Research Design and Methodology I

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March 16, 2024

Professor

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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.

**Introduction**

This course of Research Design and Methodology I is the first of a series of three research and methodological courses. These research courses are essential to the Ph.D. program in Social Research (Integration of Religion and Society) at OGS since it is a specialized program in social research. Research Design and Methodology I is in core 4 out of seven cores, this course is designed to instruct students on the principles of social research, as well as prepare the students for their dissertation work. The course covered key concepts in social research, the language of social research, writing social research papers, and the format of the dissertation.

**Personal Growth**

I have looked forward to taking this course and was very pleased with the experience, I was thrilled to be learning more about social research and the critical pieces of the research process and research writing. I was excited to be introduced to the components and structure of the dissertation. I have learned a great deal from this course, from the instructor, and from the great resources that were provided. One of the great things about this course was the concentration on the writing process, I do need to become a better writer. One of the issues I have is poor time management, that I need to become better at time management, which will allow me time to write drafts and edit my work. I also need to focus on the mechanics of writing and making good use of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

As working through the OGS PhD program reading many academic journal articles in seeing the structure and contents of social research presented in the articles. This course of Research Design and Methodology prepares students to not only become better consumers of social research but also to become participants in the production of the body of social research from a Christian perspective. This course directly relates to OGS's mission statement “The Mission of Omega Graduate School is to equip scholar-practitioners, from a Christian perspective, with research skills to integrate religion and society for constructive social change.”, where it provides the research skills necessary to become a social researcher.

**Reflective Entry**

The course used a fictional research case study of Religiosity and Social Behavior in a Diverse Community: A Mixed-Methods Approach, which displayed how the process of the research study would be carried out along with the research questions. This was a good example of the components of a research study and how to work through the process of developing a research question, research design, research methodology, collecting data, processing, and analyzing the data, conducting statistical procedures, and interpreting statistical findings.

As a sociologist, these Research Design and Methodology courses are important to me because they are the essence of doing sociological research. I am also interested in healthcare research, I have a background in healthcare analytics, which deals with healthcare data and healthcare technology but is primarily focused on the support of the operations of the healthcare organization. There has been increasingly more healthcare research about the social factors relating to health and health outcomes. This healthcare research then in turn informs the healthcare community to incorporate practices that would be supportive of the social factors surrounding healthcare outcomes. The area of healthcare social research is a great area for sociologists to become involved in. With my background in healthcare analytics, I feel it is a natural transition in my career. Thus, I am very happy to be developing more skills in social research with the Research Design and Methodology courses.

**Conclusion**

Research Design and Methodology I was taught by Dr. Taladay, who provided great instruction and guidance on the process of research including research writing, which has been very helpful for me. The course was well designed and was presented well. The resources made available to me were valuable from social research support to dissertation support. The dissertation resources put together by OGS support the students as they start to think about their dissertation. This course has provided me with insight into the dissertation process and format, and I am excited to get started on my dissertation soon. I look forward to taking more statistics and research courses, these have been my favorite courses.