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 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 Clinical and Applied Sociology course (SR 950-32) is designed to equip students to

1) recognize the difference between clinical and applied sociology 2) assess both through a Christian lense, 3) look for opportunities at work that could use methods learned, 4) apply methods learned to advance social change, and 5) be able to identify ethical concerns.

As an OGS doctoral student I am learning the fundamentals to establish a career in research from a Christian perspective. This course is teaching my about about applied sociology, “the application of sociological research to assist with social problem identification and diagnosis”; and clinical sociology, “the implementation and evaluation of interventions for groups, organizations, and communities using sociological theories and methods” (Reichard, 2023, p369). This field compliments my career as a Program Development Professional and a BAM’er. It is also necessary because it will provide data justifying a direction and/or a modification to support and direct program initiatives.

OGS programs are efficient and uniquely organized such that classes are sequenced like building blocks. When OGS was recommended to me the deadline was rapidly approaching leaving me little time to do the necessary research I would have normally done. Trusting the wise counsel around me, I applied. It was a divine appointment because while I knew it was a Christian college, I did not know it was a social research institution. Since I wasn’t looking to do social research, especially after a poor undergraduate experience double majoring in psychology and sociology. God purposely didn't reveal this to me until my first session when I was drawn to it. Now, He gets the glory and I have a story to share.

This course gave me a feeling different from other courses. Whereas, prior courses were

building blocks laying a foundation, this course built a new layer. This course connected to my

profession in a tangible way allowing me to see a direct application that will make my work

more impactful.

Since my undergraduate work was completed 30 years ago, it was necessary to refresh

(i.e., relearn) the differences between applied and clinical sociology. Studying this content from

a Christian perspective is impactful because it another opportunity to connect with the Bible and

Jesus. As a Christian, learning from this space is also motivating because OGS is preparing us

to be change makers and in order to be a change maker for Christ, we need that depth.

The only downside was learning that the DSL project does not allow pilot testing with

people because surveys and data collection is something I planned to do. The silver

lining is that I can transfer to the PhD program where I will learn and use these skills.

At the beginning of this course I was torn between two areas of focus. Today, the path is

better defined, which has been the case with each class. As each course introduces new content

my world view and wealth of knowledge grows. Assignments that require the application to my

profession creates a deeper understanding and brings to mind new opportunities to use the newly

acquired knowledge. Professionally, this has been a game changer for me because I am

motivated and eager to become that a change maker for Christ.

Reflecting on what was learned in this course, the applicability is twofold for me. First, as a professional who designs educational programs to affect people to make changes that have a positive impact/outcome, there is no question that applied and clinical sociology can and should be used.

Currently, I am modifying a career development program and plan to “plant” this as a ministry in the Christian community (i.e., churches, schools and colleges). Collecting data to show outcomes will be very impactful.

Second, as a Bam’er, who wants to change the business world to impact the world for Christ, there is an opportunity to use applied and clinical sociology because BAM seeks to eliminate social issues through business.

There is an additional opportunity within the Business As Mission (BAM) field through the implementation of my new training component for missionaries and mission organizations.

Studying the outcomes of this component will be beneficial for both the missionary and organizations because they’ll see the evidence (i.e., data) that will either support or reject achievement. This two’fer is exciting because the opportunity has exponential benefits for the Kingdom as well as the communities served.

In conclusion, this course has been extremely valuable in narrowing my career focus with respect to application of the DSL degree. It will be insightful to review the professional organizations and institutions discovered in this field. Personally, this course as with every OGS has sparked a motivation for the future. Professionally, I can’t wait to complete the DSL program and transfer into the PhD program. It is wonderful to see God’s plan for my future.

WORKS CITED

Reichard, J.D. (2023). [*The Routledge International Handbook of Sociology and Christianity*](https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003277743-40/applied-clinical-sociology-joshua-reichard). London: