

How to Create Your Personal Learning Plan (PLP)

Your PLP or Personal Learning Plan is very important because it defines what you will actually do in the course: how much you will read, how often you will post to forums, and whether you will do a presentation, a devotional, an artistic project, a research paper, or something else. It also helps your mentor to advise you.

Learning Outcomes. The Wilmette Institute designs its courses to meet the following learning outcomes. They—along with the course’s learning objectives—may help you in designing your PLP.

Knowledge:

Demonstrate knowledge and interdisciplinary insights gained from the courses.

Abilities:

- Analyze complex and interrelated local and global problems through critical systems thinking.
- Explore the intricate connections between spiritual and material solutions to social issues through research, praxis, and the arts.
- Engage in public discourse and social action in interfaith and intercultural contexts.

Application: Apply knowledge, spiritual principles, insights, and skills to:

- one’s individual reality,
- community-building efforts,
- participatory social action, and
- social discourse, with the goal of both spiritual and material progress.

Course Learning Objectives. To find the learning objectives for your course, go to the course’s “Classroom” or main page and look for them in the top section near the list of faculty. They will usually list things you should be able to *explain* or *do*. The last objective will say “To demonstrate this ability through postings in the course, devotionals, special artistic or research projects, or presentations to your friends” or something very similar. The course objectives are not abstract, asking you to “learn” or “understand”; they ask you to explain, demonstrate, or “do” something with the course.

Please think carefully about the goals you set for yourself. The Wilmette Institute asks you to read and to post to the forums every unit, and we hope you do so. But if you think you cannot do that, set different goals that you feel you can realistically achieve. Remember, this course is for your own personal development, not for credit. Set learning goals geared to your own capacity building. For example, if you are taking the course to acquire background for writing an article or a book, obtaining the background you need

for your projected work is a legitimate learning objective. You will have plenty of chances to reconsider and revise your PLP as you move through the units in the course.

If you are a Bahá'í, we hope you will be able to use course materials in firesides, deepenings, devotionals, study circles, children's classes, junior youth animator sessions, public presentations on Bahá'í topics, etc.; in other words, use the course materials to reinforce the core activities and other important efforts of your local Bahá'í community. If you are not a Bahá'í, think of groups of people you can share your learning with (including any Bahá'ís near you). This is very important because you learn by doing.

Reflecting on Personal Goals. You will have a chance to reflect on the goals you set in your PLP at the end of the course when you complete your **Learning Self Assessment**. These two activities are like book ends that shape how you read and study in the course. The *Reflection and Application of Learning* unit at the end of your course lists the types of projects you may wish to attempt to apply your learning: a devotional program, a presentation, an artistic project, and a research project or paper. Take a look at that unit on the Classroom Page as well. Your Learning Self Assessment is your chance to review what you did, what challenges you faced, how you met them, and what you feel you accomplished.

Once you have reflected on the course's learning objectives and the various projects you could consider to express your learning in action, you are ready to draft your PLP. We hope you will post your PLP in the PLP Forum, but if you prefer, you can email it to a faculty member instead.

Step by step instructions for how to create a PLP in the PLP Forum.

- Go to your Classroom Page
- Scroll down till you see
 - *Students: Click Here to Create a Personal Learning Plan (PLP)*—Click that link
- Click on *Add a new discussion topic*
- Scroll to Your new discussion topic
- In Subject line, enter [Your name]'s Personal Learning Plan
- Type your PLP in the Message box
- Scroll down to *Post to forum*
- Click to send

Problems or questions? Email learn@wilmetteinstitute.org.