



# Presidents Leadership Class

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

## PLC Applied Leadership Experience Handbook 2023

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides an overview of the PLC **Applied Leadership Experience (ALE) requirement** along with instructions on how to **start, make the most of, and complete** the ALE process. We have modified this requirement and created a course to accompany the applied experience, as an **opportunity for you to collectively reflect, learn, grow and continue to develop a sense of community across cohorts**. The course allows you to touch on all of the PLC pillars through one requirement.

Please read through the entire handbook before starting your Applied Leadership Experience (ALE).

## PRLC 2930 - ALE COURSE

The Presidents Leadership Class (PLC) Applied Leadership Experiences (ALEs) are a long-standing experiential aspect of our curriculum. **PLC requires that students complete approved experiential learning followed by the ALE Course (PRLC 2930). This course is a two-credit course that meets twice a week – MWF 1:25-2:15PM**

**This course will be offered in the FALL SEMESTERS ONLY.**

**You should take the course the fall semester following your applied experience.**

## DOES THIS NEW PROCESS APPLY TO ME?

- If you have already completed just one ALE, lower or upper division, **you do have to do another ALE and take the course** to fulfill the PLC ALE requirement.
- If you have not yet done an ALE, you will **need to do an ALE and take the course** to fulfill the PLC ALE requirement. **But you only have to do this once, not twice.**
- If you are using your **PLC Student Staff** or the **ALWC** for an ALE, please see [Special Circumstances](#) below.

## ALE CATEGORIES

- **Study Abroad** & other **significant international experience**
- **Internship** or **job** (paid or unpaid)
- **Volunteer/Service** and/or **Non-profit** (long term commitment)
- **Lab Position/Supervised Research**
- **Campus Position; Athletic Team; Marching Band; UCSG; RES LIFE (RA)**
- **Senior Design Project** (Engineering, ENVD, Film, etc. – upon approval)
- **Greek Life** – officer position
- **CU Student Group** – officer position
- **PLC Student Staff Position** (see *special circumstances* section)
- **Applied Leadership Wilderness Course (ALWC)** (see *special circumstances* section)

*\*If you have an experiential learning opportunity that falls outside of the categories below, please propose your opportunity to the Program Manager or Academic Director for approval.*

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# TERMINOLOGY

**ALE:** Using the acronym, ALE, refers to the actual lived, applied experience in which you are currently or have participated and are using for the PLC requirement. **Applied Leadership/Learning Experience**

**PRE-COURSE:** Assignments and tasks labeled as “pre-course” refer to **things to be done DURING your ALE** and BEFORE you take the ALE course, PRLC 2930.

**ALE PROCESS:** The ALE process refers to **both the applied experience and the course. You must complete the entire ALE process to fulfill the PLC requirement.**

**APPLIED LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE:** any long-term (at least one semester), non-classroom-based, **experiential learning opportunity**, enhanced by:

- A knowledge of **Experiential Learning** theory
- A knowledge of the **benefit of experiential education**
- A suggested process of **recording experiences** (journal, blog, vlog, photos, etc.)
- **Reflection** and inquiry about the experiences
- Creation of a **timeline for assignments, tasks, goals, etc.** to which you **hold yourself accountable**
- Elicitation of **feedback** from peers and supervisors (how to ask for feedback and use it)
- Setting practical *and* ambitious **goals and expectations**
- Flexibility of experience for true **transformational change**
- **Plans to implement** new knowledge in future workplaces, etc.

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The process of learning through experience; "Learning through reflection on doing."  
- *Handbook of Research on Improving Learning and Motivation*

The **ALE process** combines experiential learning, defined above, and the following criteria:

- Mixture of content (**theory**) and process (**experience**)
  - Experience must be **meaningful, personally relevant**
  - Actively participating in the learning – **learning by doing**; not passively receiving information
  - Learning is **interdisciplinary in nature**
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- Outcomes of the learning *cannot be universally defined* as they are **unique to the individual**
- **Emphasis on reflection** from experience to learn new skills and character traits
- A **re-evaluation of what you know** and why and how you know it (your biases)
- Getting **real-time feedback** with opportunities to improve upon suggestions
- Endeavors **outside of your comfort zone**
- Emphasis on making connections between learning and **how to apply it in the future**
- **Structured support** to help you realize the **impact and lessons** available to you **from your experience**  
= **PLC Course** based in discussion, seminars, professional development, presentation, reflection.

## CONNECTION TO YOUR PLC EDUCATION

Your ALE will likely fall into one of **PLC's pillars** more than the others, but it will be connected to all five:

- Scholarship
- Community
- Experience
- Service
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness

Additionally, your experience will absolutely include your knowledge and action in all of **PLC's domains of leadership education**:

- Critical thinking & Analysis
- Academic & Professional excellence
- Creativity
- Ethical reasoning
- Thoughtful implementation
- Community impact

You can read about our domains of leadership education [here](#). During your ALE (or upon reflection) it will benefit you to think about how you incorporate your PLC education into real-world, lived experiences. We want you to develop a self-awareness of your classroom-based leadership education and when it can and should be applied in settings outside of the classroom.

