

Rotary



District Leadership Academy

STUDENT HANDBOOK AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS



Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the District Leadership Academy!

We are thrilled to have you as a participant and hope that you find your experience valuable. Our goal is to prepare you for leadership roles in your Club and District.

As your Academy Dean and primary instructor, I am here to guide you through the program and make sure you learn more about Rotary and Rotary leadership and successfully join the ranks of proud DLA alumni. This handbook will give you key information you need to get started.

We understand that online learning can be a challenge, but we have a user-friendly platform called *Canvas* that will make it easier for you. With *Canvas*, you only need one login and password to access your Academy modules and assignments. You can also use the *Canvas* app on your phone to access your work from anywhere with an internet connection.

I will introduce you to *Canvas* in the first module and provide resources to help you navigate the platform. If you experience any technical difficulties, don't hesitate to contact me for support. I will be with you throughout the program to answer questions and offer guidance. I want to make sure you have the skills and tools necessary for success in your future leadership roles. Thank you for choosing to participate in the District Leadership Academy!

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DISTRICT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

STUDENT HANDBOOK & GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. **DLA Delivery:** DLA is delivered with a variety of online tools. The Canvas Learning Management System is where you will find your assignments and turn in your work. Canvas is accessible using your browser. Each month, you will receive an invitation to join the class for the next module (see the Academy schedule below). Modules will be made available on the Canvas website by the first day of the month in which the module is taught. Even if you finish the previous module early, you will need to wait until you receive the invitation for the next module to continue. This keeps the cohort together and in sync. Your Canvas dashboard will grow as each new module is launched. Because all previous modules will remain on the dashboard, you will be able to access any of them throughout the year.

Class of 2024-25 - Leadership Academy Schedule

2024	CURRICULUM
July-Aug	Recruitment for the DLA Class of 2024–25
August 31	DEADLINE for Academy applications
September 1	Module #1 – Intro to DLA & Leadership 101
October 1	Module #2 – Rotary Organization & Effective Goal Setting
November 1	Module #3 – Communication Skills & Online Tools
December	Academy Closed for the Holidays
2025	CURRICULUM
January 1	Module #4 – Membership & Leading a healthy club
February 1	Module #5 – External Communication & Public Image
March 1	Module #6 – Leading Projects & Youth Programs
April 1	Module #7 – Leading Change & The Rotary Foundation
May	DLA Class Graduation

2. **Deadlines:** Each module has submission dates for each of the required tasks/assignments throughout the month. These are distributed through the month and designed to help you complete your work on time. If you fall behind, it can be difficult to catch up, so pay attention to deadlines and alert me if you have conflicts or issues that may cause you to miss a deadline. I will make every effort to renegotiate due dates so you can complete the module and the program.
3. **Canvas Virtual Classroom:** Canvas is our online classroom. You will receive login information and instructions for Canvas prior to the start of each module. Because Canvas is a web-based system it works seamlessly with both PC's and Mac's.
 - a. When you get your login credentials, you should test your ability to access Canvas from the location(s) where you expect to do the work. If you plan to do any DLA work on your company computer, be sure your boss is ok with that, and be aware that some company firewalls may block access. If you can't log in from work and you don't have fast internet at home, you may need to find a

comfortable place to work that has fast internet like a neighborhood coffee shop. You also may find it more convenient to download documents and do as much work offline as you can. Experiment with your connections during the first module until you find what works best for you.

