**Appendix 4A: Faith-Learning Integration Worksheet**

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**Tips for the SR805 100-Day Assignment Faith-Learning Integration Worksheet**

See the published article about this process (*Interdisciplinary Faith-Learning Integration for Social Change*, JIS, V26 (2014)- Dr. David C. Ward). The article is much more detailed than the syllabus, because the method has refined in as a result of the growth in understanding each stage of the process, as a result of interaction with the methods standard in the national interdisciplinary studies movement. This is seen in the article.

**Steps 2, 3, & 4 ought to have some sources to back up the process because it is an academic process in Steps 2-4, and a practical process in Steps 5-7**. In my article describes this approach to faith-learning integration and interdisciplinary social change is described as "***Learning***... [in such a way as] ***to Change Your World***."

**Step 1** **Research Problem/Question-** In the Syllabus it is an assigned topic: i.e. work as job, profession, career, or calling. *But you can select a topic based on your interests, especially if it is related to your sense of calling in some aspect.* I am interested in how you work through the process. Please e-mail the professor your topic ideas and receive feedback about your topic idea at the beginning.

**Step 2** **Hermeneutics/Literature Review**- can be whatever disciplinary sources are relevant; also, at this early stage in the program you can include in this stage any social research done on your subject, for example, if you found articles reporting research done on multi-generation businesses. As seen in Dr. Ward’s article, and by the dissertation stage of the OGS program, Step 4 is where your own social research project goes.

**Step 3** **Faith-Learning Integration**-is where faith-integrated sources (Scripture, tradition [i.e. if theologians have addressed the topic or Christian worldview/theological truths involved in applying a Christian worldview to the topic], reason [if Christian businessmen have written on the topic-if it was a business topic, etc.], and experience [this is where personal Christian reflections guided by prayer and the Holy Spirit would come in].

**STEP 1: OBSERVATIONS RAISING THE NEED FOR INQUIRY**

**What is the subject/problem that prompts the need to integrate faith and learning and do Christian interdisciplinary research?**

Young people between the ages of 13-24 are using Cannabis to cope with depression symptoms (Bravo et al.,2019). By infusing faith-based learning into research, the researcher can apply these principles within a phased learning cycle. This approach prompts the researcher to generate literature that tests hypotheses conflicting with biblical standards for accuracy. The researcher must rely on three pivotal sources: the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, the rigor of Christian scholarship to discern and appraise teachings, and the perspectives offered by the church (Stott, 1999). Utilizing an in-depth exploration of the seven-step faith-learning integration process, evidence how disciplines distort, contribute, and intertwine with depression and cannabis use. Thus, the research crafts a foundation for proposing solutions that benefit all individuals (Ward, 2014).

**a. Why is the topic of interest to you given your profession or personal history?**

I grew up in the shadow of schizophrenia, observing my brother and cousin as they navigated the early stages of psychosis and battled through years of schizophrenia before our family rallied around them and sought help. It was a harsh reality to witness. I believe that bringing awareness to young individuals about the risks of developing Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD) and the potential for psychosis, particularly in those predisposed to schizophrenia, is crucial (Menis et al, 2023); (Ganesh & D’Souza, 2022).

Early intervention is key to addressing depressive symptoms. Educating the youth and young adults about mental health and recovery not only equips them with the knowledge to seek help but also inspires them to steer clear of hopelessness and substance use as coping mechanisms (Scheier & Griffin, 2021). God preordained specific tasks and purposes for me on earth to fulfill during my time on earth. Each action, decision, and interaction has been intricately woven into the fabric of your existence, guiding me toward the destined path (Hillman, 2017).

**b. Why is there a need to research this subject/problem?**

Research indicated that the medical marijuana industry and laws ignore the ramifications of young people concerning their mental health, and substance abuse potential, prompting the call for further research on the matter as a public health issue (Anderson & Rees, 2023).

