PHI 815-22

History of the Integration of Religion and Society

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Professor

Dr. Ward

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.

This course on the History of Integrating Religion and Society is designed to help participants understand how Christianity has significantly influenced society and how God uses individuals and reform to fulfill His purpose on Earth. Omega Graduate School's vision is to explore how we can achieve God’s purpose for our lives in every area. It is essential to build a strong foundation to consistently integrate our faith into our work and the places where we spend the most time.

This course allowed me to learn about the significant influence of Christianity in our world, the various areas that developed from Christianity itself, and how the heroes of faith extend beyond the Bible. I had previously maintained a particular historical perspective on how Christianity often served as the foundation for many aspects, such as the establishment of the New World, as the Puritans sought religious freedom, and how many schools began with a basis of faith but later integrated other principles. However, I was unaware of Christians' substantial impact on establishing hospitals, schools, and public education institutions.

I have a passion for history and find joy in documentaries, the teachings of the Bible, and any truth I encounter. Consequently, reading Schmidt's “How Christianity Changed the World” captivated me. The historical insights uncovered the truth about public education and Martin Luther’s push for it to become a civic responsibility of taxpayers, ensuring that the underprivileged received an education and recognized its significance, which was a new perspective for me. Furthermore, the establishment of schools began by integrating Christian principles and values. After 26 years in education, I never received this information in any professional development or college courses. This revelation frustrated me and made me realize that Christianity was a deliberate influence and foundational influence on the public education system I work in. removed from the system. I immediately thought about how Christianity had not received the credibility it deserved as a system that began as a faith-based structure in society but was instead removed. According to Schmidt, “Although public schools have by now become totally secularized, especially in the United States, it is helpful to know that the idea of tax-supported schools originated with individuals who were motivated by the love of Jesus Christ, whom they wanted to be taught for people’s spiritual and material benefit.”

This course has motivated me to stand firm on the need for Christian values to be returned to public education, even if it is an option for parents. Faith-based institutions can support this endeavor through partnerships and by having those of the faith volunteer in schools, offering opportunities for families to choose to create a connection between schools and faith. For example, I have sought out opportunities for this, as my current church will start a “Good News Club” at my school. This will provide the option of Christian Bible study in schools, allowing parents to choose for their children to build on the original principles within the public school system.

This course has provided an excellent foundation for me to continue exploring the history of how faith-based principles and those dedicated to the faith, along with God himself, utilize reform and individuals to ensure that his plan unfolds on earth. I have become intensely curious about how many more systems and structures are built on Christian principles. This course has shifted my perspective and renewed my understanding of how we can trace the lineage of God’s plan as it is consistently implemented in our society through man and various systems.

Works Cited

Schmidt, A. J. (2004). *How christianity changed the world*. Zondervan.