The Leadership Alliance
Undergraduate Virtual Professional Development Series
Summer 2025 Syllabus

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Program Overview

The Leadership Alliance's Virtual Professional Development (VPD) program is a series of summer workshops and webinars designed to promote interest and preparation for a research career. VPD is the result of a collaborative effort that leverages the expertise of Alliance researchers and program administrators to share and demystify the research career pathway. The Leadership Alliance VPD provides a robust networking and professional development experience that supports students in preparing for and navigating undergraduate research, applying to graduate school, considering different research career pathways, and more!

Through your participation in the VPD program you will:
- Learn about the overall research process and explore foundations of research in a variety of fields
- Learn about the diversity of research career pathways
- Hear about the personal journeys of underrepresented doctoral scholars who are at the forefront of research in academia, industry, non-profits, and government
- Build and develop research communication skills
- Expand your network through engagement with faculty, administrators, students, alumni, and other future research colleagues
- Meet deans and administrators from Leadership Alliance member institutions to learn more about graduate school and the graduate school application process
- Learn about graduate school funding structures and opportunities
- Gain confidence in yourself as a researcher and an agent of change

Learning Objectives

By the end of the program, participants will be able to:
1. Understand the basic components and requirements of a research career
2. Be aware of potential next steps in their journey towards a career in research
3. Expand their professional, academic, and peer networks
4. Be aware of graduate school programs at multiple research institutions

Program Format

The Leadership Alliance VPD program will integrate virtual workshops, presentations, and recruitment events. Program activities will be synchronous and asynchronous, with all program components housed in a Google Classroom that will be accessible by all program participants and contain all program materials as they are released. Participants will be invited to all professional development series events and are encouraged to participate as their schedule allows. Students will have the opportunity to complete reflections after each Wednesday workshop. At the of the program, participants will complete a post-survey to reflect on their VPD participation. These survey responses will help The Leadership Alliance determine program impact and explore potential ways to improve and expand upon the program in coming years.

Digital Badge/Certificate of Completion

Virtual Professional Development participants who complete the following requirements will receive a digital badge/certificate of completion administered through Credly.com.

To receive the digital badge/certificate, you must:

- Attend or view at least **5** of the **7** professional development workshops and answer the follow-up reflection questions via a Google Form for these 5 workshops*
- Visit at least **4** institutions/programs at the virtual graduate school recruitment and information sessions**
- Submit a question for at least **2** "Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar" sessions***
- Register for TLA Connect - the Leadership Alliance's professional networking site
- Complete a post-survey that will be emailed to you at the conclusion of the program

*A Google Form with a related question will be posted to the Google Classroom after each workshop. Participants must complete the form for at least five workshops to meet badging requirements.

**For students who are unable to attend the live info sessions due to schedule conflicts, will have the opportunity to do an end-of-program assignment, which will count for this badging requirement.

***Questions can be submitted before the event via a Google Form posted to the Google Classroom or during the event via the Zoom Q&A box.

It is YOUR responsibility to keep track of your participation throughout the program!
[i.e., the workshops you attend/watch, the graduate program recruitment/information sessions you attend, and the Doctoral Scholars you ask questions of (even if questions are not answered)]

You will receive a Google Form at the end of the program where you will share your participation information to receive your digital badge and certificate. You MUST complete the form to receive these.

Upon receipt of your digital badge, you will be able to upload it to various platforms (LinkedIn, etc), print it as a certificate, and share it with prospective employers and graduate institutions.

SUMMER 2025 VIRTUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES SCHEDULE

Video and written resources to supplement the scheduled programming can be accessed via the Leadership Alliance Virtual Professional Development Google Classroom. Registered participants will be invited to join the classroom via email. You must use an @gmail.com email address to join the classroom.

ZOOM LINKS FOR ALL EVENTS WILL BE POSTED IN THE GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Zoom links will be posted in the "Classwork" tab prior to each webinar and in the stream the day of the event. **Schedule is subject to change to accommodate speakers.**

All webinars will be recorded and shared for asynchronous viewing – recordings will not be available right away. Students will be able to attend all graduate school info sessions held on any given day.

Week 1: Welcome to Research!			
Mon. June 2	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 1
Wed. June 4	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 1 – Discovering a Career in Research
Thurs. June 5	4 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Fri. June 6	3 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Week 2: Professional Skills for Researchers			
Mon. June 9	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 2
Wed. June 11	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 2 – Professional Networking & Communication
Thurs. June 12	4 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Fri. June 13	3 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Week 3: Celebrating Juneteenth			
Mon. June 16	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 3
Wed. June 18	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 3 – Strategies for Sharing Your Diverse Experiences
Thurs. June 19	NA	NA	Juneteenth Holiday - No Programming
Fri. June 20	3 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Week 4: Communicating Your Research			
Mon. June 23	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 4
Wed. June 25	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 4 – Storytelling for Impact
Thurs. June 26	4 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Fri. June 27	3 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions

Week 5: The Road to Graduate School			
Mon. June 30	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 5
Wed. July 2	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 5 – Applying to Grad School
Thurs. July 3	4 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Fri. July 4	NA	NA	Independence Day Holiday - No Programming
Week 6: Technology Tools for Research			
Mon. July 7	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 6
Wed. July 9	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 6 – AI in Research
Thurs. July 10	4 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Fri. July 11	3 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Week 7: Looking to the Future			
Mon. July 14	4 pm EDT	Networking	Conversation with a Doctoral Scholar 7
Wed. July 16	4 pm EDT	Workshop	Workshop 7 – Cultivating Resiliency
Thurs. July 17	4 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions
Fri. July 18	3 pm EDT	Grad School Recruiting	Recruitment and Info Sessions