



Purdue Engineering Staff Leadership Academy (PESLA)

Program Outline & Syllabus

Cohort 5.0: February 2025 – January 2027

Meetings: Tuesdays, 10:00am – 12:00pm (in-person)

Contact Email: PESLAleadership@ecn.purdue.edu

[PESLA Website](#)

[PESLA Intranet](#)

PESLA Leadership

[Will Sondgerath \(∞\)](#)

[Kat Burkhart \(cohort 4.0\)](#)

[Chelsea Cummings \(cohort 4.0\)](#)

[Kaisa Ejendal \(cohort 3.0\)](#)

[Patrick Francis \(cohort 4.0\)](#)

[Rabita Rajkarnikar \(cohort 4.0\)](#)

Description

Through real-world case studies, small group discussions, and interactive presentations, PESLA encourages you to think beyond your own position and unit and lead in ways that support larger institutional objectives. PESLA provides the tools and insight to think more strategically, balancing your time, and engage in forward thinking leadership.

Objectives

1. **Leadership Development:** Strengthen leadership capabilities, emotional intelligence, and professionalism to foster success as an individual, co-worker, and steward of Purdue University.
2. **Project Management:** Apply project management strategies and utilize tools from accredited resources to drive collaboration, challenge growth mindset and explore new ways of doing
3. **Personal Growth:** Engage in activities that promote continuous professional and personal development.
4. **Organizational Awareness:** Gain comprehensive insights into College of Engineering units and their functions to bring awareness to resources, partnerships and possible opportunities for collaboration.
5. **Facilitation & Communication:** Develop effective facilitation, public speaking, and presentation skills tailored to diverse audiences, with a focus on engaging key stakeholders to foster deeper understanding within the College.

Work Expectations

The PESLA program encourages active participation and the development of valuable leadership skills through a combination of in-person sessions and a culminating project.

Program Participation Expectations:

- **Active Engagement:** Full participation in all sessions, including case studies, group discussions, and presentations, is crucial for personal and collective growth.
- **Collaboration:** Active collaboration with peers is essential for knowledge sharing, problem-solving, and learning from diverse perspectives.

- **Time Management:** Effective time management is critical for balancing professional and personal commitments while successfully completing the program's requirements.
- **Professionalism and Commitment:** Successful outcomes for PESLA requires dedication, consistent attendance, timely completion of project milestones, and a commitment to the program's objectives.
- **Absences:** All absences should be reported to PESLA Leadership prior to the missed session.

Project Requirements:

- **Time Commitment:** In addition to attending sessions, participants are expected to dedicate time to project planning, research, collaboration, and execution.
- **Scope:** The project should be clearly defined and achievable within the program's timeframe. Participants will have the opportunity to define a project that aligns with their professional interests and contributes to the College.
- **Milestones and Deliverables:** Key deliverables include progress reports, a final presentation, and a poster session, showcasing project outcomes and the development of leadership skills.
- **Focus:** The project should directly address one or more PESLA program objectives, such as organizational awareness, leadership development, or project management. It should demonstrate innovative thinking and the application of learned skills to address a real-world challenge or opportunity within the College of Engineering.

Learning Resources

Textbook Spring 2025: **Strategic Doing** by Edward Morrison, Scott Hutcheson, Elizabeth Nilsen, Janyce Fadden, and Nancy Franklin

Additional Readings (*optional*): The list of additional readings is below; however, as we progress through the course, other resources may be added.

- **Rethinking Higher Education** by Robert A. Scott - Provides insights on how academic leaders can improve institutional performance and adapt to current trends in education.
- **The Leadership Challenge** by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner-Focuses on leadership practices and how leaders can inspire and engage their teams.
- **Leading Change** by John P. Kotter - Offers a framework for managing and leading organizational change, crucial for academic leaders in adapting to new challenges.
- **The American University: A Global History** by Christopher J. Lucas - Provides an in-depth historical perspective on U.S. higher education and the role universities play globally.

Policies:

PESLA members are expected to attend, fully prepare for, and actively participate in classes, projects, and special events, which typically require 6-8 hours of your time per month. PESLA members are also expected to successfully complete the two-year program. The final presentation and poster session for Cohort members will be in-person. Readiness and agreement to this commitment was expressed in the applications for cohort acceptance.

Schedule

Year 1

Date	Session	Topic	Location	Speaker
2.04.25	1	Engineering 101	ARMS 3041	Will Sondgerath
2.18.25	2	Facilitation Skills Group photo (last 10min of session)	PGSC 105 A/B	Tamara Ogle
3.04.25	3	Engineering Disciplines, Part 1 Small group discussion	PGSC 105 A/B	Cohort 5.0
3.18.25	--	Purdue Spring Break- No Session		
4.01.25	4	Engineering Disciplines, Part 2 Book Discussion Chapters 1 & 2	DUDL 1119	Cohort 5.0
4.15.25	5	Engineering Disciplines, Part 3 Book Discussion Chapters 3 & 4	PGSC 105 A/B	Cohort 5.0
4.29.25	6	Engineering Disciplines, Part 4 Book Discussion Chapters 5 & 6	PGSC 105 A/B	Cohort 5.0
5.13.25	7	Book Discussion Chapters 7 & 8 Leadership Impact on CoE	PGSC 105 A/B	Cohort 5.0 Office of the Provost: Cristina Farmus, VP Special Projects John Grundy, Director of Faculty Awards and Recognition Office
6.03.25	8	Book Discussion Chapters 9 & 10 Book Discussion Chapters 11 & 12	PGSC 105 A/B	Cohort 5.0
6.24.25	9	Tour & Presentations	Herrick Lab 177 S Russell St	TBD
7.22.25	10	Indianapolis Campus Field Trip	Indy Campus	<i>*This will be longer than the normal 2hr session. Details to come.</i>
8.05.25		No session		
8.19.25	11	Strategic Doing Workshop, Part 1	PGSC 105 A/B	Scott Hutcheson
8.26.25	12	Strategic Doing Workshop, Part 2	PGSC 105 A/B	Scott Hutcheson
9.02.25		No session		
9.16.25	13	Project Review Past Projects- Presented by previous cohort members Call for Project Proposals	PGSC 105 A/B	TBD
9.30.25	14	PESLA Project- member's initial pitch	PGSC 105 A/B	TBD
10.14.25	15	Campus Master Plan CoE Facilities Team	PGSC 105 A/B	TBD
10.28.25	16	University and College Finance	PGSC 105 A/B	TBD
11.11.25	17	Purdue for Life PESLA Project Proposal Due	TBD	TBD
11.25.25		Canceled session due to Thanksgiving		
12.02.25	18	Project Feedback- individual meetings	PGSC 105 A/B	
12.09.25	19	Project Feedback- individual meetings	PGSC 105 A/B	

Year 2 (Work in progress, expect updates towards the end of year one)