Library of Congress Reading and Research

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I attended the Library of Congress Trip on June 18-24th, 2023.

I spent 36+ hours in the Library of Congress Learning to Research and Researching.

# Introduction

The Library of Congress Trip gives students access to the largest library in the world and teaches them useful ways to study.  Students spend the week in the library, which includes an introduction to researching tools and methods available, being paired with a librarian, and using the library's facilities. The goal is to create and improve the OGS Research for the Action Research Prospectus, make a plan for getting articles and books, improve research skills, gain access to full-text journals and academic tools, and build relationships with libraries to help with research, writing, and publishing at the dissertation level.

The outcome is intended to help figure out how to search for topics that are both relevant and combine religion and society in a way that leads to positive social reform. It helps to enhance critical thinking so that we may better comprehend how to arrange and focus the information to support the intended project result. This trip supports Christian leaders ability to take guidance from their own studies and acquired knowledge, which is crucial for developing critical thinking skills and supporting fundamental knowledge while advancing in the graduate program to develop and carry out our Action Research Project.

# Personal Growth

 I was challenged throughout this trip by learning more effective research methods and techniques for organizing. It has improved my abilities and capabilities in structuring my research in a more logical manner. I was encouraged to pursue research in these areas and given guidance on how to satisfy these objectives. This journey has encouraged me to understand more about myself and my future goals. It pushed me to face tasks that were outside of my usual comfort zone. It aided me in sifting and categorizing the many ideas I had. It has taught me how to gather the material I need to establish more profound personal beliefs and understand how God has affected order and structure throughout creation. The ability to employ all of the organizational abilities that had acquired, as well as the determination to try to keep moving ahead even as I absorbed all of the questions and difficulties that were clouding my mind. While I continue to study and read, the desire to think theologically via pedagogy and personal experiences is something I want to include every day through critical thinking, which will help not only my own transformation but also allow me to guide others in the same direction. Reflecting on past experiences, both positive and negative, will help to learn what I can do better in the future or what didn’t work and how faith integration can support better future outcomes has been enlightening and self-motivating. I learned useful research methodology on this trip, and I also gained crucial peer-related interactions, suggestions, and encouragement. Additionally, I received practical life lessons on how to manage the procedure and avoid becoming separated from my party at the metro station and what to do when this happens.

# Reflective Entry

Working with children in traditional education, Montessori methods of education, and Christian schools, as well as during my own education and this course's study, I have seen that in each there are certain crucial aspects that are lacking. While some of these teaching strategies are effective, many are also deficient.

 My continued improvement as a researcher and writer is one of my primary objectives for the remainder of my time spent in the graduate program. I am motivated by the continuation of opportunities to develop my reading and writing skills with more research-based methods as opposed to just writing freely my personal understanding or view of a topic. Finally, I hope to improve my time management. I have been thinking for years of ideas that someday I would like to do but this program has encouraged me to bring the ideas to fruition. This program has been difficult to juggle a full-time career, family, and full-time graduate courses, and often times feel like I am not doing anything well, but rather just getting things done. It is challenging me and I am thrilled and overwhelmed. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

# Conclusion

The goal of this trip was to create and improve the OGS Research for the Action Research Prospectus, make a plan for getting articles and books, improve research skills, gain access to full-text journals and academic tools, and build relationships with libraries to help with research, writing, and publishing at the dissertation level. I feel that it was more than successful.

My ultimate objectives and anticipated results from this program would be to continue to develop and learn so that I may continue to seek God's purpose and plan in the future. Knowing that you are meant to accomplish a mission is more fulfilling than working for a living. Bringing respect to Christ and discovering His purpose for each day of your life is what establishes what He has called us to accomplish. The foundation of our vocation and purpose is God's faithful presence in us, as shown by our beliefs, careers, and other areas of influence. Furthermore, it acknowledges that Christians are obligated to be completely present to God in response. I want to develop methods to link kids to opportunities that will promote their lifetime learning, much as this trip and OGS have done for me, and to lead them to faith in Christ and reliance on His truth and love.