Clinical and Applied Sociology

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Professor

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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.

**Introduction**

This Clinical and Applied Sociology course presented, through a Christian perspective, the application of sociology in a non-academic setting, using sociological research and theory in the real world by way of applied and clinical sociology in order to influence social change or have a direct cause in social change. Though I am in the DPhil program and this course is usually meant for DSL students, as a sociologist, this was an excellent course for me, given that I have had an interest in public and applied as well as have a career in applied sociology the through the healthcare analytics career. This course has benefited me as a sociology student and as a professional and applied sociologist.

**Personal Growth**

This course has helped me develop more as an interactive sociologist, seeing sociology as more than just an academic subject; sociology is an uncovering of social phenomena and understanding of the structural and personal interaction of people within the world, the social world. This sociological knowledge could help people, communities, and society if sociologists would take this social knowledge to the people instead of just remaining behind the walls of academia. I have been a member of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (AACS) for some years but have not participated in the organization. I have found that I need to get involved to support my career as an applied sociologist and promote applied and clinical sociology to my students at Boise State University as an adjunct sociology professor. AACS offers two certification programs: Certified Sociological Practitioner (CSP) for applied sociologists and Certified Clinical Sociologist (CCS) for clinical sociologists. I have thought a little about going through those programs, but I decided I really do not need to because I am already a sociologist through my BA and MA in Sociology, my applied sociology career in healthcare analytics, and my sociology adjunct teaching career. I may relook at the certification programs in the future, but at this time do not see the benefit of becoming certified.

There are many sociologists and social theorists I admire and model my sociology from, but one I consider the model sociologist is W.E.B. Dubois. He naturally applied sociology through his academic work to his public, applied, and clinical sociology. That is the type of sociologist I seek to be. I have a renewed hope for sociology, where we see a lot more movement in sociology doing public, applied, and clinical sociology. I suspect that some of the reason we are seeing this is because of a disillusionment of academic sociology where it is about publishing for other sociologists and not applicable in the real world, lack of academic sociology jobs, so more trained sociologists are having government or corporate careers, more students going to college and thus more students majoring in sociology (lately there has been a reduction in people opting to pursue college, and feeling that sociology has lost its predominance in the social sciences as a disciple to provide good to for information on the current state of society. As sociologists work outside academia maybe once again we can see sociology as a tool to help make positive social change.

**Reflective Entry**

In my study of sociology, I have found it to be very applicable to the real world of everyday life and found discouragement in useless research presented in sociology journals. I also realized that a sociological perspective would greatly benefit Christian communities so I have been trying to get sociology out there in the world and have a career in healthcare analytics, I found that it is great to have applied and clinical sociologists adjunct teaching where it provides an active perspective on sociology that students can relate to and see sociology as a useful tool to help solve social problems.

I met a former present of the Associate for Applied and Clinical Sociology, Karen Albright, in 2023 at a health information and technology conference; she was working as a Senior Scientist Investigator for this health systems organization <https://ochin.org/leadership/karen-albright/> and tended a few of their sessions on healthcare research. Moreover, though of course, healthcare research in an Electronic Health Records company would have a wealth of data to contribute to healthcare research. Karen was also a guest on the Annex Sociology Podcast a few years ago: <https://socannex.commons.gc.cuny.edu/podcast/applied-sociology-karen-albright/>

She discussed the clinical, applied, and sociology paths for people outside of academia. It was great to meet other sociologists who work outside of academia in particular in the healthcare sector.

**Conclusion**

I am very thankful that I could take this course in Applied and Clinical Sociology; it has been a breath of fresh air in the OGS curriculum, returning to the sociology course. After many undergraduate and graduate sociology courses, this is the first applied/clinical course I have taken. It does tell us something about the direction of sociology programs at the university level. This course was very well put together, tying in the theoretical perspective with applied and clinical sociology. It was effective in meeting my professional, religious, and educational goals.

This course has helped me think more about clinical sociology and how I may utilize it in my sociological work, whether applied, public, or professional. I consider myself an applied sociologist, but it seems that there are times when clinical sociology is the appropriate choice to enact positive social change.