Orthodoxy & Orthopraxis

Carrie Hayashida

Omega Graduate School

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Professor

Dr. David Ward

**Carrie, I am very impressed with your Course Learning Journal for PHI 943-32! 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. I was personally inspired by this statement: "At the end of each session I find myself in awe of what was learned and how it narrowed my focus for both the DSL project and also what I will be doing after graduation. I see God’s hand in the OGS program making it a wonderful experience both for professional growth and also for deepening our relationship with Jesus."**

**In the Personal Growth section your reflections showed amazing growth in clarifying your calling: "I better understand the downside of how the gospel was shared historically; and how vocational calling became mostly focused on the priesthood within the church. This mindset developed a deep sense of orthopathy that will fuel my motivation to do what I believe God has called me to do. Specifically, I am to share the statistic of lost faith among Christian college students and to study if it is in part due to the fact that those students do NOT know what their calling is; and when they get to college they are unprepared to deal with the stress of adjusting to college."**

**Congratulations for identifying a possible Action Research topic, "I intend to persuade the church to adopt a vocational and spiritual calling program developed to help students discover their calling before they graduate high school." This goal at least shows how you can use what you do during the DSL program in the future!**

**In your Reflective Entry your story about your seminar showing that most of the high school students had no sense of future direction demonstrated the need for your research in technicolor!**

**Keep up the great work! -- Prof. David Ward**

**Grade: A**

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** – Phi 943 allowed me to examine both my career and my DSL project from a Christian worldview. Fortunately, it was already grounded in Christ and meant to serve the Kingdom, which is the first milestone. This course added depth to my own Christian worldview as I learned about right thought (orthodoxy), right action (orthopraxy) and to develop that passion to sociologically integrate Christianity and society (orthopathy). Unbeknownst to me, this core OGS course was extremely helpful to my progress towards my doctoral degree. At the end of each session I find myself in awe of what was learned and how it narrowed my focus for both the DSL project and also what I will be doing after graduation. I see God’s hand in the OGS program making it a wonderful experience both for professional growth and also for deepening our relationship with Jesus.

2. **Personal Growth** - God has been challenging me to dig deeper and to learn to articulate that. While I have been developing a DSL project for the Christian community this course helped me develop a deeper personal understanding of my work for the Kingdom. I better understand the downside of how the gospel was shared historically; and how vocational calling became mostly focused on the priesthood within the church. This mindset developed a deep sense of orthopathy that will fuel my motivation to do what I believe God has called me to do. Specifically, I am to share the statistic of lost faith among Christian college students and to study if it is in part due to the fact that those students do NOT know what their calling is; and when they get to college they are unprepared to deal with the stress of adjusting to college. Once this argument is presented, I intend to persuade the church to adopt a vocational and spiritual calling program developed to help students discover their calling before they graduate high school. It is my belief that this can reverse the loss of faith and actually increase those coming to Christ because our Christian students will be grounded in the Word and be able to disciple the lost.

3. **Reflective Entry** - This past summer I attended a youth conference hosted by my church. To my surprise, my seminar was the most popular seminar! Sadly, the results of my anonymous survey indicated 93% had no idea what they wanted to study in college or pursue as a career. More disappointing was that half of these students were going to be high school seniors. With these results it is not hard to believe the loss of faith statistic reported by the Barna Group. Something clicked in me after studying this topic for three semesters now… I consider it Orthopathy because of the burden I feel for the thousands of students that will graduate in June without having discovered their vocational calling.

The burden caused me to see the need for exponential growth to meet the student’s needs quicker than originally anticipated. The result was to modify my program from a student approach to a train-the-trainer program. So instead of hosting a student cohort, I will be contacting churches to host a student cohort AND a train-the-trainer seminar in order to plant the program within the church. This implementation style will allow 1) students to participate annually; 2) the church to address biblical principles of work; and 3) invite the congregation to pour into students by sharing their vocation and participating in this ministry.

4. **Conclusion** – This course grew my knowledge of religion and the integration into society. It also allowed my growth in orthodoxy and orthopraxy, as well as developed my own understanding and sense of orthopathy.

While my own gap between operational and professional beliefs is very narrow and aligned, it is helping others close that gap that I believe is a big part of the task I have been assigned. Christians need to see their career as a mission field to reach the lost and to be the salt and light. We are not here to be passive, but to find our calling and to know God’s plan for our life!

Prayerfully, the program I am developing will help parents, students, and churches see their own gap and embrace what is being shared in order to understand God has a call for them. In so doing, the potential to reverse the lost faith of Christian college students and to increase bringing others to Christ seems to be a very achievable goal.