

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS 2011-2012 Academy Year

TO: 2011-2012 District Leadership Academy Prospective Participants
FROM: Harriett Schloer, Academy Webmaster
Course #1: Communications, Instructor
DATE: April 2011
SUBJECT: Leadership Academy General Instructions for All Courses for Prospective Participants

Each year, when District Rotarians are deciding whether or not to participate in the District Leadership Academy program, the questions we are most frequently asked are:

- "Who is eligible to participate"
- "How much time does it take?"
- "How many meetings are there?"
- "How does the program work?"
- "Can I work from my office?"
- "I heard there are assignments. What kind of assignments will I have to do?"

The purpose of this memorandum is to answer all of those questions and more to help you make the decision about submitting an application.

As the Academy Webmaster and the instructor for Course #1 (Communications) it is my job to provide students all of the instructions they will need to work on the Academy web site, how to use the Academy Google Group web site and explain how the District Leadership Academy Program (DLA) is organized. In addition, it's my job to help you if you run into any kind of technical difficulty and to provide moral support throughout the year if you need it.

- **Program Eligibility:** The following individuals are eligible to participate in the DLA Program
 - Past Club Presidents
 - Club Presidents
 - Presidents-Elect
 - Presidents Nominee
 - Individuals nominated by the District Governor-Elect
- **How do I apply for admission?** Admission to the DLA program is by nomination only. The following individuals are eligible to nominate an individual to participate in the DLA program:
 - Past District Governors
 - District Governor
 - District Governor-Elect
 - District Governor Nominee(s)
 - Academy Instructors
 - Assistant Governors

If you are interested in being considered for participation in the DLA program, contact one of the above individuals to discuss the program and request that they nominate you.

Top Questions and Answers

- **First:** DLA courses are made available on the DLA web site ONLY during the month in which they are taught. If you finish your course for the month early, you will need to wait until the following month for the next course to be posted. Instructors have allotted personal time to manage their course during the month it is being offered. Please do not request that you be allowed to move forward to the next course before the month in which it is taught as this will not be possible. ALL instructors work on their course right up to the time that it becomes available. The materials are not even provided to me for posting until five days prior to the launch of each course and then I need to prepare the materials for DLA use. Each course will be posted between the 1st and 5th day of the month depending on holidays and my travel schedule. The home page of the web site will have a notification when each course becomes available. In addition, I will send you an email each month (to your Gmail address) notifying you when each course becomes available.
- **Second:** Each course has a deadline and these deadlines need to be adhered to in order to insure that you will not fall behind. When a student falls behind, it can be very difficult to get caught up. In addition, instructions are primarily ONLY available during the month in which their course is taught. There are three deadlines for each course and they are as follows:
 - a. **20th of the Month:** Google Group responses for the course must be completed. The exception is Course # 4 which has a deadline of **December 10**.
 - b. **25th of the Month:** Deadline for submitting written assignments to the Instructor. The exception to this is Course #4 which has a deadline of **December 15**.
 - c. **Last Day of the Month:** Deadline for completing final exam online on Hosted Test. In the case of Course #4, the final exam must be completed by **December 20**. If not completed by that time, you will need to wait until January 2, 2012 to complete the online exam as the instructor and the Webmaster will be on vacation over Christmas and will not be able to give you access to the Hosted Test server.
- **Third:** Use a large D-Ring 3-ring binder, with dividers, for all of the DLA courses. Check with your Academy Dean in advance to see if your district will be providing this. You will be printing a lot of your material this year and the binder will help you keep them all in one place and organized by course.
- **Fourth:** Everything you need for Course #1 is available for download on the Academy web site and the RI web site. All of the remaining courses will use printed material from RI, much of which is available for download from the RI web site. You can also purchase all of the RI printed material to alleviate all of the time and ink required to print. The cost of the materials for the entire year is approximately \$35.00.
- **Fifth:** The DLA “Classroom” throughout the entire year is the DLA web site which is located at <http://www.district5110leadershipacademy.org> All course material (other than the printed material from Rotary International) will be posted on the web site for download. In addition, for some of the courses you will view online learning “modules” that will give you background and in depth information in the various subjects. All of this material will be posted in the secured access area of the web site that only this year’s class of students and instructors will be able to access.