Regulations on recreational and medical marijuana, as well as legalization, primarily target adults capable of deciding whether to risk cannabis-related issues such as disorder, substance use, or potential gateway effects (Sabet, 2021). Various worldviews, deeply rooted in biology, philosophy, sociology, ethics, law, and postmodernism, play a role in shaping perspectives on youth mental health struggles and the use of cannabis as a treatment method (Noebel,2006).

c. **What various disciplines or perspectives need to be brought to bear to adequately address this subject/problem?**

Sociology, law, psychology, psychiatry, and integrative medicine converge to tackle the complex issue of depression in youth and young adults. Slife and Williams (1997) warned that some implicit ideologies offered by these disciplines inadvertently exclude theism from their beliefs, regardless of intention. Slife and Williams argue that offer perspectives on the world, that shed light on their origins and implications for society. Therefore, Christian scholars need to embrace critical thinking to uphold a biblical worldview effectively. According to Nosich (2011), critical thinking empowers scholars to offer accurate, comprehensive, and clear solutions customized to solve a problem.

For instance, the legalization of marijuana involves a three-pronged form. Advocates argue that it could help reduce the disproportionate incarceration rates of Blacks and Latinx populations due to a biased criminal justice system (Plunk, et al., 2019)**.**

Some believe that advocating for recognition through education of depression among young people instead of treating a mental health issue by transforming prisons into mental health facilities (Sabet, 2021). For many, marijuana serves as a coping mechanism for anxiety and depression. While other young people develop depression due to cannabis use disorder. Other proponents of cannabis use opined a blurring of the line between recreational use and medicinal necessity for adults with young people entangled in between. (Anderson & Rees 2023). Understanding the psychological aspects of mental health is vital in developing effective therapies like cognitive behavioral therapy (Graham., et al. 2022). ~~While,~~ the etiology of depression is multifaceted, involving biological, genetic, and environmental factors (Leone, 2022; Li, et al., 2021). Family dynamics and societal influences play a significant role in shaping one's mental well-being, highlighting the importance of a holistic approach to mental health care (Lehmann et al, (2022).

**How might faith-integration and interdisciplinary research yield better answers than either exclusively religious or exclusively academic research might provide?)**

This research endeavors to skillfully blend faith integration with interdisciplinary research to offer deeper insights. Utilizing a theological perspective helps scholars grasp the essence of human ontology and the complexities of human existence (Holmes, 1989). The researcher delves into the roots of epistemology and truth, highlighting discriminatory laws, social justice concerns, and distorted worldviews across disciplines that hinder empathy, care, and assistance for young people battling depression.

By combining faith integration and interdisciplinary research, the focus shifts to individuals- fostering compassionate, ethical leadership that prioritizes the person facing the challenge. This approach exposes a tendency in literature within law, ethics, politics, theology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy. These worldviews influence disciplines that move solutions further from a Christian worldview in its process of elimination via post-modernism, Marxism, and cosmic and secular humanism (Noebel, 2006).

New Age ideas infiltrate education, as seen in reports on Classroom Child Abuse. Witnesses stress protecting students from psychological manipulation in US cities (Groothuis, 2014). But, Holmes (1989) cautioned that Christians should guard against straying from their moral principles and prioritize embracing their uniqueness Noebel (2006) asserted that gender identity conflicts with traditional Biblical views, causing distress due to differing interpretations and societal norms.

**STEP 2: LITERATURE REVIEW- HERMENEUTICAL INQUIRY OF NATURAL/SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES/HISTORICAL TRADITIONS**

**What are the different perspectives on the subject/problem from the relevant contemporary natural or social science disciplines as well as cultural trends and ideas?**

Various perspectives on mental health and drug use include those of social justice advocates who focus on addressing a system that has historically penalized and marginalized certain groups, leading to issues such as imprisonment, drug availability, and inadequate mental health care due to factors like race and economics (Barnes-Matthews,2023; (Mohr-Avitia,2024).

Hence, the inclination to pass legislation favoring businesses related to marijuana shops, decriminalization, and legalization for medical use is embedded in these viewpoints. Social justice is deeply ingrained in American society.   
To young cannabis users and other advocates, smoking marijuana appears less harmful compared to harder narcotics such as cocaine and heroin. Marijuana is perceived as non-threatening; thus the recreational laws aim to promote that perception.

Gender dysphoria, depression, and anxiety are receiving significant attention. Conversion therapy, a type of therapy that aims to change a person's sexual orientation, is prohibited in several states due to proponents linking religiosity to causing depression, anxiety, and suicide (Golightly, 2023).

