Understanding the Pathway Program

In our sincere desire to serve more students, President Kim B. Clark has charged the university with the following imperatives:

1. **Raise substantially the quality of every aspect of the student experience our students have.**
2. **To make a BYU-Idaho education available to many more of the young people of the Church.**
3. **Lower the relative cost of education.**

The objective of the Pathway Program is to help people meet the three imperatives outlined by President Clark. Additionally we believe the Pathway Program will invite all those that participate to “come unto Christ” by providing a well-balanced educational program focused on perfecting the Saints spiritually, socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

What is the Pathway Program?
Through the Pathway Program, BYU-Idaho and Seminaries and Institutes provide a pathway to higher educational opportunities to LDS young adults, regardless of where they live or where they may ultimately receive their degree. Additionally, adults beyond Institute age may also participate at a local Stake Center.

What is the purpose of the Pathway Program?
The Pathway Program targets students not already enrolled in college. The first year of the program helps provide students with the skills and confidence they will need to succeed both in college and in life. During the first year of the program—called Academic Start—students gather each week at an Institute building or Stake Center under the direction of a Church service couple.

Where does the Pathway Program take place?
Institute buildings or Stake Centers act as a weekly gathering spot for Pathway students, especially during the first year. Local Church service couples facilitate group interaction and monitor student involvement. Furthermore, students under the age of 30 enrolled in the Pathway courses are also required to enroll in a local Institute course. The typical Pathway gathering takes place on Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

What’s a typical Pathway student profile?
To participate, students must be:

- 18 to 30 years old (institute) or over 30 years old (stake center).
- Member of the Church.
- Willing to attend Institute (18 to 30 years old).
- Willing to strive to live by BYU-Idaho’s Honor Code.
- Able to access a computer with high-speed internet on a daily basis.
- Proficient in speaking, reading, and writing English (or meet the minimum requirement for the ESL version of the program)
What happens after the first year of the program (Academic Start)?
Students who successfully complete Academic Start with at least a B average may matriculate at BYU-Idaho online. At this point, they must receive an annual ecclesiastical endorsement, like other BYU-Idaho students. Once matriculated, they may take as many or few courses online each semester as they like. They can earn a certificate, an associate’s, or even a bachelor’s degree online. They remain part of the Pathway Program even after matriculation, with support from the local Church service couple, assistance from Employment Services in career preparation and job placement, mentoring, and opportunities to gather regularly. In addition, to earn religion credit students will attend Institute and complete academic coursework online.

How much is tuition for the Pathway Program?
The current cost of the program to students is $65 per credit in the United States; students can earn a bachelor’s degree in 120 hours for $7,800. In consultation with each country’s Area Presidency, BYU-Idaho plans to adjust the amount of tuition charged in each country to make the program affordable for local members. Generally, PEF funds will be available to Pathway students internationally after the first semester. Textbook costs are minimal because course designers seek to eliminate textbooks wherever possible. Once students matriculate, U.S. citizens may qualify for federal aid, including Pell Grants.

What are BYU-Idaho online classes like?
Created by BYU–Idaho faculty and instructional designers, this new generation of online courses is taught by dedicated experts with student interaction in mind. Just like courses taught in a classroom, online courses are rooted in the BYU–Idaho Learning Model which leads to significant personal contact between you, your fellow students, and your instructor.

Courses are organized into closely interacting groups of 10 to 15 students called “cohorts,” with no more than 60 students in a section. Cohorts are comprised of students in Rexburg and within the Pathway Program. Students interact with each other and instructors each week in a structured learning experience based on the semester calendar.

What degrees are available through the Pathway Program?
Students may pursue several online degree options after completing the first year of Academic Start (see this chart for details). Online degree options include a professional certificate, an associate’s, or bachelor’s degree. All students who complete Academic Start should at least have greater motivation and ability to live providently.

Is there an option for non English speaking students?
For students in the United States and abroad who do not speak English well, BYU-Idaho will offer a simplified English introduction or English as a Second Language (ESL) version of the program. Students need some foundation in English to be able to participate, but do not need to be as proficient as they would be to be admitted to BYU-Idaho or BYU-Hawai'i. During the course of the first year, students will study the same content in somewhat simplified English as other Pathway students; they will also receive language instruction and have opportunities to improve their English abilities. Among other things, they will connect via computer with volunteer conversational partners who are native English speakers.