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.

**Introduction**

 Clinical and Applied Sociology is an excellent course in which to learn to apply philosophy, leadership, knowledge, research skills and personal worldview to community problems, and help groups of people make better choices to improve their quality of life, by interventions that promote social change. Omega Graduate School’s mission statement proclaims: “The Mission of Omega Graduate School is to equip scholar-practitioners, from a Christian perspective, with research skills for constructive social change,” (Omega Graduate School).

 In the graduate program’s position and curricular sequence of this course, it is strategically placed about half-way through the degree of Doctor of Social Leadership. Students learn to evaluate and research the various sociological theories from history and discern the value of these theories and how they have affected groups of people in history before. Today every organization in the world and people group, experience social problems that can be addressed to bring about positive successes in both Christian and secular realms of society. Philosophy, worldview, and leadership classes are pertinent before this course. Learning about people in their own environment sand experiences is essential to developing a solution for their challenges.

**Personal Growth**

 I continue to grow stronger in my personal faith in Jesus Christ, Christian worldview and desire to help others understand their relationship with Christ and others, through each course I have taken at OGS. This one by far is the most exciting and yet challenging class that continues to intrigue me as I think about strategies for the school in which I am an administrator. Readings from various books and scholarly journal articles were not only knowledgeable, but also inspirational. Some of these include *The Routledge International Handbook of Sociology and Christianity* by Dennis Hiebert. I am still intrigued by the dedication: “For those who practice grace.” I still remember “Grace practice” each morning as I enter my office and go over the calendar of events for the day. Will I continue to practice grace with others today, as God does with me?

 “*Applied and Clinical Sociology: A Christian Perspective*,” by Joshua Reichard, is a read that I referred to more than a few times through my studies these past few weeks, as I was encouraged to study scripture through the eyes of a learning scholar practioner and see how Jesus Christ answered and intervened for the least ones, the lost ones, and the last ones. Particularly how we can help in Christian communities understand that their beliefs can determine their thinking which leads to their behavior, and how their behavior not only affects them, but affects others in the world around them. My abilities to listen with more intention have been enhanced and I find myself a better listener than ever before.

**Reflective Entry**

 As an administrator in a middle school of 500 students and 90 adult staff, I have the privilege of many adults in my office each day. Some of these wonderful individuals ask much advice from how to talk with a disgruntled parent, to asking for biblical integration help teaching a particular lesson, to how best to reach a child who does not like school. And sometimes these adults want spiritual advice and help with particular challenges they are facing. What an awesome God I serve, and it is an honor to listen to them as I am listening to the Holy Spirit at the same time for the words He would have me say.

 In January, as I observed and completed teacher evaluations for the ones for which I am responsible for, I realized there were a few teachers who did not use biblical worldview integration in a natural way. When I met with them individually at the post conference, they shared they felt uncomfortable as they were new and unsure how to teach from what the Lord, Himself, was teaching them. They felt more drawn to curriculum standards and texts and student testing outcomes and preferred to find a daily bible verse to share with the students. Although, the above is important, they needed purposeful training in the calling of the Lord Jesus to them for Christian teaching.

 I had the privilege of asking if they would like to be mentored specifically by me and learn to understand how Jesus as the master teacher and guide, takes us through daily lessons intentionally. It has been a glorious time for me to meet with them together regularly and watch their growth as I go back to inspect what is expected. I was able to explore with them the purpose of Christian education along with our school mission, “Love God, Love Learning, Love Others,” through their lesson planning. Helping them in this change for their classroom teaching will influence their students for greater biblical worldview as they meet challenges that could need social change. I will continue meeting with these teachers through the rest of the school year.

**Conclusion**

 Clinical and Applied Sociology is very effective in the continuation of meeting my professional and educational goals, both now and for the future, as I learn to be an effective scholar practioner researching other social issues within our school community with families, students, and staff, particularly from a faith that is based on Christian principles. I will continue to research, evaluate challenges, and hopefully find interventions that will help constituents, as I pursue a Clinical Sociologist Certification and the Doctor of Social Leadership degree. Personally, I want to re-read the Bible again this year, looking for and studying exact ways in which Jesus Christ meet the needs of social groups, listened to them, and intervened for them.

WORKS CITED

Omega Graduate School (2021). https://ogs.edu/about-us/our-core-values/