- **Note With Regard to Access to the Secured Area:** In the past, we have discovered that users of AOL and some other service have had difficulty accessing the secured area of the web site. If you are an AOL user, it is important that you turn off your pop-up blockers and all other items that could prevent the items from loading properly. In addition, if your place of work is located in any of the following: bank, credit union, brokerage firm, government office (federal, state, or local); military office, you **WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE SECURED AREA** from your place of work. You will need to access it either from home or some other location that has **high speed Internet access**. I emphasize “high speed” as you’ll need to download many documents and work with online learning modules which will not be possible without high speed access. If you access the site from a public place (library, Internet café, etc.) be sure to download all of the documents to a portable USB “thumb / jump” drive that uses a USB port so you can then run them on your computer at work or at home in order to print them out. These types of “portable USB drives” can be purchased for as little as \$10.00 for an 8 GIG drive which will be more than enough to handle the DLA material for the entire Academy year. This “glitch” in the system is NOT caused by the DLA site but rather by the heavy firewalls incorporated in the afore-mentioned businesses that do not allow employees to access “secured” areas requiring ID’s and Passwords. Please DO NOT attempt to get your company’s “I.T. guru” to fix this for you. It simply will not happen and you’ll waste his/her valuable time and yours as well. There is no way the IT person can disable the entire company I.T. system in order to accommodate your work on the Leadership Academy web site. Also, I cannot be of any assistance with this so please do not request it. Twelve years of the Leadership Academy have proven this to be true in each and every instance without a single exception. You are simply going to have to find some other way to access the DLA site and to take your online exams if this becomes an issue. Academy material is not available in any other format other than on the web site.
- **Sixth:** I don't know what you may have "heard" about the Leadership Academy program but the one thing you need to understand is that this program requires a real commitment on the student's part in order to complete the program. Each course requires a minimum of 2-3 full days a month in order to read all of the material, complete the Google Group responses, work on and submit assignments (some courses require more than one assignment) and take the Pre-Test and final exam. If you wait until the last weekend of the month to get started, you will not complete the courses on time and will fall behind. If you fall behind it is very difficult to catch up and you could be dropped from the program and need to complete it the following year.

The Academy program is definitely not a “walk in the park”. The amount of time each course will take will depend on your skill level with computers, the Internet, search engines, and Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. In addition, depending on your basic knowledge of each subject, how fast you type, how fast you read, and the speed of your computer, your web browser and your internet connection (**you must use a high speed Internet connection for all Academy work**) it could take you significantly more time than your classmates to complete your courses. Students are **expected to complete each course during the month the course is offered**. Work on it throughout the month allotted to the course. This is particularly important with regard to your work on the Google Group. If you wait until the last few days to participate in the group discussions (required for all Academy courses), you will not be an active participant and your classmates will miss your input.

- **Seventh:** Most of all, do NOT become discouraged if you're having trouble getting back in the groove of "going back to college". If you feel you are falling behind or you're having particular difficulty with something, pick up the phone and give me a call (541-388-0769 or 541-388-7342). The Academy Dean, your instructors and I can work with you to help you get over the hump. This will be my 13th year as an Academy instructor and webmaster and during that time I've had a lot of experience in pulling students back from the brink. Past students have felt that the first semester is the most demanding and time consuming and once you've taken your final exam for Course #4 in December, you will be "over the hump" and able to relax over the Christmas holidays. With the start of the Second Semester you are on the downhill stretch. There will still be significant work to do, but most feel it is not quite as demanding as the First Semester.

- **Eighth:**
 - **Assignments:** Each of the courses has an assignment that must be completed. Many of these will require that you work with your club or club leaders / committee members in order to complete them. Allow plenty of time during the month in which to get these completed as each assignment is due on the 25th day of the month in which the course is taught. All assignments are written with very specific criteria that you must follow. If you do not submit an assignment that meets the criteria as described in the course, you will be asked to resubmit it.

 - **Pre-Test:** Once your instructor has received your assignment and approve it, he/she will then provide you with a copy of the course "Pre-Test". This Pre-Test will be identical to the Final Exam that you will take online. When the instructor notifies me that you have completed your assignment(s) and been provided with the Pre-Test, I will then set you up to take your final exam on Hosted Test. Once you are set up for each exam, you will receive an Email from the Hosted Test server providing you with your personal link to take your Final Exam online. The link you will receive will be specific to you and cannot be used by anyone else. You will receive a new link for each and every course.

 - **Final Exam:** You will use the answers on the Pre-Test to take your Final Exam online on the Hosted Test Server. You will access the Hosted Test server using the personal link that will be mailed to your Gmail address by the Hosted Test server. A score of 70% is required to pass the final exam for each and every course and the system will give you the results immediately upon submitting your answers. If you score 70% or above, you will not be able to retake the exam.

 - **Grades:** Once all of your work for the course has been completed (Google Group discussion, assignment(s), Final Exam) your entire body of work will be fully reviewed and critiqued by the instructor for the course. You will then be provided with feedback on the course and an overall Course Grade. You will receive this Grade Report sometime during the month following the completion of the course.

