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Omega Graduate School

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**120 Day - Course Learning Journal**

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course and is an integration of the essential elements of the course within your professional field of interest. The objective of the course journal is to produce a degree of acculturation, integrating new ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to communicate with your professor consistent with the Tutorial Methodology to express insights gained as a result of the course of study. Submit the course learning journal via DIAL. The course learning journal should be 5-7 pages in length, and should include the following sections:

**Introduction** – Describe the expectations of the graduate program and the campus residency component for that course. Summarize the intent of the course, how it fits into the graduate program as a whole, and the relevance of its position in the curricular sequence.

**Personal Growth** - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or challenged you– as well as your progress in mastery of course content and skills during the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

**Reflective Entry** - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or adaptation and relevant application) of new learning into your professional field. What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result of your study?

**Future Expectations** - Continue the journal by addressing questions and concerns you now have relating to the graduate program expectations.

**Conclusion** – Synthesize the three body sections above, evaluating the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.

The Clinical Sociology class that I attended during Core week was interesting as it was my first in person class I did with Dr Riechard and also the first class I did with the new system that OGS implemented. Having done four previous cores with OGS, I was a bit wary about what to expect as we now had our core condensed into one weekend. I previously had not heard of Applied Clinical Sociology, my interest was definitely peaked with this new knowledge and applying it in a Christian context. Although the discussion was good and the passion from Dr Riechard to the subject matter was felt I realize that I missed the more in-depth discussion that would normally be had during the week of Core where students would get to share their experience with the topics related to their particular field of interest. The course is appropriately placed in core 5 as it allows the student to practically think about how they can use clinical sociology to help an existing cause that they students are familiar with also at this stage in the degree there is a more concrete idea of what we want to do for the DSL action plan or their PhD research.

Since coming to OGS, I have noticed a trend where the topics I focus on in class becomes relevant to either my personal or professional life. This term was no different as I was asked to lead tutorial sessions for the Caribbean Youth Fellowship Programme. The group I worked with was the education cohort who decided, without my prompting that they wanted to do an advocacy project for neurodivergent population, which was the focus of my essay for this class. Based on my previous relationship with the Down Syndrome Family Network, the group was able to partner with them for their project. Due to my new awareness of applied clinical sociology, I was able to guide them in using some of the principles for their campaign. This year has been one of coming into my identity and reframing the way in which I view myself. As I move further along in the degree I have had to confront my feelings of Imposter Syndrome and feeling worthy of these new spheres the Lord has allowed me to be in. I had one of these such moments of comparison when the other tutors of the fellowship were introduced. Holy Spirit had to remind me that it was he who qualifies the called and this was not something I applied to do, but was asked to do, by a new OGS contact actually.

This particular semester was tough as I struggled to keep up with the course work submission as I took longer to make the particular connections that I normally would when completing assignments. I realized how much I relied on anecdotal conversations that would happen during core, I also was not able to attend most of the meetups due to conflicting schedules so I missed some of the interface with professors. Honestly, I am not a big fan of this new core except that we are no longer required to work through the Christmas break but I am thankful that the majority of my courses were completed in the previous dispensation as that better suits my learning style.

Working as a Youth Development Associate (YDA), I am one of the people working closely with youth in various communities. By nature of the job, I become aware of different issues that communities face and the various way I have to navigate and assist. The course is a reminder of the work I do is not just a job but a vocation that I have been called to. Recently at a youth work conference which is the first I have attended; they spoke about the importance of professionalizing the field and the importance of best practice research for youth work. I use a collaborative approach when I go into communities to assist youth-serving and youth-led groups. Various stakeholders are called upon depending on the project and particular needs of the community; community policing, guidance counsellors, psychologists, businessmen, and other community stakeholders are sometimes called on to assist, dependent on the objective of the project to be developed. The course would have reinforced the importance of considering my job as a bonafied field that requires the right approach to be effective. I have always preferred working on community level projects versus national projects. This season, the Lord is exposing me to bigger and increasing my appreciation for that level of impact, I have consciously had to stop downplaying the work I do as just community-level work.

Currently in my church I am acting Director for women’s Ministries since the most recent director has stepped down from the position, as little as five years ago I would not have thought that I would be so heavily involved in ministry. As with my job it requires managing different personalities, thinking of them from a clinical point of view could be beneficial for some interactions that I have. I hope that I continue to be an effective change agent who is able to impact communities that sometimes don't have an advocate on their side; in doing so I hope that ultimately, I will be able to point people to Christ as they see the way in which I effectively perform my Job.

As I come to the end of this course, I look forward to what will come in term B and the project prospectus class. The Applied Clinical sociology course allows for the Christian scholar-practitioner to gain an appreciation for their work as ministry that they should partner with the Lord in doing them but also that their work should be done strategically in whatever their field. The course allowed me to critically examine and take note of the work I do in communities and my interactions with both colleagues and clients, differing personalities can sometimes be a challenge to work with but with a better understanding of how to engage in the work I do and better function in my calling. Educationally OGS has continued to exceeded my expectations, the coursework allows for insightful discussions and thoughts about our work and how it aligns with kingdom building. It encourages evaluation of your work and ways to implement it to ensure effectiveness. As Christians, we are responsible for working with excellence in whatever sphere we are called to.