Classes

- Complete the assigned course scripture reading.
- Pass course learning assessments (daily assignments should be done at home each weekday).
- Complete 75 percent of the daily student study guide assignments.
- Attend at least 75 percent of all classes held (including any weekly and stake classes).

Progress Reports

Progress reports should be issued at the end of each term for the benefit of both students and parents. Progress reports are generated in WISE and should be emailed to parents or handed to students to take home. Personal contact by the teacher with the parents may also be appropriate.

Grades

Every student who qualifies for credit is to be given a grade. The type of grade given should be consistent with the standards used in the country or region where the program is located. In the United States, A, B, or C grades should be used. An incomplete, audit, or failing grade is not authorized. For students who do not qualify for credit, teachers should determine and enter the grade into WISE that the student will receive once makeup work is completed. WISE will withhold and issue the grade upon completion of the makeup work.

Criteria for grading could include effort and progress on such things as assignments, quizzes, doctrinal mastery, and contributions to class discussions. Area directors should ensure that individual seminary programs use similar criteria and grades.

Student Recognition and Graduation

Stake presidents are responsible for seminary graduation exercises. S&I stake representatives should contact their stake presidents and make themselves available to help with planning. For recommended procedures, see [A Guide to Seminary and Institute Graduation Exercises](#).

Diplomas and Certificates

Seminary diplomas and certificates are official documents. Programs produce these documents using [WISE](#) after the final term of the year is closed; this ensures that the awards are recorded on students' transcripts. For programs needing diplomas and certificates in languages not yet available in [WISE](#), please contact [S&I Information Services](#). The following awards are available to students who complete seminary classes with credit:

Stake Seminary Teachers (Outside the United States)

- A Certificate of Attendance is awarded annually to students who meet the attendance requirement for the current year but do not meet the qualifications for a Certificate of Completion.
- A Certificate of Completion is awarded annually to students who have received credit for the current course of study. In cases where a student (particularly one with disabilities) attends seminary for more than four years (see “Seminary Potential” in this section), a Certificate of Completion may be awarded at graduation ceremonies each year after the Seminary Diploma has been awarded.
- A Seminary Graduation Diploma is awarded to students who have received four certificates of completion, one for each course of study.

“[Seminary and Institute Certificate Paper](#)” (11181000) “[Seminary and Institute Diploma Paper](#)” (06029000), and “[Seminary and Institute Diploma Covers](#)” (10474000) are available at store.lds.org.

Worthiness Clearance for Certificates and Diplomas

A worthiness clearance from the student’s bishop is required for a Seminary Graduation Diploma or a seminary Certificate of Completion; a worthiness clearance is not required for a seminary Certificate of Attendance. A list of students eligible to be honored with Seminary Graduation Diplomas or Certificates of Completion at the seminary graduation exercises should be sent to bishops in advance of the printing of graduation programs. This allows bishops time to determine worthiness and, if necessary, work with students to resolve any concerns. Those not of our faith may also be cleared for worthiness by the bishops of the wards in which they live or attend seminary, or by the clergy of their own faith. To maintain confidentiality, worthiness clearance information from bishops should only be given to stake presidents and not to S&I personnel. If a bishop requests additional time beyond seminary graduation to resolve worthiness issues, the diploma or certificate should be given to the bishop. It could then be awarded privately by the bishop when appropriate.

Printed Programs

S&I stake representatives should provide the names of current members of the Church Board of Education and the other S&I leaders listed in [A Guide to Seminary and Institute Graduation Exercises](#). Locally produced program covers used for graduation services must not include pictures, paintings, or other illustrations that violate copyright laws. Stake presidents should finalize the lists of those to be honored and supervise the planning and printing of the graduation programs.

Early High School/Secondary Education Completion

If students complete their high school/secondary education before finishing four years of seminary they may receive Certificates of Attendance or a Certificate of Completion as described above. They may graduate from seminary by (1) continuing to attend regular seminary classes, (2) arranging with appropriate S&I personnel to complete equivalent work using the home-study seminary materials, or (3) completing the appropriate number of religion classes at an institute of religion or Church college or university (such credit would count for both institute recognition and seminary graduation but cannot be used for seminary makeup

work). If possible, the classes taken at the institute or Church college or university that are to be counted toward seminary graduation should be the same scripture courses that were missed in seminary. The work needed to meet the graduation requirements should be completed within one year of the student's final day of seminary (students who begin their mission service during this one-year extension period are allowed one year following their mission to complete the makeup work).