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**a. How has the subject/problem developed relevant contemporary natural or social science disciplines?**

A recent social science study delves into strategies for supporting young individuals in managing mental health challenges within political and social frameworks (Barnes-Matthews, 2023).

Within society, some link marijuana use, decriminalization, and elevated depression rates among minority and Latinx groups (Daly, 2022).) Others associate mental health stigma with ethnicity and gender dysphoria (Miller, 2019). This narrative echoes a leftist political stance advocating for governmental involvement in gender-related concerns (Noebel, 2006).

**Are there different traditions?**

The diverse tradition is a historical theological perspective that regards everyone dependent on God to assist one another as a duty, rather than pursuing rights formed by a government.

The traditional perspective campaigned for the vulnerable, welcomed them into their homes, and provided care for them outside a penal system (Van Bilsen, 2016). The traditional perspective viewed individuals as creations of God rather than the product of economic, class, and racial divisions, a tactic known in Marxism (Noebel, 2006).

**b. How has the subject/problem developed in cultural trends/history?**

In the past, individuals in America struggling with depression were often stigmatized, viewed as possessed by demons, or deemed unintelligent, leading to their mistreatment and isolation (Dix, 2018). However, faith-based Christianity played a pivotal role in the establishment of hospitals recognizing mental illness as a form of sickness rather than a curse deserving of punishment (Van Bilsen, 2016). While stigma remains prevalent today, individuals seeking mental health support now have improved access to counseling and healthcare services, including psychiatric medications and alternative therapies, both in-person and online.

**c. What disciplines have developed which have addressed the subject/problem?**

Freudian philosophy led to insights into the roots of mental disorders, shaping his concept of psychological well-being. This gave rise to psychoanalysis, a significant school of psychology with broad influence in various disciplines (Slife & William, 1995)**.** According to (Graham et al., 2022) practitioners of naturopathy, and therapists use effective mind-body intervention treatments to improve mental health. Benjamin Rush, a signatory of the US Declaration of Independence, is celebrated as an American pioneer in psychiatry. Rush revolutionized the field by attributing mental illnesses to medical origins and advocating for physical treatments (Trong, et al., 2020)**.**

**How have they addressed it (briefly)?**

Psychology employs services like behavioral therapy to delve into the workings of the mind and people's behavior. Behavioral science is the study of human behavior**.** In addressing depression, psychology offers counseling services to establish a relationship with a counselor and help individuals express their symptoms and emotions. Counseling services encourage individuals to navigate through their symptoms. Psychiatry collaborates with psychologists and mental health counselors to address issues by prescribing medications that target the brain and the nervous system, providing SSRIs to manage dopamine and serotonin levels typically low in individuals with depression. Cognitive behavioral therapy equips individuals with tools to steer their thoughts and emotions, offering a pathway to control their mental processes (Amen, 2015).

**Are there different schools of thought?**

Naturopathy, an alternative medicine practice, utilizes holistic therapies like cognitive therapy, adjunct therapy, and nutrition to enhance healing in both mind and body. For example, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is employed to manage psychological concerns by leveraging nutrition and phytochemicals from herbs (Graham et al., 2022 )

Specifically, neuropsychiatry (Amen, 2015) utilizes advanced brain imaging techniques to provide comprehensive solutions for individuals struggling with depression and anxiety. By combining behavioral therapy with brain imaging technology, this approach offers a holistic treatment method that addresses the interconnected aspects of the mind, body, and spirit.

**STEP 3: FAITH-LEARNING INTEGRATION INQUIRY WITH CHRISTIAN AND SCIENTIFIC SOURCES**

**How does Scripture speak to this issue? Realize that many issues that are a result of modernity or technological advances will not be directly addressed by the Bible, but Scripture may provide a parallel or precedent with a similar issue or subject, or the topic may be addressed through extrapolation.**

1. **Are there any developments in biblical thought about the issue from the Old Testament?**

The Psalms, attributed to authors like David, vividly portray cries to God encompassing fear, pain, dejection, and rage - emotions often experienced by young individuals grappling with depression. For example, in Psalm 13, David, weighed down by a cascade of hardships, fervently implores divine assistance (Calvin, 2013). Both Job and Paul underscore the profound emotional depth of human suffering (Job 42:3-6; Romans 8:18), asserting its inherent purpose and significance (Ross, 2011).

