Course Core Learning Journal for Advanced Communication:

Introduction:

Human beings possess a unique ability to communicate with each other and their surroundings through language. The Advanced Communication seminar aims to build upon our foundational understanding of human communication, focusing on interpersonal communication, effective writing, and public speaking skills. The course utilizes advanced communication techniques, including media, computers, and information science.

Course Objectives:

The objectives of this course encompass various aspects of communication:

1. Define and explain the elements of communication and the process inherent in each.
2. Providing a working knowledge of communication suitable for use in a graduate programme.
3. Contextualize basic communication processes into one’s life profession and other context.
4. Expanding areas of interpersonal, group, and public communication.
5. Review and evaluate effective skills in interpersonal, public, and small group communication situations.

Expectations:

My experience throughout this course has been captivating and enlightening. Initially, I had rather ordinary expectations, simply anticipating a review of grammar and language skills to serve as a refresher course. However, I was pleasantly taken aback by the course's ability to present me with challenges that compelled me to confront my fears and address my perceived shortcomings in communication. The course pushed me beyond my comfort zone, encouraging me to work diligently to improve my communication skills and become a more effective communicator. It provided me with valuable insights and tools to overcome obstacles and communicate with greater clarity and confidence. As a result, I now approach communication with a heightened sense of awareness and purpose, eager to continuously enhance my abilities in my pastoral ministry and other aspects of my life.

Personal Growth:

As a pastor in my professional field, effective communication is not just a skill but an integral part of my calling. Whether delivering sermons, comforting the sick and dying, or engaging in pastoral counselling, communication is at the heart of every aspect of my work. This course on advanced communication has been a transformative journey that has heightened my awareness of the intricacies of the communication process.

In the past, I may have taken communication for granted, assuming that my words alone would convey the intended message. However, through this course, I have come to realize that communication extends far beyond mere words. My facial expressions, gestures, and body language all play a significant role in how my messages are received and interpreted by others.

Now, I am much more attentive to my non-verbal cues, understanding that they can either enhance or hinder the effectiveness of my verbal communication. When delivering sermons, I am mindful of my facial expressions, ensuring that they align with the tone and content of my message. In pastoral care settings, I am conscious of my body language, seeking to convey empathy and compassion through my gestures and presence. Communication has evolved into a matter of great importance for me.

Campus Residency:

During the campus residency, I observed the remarkable ability of human beings to establish a supportive communication atmosphere, even in the presence of individuals who were relatively unfamiliar to each other. Together, we cultivated an environment that encouraged and facilitated the learning process.

Progress-Insights:

One of the most profound realizations from this course is the inescapable essence of communication, whether it takes a direct or indirect form. This has compelled me to be deliberate and open in my communication, particularly in areas where I may still need to grow. Instead of shying away from communication during conflicts, I am now making a conscious effort to communicate purposefully, even in difficult interpersonal or professional situations.

Reflective Entry-Contextualization:

In the context of pastoral ministry, silence holds profound significance, often overlooked amidst the busyness of communication. We are called to speak and proclaim the Word of God, offering comfort, guidance, and encouragement to those in need.

Yet, amidst this responsibility, there exists an intriguing paradox – the fear of silence. Some pastors may perceive silence as a void to be filled, a moment of awkwardness to be avoided. They might struggle to remain quiet, fearing that their silence will be interpreted as a lack of competence or uncertainty. This fear can drive them to fill every moment with words, as if the continuous flow of speech validates their role as spiritual leaders.

I, too, have experienced this temptation to avoid silence in my pastoral interactions. In times of uncertainty or vulnerability, I found myself compelled to speak, to provide immediate answers or comforting words. However, as I delved deeper into my journey of advanced communication, I now recognize that silence can be just as powerful a form of communication as verbal expression. Silence can convey empathy and compassion like no words can.

Questions and Concerns about the Professional Field:

Pastoral ministry requires a deep awareness of our motivations for communication and the content of our messages. Offering ministry with pure intentions, free from personal agendas, is essential for fostering an environment of trust, growth, and spiritual support within the congregation. By prioritizing the needs of others and staying true to the teachings of faith, pastors can effectively serve their congregants and lead them on a transformative spiritual journey.

Addressing Graduate Study Programme Concerns:

Effective communication is key in the modern world, where technology has revolutionized how we interact. As game-changers, we must embrace the available tools and advancements to advance the Kingdom and fulfil our calling.