Students who graduate early should not be given credit for classes that they did not attend or for assignments they did not complete even if they are leaving early for the mission field or for other worthwhile endeavors.

Accelerated High School/Secondary Education Programs

Students in accelerated high school/secondary education programs whose schedule consists entirely of classes taken at a college or university campus may enroll in an institute program (if available) in order to complete their seminary graduation requirements. If possible, classes taken at the institute or Church college or university should be the same scripture courses that are being taught in seminary.

Encouraging the Transition from Seminary to Institute of Religion

Invite those completing their last year of seminary to enroll in institute of religion classes as soon as possible and to attend the next Worldwide Devotional for Young Adults.

Leadership and Student Activities

Class Officers

A seminary teacher may appoint a class president, one or more vice presidents, and a secretary. Before making these appointments, the teacher contacts the bishop for approval. The teacher considers all worthy students for class officers, including those who have disabilities. The teacher announces officers in class, but they are not sustained or set apart. These officers assist the teacher as needed.

Student Leadership and Activities

The primary role of seminary is teaching the gospel. Therefore, the number of seminary activities held in or out of regular seminary classes should be minimal. When class presidencies or student council members are used to assist in the seminary program, their involvement outside of regular seminary hours should also be minimal. Teachers and administrators should be sensitive to the family, Church, and school responsibilities of their students.

Note: Student councils only apply to released-time programs.

Student Activities

Social activities for seminary-age youth are included in the assigned role of the Young Men and Young Women organizations of the Church. Seminary student activities should support the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, the S&I curriculum, and the current lessons being taught. No money should be collected from seminary students for activities or any other purpose. S&I provides a limited budget for seminary activities.

Stake Seminary Teachers (Outside the United States)

S&I cannot authorize travel involving seminary-age youth; any seminary activity conducted outside of normal seminary class hours or away from seminary premises should be reviewed, considered, and approved well in advance by the bishop or stake president before it is implemented. When such activities are approved, adherence to all Church policies is required. Plans for the accommodation and participation of students who have disabilities should be made in advance to ensure successful seminary-sponsored activities. Seminary student council members or students should not be expected to miss their public school classes to participate in seminary activities. Appropriate out-of-class seminary activities might include enrollment breakfasts, graduation socials, and so forth.

Note: Student councils only apply to released-time programs.

Special Learning Activities

When special seminary learning activities are approved by priesthood leadership, they should not affect the day-to-day operation of the adjacent school. For example, the following are not appropriate activities in adjacent school facilities: the wearing of missionary badges, having missionary dress-up days, placing copies of the Book of Mormon, and so forth.

Curriculum

SEMINARIES AND INSTITUTES OF RELIGION CURRICULUM MATERIALS

Course Materials

Courses of study, including associated media, are developed by Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) Curriculum Services in the central office. All curriculum materials are approved by the Church Correlation Department before use. This ensures a unified religious education curriculum true to the direction of the Church Board of Education. It also allows students the opportunity to study the gospel systematically and makes it possible for them to move from one geographic area to another without serious disruption of their gospel study. These materials are copyrighted and may not be used in private publications without permission from the Church Intellectual Property Office. All S&I teachers are expected to use the approved curriculum and adapt it to local circumstances as needed. S&I welcomes suggestions from the field on how to improve curriculum effectiveness.

Students with Special Needs

“Special needs” is a general term used to identify students with unusual intellectual or physical circumstances. Reasonable effort should be made by teachers to meet these various individual needs. Many curriculum materials are available in alternate formats and are designed to meet the needs of students whose sight, hearing, learning skills, or reading ability may be limited. Teachers should select the S&I-approved curriculum materials most suitable to the needs of their students. Special assistance for deaf students, such as signing, is the responsibility of the students’ family members and priesthood leaders. Additional information is available on the [Disability Resources](#) page on the Church website.