In the Old Testament, individuals turned to God for solace during trying times. Figures like David, Job, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, Peter, Judas, Ezekiel, and Elijah sought God’s divine understanding and compassion. Though each faced unique challenges, their faith sustained them through periods of profound sadness (Clinton,) The prophets and kings in the Old Testament, such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and David, experienced moments of despondency, as illustrated in various passages (Jeremiah 15:10–11; Ezekiel 25–27; Psalm 38; 1 Kings 18–19).

**b. Are there any changes in biblical thought about the issue from the Old to the New Testament?**

**Are there any developments in biblical thought about the issue in the New Testament?**

In the New Testament, mental health issues were often attributed to malevolent spirits that Christ cast out. The enduring struggles of individuals like Paul stem from the consequences of the fall, underscoring the importance of following the examples set by the forefathers of faith in the book of Hebrews (2 Corinthians 12:7; Heb 11:1-40). Amidst life's trials and tribulations, our suffering can serve to draw us closer to God, seeking His solace until the day we are united with Him eternally, where pain and sorrow will be no more.

There are individuals in the church hesitant to wholeheartedly believe in God's healing power for both bodies and minds, leading them to withhold such affirmations. Conversely, some church members feel that relying solely on God may not suffice, fearing it could deter younger congregants. Rather than allowing the gospel to transform individuals. Moreover, the absence of robust familial and communal support exacerbates the plight of individuals battling depression. The collaboration between families and religious institutions is crucial in aiding those affected and their loved ones Lehman,

c. **Are there any developments in Christian thought and history about the issue since biblical times?**

Geel, Belgium, known for its innovative care of the mentally ill since the 15th century, originated from the story of St. Dymphna. The town's family foster care system predates psychiatric hospitals and was driven by community initiative. Initially based on religious beliefs, the care evolved over centuries, gaining fame for miraculous cures and hosting thousands of patients before state involvement in 1852 (Van Bilsen, 2016).

Dorothea Dix in the early 19th century, a devout woman advocated for specialized hospitals catering to individuals with mental vulnerabilities (Dix, 2018). This marked the dawn of a crucial shift in mental healthcare provision, particularly for the most vulnerable members of society. This excursion has unveiled the seamless fusion of Christian values and scholarly endeavors, showcasing how faith can enrich endeavors to tackle complex societal issues.

d**. If the subject/problem is not directly addressed in the Bible, what principle can be extrapolated from a clear biblical teaching which helps to frame the subject/problem within a Christian worldview?**

Cook & Hamley (2020) draw parallels between mental health and faith, exploring thriving in the face of adversity. The church body plays a role in promoting healing, values, purpose, and relationships, advocating for a holistic approach that integrates psychiatric, medical, and spiritual support at the individual level. The authors stress the importance of spiritual and pastoral guidance in caring for the whole person. The book of (James 5: 13 -15) encourages the church to pray for those in distress, and joyfully sing praises. For the sick, they must summon the elders for prayer and anointing in the Lord's name since prayer has the power to heal, absolve sins, and uplift the afflicted.

e. **Which contemporary natural or social sciences address this subject/ problem?**

Social science delves into the correlation between youth depression and cannabis use, examining their impact on individuals' health, public health, families, cultural diversity, LGBTQ communities, and Christian groups within society. This research also extends to the legislative landscape surrounding cannabis legalization. On the other hand, natural science focuses on the biological aspects, exploring brain functions, neurotransmitter functionalities, brain development, and environmental influences as potential contributors to depression. Psychology plays a crucial role in understanding these complex dynamics.

**What additional perspectives does each science or discipline add?**

Social science encompasses psychology which plays a crucial role in identifying the symptoms and diagnosis of depression. It delves into the emotional and behavioral aspects, exploring the functionality of individuals within specific groups in terms of behavior, emotions, and cognition (Amen, 2015). The sociological impact is profound, especially concerning the welfare of young people, addressing issues such as suicidality, addiction, substance use disorders, mental wellness, and public health.

Legal aspects, encompassing the legalization of cannabis for recreational and medical purposes, have far-reaching effects on laws, political decisions, voting patterns, taxpayer contributions, and the industries making cannabis more accessible to the youth (Anderson & Rees, 2023).

