Course Learning Journal

Antwan D. Brown

OMEGA Graduate School

PHI 815 History of Integration of Religion & Society

Dr. David Ward

March 16, 2025

**Antwon, I am impressed with your Course Learning Journal for PHI 815-22!**

**This heartfelt journal has been really gratifying to read, because I could see that it had made a transforming impact on you and your future ministry. You are a good writer. You completely got the point of the course and its seed was sown in good soil that is going to bear fruit 30, 60, and a 100 fold! Thank you.**

**I will restate what I said in the Essay feedback: This is actually a persuasive paper, with a topic you could use for COM 822. It has great potential, if it avoids emotionalism and addresses both sides of the case factually and not rhetorically, before making a research-based case for your position. I say this as one of the Persuasive paper panelist judges. I would almost like to hear a debate between two presenters like they do at the university of Oxford!**

**Keep up the superior work!**

**Dr. David Ward**

**Grade: A+**

**Introduction**

PHI 815-22 helps students to identify and analyze those portions of society that can experience progressive transformation through the integration of religion. It allows the student to look at the issues of society with a theological worldview to make effective changes for the betterment of society. The course intends to show how, through the continued work of the discipling community, the redemptive work of Christ shifts the community at large. The course demonstrates how the historical movements of the Church have been integral in shaping communities, families, policies, and governments.

This course is integral to the overall mission of OMEGA Graduate School in that it equips students with the tools necessary to be conscious of the world they live in, the issues facing humanity, and how, with an infusion of spirituality (or religion), much of society's ills can be mitigated or eradicated. It does well to have this course as part of the curriculum; however, it might be beneficial for the course to be hybrid rather than fully asynchronous. Face-to-face time with the instructor is helpful with a course as foundational as PHI 815.

**Personal Growth**

This challenging course made me want to engage deeply with the material. It forced me to be heavily involved in academic research and to be intentional in ensuring I was looking for material germane to the course material. The depth of the subjects created a nearly insatiable appetite for material pertinent to the interaction and integration of faith and society. This course has been the only one, thus far, where I have had to think about succinctly putting my thoughts on paper because the course was so intriguing and near to my wheelhouse.

I was also stretched because I had to think beyond my context and open my lens to look more globally. It also allowed me to be rather introspective and assess if I have done enough in my ministry to be a voice in the community. It made me confront whether I have positioned my church as a beacon of light that breaks up the darkness that covers the lives of the less fortunate and marginalized within our community.

**Reflective Entry**

As I engaged in the coursework, read the source material, prepared the papers, and interacted with the discussion post, I looked at my context and how I have positioned us to be an influential force that helps shift society. With the tools gained in this course, I can lend my knowledge to our work in my theological context to help lead conversations on many of the trending topics within social reform. With all the uncertainty facing our nation, with our politicians treating citizens as if they are nothing more than fodder for the latest newspaper headline, these moments have demonstrated the urgency of being a church that goes beyond its walls to help those who might not be able to help themselves.

One of my most significant character traits pertaining to integrating religion and society has been my compassion. Compassion can also be a weakness because many might want to exploit and weaponize my weakness. I desire that our church be a leading voice within our community to ensure that the voiceless and disenfranchised have an advocate and ally to champion their causes and solve their problems.

**Conclusion**

Overall, this course, guided by Dr. Ward, has been exceptional in helping me progress toward my professional and educational goals while fostering personal growth. This course has more than met its intended outcomes and equipped me with the tools necessary to make a meaningful impact on engineering social reforms in my community. The disciplines learned in this course will aid in developing a robust discipleship ministry focused on integrating religion within our context. With the knowledge gained in this course, I can formulate a plan and course of action to incorporate religion into our community and spread the good news about Jesus. In this way, we can help alleviate many of the social issues affecting the community around our church. With the successful integration of religion and society, particularly in the community surrounding our church, we can indeed be a "community church."

OMEGA Graduate School has been pivotal as a launchpad to clarify my calling in life and ministry, enabling me to be a catalyst for change in my community and initiate the transformation process. Helping to change our community then contributes to altering the trajectory of the lives of its citizens, providing them with the hope that a better future is indeed possible.