LOCAL CURRICULUM MATERIALS

Sharing ideas and personal materials with colleagues is an important part of teaching and mentoring. Teachers are, however, expected to abide by the following guidelines:

- Materials shared should be appropriate, support S&I curriculum, and be in harmony with S&I policies.
- Materials shared may not contain copyrighted material (other than those found in written Church publications) unless permission has been granted by the Church’s Intellectual Properties Office.

Locally prepared non-copyrighted curriculum materials (teaching ideas, handouts, and so forth) may be shared among teachers within an S&I program with approval of the seminary principal, institute director, or coordinator. In rare situations, the distribution may be expanded to others in the area with the approval of the area director. However, creating and sharing uncorrelated materials beyond the area is not approved.

TEACHING CORRECT DOCTRINE

Occasionally sensational and spurious quotes or stories circulate among Church members. President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) said “Rumor and gossip ... when once started, gains momentum as each telling becomes more fanciful, until unwittingly those who wish to dwell on the sensational repeat them in firesides, in classes ... without *first verifying the source* before becoming a party to causing speculation and discussions that steal time away from the things that would be profitable and beneficial and enlightening to their souls” (“[Admonitions for the Priesthood of God](#),” *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 105; emphasis added).

Quoting spurious material is detrimental to the Spirit and will not bless the lives of our students. As we teach them the restored gospel, we must reach past their emotions to their spirits and let the Holy Ghost, not the sensational, bring them to Christ. The safest sources for lesson materials are found in official Church publications, including S&I curriculum materials.

CURRICULUM-RELATED MATERIALS ON THE INTERNET

Curriculum-related materials on the internet may not always be appropriate for S&I classroom use. Because such internet sites (except for the official S&I and Church sites) are not endorsed by S&I and the materials they contain have not been approved by the Church Correlation Department, caution should be used when considering such material for use in a lesson. If an item is found that seems beneficial and suitable to a lesson being prepared, however, the item should be cleared by the teacher’s S&I supervisor prior to use.

USING WISDOM IN LESSON PREPARATION

Even if something has been verified or published before, it still may not be appropriate for our use. Our lessons should build faith and testimony in the students. President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles warned of the following in a Church history setting, which can be applied generally:

“There is a temptation ... to want to tell everything, whether it is worthy or faith promoting or not.

“Some things that are true are not very useful. ...

“The final caution concerns the idea that so long as something is already in print, so long as it is available from another source, there is nothing out of order in using it in writing or speaking or teaching.

“Surely you can see the fallacy in that.

“I have on occasion been disappointed when I have read statements that tend to belittle or degrade the Church or past leaders of the Church in writings of those who are supposed to be worthy members of the Church. When I have commented on my disappointment to see that in print, the answer has been, ‘It was printed before, and it’s available, and therefore I saw no reason not to publish it again.’

“You do not do well to see that it is disseminated. It may be read by those not mature enough for ‘advanced history,’ and a testimony in seedling stage may be crushed. ...

“Don’t perpetuate the unworthy, the unsavory, or the sensational.

“Some things that are in print go out of print, and the old statement ‘good riddance to bad rubbish’ might apply” (“The Mantle is Far, Far Greater than the Intellect” [address given at the Church Educational System Symposium, Aug. 22, 1981], 2, 7–8).

PROPER DECORUM IN SACRED MATTERS

Students should not be asked to kneel for prayer in class. It is not appropriate to organize clubs or groups with sacred implications (for example, “the Holy Ghost Club”).

DOCTRINAL ISSUES

Students and teachers with doctrinal issues should first be encouraged to find answers in the scriptures or the teachings of modern prophets (students should also be encouraged to go to their parents). If they cannot find an answer, they should be directed to their bishop. If their bishop does not have an answer, he has a priesthood line of authority to follow until an answer is received. S&I teachers with routine questions arising out of current seminary lessons could ask their immediate supervisor. If the supervisor does not have an answer, he or she has an S&I line of authority to follow until an answer is received. The First Presidency has counseled:

“The Lord in His wisdom so organized His Church that there is accessible to every member—man, woman, and child—a bishop or branch president and a stake or mission president who serve as spiritual advisers and as temporal counselors. By reason of their ordination, these priesthood leaders are entitled to the spirit of discernment and inspiration to enable them to counsel members within their jurisdiction. Such leaders who have need for further clarification about doctrinal issues may write in behalf of their members to the First Presidency” (“[Policies and Announcements](#),” *Ensign*, Dec. 1990, 71).

