Course Learning Journal

COM 803 - Hermeneutics and Communications

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May 10, 2024

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

innovative ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to

communicate with your professor insights gained because 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, 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 –**

The primary objectives of COM 803, Hermeneutics and Communication, are to cultivate the necessary skills to review a passage of literature, interpret literary works, improve writing, and enhance critical thinking. Hermeneutics, a term derived from the Greek words for 'express,' 'translate,' and 'interpret,' is not just a method or philosophy of interpretation. It is the foundation of all scientific methods, including textual studies (Gilhus, 2021, Abstract). Hermeneutics is not mere interpretation; it is the essence of literary analysis, which leads us to the core truth. In scholarly research, hermeneutics is the guiding light, revealing the essence and etymology of words, passages, texts, actions, and behaviors.

Hermeneutics takes researchers beyond surface meanings, allowing them to explore literary depth. It is apropos to graduate studies as it is like the key that unlocks the door to academic writing, research, and communication. The Omega Graduate School curriculum design is such that it provides a curriculum building block from one assignment, one course, and one discipline to another. The institution's mantra is learning social research that leads to social change. The andrological teaching method encourages and enhances scholarship and meets non-traditional adult learners' needs and learning styles to help them command subjects and skills.

**Personal Growth –**

 The genesis of matriculation at Omega Graduate School (OGS) for the Spring of 2024 was nothing less than exciting, exhausting, and eye-opening. The semester began on a Saturday, the last day of the week-long intensive. Missing so much that week left me out of pocket compared to my other academic colleagues. Starting the semester in academic arrearage has been nothing less than challenging, but a challenge like grabbing a bull by the horns. Thinking I would never catch up with everyone, only to realize that we were all in this together, each with our struggles. Doctoral studies can be intimidating. There is no one to hold hands with as a pull-through to the course. Independent study is the order of the degree program, and even though the programs are asynchronous, it is one hundred percent online, which poses adaptability issues. My growth pattern has been steady. It has taken the first half of the semester to figure out what needs prioritizing. However, knowing that we face similar challenges is comforting to know we are not alone in this journey.

Embracing the initiative and responsibility for our personal growth is not just beneficial but crucial. Personal Growth Initiative (PGI) is more than just a concept; it's a powerful tool for our academic journey. PGI is about actively and intentionally engaging in our growth process, encompassing cognitive and behavioral aspects that contribute to self-improvement (Robitschek, 1998). It's about taking control of our development and steering it in our desired direction (Stevic et al., 2008). Each doctoral course is a steppingstone toward personal, spiritual, and sociological growth. The course enhances critical thinking skills and stretches the boundaries of our cognitive abilities. The readings, zoom forums, instructor feedback, and academic interaction with peers all contribute to our mastery of course content. COM-803 equips us with the skills to interpret and understand literary works more effectively, as well as to decode complex writing, in addition to improving reading skills.

**Reflective Entry –**

Preaching and teaching the Word of God and leading or facilitating ministry or leadership modules are no small tasks. Many pericopes, phrases, and quotes would make spiritual growth and development impossible without help from bible study, scholarly sources, commentaries, and the like. By learning how to use the tools of interpretive study and the purposes of its various components, COM-803 has broadened and, in some ways, deepened my knowledge of interpreting texts as they relate to the Ministry. The adaptation to doctoral-level hermeneutics is a work in progress. I have applied the knowledge gained thus far to improve exegesis, which helps avoid eisegesis and misinterpreting biblical texts. Misreading a text result in misinterpretation, and misinterpretation leads to misunderstanding. Due to facing and embracing academic phobias, hermeneutics has helped me to approach academic challenges with more confidence and discernment. While there are no questions or concerns related to my professional field as a result of studying hermeneutics, there is a solid aspiration to use the tools acquired in COM-803 to significantly improve decision making-problem solving, demonstrating the practical application and relevance of hermeneutics in real-world scenarios, enhance understanding of theological presuppositions and perspectives, and learn how to reconcile different interpretations as a result of religious pluralisms of this present dispensation.

**Conclusion –**

 The time invested in COM-803 has been fruitful. It has not only guided my life and ministry until post-graduation, but also shown the potential for significant professional development. The benefits of this academic discipline are promising, propelling me towards the scholar I once believed was beyond my reach. COM-803 is not just enhancing my understanding of literary works, but also equipping me with analytical skills for interpreting information as a social researcher through a religious lens.

**Works Cited**

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