Notes on how we’ll evaluate your personal learning resource:

As described in the attached handout (which was given out in our first class session), a personal learning resource is meant to provide a context in which you can do integrative work in this course. We have asked to see it at the midpoint of the course (October 22), and at the end of the course (December 10).

While it has been conceived very broadly, to give you as much flexibility as possible, there are a few pieces that each person’s resource should include. They are the following:

• your first draft of your learning goals
• On October 22, a second draft of your learning goals, with clear assessment and accountability pieces included
• On December 10th, a final draft of your learning goals with a description of how well you attained them, and some sense of what the process of naming them and attempting to accomplish them has taught you
• a brief introduction to your resource that describes how you have been using it
• organized content of an integrative nature that “works” the ideas and events of the course (think about the readings, the class discussions, your own participation in various events, cross references to other classes and contexts, etc.)

This last item perhaps requires further explanation. As the original handout suggested, a personal learning resource is at heart a place in which you can attend to your own learning, and do so in an organized way so that you can retrieve specific content and insights at a later date. We have given you our best ideas of ways in which to accomplish that. You, however, will know best how to make this resource work for/with you. Some of you may be familiar with traditional journalling methods and find them very useful, others of you will not. This does not have to be a “journal” in any traditional sense of that word. But it is intended to provide a process by which we can, as faculty, engage in a dialogue with you and support your integration of the materials we’re studying.

If you have all of the pieces listed above, your resource “passes.” If you have any questions about what we mean by any element of that list, please ask us!
Developing a “personal learning resource”

What is a “personal learning resource”? It can be any number of things, but it is first and primarily a place in which you take notes on your own learning, and then organize them in such a way that you can return to them again and again. In this seminar, it is one of the primary assignments that will allow you to do integrative work on a personal level.

You may be familiar with the Progoff journalling process, or you may have done various kinds of other journalling in spiritual direction. Or perhaps you’ve kept notes throughout your time at Luther from various classes, and attempted, haphazardly, to organize them. Whatever worked well for you from these other attempts ought to provide a beginning for this one.

A “personal learning resource” can be done in a number of formats (on paper, in a weblog, etc.), but it should contain at least the following: detailed notes from your reading in this class, put into a form that will be readily accessible when you enter your next professional context; notes and musings from any “outside” events you participate in, particularly those from the “choice menu”; ideas, notes, resources, etc. that you pick up from other classes and learning opportunities at Luther that strike you as particularly germane here; cross references between the preceding and your own learning goals; and a open-ended bibliographic resource of books/articles/other resources you’d like to venture into at a later date.

As you put this resource together, make sure that you pay attention to your own best learning practices. Do you like to draw? Perhaps you ought to spend some time each week responding in art to our work together. Do you like to make collages? It would be great to build collages out of clippings of current images and events from various magazines and other publications, and include such collages in your resource. Is your theology carried primarily via hymns? Perhaps a section of your resource could include hymn references, tied into your reflections on the class, or linked to biblical passages you found striking.

Many students will purchase a big 3-ring binder, and build a number of compartments into it: folders for handouts and other resources, sections for syllabi, space for journalling, announcements/calendar for upcoming learning events, a biblical reference/helps section, etc.

When you hand this in (at the middle and at the end of the term), you should include a short, no more than 2-3 page, written introduction in which you explain its organizing principles, how you’ve used it, and whether (and how) you might continue to use it.

Please note: if you’ve never done this kind of assignment before, it is helpful to set aside a particular day and time each week in which you concentrate on gathering things up to include here. Otherwise you might find yourself at the end of the term with an empty notebook and a huge task in front of you!