From a natural science perspective, the biological origins of depression are explored, considering the body's genetic predisposition to depression and substance abuse. The developmental stages of the brain are also crucial in understanding these conditions (Leone, 2022).

Moreover, the impact of cannabis on the brain, cognitive health, and internal systems is examined. Alternative medicine's effects on the brain, intestinal organs, and neuronal function to enhance sleep and foster positive emotions are also considered (Mennis, et al., 2023).

f. **How do religious and scientific perspectives interact or integrate in providing a more comprehensive account of the subject/problem?**

Biblical research delves into the fundamental worldviews of natural and social sciences that underpin issues affecting young individuals. It sheds light on the pitfalls of tackling symptoms in silence with misguided treatment methods such as marijuana use. Scholarship understanding their yearning for help offers valuable insights into this complex matter.

Christian worldview defines a system based on divine-human values, which clashes with secular sociologically and psychologically influenced perspectives. Amid the clash and confusion, young individuals seek unconventional solutions supported by biases tied to race, class, wealth, industry, and morality.

Faith learning integration bridges religious and scientific viewpoints and seeks to underscore the importance of God's supremacy, truth, historical evidence, and logical reasoning in addressing the needs of troubled youth. Religious perspectives recognize the pain, suffering, lack of support, and humanitarian aid required for those afflicted. Providing additional insights can aid the afflicted in realizing the potential for mental healing. Christian-minded scholars addressing distortions in psychology, law, ethics, historical evidence, and worldviews are paramount for a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand.

Ward (2014) proposed five truth criteria essential for blending faith and academic study. These criteria aid in integrating knowledge with moral guidance, helping academics uncover truths and enhance their understanding of the universe. Christian academics apply these criteria to analyze study contexts and validate knowledge claims across various fields.

Susan, the 2nd half of the Worksheet is missing. If you complete Steps 4-7, I will gladly change the grade to an "A." You are completely on the right track so far!

**Step 4** **Converting Your Synthesized Topic to a Formal Social Research Problem and Hypothesis:**

See excerpt from *Empirical Research in the Social Sciences* by Richard Walters, pp.25-26.

At this stage of the program, Stage 4 (at he beginning of the Interdisciplinary Research Worksheet) is described as a synthesizing step. This is where to use sources on your subject written by Christians who are farther along than you, and who have done the faith-integrating work for you, and who have proposed Christian approaches to your topic.

You then need in this stage to ***imagine a hypothetical*** social research project. Assume you collect and analyze data (do not worry about how, it is too early in the program for that yet). Assume the project was completed (written in past tense) and that research findings supported the educated guess that produced your Research Problem and Hypothesis. See below:

*Example Problem:* It is not known whether teenagers abuse drugs or alcohol to escape from negative thoughts about themselves.”

*Example Hypothesis:* Drug abusing teenagers will score higher on the I Feel Worthless Inventory than non-drug abusing teenagers.

*Hypothetical Research Results* (this is what you project in STEP 4): The drug abusing teenagers scored higher in statistically significant measures on the I Feel Worthless Inventory than non-drug abusing teenagers.

You need to articulate a research discovery worth sharing before you figure out how to communicate it (Step 5, and then you influence with it through leadership application of “So What” change your world strategies to enact in Step 6).

**Step 5** **Contextualization-** Who is the target audience you want to influence with this research project? How can you package your results to be persuasive with them? This stage and Stage 6 you work through as a hypothetical, kind of as a plan in the future tense. My target audience is XXXXX and they have these characteristics 1), xxxx, 2) xxxx, etc. Therefore, to adapt my findings to communicate persuasively with them, I can emphasize the following benefits, and use the following venues (??? research report, multimedia presentation, trade journal article, etc. ???), AND SO ON...

**Step 6** **Orthopraxis/Leadership**- Also, for ease of understanding, Step 6 moved in the article from being called orthopraxis to leadership. Leadership is all about applying truth and solutions within groups, whether they are in the context of any kind of human organization in family, church or society, as the OGS world changer mission statement states.

**Step 7** **Evaluation (of the Process)**- Make this Journal-like, i.e. here is what I learned from this process, and here is how, if I did follow through in practice with Steps 5 & 6, that I could assess the effective of the results.

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