MEDIA

As discussed here, media includes music and visual images presented via audiocassettes, videocassettes, CDs, DVDs, and computers.

S&I Media

Many seminary and institute courses have S&I-produced media that may be used. These materials can be ordered through the Church distribution centers.

Other Church Media

Most other Church media as listed at store.lds.org has also been approved by the Church Correlation Department for uses that include S&I classrooms. Recordings of most Church satellite broadcasts may also be used in S&I classrooms.

S&I-approved Media

Occasionally the S&I Executive Council may approve other media for classroom use or for training purposes. When such approval is given, S&I budgeted funds may be used to purchase it.

Other Media

S&I teachers and administrators may use copyrighted material in their individual classrooms as long as the use of the material is in harmony with each of the following principles (for

additional information, see “Guidelines,” “The Use of Church-Produced Material,” and “Use of Non-Church-Produced Material in sections 5.10.1–3 of *Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* ([2012], [72–74](#)):

The use of copyrighted material must:

- *Directly contribute to the purpose of the lesson and what the students need to learn.* Using resources because they fill time or are entertaining are not sufficient reasons for their use.
- *Be used sparingly to accent or make a lesson interesting.*
- *Be worth the time they take to prepare and present.*
- *Be appropriate and in keeping with Church standards.* They must not contain any undesirable features that may offend or teach ideas that are not desirable in religious education. Even if a short video or audio segment is appropriate, if it comes from an inappropriate source, it should not be used. Items that are controversial and sensational usually do not build faith and testimony and should not be used.

S&I budgeted funds may not be used for the rental or purchase of media that is not approved by the Church Correlation Department and by S&I.

Stake Seminary and Institute of Religion Teachers and Stake Seminary Supervisors

APPOINTMENT AND RELEASE

Stake seminary and institute of religion teachers and stake seminary supervisors are to be called, set apart, and released by or under the direction of local stake presidents.

DRESS AND GROOMING STANDARDS

Stake seminary and institute teachers are expected to dress modestly and in a conservative, professional manner that is consistent with the customs and standards of the country in which they work. In situations where dress standards may need to be modified, please consult with your coordinator.

The following guidelines should be followed for dress and grooming:

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing should be clean, well-cared for, and neatly pressed. The fit and style of clothing should be modest. • Extreme clothing of any kind or style should be avoided. • Ties and suits or sport coats and dress slacks are acceptable. It is expected that a suit or sport coat will be worn when teaching unless classroom temperature dictates otherwise. • Casual materials (such as denim or khaki) are not acceptable. • White or light-colored dress shirts are acceptable. • Shoes should be in good repair and shined. Athletic or similar shoes, regardless of color, should be avoided. Casual sandals and flip-flops are not acceptable. • Extreme hairstyles are not acceptable. Hair should be clean and neatly combed. Hair length should be above the collar. • Sideburns below the earlobes and beards are not acceptable. • Mustaches, where worn, should be neatly trimmed and not extend beyond the corners of the mouth. • Cologne should be used sparingly, with sensitivity to the allergies of others. • High standards of personal hygiene and cleanliness are expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing should be clean, well-cared for, and neatly pressed. The fit and style of clothing should be modest. • Extreme clothing of any kind or style should be avoided. • Professional pant suits, dress slacks, skirts, or dresses of at least knee length are acceptable. Skirts with immodest slits or split skirts are not acceptable. • Shoes should be in good repair. Athletic or similar shoes, regardless of color, should be avoided. Casual sandals and flip-flops are not acceptable. • Extreme hairstyles are not acceptable. Hair should be clean and neatly combed. • Perfume should be used sparingly, with sensitivity to the allergies of others. • High standards of personal hygiene and cleanliness are expected.

TRAINING

Stake Seminary and Institute of Religion Teachers

Stake seminary and institute of religion teachers are trained by and under the direction of full-time Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) personnel or stake seminary supervisors. Each stake seminary or institute of religion teacher should receive a copy of the following:

- [*Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* \[2012\]](#)
- S&I Policy Manual Sections for Stake Seminary Teachers or for Stake Institute of Religion Teachers (depending on the assignments) [available on the S&I intranet]

The *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook and appropriate sections of this policy manual should form the basis for the orientation and training of stake seminary and institute of religion teachers. The training should take place during the summer and at monthly inservice meetings during the school year, on a day other than Sunday. Teachers should attend these training sessions regularly.

