Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal

PHI 815-22: History of the Integration of Religion and Society

Donovan A. McFarlane

Omega Graduate School

March 10, 2025

Professor

Dr. David Ward

**Course Learning Journal**

**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.

**Donovan, excellent work on this Course Learning Journal! You synthesized the course well. You effectively integrated concepts in the course to show how useful the concept of worldview is for critical thinking about the big-picture perspective from which an author frames his or her understanding of society. I appreciated how you found that "the course’s body of knowledge and concepts facilitated your ability to identify historical precedents of Christianity's positive and negative social impacts for guidance in the sociological integration of religion and society to advance constructive social change. I could see how this was facilitated through your preliminary research on Christianity’s influence on perspectives regarding a modern social issue: homosexuality. Your reflections show thoughtful engagement with the course content for PHI 815-22.**

**Keep up the good work! Please reach out with any questions, Donovan. -- Dr. David Ward**

**Grade: A**

**Course Learning Journal**

**Introduction**

The course, PHI 815-22: History of the Integration of Religion and Society, is designed to foster deep knowledge and understanding of connections between religion and society. As such, this course by Omega Graduate School seeks to analyze trends, issues, and problems that need the transforming impact of a Christian worldview in the social sciences. This objective engages students’ understanding of the knowledge and connections between Christian worldview and one’s religion and religious beliefs. Furthermore, the course meets the program quality and knowledge requirements by developing students’ critical thinking skills to clarify the nature and significance of issues related to the integration of religion and society (Omega Graduate School, 2024). Finally, the course’s body of knowledge and concepts facilitated my ability to identify historical precedents of Christianity's positive and negative social impacts for guidance in the sociological integration of religion and society to advance constructive social change (Omega Graduate School, 2024). This was facilitated through research on Christianity’s influence on perspectives regarding a modern social issue: homosexuality.

**Personal Growth**

The course, PHI 815-22: History of the Integration of Religion and Society was an important one in developing a strong base in both social sciences and the connection to religion. With the readings and research, I was able to develop a deeper understanding of the role of religion, and specifically, a Christian worldview from the perspective of how Judeo-Christian values shaped and influence different ideas and ideologies. During the course, my knowledge and understanding of the extensive impact that Judeo-Christian perspectives made became enlightened with several important readings. I was able to better navigate and understand several modern challenges in light of the historical and concurrent influence of Judeo-Christian worldview, especially in light of what is happening in the United States today. My research skills and reading literacy have increased significantly, as well as my ability to synthesize information. My ability to synthesize information across several areas and worldviews was augmented in this course.

**Reflective Entry**

 After having completed several readings and research on the topic of the integration of religion and society, the course re-oriented my understanding of how much we still depend on religious perspectives and faith in understanding and interpreting several phenomena. While I have not adopted a new worldview, several philosophical thoughts and ideas emerged. For example, when it comes to the influence of Judeo-Christianity on our views of sexuality, it made me wonder if it is worse for Christians to shun and discriminate against such individuals than to be tolerant. Are we to judge and reject others?

 Learning about how the perspectives on social issues changed over time with the importance and rise and fall of faith and religion gave me new perspectives on the intricacy of religion and social values in human life and society. I also learned that there is extensive disagreement on the degree to which the Bible condemns homosexuality, and that most of our views today have emerged from different eras and influences.

**Conclusion**

As individuals, we need to rekindle understanding of the relationship and intimacy between religion and society, recognizing how much religion has shaped all aspects of society and our individual and collective worldviews and expectations. With a great need for enlightenment in what seems a dark age in our 21st century technological society, the missing ingredient may be the lack of appreciation for faith and belief, and our lack of a sense of spiritual intimacy with the Creator. A course such as PHI 815 History of the Integration of Religion and Society fills this gap by reminding us of where we have traveled from to where we currently are, and that we still need faith as a guide to continue this journey toward a good or great end.

This course was very effective in achieving its established purpose and goals. With several important readings, I was able to explore diverse views on integration and society and religion. Particularly interesting were the many sources encountered on worldview, and on Christian worldview. The course has created an opportunity to better understand how much religion and faith cut across what we seek to know and understand in today’s society. From the course, I was able to gain new understanding on the concept of worldview, especially in the Alessiato reading on the definition and origin of the term.

**Course Readings**

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Akanbi, S.O., & Beyers, J. (2017). The church as a catalyst for transformation in the society. *Hervormde Teologiese Studies, 73*(4) <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i4.4635>.

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Cheng, D. (2017). Homosexuality in High Medieval Europe: Reformist Thought and its Effect on Queer Subculture. *JUST,* Vol. V, No. 1. <https://ojs.trentu.ca>.

DeYoung, K. (2015). What does the Bible really teach about Homosexuality? *Clearly Reformed*, July 15, 2025. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://clearlyreformed.org/a-biblical-view-of-homosexuality/>.

Epstein, L. & Walker, T.G. (2020). *Constitutional Law for a Changing America: Institutional Powers and Constraints, 10th edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

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Lacopo, F.P. (2016). Medieval Europe and the Culture of Contempt in the Age of the Lateran Councils. *Grand Valley Journal of History, Vol. 4*: No. 2, Article 1. <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gvjh/vol4/iss2/1>.

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Rossum, R.A., & Tarr, G.A. (2003). *American Constitutional Law: The Bill of Rights and Subsequent Amendments, Volume II, Sixth edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Schmidt, A.J. (2004). *How Christianity Changed the World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Stopforth, J. (2024). Homosexuality in Medieval Europe. *PRISM*, June 11, 2024. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://www.prismfl.org/post/homosexuality-in-medieval-europe>.

Volkomer, W.E. (2012). *American Government, 14e*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.