**Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal**

**Reflection of Takeaways and Applications from Hermeneutics and Communication**

COM 803-12: Hermeneutics and Communication (Fall 2024, Subterm A)

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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.

**Reflection of Takeaways and Applications from Hermeneutics and Communication**

**Introduction**

The course, COM 803-12: Hermeneutics and Communication, was very interesting and represents my first course in Hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is a body of knowledge about how to interpret literature. According to Gilhus (2021), Hermeneutics is the science and methodology of interpretation and deals with understanding texts and other sources in order to understand their true and intended meaning. This definition is something that is not new to this learner, but this course with several interesting materials and resources, went much further than this definition to present several guidelines on proper and effective interpretation of texts. Additionally, we completed two important exercises that allowed us to apply Hermeneutics. For example, one was a “Developmental Reading” in which we explored course resources and literature by applying course elements and interpreting specific statements or paragraphs in terms of what is written, and also applying our experience and contexts to such.

The intent of the course, COM 803-12: Hermeneutics and Communication, was to familiarize students with Hermeneutics in terms of its history, the major issues encountered in this perspective, and the various methodologies of hermeneutics. In this course, we were able to distinguish the diverse uses of hermeneutics as evident in the following: (1) biblical hermeneutics (biblical writings), (2) general hermeneutics (literary discourse), and (3) cultural hermeneutics (such as the arts). The materials used in the course provided me with understanding of how Hermeneutics affects interpretation across fields with both biblical worldview and general principles of understanding texts.

This course fits well into the graduate curriculum and program because it is important for students to understand and interpret what they read in order to accurately analyze and present information as the explore ideas and complete research and assignments. As noted in the course’s description, “General hermeneutics equips students to understand and interpret texts and written discourse through scholarly reading and applied research principles” (COM 803, Omega Graduate School, 2024, p. 1). Without the ability to understand and interpret texts, students would not be able to understand materials presented in the program and in each course. Furthermore, the course provided me with and enhanced my scholarly writing skills through well-established guidelines, techniques, and writing. It builds upon already existing skills and understanding regarding communication and interpretation skills in using textual materials.

**Personal Growth**

This course has been significant in expanding my academic and writing skills. Learning about the art and science of interpreting textual materials or what we call Hermeneutics, has certainly expanded my knowledge. The practical guidelines offered by several authors on how to best read and interpret the Bible (Duvall & Hays, 2012; Hack, 2008), as well as text in general (Gilhus, 2021; Booth, Colomb, Williams & Bizup, 2016; Zimmerman, 2015; Adler & Van Doren, 1965) have certainly increased my approach to reading and interpretation. The course introduced me to new types of exercises and applications of knowledge and understanding. It builds on existing organizational and communication skills. New knowledge was certainly gained about the art of interpreting texts or Hermeneutics as a discipline or body of knowledge.

**Reflective Entry**

This learner’s professional field is that of research and education. The course, COM 803 Hermeneutics and Communication, has certainly added to his knowledge and understanding of how best to approach reading and interpreting texts and related materials when conducting research. Moreover, since taking this course in Hermeneutics and Communication, this learner has shared this knowledge with his coworkers and pupils on best practices to interpret and understand textual materials. This course is a reminder that reading is purposeful and that the approach and motivation also affect interpretation. This course can be readily applied in my professional field in teaching students how to read texts more efficiently and how to increase their understanding of diverse textual materials.

**What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result of your study?**

As a result of taking this course in Hermeneutics and Communication, concerns about current professional field of research and education have been raised. For example, the following questions emerged: (1) Are we really teaching students how to effectively read and understand textual materials? (2) Do we need to develop curriculum requirements to teach Hermeneutics to students at the high school and college levels as a mandatory requirement to further reading and interpretation skills? and (3) How can this professional foster an appreciation for reading using the guidelines from this course?

**Conclusion**

This course, COM 803 Hermeneutics and Communication, has been very effective in meeting my professional, religious, and educational goals. From a professional perspective, it has increased my academic skills and knowledge vital to conducting research and producing better analysis on read materials. It has also increased my interpretation skills vital to imparting literature to others. From a religious perspective, there were several practical guidelines provided on reading the Bible and religious texts in ways that emphasize meaning and understanding. The educational goals of increasing my knowledge and skills, as well as understanding to further my academic journey have certainly been enhanced by this course.

**References**

Adler, M.J., & Van Doren, C. (1965). *How to Read a Book: A Guide to Reading the Great Books*. Chicago: Simon and Schuster.

Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.G., Williams, J.M., & Bizup, J. (2016). *The Craft of Research, Fourth Edition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Duvall, J.S., & Hays, J.D. (2012). *Grasping God’s Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Press.

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