Faith-Learning Integration & Interdisciplinary Studies

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Professor

Dr. David Ward

**Carrie , I am very impressed with your Course Learning Journal for PHI 805-22! Your reflections on what you learned in this course are deep and meaningful. I especially appreciate your ability to integrate concepts across courses and make connections between ideas in ways that advance your own academic and professional goals. It was encouraging to see how the process you learned in this course is helping you going forward in your research on calling and coaching you in their life purpose. You mentioned the statistic about how many young Christian lose their faith while in university. This process is called deconversion and is the subject of the PhD dissertation research of a fellow student named Richard Mohline. Going forward I can share some of his research sources with you that may help you in your DSL literature review. Keep up the great work! -- Prof. David Ward**

**Grade: A**

Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course. The

Learning Journal integrates 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 insights gained as a result of the course. The course

learning journal should be **3-5 pages** in length and should include the following sections:

1. Introduction –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.

2. Personal Growth - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or

challenged you– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during

the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

3. Reflective Entry - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or

adaptation and relevant application) of new learning in your professional field.

What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result

of your study?

4. Conclusion – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional,

religious, and educational goals.

**1. Introduction – 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.** The course, in part is intended to meld the Christian worldview and social science in an effort to answer questions that lead to world change and better leadership. Coming from a social science background, it was interesting to add the Christian worldview. As a Christian, this course gave me the opportunity to use the Christian worldview to support social science, which is very different from a secular social science perspective. The most striking experience was how integration of scripture provided a directive on work. Using scripture as a directive eliminates the guess work and the option of doing nothing. The “self-help” industry exploded in the 90’s and has continued with the creation of the internet and social media. We can speculate that a lot of money was made by those in the secular social science discipline, even those not but who saw the opportunity to capitalize on the lost. Sorry for the tangent.

The course, like the others I have completed, is perfectly placed. Each course builds upon the previous in a unique way that fosters growth and supports our journey to that final project! It fits into my graduate program as it allowed me to assess the chosen area of study and narrow my focus. Using the 7-step process to narrow my focus and to understand the blending of these two disciplines. The experience was almost like learning a second language! Bringing a Christian worldview to the social science discipline is not that difficult as a Christian, but not having memorized a lot of scripture gives me an opportunity to familiarize myself more with the Bible. It is also expanding my foundation as a leader, world change maker, and social science researcher. My apologies for the extreme delay in completing this assignment. Getting to this point is very exciting as I catch up in my next two classes and anticipate my forum paper will be done in a year!!

**2. Personal Growth - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or challenged you– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.** I was stretched by this course to narrow my project scope (Hey, an oxymoron!). However, my area of study actually grew. As mentioned in the zoom with you, I see my direction more clearly, which is very exciting. It was challenging to include scripture, but reading from the old and new testaments about work was wonderful. Understanding the intersection of social science and faith principles is a new area for me, but I love it. I look forward to memorizing scripture and using it to support future research and course work, as well as to learn how to effectively communicate and share faith-integration with non-Christians.

Readings and course resources were very insightful. Os Guiness presents information and perspective that helps the thinking process delve deeper. Using these resources to shape and build my foundation will make the difference in being an average or a skilled researcher. I especially like to think that my new vocational calling paradigm could shape a new way of seeing “calling” not just as for one to be called to the priesthood, but rather we are all “called” to serve God and to disciple. Os’s primary and secondary call may not be as he suggested, but viewed as we have one primary call.

As previously discussed, I look forward to conducting research that allows undergraduates the opportunity to participate, learn, and develop their skills. Perhaps the challenge to Os is one to start with!

**3. Reflective Entry - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or adaptation and relevant application) of new learning in your professional field. What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result of your study?** Learning to address different audiences will be helpful to plant seeds and give hope. My field of Career Development has become a Strategic Career Development program. The ability to understand the Christian biblical principles of work will allow me to better explain them in contrast to work without principles. Faith integration is a game changer for someone that is a leader of change because it will provide that “directive”, which also provides hope!

Learning the statistic that 80% of college students lose their faith in college, became one of the most important reasons for developing the program, “STRIVE: Strategic Career Development”. It is clear as day that our children need to be better equipped for the good and bad of college. That experience can be the highlight of that time of life, but it can also push one to the brink where they shut down mentally, emotionally, and physically.

While the social aspect is probably the most important in the eyes of a student, I am reminded of the difference I saw between my own experience in a classroom at UCLA (secular) and that of Hope International University (non- secular). Hope was a much more uplifting, warm and accepting environment. Leaning on scripture was not only comforting, but also just felt right. Looking back at my time at UCLA, it was where I should have gone all in for research, but I turned away from it because my experience was jaded with negative TA’s and arrogant Professors. My dream school wasn’t so dreamy.

To address both these challenges, students need to address their career from an early age instead of waiting until their junior year in high school. College major is obvious to be able to train for the career field they hopefully have in mind by their senior year. If not, Larry Burke’s assessment will help! Students should also know what social and academic situations they might encounter and have some ideas of how to address them. Aside from the academics, there are also tools and resources students need to access for resume writing, interview skills, and networking. STRIVE is a one stop 4-hour workshop that covers these and a variety of other strategies to develop a career plan.

I come away from this course with a stronger commitment that what I am doing is needed and what God wants me to do. He continues to open doors, which is one reason this assignment is so late. The confidence I feel in what my organization is planning, my leadership abilities, and that “STRIVE: Strategic Career Development” is the answer to reducing that 80% statistic and increasing the ability of Christians to reach the lost for the kingdom, is AMAZING!

**4. Conclusion – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.** With the new CEO position, a death, and a graduation my time this semester was extremely limited. However, I was just appointed as to the Cypress School Board as Trustee Area A over two elementary schools! It is an amazing opportunity to impact lives and the elementary school system in my city.

The CEO position is opening doors to work with Former Foster Youth, now known as Transition-Aged Youth (TAY) in California. On behalf of my organization, we are partnering with Nehemiah Project Los Angeles to serve the largest TAY population in the nation. Tens of thousands of individuals are released from the County’s Foster Care Program annually. It is an opportunity to impact lives, orphans that God says Christians must care for.

OGS and the courses taken to date have changed my life. I feel a new drive to serve, confidence in my ability to lead, and a mindset to be a change maker. All of which would not be possible without OGS directed Learning… to Change the World!

As a Christian, I am extremely thankful for institutions like Hope International and OGS because classes integrate faith, whereas secular universities do not. I have a good friend who works for a secular university and feels God’s call for him to be there and to be a changemaker there. He’s invited me to work with him. Before this class, I wanted encourage Christians to attend Christian colleges. However, the opportunity to serve like my friend does, is an opportunity to sow seeds. Faith Integration showed me I can be a changemaker anywhere. I hope I have conveyed how my focus has narrowed (i.e., research question), but the area of study has grown!

Worldview Literacy and Interdisciplinary Learning are both important essential elements in my desire to one day work for the university system. Is dreaming to teach the next generation to be missionaries in their career field and training retirees to facilitate “STRIVE: Strategic Career Development” in churches, schools, and organizations helping people worldwide too big of an ask?

As you can see, I am on fire! Yes, juggling many plates, but all planes intersect at one point or another. In fact, a friend has offered a 1:1 session using his time management daily devotional. This summer will focus on reading course material again, going through the time management devotional and preparing for fall classes, and researching my doctoral project. The goal is to settle in as CEO and develop the BAM - STRIVE program, including a Train-the-Trainers Course. Now to catch up with my B session classes!