Cross-cultural Dynamics

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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.

**Introduction**

 What a privilege to be a part of OGS and its own going curricular sequence of course study! In LDR810-42, Cross Cultural Dynamics, I was made aware of the instinctiveness of global awareness in thinking about cross-cultural living, not only abroad but here in the USA. This has enhanced my own worldview dynamics of others in multinational diversities. I appreciate how leadership skills begin through a personal faith experience with Jesus Christ. And since the first leadership course I took, this fact has been exemplified through professors and challenging assignments that have brought about analyzing and critical thinking in new ways. Knowing the privilege we have to discover new ways to of understanding other persons’ cultures and traditions, especially Spiritual, enhances my own views of interdisciplinary learning, as I ask my Heavenly Father lots of questions for my own personal growth in Him.

 Learning new communication skills both personally and professionally have greatly benefited me. And realizing that good questioning with listening skills is the most effective way to communicate for the kingdom purposes of God.

**Personal Growth**

 Personally, I began to understand more fully the China opportunity that my husband and I had experienced in 2014-2016. This was a wonderful time of debriefing the experience we had there. I was sad sometimes knowing that I could have done much better in communicating with our director. I expected them to know how we needed to adjust to their customs every day. I depended too much on them and did not exercise my own personal boundaries which led to frustration and stress. But praise the Lord, He knew how to teach me! I now know that so much would have been different had I observed more, listened, and asked questions of them.

 In this course, the books, articles, and videos that were suggested were of great importance and I wished I had known of them before accepting the call to China! Particularly of great help in understanding others was D. Elmer’s book*, Cross-cultural Connections: Stepping Out and Fitting in Around the World.* We need to seek understanding to be understood with other, knowing that our words have value and matter to others. Their words have value and matter to us. Building bridges is a major part of cross-cultural communication and Christian Missiology!

**Reflective Entry**

 I’m excited to meet with our Multinational Team in our school after having learned even more communication skills to create a better understanding of our 20% families who do not feel connected with us. They just do not understand yet!

 Some of our ideas include the following: Sitting down with a few of them who understand English well enough to communicate and ask questions about their family and traditions. How can we better serve you and your family here to ensure good educational success for your child? This will take some time to cover each new family. Then, perhaps, we talk about establishing an International Day emphasizing a few of the countries represented by students. They could teach us cultural traditions with food, dance, clothing, and few other ideas.

 Could this be a new school tradition that takes place each semester? Could we have signs of welcome in their languages in the school foyer? Are these good community development strategies as new multinational families come to our school? Will we learn the uniqueness of each individual in this way? Will they be authentic with us? Will this bring about openness, acceptance and trust, so that we may partner with them for the good success of their child’s educational and Spiritual growth? Is this practical wisdom that will enable us to all work together?

**Conclusion**

 This course, Cross-cultural Dynamics effectively met my goals professionally, Spiritually and educationally as I continue to pursue the Doctor of Social Leadership Degree. Being an OGS scholar practioner is a grand pursuit in life-long learning!

 Professionally, I gained new insights to support the ideas of good communication with those in my school, teachers, staff, parents, students. I appreciated the TED Talk video of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *The Danger of a Single Story*. We are all impressionable, especially children, when looking to relate and identity with others’ stories. We are too quick to make assumptions from what we hear about others. Do we believe from others’ eyes or from their experiences? Many times this only gives us a single story. Never make assumptions from a single story!

 Spiritually, I’m always learning from Jesus Christ as I ask many questions before analyzing situations. I would rather be quiet a while before answering questions. Sometimes, I ask the questioner another question to make sure I understand. This has enhanced by Bible study when thinking about the cultures and traditions in which Scripture was written. And knowing the culture changes the story from my experience to the person who was writing by the Holy Spirit. I have so much more to learn contextually in the Scriptures. These stories read and studied with a new cross-cultural lens can break down and repair my previous assumptions. Being led and functioning from the life of Jesus in me is how I want to live!

 Educationally, the use of the Cultural Adjustment Map has impacted me the most when communicating with multinationals. Understanding, communication, and being mission minded in a global society is a fundamental and foundational concept in a cross-cultural post-modern society.

 Thankfully, from the first biblical story of Abraham’s calling from God to our own personal calling to China, and now to our spheres of influence daily, we bring messages of the hope of Jesus Christ to others by use of good communication skills, asking good questions and actively listening to others, to successfully strategize and build bridges of trust and understanding, so they will accept His good news.