**Course Learning Journal**

COM 803 – Hermeneutics and Communication

Katherine Blanc

Omega Graduate School

October 7, 2023

Professor

Dr. Ken Schmidt

Introduction

I am asked to 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. I know from the DSL program’s catalog description that this program is designed for scholar-practitioners, with an emphasis on practical application of knowledge attained. This is order to become world changers. Initially there were issues with the course Syllabus, which created a bit of confusion. However, we managed to get into a groove after that.

 The intent of this particular course is to explore the *interpretation of research literature and how that interpretation influences the understanding of the literature – in other words, its ability to communicate ideas*. I perceive that this course fits into the DSL program as a provider of practical skills, in order to make students better communicators from an interdisciplinary perspective. I am unsure as to why this course is placed within the course sequence for the DSL program; instead, I simply trust that it has been placed into the sequence because it builds skills.

Personal Growth

This course stretched me in many ways, but especially in the integration of faith and other disciplines. I have not been affiliated with any form of religious organization for nearly 50 years. I communicated this to the professor, and felt fully supported.

When researching literature that contributed to my contextual interests, I was comfortable. But as stated previously, when it came to integrating faith into my secular context, I was stretched and challenged to “fit” that in. I do believe that I rose to the challenge and was able to successfully integrate some faith principles into my arguments and contextualization.

I think it was helpful that I had completed a few courses at another university, so that I could return to OGS with perspective and a greater appreciation for the spiritual aspect (which was missing entirely from the other university’s curricula).

Reflective Entry

While this course was mainly theoretical, I was able to contextualize some of its content in my volunteer position with the Hospital Foundation. I began to think of my volunteer service as a form of ministry. While my work is outwardly secular in nature, inwardly I was able to connect service to a higher power with my service to the community. Once that realization occurred, the content of this course gained relevancy to my life.

As for concerns, the only concern is that I cannot overtly express any form of spiritual ideas or thoughts in my work. However, as stated above, I gain inward strength and purpose.

Conclusion

 The DSL program’s catalog description states that this program is designed for scholar-practitioners, with an emphasis on practical application of knowledge attained. This is order to help OGS graduates become world changers.

I have not been affiliated with any form of religious organization for nearly 50 years. Therefore, I’ve admittedly struggled with some of the deeply religious content of my courses. Nonetheless, I feel enriched by this added dimension of learning – especially as it informs my newly discovered sense of purpose by viewing my work as a form of ministry to the community.

While my work is outwardly secular in nature, inwardly I was able to connect service to a higher power with my service to the community. Once that realization occurred, the content of this course gained relevancy to my life.

My only questions and concerns relating to the program expectations are whether I would be expected to incorporate scripture or Christian principles *into my* *action research project*. While a reflective section of the project would be acceptable, the incorporation of religious principles directly into the research itself would offend some of my fellow Foundation members and possibly get me into trouble with the Healthcare District. In light of these risks, I am confident that my professors will help me to maintain secularity in my hands-on research.

 As I move through the DSL program, I am confident that I will continue to receive the same gracious support that I’ve receive thus far, including the accommodation of secular restrictions within the context of my volunteer work. This course helped me to better evaluate literature from a wide variety of disciplines and see where they integrated in ways that strengthened these disciplines while supporting my communicative arguments.