

SR 968-22: Sociological Methodology: Interpreting Changing Cultures, Dr. Joshua Reichard

PHI 923-32: Contextualization for Social Change, Dr. David Ward/Mr. Prof. David Moser

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### **Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal**

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working on 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 intent of the Sociological Methodology: Interpreting Changing Cultures course was to understand how to apply a sociological theory in analyzing and devising a solution or plan in addressing a particular problem. The intent of the Contextualization for Social Change helps us to bring together our research and learning to carry out the work that God has called us to do to bring change to the world. In terms of how it fits into the graduate program as a whole, the sequence worked well for me because it was right before I began working on my action research project and the Library of Congress trip. The challenge for me is trying to figure out what sociological theory works best in devising a plan of action. I was thinking about Conflict Theory. I appreciate Jeff Bezos' approach in having Amazonians disagree and criticize the opinions of their peers before uniting around a conclusion (Contu, 2019), but conflict is only productive when properly managed and all parties come to the table with respect. Across the Nation, the lack of respect and the sentiment for anything but Christian is becoming the norm in our public schools. The viewpoint of anything biblical is now met with resentment.

**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.**

In my Contextualization for Social Change, I read about how passive citizens have become as a result of American Civics courses from Joel Spring's work. His work discusses how a large percentage of school graduates do not vote despite this being a central creed of civic instruction (Spring, 2019). Some of this passivism is even in the Christian community. Christians are not necessarily comparing what they see and understand with scripture and boldly taken actions. The Bible warns us about truly studying the Word so that we can have lives that are in line with God's Will (2 Timothy 2:15). With the Sociology Methodology course, as I try to reshape my thinking, I believe the best theory for my work is Symbolic Interactionism. As Christian educators, we are on the Frontlines in schools which reflect all that is happening in society. Every day we interact with each other and with students and families in our community. It is through these interactions that we will make our greatest impact. Both of these courses have challenged me because it is not just about trying to serve Jesus in public schools and lead others, but how to serve Jesus and lead in public schools while parents are coming against you, other staff are coming against you and students are coming against you. I realize through the activities through my ministry, I need to train my educators to look at these activities as an outreach. I also realize that I will have to establish more partnerships for support with these educators.

**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?**

As I contextualize the learning from both courses, the Holy Spirit led me to Galatians. The scripture teaches us that we have to live morally for the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to

work through us (Galatians 5:16-21). In this light, the Bible teaches, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things, there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23). The Bible also teaches us to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). The work of education is massive. In addition to the massive workload, it is emotionally and mentally draining. The question that still surfaced is how to best equip Christian educators to be successful in their call as ambassadors for Christ without experiencing compassion fatigue (Johnson, 2020). Christians in public schools are right in the thick of it and could have the greatest impact on faith learning integration. Another question is what is the most effective way of encouraging churches to visit and support Christians in public schools in the same light as foreign missionaries? Who will come and support us?

#### **4. Conclusion – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.**

Both courses helped me to think through what I need to do to be more effective in my profession and in ministry. The courses have also helped me to learn more about the U.S. Constitution, the First Amendment, and Supreme Court cases relating to it. I also looked more deeply into sociological theories and conflict to gain a better understanding. The magnitude of conflict in my profession is alarming. The conflict is not just with the students. Teachers and staff often have conflicts. Additionally, parents are constantly attacking the school and expecting the school to meet all of their needs. My forum paper on community schools is a model for all schools in partnering with agencies in the community to meet the needs of students. As I

continue to learn, I am trusting God to help me advance in my career so that I can have a greater impact. Jeremiah 29:11 lets me know that the Lord will guide me (NASB, 2020).

### Works Cited

- Contu, A. (2019). Conflict and organization studies. *Organization Studies*, 40(10), 1445-1462.
- Johnson, M. M. (2020). Self-care: The antidote to compassion fatigue. *Educational Leadership*, 78(2), 46-51. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1275253>
- New American Standard Bible (NASB), 2020. *Lockman Foundation*. (Original work published in 1960).
- Spring, J. (2019). *American education*. Routledge.