## ALE REQUIREMENTS

The assignments for your ALE will be separated into two parts, **1) Pre-Course, 2) In Course**. The pre-course assignments are listed and detailed below. Your assignments during the course will be detailed in the syllabus and/or on canvas, and/or explained in class.

### PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

If you are doing study abroad for your ALE, you do not need to have a supervisor evaluation or feedback conversation. All other items are expected.

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2. **Assigned Articles** - Please read the articles listed below:
  - Coker, Jeffrey Scott, and Desiree Jasmine Porter. "[Student motivations and perceptions across and within five forms of experiential learning.](#)" *The Journal of General Education* 65.2 (2017): 138-156.
  - Chapman, Steve, Pam McPhee, and Bill Proudman. "[What is experiential education.](#)" *The theory of experiential education* 3 (1995): 235-248.
  - Mezirow, Jack. "[How critical reflection triggers transformative learning.](#)" *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood* 1.20 (1990): 1-6.
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3. **Keep or Create a Reflection Log:** You are responsible for creating a reflection journal during your ALE. The more effort you put into your reflections, the more you will get out of your ALE. You can keep this log in one of three forms:
  - i. **Written journal** (hand-written or typed)
  - ii. **Blog**
  - iii. **Video recordings**
  - iv. **Podcast recordings**

**Please answer the following questions at some point in your log:**

- How/when you were reminded of our **shared humanity**? (*perhaps most relevant to study abroad*)
  - What did you **learn about yourself**?
  - When did you experience **discomfort**? Why? How did you **respond**?
  - What is **one thing you do differently** in your day-to-day life **now** since returning from abroad or since you received feedback?
  - If you got a "**do over**," what, if anything, would you do differently?
4. **Top 9 Collection Bottom 1 - Visual Representation:** Though you will likely have many more than nine **visual images** from your experience, you will need to pick and prepare the most representative set for this assignment. Additionally, pick 1 image that represents the low point in your experience, or something that made you stop and think. You will finish this assignment in class.
  5. **Entry Interview:** Whether you went abroad or did a traditional internship, you will be **asked to speak about it** in future interviews and be expected to explain how it affected your professional, personal, and leadership development. As with PLC as a program, it is hard to explain – it takes practice. Therefore, please **prepare a short, verbal answer** to the following question for your Entry Interview assignment. You will polish this assignment in class and revisit it many times.

*"Can you please explain your experience and how it impacted the way in which you look at your future?" (academic, civic, or professional pursuits)*
  6. **Evaluation or Feedback Conversation:** Keep **documentation of the feedback conversations** you have with peers and supervisors during your ALE. These can be your notes, their notes, a form you prepare for them and they fill out during a conversation, etc. **Please have, at least, two feedback conversations during your experience.**

## IN-COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments will be available in the course syllabus, canvas, or in class. You will be responsible to deliver upon all assignments with the same attention that is paid to all other courses. Course participation will be paramount to other

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assignments. This course is about connecting with your PLC peers and with your experience in order to learn more about yourself. Most assignments will be complete/incomplete and the course will not add rigor to your schedule.

### **INCOMPLETE ALE POLICY**

It is very common for students not to complete the ALE by simply not completing or submitting the work assigned. If a student does not complete the process in accordance with the standards above and below, credit **will not be granted for the PLC ALE requirement**. The following will lead to an incomplete ALE for PLC:

- Missing Pre-Course Assignments
- Failure to enroll in post ALE Course
- Failure to attend post ALE Course
- Failure to participate in your ALE (actual experience)
- Failure to participate in post ALE Course
- Failing grade in post ALE Course

If you do not complete the ALE first intended, you should not enroll into the course. However, as long as you have time left in your undergraduate career, you have time left to complete an ALE.

### **HOW TO START AGAIN**

You will do many of these “experiences” or ALEs during your undergraduate career. You will have many opportunities to use another experience to fulfill the requirement (ALE + course). If you do not find your original experience to be personally fulfilling, relevant to you and your education/professional, etc., you are not obligated to finish the process using that ALE.

**As stated above, if you have semesters remaining in your undergrad, you can choose a different experience with which to complete the entire process.**

### **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

If you are fulfilling your ALE with either your **PLC Student Staff** position or the **ALWC**, you do not have to take the ALE course after your experience, as you are already required to either take the student staff course or the extended summer trip with your ALE supervisor. **You will be responsible for assignments and possibly other items specific to your role and supervisor.** Please be in contact with your professional staff/faculty supervisor.

Please follow the timeline below:

- Notify and confirm with your **ALE supervisor** (professional staff or faculty)
- Determine **assignments and feedback process** for ALE with your supervisor
- Determine **final reflective assignment** with supervisor
- Upon **mission and approval** of all assignments, evaluations, etc. you will have fulfilled your PLC ALE requirement.