Stake Seminary Supervisors

Stake seminary supervisors are trained by full-time S&I personnel. Each stake seminary supervisor should receive copies of, and become familiar with:

- [*Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* \[2012\]](#)
- [*Administering Appropriately: A Handbook for CES Teachers and Leaders* \[2003\]](#)
- S&I Policy Manual Sections for Stake Seminary Teachers or for Stake Institute of Religion Teachers (depending on assignment) [available on the S&I intranet]
- “Church Educational System,” chapter 11 of *Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops* [2010]

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

In areas where the Area Presidency has approved travel reimbursement for transportation expenses for stake seminary and institute of religion teachers and stake seminary supervisors, the guidelines below should be followed:

- Reimbursements are not to be a set amount for all stake seminary and institute of religion teachers in a given country. Reimbursement is not a salary. If there are no expenses, there should be no reimbursement.
- The stake president, in consultation with the coordinator, determines appropriate reimbursement for local travel expenses for his stake seminary and institute of religion teachers and stake supervisors. Reimbursement is not mandatory. It is also an option that no reimbursement be given in a particular country. This decision should be made in consultation with the area director and the Area Presidency.
- Any reimbursement of transportation expenses should be indicated in the “Personal and Assignment Information” section of the Orientation for Stake Seminary and Institute

Teachers and Supervisors form (PD50027485). Reimbursement may be made for actual public transportation fares paid. Unless restricted by law, the reimbursement rate for use of a personal vehicle should be based on variable operating costs (fuel, maintenance, tires, and so forth) but not fixed costs (insurance, repairs, tax, registration, depreciation, financing, and so forth). The rate should be approved and updated by the area Vehicle Review Committee or other PBAO entity tasked with maintaining reimbursement rates within the area. Where approved, the reimbursement process should be explained by the coordinator when the teacher is oriented.

- At the beginning of each school or calendar year, using the information from the completed Orientation for Stake Seminary and Institute Teachers and Supervisors form (PD50027485) forms, the coordinator fills out an Approved Reimbursements Summary—Outside the United States form (PD10048702) for each stake. To complete this form, the coordinator calculates an estimate of the total expected travel expenses for the year for each teacher based on the approved travel description. The coordinator and stake president sign the form and the coordinator emails a copy to the area office.
- During the year, stake teachers and supervisors authorized to receive reimbursement, request reimbursement as needed, usually no more than monthly and at least twice per year. Reimbursement requests must include dates, specific locations, purpose, and distance or cost of travel. They are made using the Nonemployee Reimbursement Request form (PD10048700). Another form may only be used if it contains the travel details listed above and has been preapproved by both the area and S&I controllers.
- Whenever possible, reimbursement should be made by the PBO Service Center using electronic payment or check. The reimbursement request and supporting documentation is scanned and submitted to the S&I financial document repository before being sent to the PBO Service Center for payment unless the document images are already being captured in another Church financial system. Where electronic or check payment is not practical, coordinators may give a cash reimbursement directly to the individual eligible for reimbursement, preferably at the monthly inservice meetings. Reimbursements may not be given to another person (stake supervisor, stake president, and so forth) with the intention that they will pass the reimbursement along. When cash is given, both the coordinator and the recipient sign the reimbursement request form to verify cash was given and received. The signed reimbursement request form is then submitted as documentation for working fund reimbursement or other cash reconciliation.
- During the year, coordinators track reimbursement for each stake teacher or supervisor on a Reimbursement Tracking Record (Stake Teacher or Supervisor) form (00367SI) or another locally developed form created to help summarize the payments.
- At the end of the year, using the information from the tracking sheet, the coordinator completes the “Actual Amount Reimbursed for the Year” column on the Approved Reimbursements Summary—Outside the United States form (PD10048702) that was signed at the beginning of the year. If new teachers were called during the year, they may be added as additional lines on the form. A copy of this completed form is sent to the stake president and is emailed to the area office.

- The area office randomly contacts a few stake teachers or supervisors, thanks them for their service, and verifies that they have received the reimbursements indicated.