Hermeneutics and Communication

Regina Matthews

Omega Graduate School

October 10, 2024

Professor

Dr. James Strecker

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 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 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.

The primary objective of Hermeneutics and Communication is to equip us with the skills to interpret texts from biblical, scholarly, and social perspectives. This course deepens our understanding of the various approaches to hermeneutics and underscores the necessity across all forms of text. The Omega Graduate School program fosters a well-rounded approach to our future scholarly contributions, while the Doctor of Social Leadership Program empowers us to lead societal change through a faith-based lens. Mastering hermeneutics is essential for our research, as effective interpretation of texts is crucial to our endeavors. Hermeneutics serves as a crucial bridge, enhancing our understanding of both past and future courses in our academic journey.

My perspective on hermeneutics has and its relevance to all types of texts has been transformed. Initially, I believed it was solely focused on interpreting biblical texts, specifically understanding the author’s intent and the historical context of the writing. While my theological understanding contained foundational truths—recognizing that hermeneutical practices originated with biblical interpretation—I have come to realize that its applications are much broader and more extensive. It has transformed the way I read texts and conduct research, deepening my understanding of how essential hermeneutics is for all scholarly inquiry.

During my readings of peer-reviewed journals and textbooks on hermeneutics, I discovered that, as an educator, I have been unknowingly engaging in the practice of hermeneutics. For instance, when we guide students to understand an author’s perspective, research historical context, and explore the author's background or setting, we help them gain a deeper understanding of the text. This involves examining why the author wrote the piece, identifying the intended audience, and uncovering the point of view being conveyed. While this application of hermeneutics may be on a smaller scale and pertains to a specific type of text, it still holds some validity.

My understanding of hermeneutics was challenged, allowing me to explore its various types and learn how to distinguish between them. I learned about the evolution of hermeneutics from post-modern to modern historical contexts and the necessity that has shaped its development. This experience prompted me to let go of my old mindset and embrace a new approach to interpreting and analyzing all texts. I have come to appreciate the significant impact an author’s perspective has on the texts we often accept as truth without questioning. The course also highlighted the distinctions between biblical hermeneutics for spiritual formation, general hermeneutics for academic subjects—including faith-integrated reading for worldviews—and social science hermeneutics for addressing social issues through research.

My recent experiences have prompted me to reevaluate, as an educator, how I read, research, and what I should truly gain from scholarly texts. Its goal is to help students at Omega Graduate School become more strategic readers, ultimately enhancing our writing. Each time I engage with an article or research piece, I will now consider the intended audience, the historical context, and the purpose behind the writing.

This course has encouraged me to approach texts—whether reading, researching, or writing—in a systematic way. I now focus on identifying the type of text and consider key questions, such as who the intended audience is and whether the author aimed to convey their faith-based beliefs to influence their writing.

I now prioritize identifying the type of text and exploring key questions, such as who the intended audience is and whether the author sought to convey their faith-based beliefs. This course has sparked my curiosity about how I read and interpret the word of God and other texts. I feel compelled to revisit all texts and apply my new perspective. It has transformed my previous mindset, leading me to adopt a fresh approach to text interpretation.

I often question why hermeneutical methodology is rarely addressed in discussions of pedagogy. In the field of education, it’s surprising that hermeneutics is not more frequently referenced or taught, even within andragogy. I feel a strong need to understand why this approach isn’t integrated into our developmental research. As an educational leader responsible for guiding adults who will ultimately lead students, it seems essential to incorporate this method of learning.

This course has allowed me to delve deeper into the art of reading. It has reinforced the idea that a teacher's role is to focus on guiding students to become stronger readers. Ultimately, the course has shown me that one of the primary goals of hermeneutics is to help scholars become better readers and interpreters of texts. By embracing this methodology, we can enhance our understanding and effectiveness in the classroom, fostering a richer learning experience for our students. I am now more motivated than ever to advocate for the inclusion of hermeneutics in educational practice, recognizing its profound impact on literacy and comprehension.

The learning experience has effectively addressed my professional needs and deepened my understanding of hermeneutics. It has transformed how I read and respond in my professional environment, shaping my approach as both a reader and a researcher.

I intend to continue exploring the historical impact of hermeneutics and its influence on my interpretation of texts. It has caused me to dive deeper into the art of reading, and the method in which we read different texts. This is just the beginning of my interpretative journey, and I am sure this will impact all other courses in my learning journey at Omega Graduate School.