Hermeneutics and Communications

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Professor

Dr. Schmidt

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.

This course in Hermeneutics and Communications was much broader than I anticipated. I was pleasantly surprised by the content of the course, where we learned about how we and others interpret the world around us, from text to events, to artifacts, to interactions. Our hermeneutics is dependent upon our socialization, our culture, and our worldview. In addition, this course has taught us the methods of engaging in social research from digesting material and communicating our research through writing, use of statistics, and presentation. This course is fundamental to the doctoral program at OGS, where it informs us about the biases and perspectives, we take toward a given topic, in addition, it provides us with a framework to understand and respect other’s hermeneutics based on their background. This is important to us as researchers to be fair to variant perspectives so that we may bring forth a well-developed formulation and presentation to our social research that may address the reasoned perspective and intent of our research.

This course has been informative to my personal growth in a few different ways, one, is that it has reinforced the perspective on the reflexivity development of the researcher in order to understand their socialization that informs their worldview as well as their pursuits in social research. In addition, this reflexivity helps inform the researcher of the different perspectives within their research field and the dynamics of social-historical thought of people within the field. This allows for a degree of respect for others in general and other researchers even those that we may hold to be divergent to our own perspective. One of the social-theological thinkers that I have looked up to is Martin Luther the 16th-century monk, theologian, and pastor. Luther had some great insight and a man used by God, he was bold in his writing and presentation, he also used a method of discrediting alternative positions by verbally attacking the writers of those alternative positions. Perhaps, this had to do with Luther’s personality or a social/cultural practice of the time, I do appreciate his boldness and conviction of his arguments and perspectives and I do seek to model his boldness and conviction to an extent, but in a way that does not attack other people even though they are coming from an opposing position than that of myself. People are not the enemy, the ideas are, and the people are just like us who have been socialized into the perspectives we hold. We as researchers need to hold mutual respect for each other’s person and position, though we may argue for different positions/hermeneutics we can hold an understanding of other positions that help us dive deeper into the epistemological pursuit of our social research. Secondly, my personal growth came in the form of personal adjustment, where I cannot submit half-heartedly or out of a rush due to expiring due dates. My work on assignment number 3 was an embarrassment to me personally, academically, and professionally. I will not let that happen again, I am deeply sorry Dr. Schmidt that I presented such a pile of words strung together and assumed it was a paper. No matter the situation, I need to produce high-quality academic work worthy of this opportunity of being a doctoral student and a professional.

Within this course of hermeneutics and communication, I took the opportunity to learn about rural sociology and in particular healthcare in rural America, because of my interest and the fit of the hermeneutical approach to understanding the dynamics of rural populations, socialization, and culture, in addition to the political, economic, and social interpretations of rural America. I know much more about the western rural communities than I do of the mid-west, southern, and northeastern rural areas. Though there are similarities, there are also differences and a different social-historical context in each that needs to be understood in order to understand the dynamic in those areas. I would like to travel to those rural areas to learn more about them, to visually experience the landscape and people, and to witness the environment, produce, and food of those different rural areas, to help me gain insight of these areas. Having a greater understanding of rural America will aid me in doing rural sociology as part of my professional direction as a sociologist. There has been some great work in rural sociology, but I think there is more to offer to the field that I would like to bring forth. The people of rural America and its land have a dynamic social-historical context that makes the land and its people what it is today, and utilizing the hermeneutical approach learned in this course will help me produce informative and representatively portrait of the lives and land in each of these rural America areas, their ways of life and ways of being from religious to economic.

This course of Hermeneutics and Communications has met my professional, religious, and educational goals well, the professor presented the course material effectively and clearly. The resource material provided was informative and useful. The content of the course was insightful in bringing out a deep understanding of the art and methods of interpretation from the social-historical context of texts, actions, symbols, culture, people, verbal, and statistics to help us as researchers have a deep understanding of the narrative of the fields we study. Professionally and educationally and for that matter religiously this course has reinforced how deep and important the cultural context of the perspectives of people are and in order to effectively communicate with others we need to take into account the context in which people believe and think. This not only provides us with the tools necessary for effective communication and engagement with other people and researchers, but it also provides us with a sense of courtesy, respect, and a sense of ‘oneness’ or ‘togetherness’ as God’s diverse and beautiful creation of human beings, in which we share in the fellowship of humanness of people throughout cultures, places, and societies. This not only provides us with a way of thinking about and understanding others better, but also a way of understanding ourselves better, so that we may become the better of ourselves.

WORKS CITED