 - **Hosted Test Server Access:**
 - If you have difficulty accessing the Hosted Test server with the personal link you were issued by the server for ANY of your exams, please notify me immediately.

- If you do NOT receive your personal link from the Hosted Test server, please notify me immediately. As stated above, you will only receive your personal Hosted Test link at your **Gmail address**. No other email address will be used to communicate with you throughout the Academy year so check your Gmail address daily. Better yet, set up Gmail to automatically forward to your standard email address. That way you can be assured you won't miss anything.
 - We will insure that you do not fail by allowing you to retake the exam until you reach the minimum 70% score. If you do not pass on the first try, you will be provided with specific references to help you obtain the correct answer before retaking the test. *(In the past eight years since using Hosted Test, only 1 student out of six districts participating in the DLA did not pass on the first try and that was only for one test.)*
- **Disagreement With Test Answer:** For each test, the questions will be grouped by specific references. First the Reference / Source will be listed and then, all of the questions related to that reference will follow. The entire test will be formatted in this manner for each and every course-. If you use any other source than the one listed for the specific question and you come up with a different answer, you will not be given credit for the question. Use ONLY the reference / source listed for the specific group of questions in order to obtain the correct answer. If, upon completing the final exam and receiving your score, you feel that a particular answer is incorrect, please notify me. I shall review your challenge and respond. If your challenge stands, your score will be adjusted as will all of the scores of your fellow students. If it does not stand, no change will be made to your score... *(Note: for the 2011-2012 Academy year, since redesigning the test format, there were no challenges to any of the questions.)*
- **Ninth:** You may not move forward to the next course until you have completed and passed the Final Exam for all previous courses. This is monitored by the Dean, the instructors and the webmaster.
- **Ten:** For the 2011-2012 Academy year you will be doing extensive work on the Leadership Academy Google Group. You will be using the group in the following ways:
 - **1. To respond to required discussion topics posted by all of your instructors.** Responding to these topics is part of your course “assignment” and your participation will be scored by each instructor.
 - **2. To resolve any problems or questions you may have.** When you have a question or you run into a problem, we want you to **go to the Google Group first** and use the GG to work with your fellow students and notify your instructors if you are having a problem or a question.
 - **3. To collaborate on your DLA assignments.** We encourage you to work together with your classmates on your assignments, especially when you are developing strategic plans, membership plans, PR plans, etc. If there are several of you in the same club or the same community, get together and work on your assignments. You do not have to work alone. You will find the DLA work much easier if you work with your classmates and communicate with your instructors when questions or problems arise. Don't waste "hours" looking for something!!! CONTACT YOUR INSTRUCTOR and/or the WEBMASTER.

It is our hope that you will use the Academy Google Group to bridge the gap (miles) that prevents the regular face to face meetings that are difficult for “geographically challenged” Rotary districts such as ours.

- **4. Upload Academy Course Work.** Under the "new" Google Group format, assignment can now be uploaded to the group for sharing with your classmates.
- **5. Not to be used for technical difficulties.** Do not use the GG for Technical Difficulties: If you run into technical difficulty accessing the secured area of the Academy web site or have difficulty with Hosted Test, please do not post a request for help on the GG. You must contact me for technical help as your classmates and instructors will not be able to help you.

That’s it. These are the basics. Beginning with Course #1 you will receive a “Course Description” from each instructor with complete information on the course including curriculum materials to be read, Google Group discussion topics, Assignments(s) and instructions for the Final Exam. Each of these Course Descriptions will follow the same format so once you have gone through Course #1 you’ll know what the format will be for all of the remaining courses.

Throughout the Academy year, if you have any **questions about the actual curriculum**, you should **contact the individual instructor for the course**. However, if you have any **technical difficulty** with the DLA web site or the Hosted Test server or the Google Group, do not contact the instructor, instead, **you will need to contact me** and I will help you with any and all technical matters. My complete contact information is as follows:

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Should you decide to apply for admission to the District Leadership Academy Class of 2012 (and we sincerely hope you will), I shall look forward to working with you throughout the Academy year and wish you well during this very unique Rotary experience. All of your instructors are Rotarians who have extensive knowledge and experience with regard to the course they are teaching. However, they are not educators. All of them have done their very best to make their course as relevant to your Rotary work as possible and have spent a great deal of their personal time to do so. Throughout the year, please keep in mind that they are all dedicated, committed Rotary **volunteers**.

When the year is over and you’ve taken your final exam I believe you will look back on this year as the “most valuable experience of your Rotary career” just as more than 370 graduates from five Rotary districts have done before you. You’ll know that you really accomplished something and you, your club, and your district will be better for it. You’ll wear your Academy pin with pride.

Yours in Rotary Service,



Harriett Schloer
Academy Webmaster
Communications Instructor