4. **Zoom Meetings/Webinars:** Each module will include Zoom meetings with guest speakers. Generally, these will be scheduled on the first and third Thursdays of each month from 5-6pm Central time. Any changes to this schedule will be provided to you in advance. We can also use Zoom for conference calls and instructor “office hours.” If you are having difficulty with any of the online systems, it is sometimes easier for me to help you troubleshoot when we are both on Zoom. Please ask if you wish to have a Zoom call with me and we’ll arrange it.
5. **Scheduling your Time:** I know how busy Rotarians are and understanding this, I’ve tried to design the DLA to ensure that the program does not overwhelm you. Having said that, you should recognize that the program is not a “walk in the park” and it does require a commitment to DLA work. Please contact me to discuss any time-management issues you might be having during the program. Here are some hints to manage your time:
 - a. Pay attention to the assignment deadlines and start work on them early. Waiting until the day before the deadline is usually a bad idea. For some of the modules, you will be asked to work with your club leaders and members to complete surveys and action plans. Contact these members well in advance and set up meetings with them to complete the assignments on time.
 - b. Get familiar with your Canvas online classroom and Perusall.com social reading site – view the introductory videos and mouse around to sites to get familiar with menus and features.
 - c. Use smart reading techniques. When given a document to read, first ask what the purpose of a particular document is (look inside to find out if it isn’t obvious). Second, look through the Table of Contents to see what info the document contains and how it is organized. Third, skim the document looking at headings, tables, figures, and highlights – particularly note those areas you find interesting. Finally, go back to these interesting areas to read more thoroughly, asking yourself how the information applies and how you might use it in your Rotary journey.
 - d. Find a time and place where you can do your DLA work with minimal distractions. Interruptions can really slow you down.
6. **Working With Others:** Much of the reading and video annotations are done individually. For some of the assignments, you will need to work with your club leaders and committee chairs to better understand how your club works and what improvements might be made, particularly in Membership, Projects/Fundraisers, Public Relations, Youth Services, and The Rotary Foundation. This collaboration is important to give you deeper insight into the details of how your club operates.
7. **Academy Assignments:** Each module has assignments that must be completed and submitted to the instructor. Assignments generally fall into these categories:
 - a. **Readings and videos:** These provide a baseline of knowledge to help you better understand the topics we are covering. For these, we will use the Perusall tools to

spark discussions and class interactions to share information, questions, and experiences. Participating in these discussions is important and graded.

- b. **Rotary Learning Center courses:** These are Rotary International interactive courses. Learning Center courses should be completed and the completion certificates uploaded to Canvas.
 - c. **Rotary Brand Center:** During Module 5, you will learn about the tools on the Brand Center and create a “Rotary Approved” club logo and information brochure using Rotary stock photos and templates.
 - d. **Club Surveys and Action Plans:** These are among the most important assignments in the DLA. Using what you learned in the assignments, you will survey/interview your club leaders and committee chairs/members to discover, firsthand, how your club operates in important areas like membership, projects/fundraisers, etc. You will begin to see the things your club does well and potential areas for improvement. Using this information, you will create improvement plans that you can recommend to your club’s leaders or implement yourself if you are in a position to do so. These important assignments can be time-consuming, so be sure to set aside sufficient time and start early.
8. **Academic Probation and Dismissal:** An average score of 70% on all assignments for each module is required to pass the module. Average scores can be severely impacted by missing assignments with zero points, so turning in every assignment is key to passing and moving forward. If your module score is below 70% at the end of the module, you will be on “academic probation,” and need to turn in missing assignments or rework substandard ones to raise your grade. If you fail to do so during the following month, you will be dismissed from the program. You will be able to track your grades at any time in the Canvas gradebook.
 9. **Syllabus:** Beginning with the first module, you will be provided with a “Syllabus” with detailed information about the module. (Objectives, Resources, Assignments, Final Quiz info, etc.). Each Syllabus will follow the same format so you’ll become familiar with where to find information for the remaining modules.
 10. **Travel or Absence During DLA Year:** If you are planning to travel or expect to be absent for an extended period of time, let me know so I can help you plan to get your required assignments done in a timely manner.
 11. **Browsers and Canvas:** The “browsers of choice” for Canvas are Chrome, Microsoft Edge, and Firefox. If you use a Mac, the Safari browser should work as well. You may experiment with other browsers but if you run into a problem while using Canvas, try installing a different browser (start with Chrome). If you choose to try and work from a tablet or phone (not recommended), the Canvas mobile app can be downloaded from the Apple or Google stores.
 - a. **Problems with Canvas:** If you run into a problem with Canvas, take these steps:
 - i. Try quitting your browser and reopening it. Then log in to Canvas and see if the problem is still there.
 - ii. Clear your browser cache. [See this article](#) and use the instructions for your browser.

iii. Try switching to a different browser. You may need to download a different one.

iv. If none of the above works, contact me for additional troubleshooting.

v. If all else fails, put in a ticket with Canvas support (but expect them to be slow getting back with you!).

12. [Going Back to School Anxiety](#). It's important to NOT become discouraged if you're having trouble getting back in the groove of going to school. If you feel you are falling behind or you're having particular difficulty or frustration, please give me a call or email. I will do my best to help you get over the hump.

I look forward to meeting and working with you during the months to come and wish you the best of luck with this very unique Rotary experience. As DLA graduates, you will be influential in the success of your clubs, our District, and Rotary International...Thank you.

Yours In Rotary service,
Roy Wood, Ph.D.
Academy Dean