



Junior League of Baton Rouge Women's Leadership Academy Participant Policy, Program Standards, and Governance Framework

Program Overview

The Junior League of Baton Rouge (“JLBR”) Women’s Leadership Academy (“WLA”) powered by LSU Leadership Development Institute is a premier leadership development initiative designed to cultivate high-impact leaders within the Junior League and Louisiana.

JLBR WLA equips participants with the strategic, civic, and professional leadership competencies necessary to advance community impact, organizational effectiveness, and personal leadership growth.

Participation in the JLBR Women’s Leadership Academy is both a privilege and a professional commitment. Selected participants are expected to demonstrate a high level of engagement, accountability, and adherence to the standards outlined in this policy.

The JLBR WLA consists of six (6) structured sessions designed to foster leadership development through education, collaboration, mentorship, and experiential learning.

Participants selected for the program represent the Junior League of Baton Rouge and are expected to uphold the League’s core values of leadership, service, integrity, and excellence.

Due to the limited cohort size and high demand for participation, applicants selected for the program are expected to fully honor their commitment.

I. Participant Selection Criteria

The JLBR Women’s Leadership Academy is designed to identify and develop emerging and established leaders who demonstrate a commitment to service, leadership growth, and community engagement.

Participants may be selected based on a combination of the following criteria:

- demonstrated leadership potential
- active engagement within community organizations
- commitment to professional and civic leadership development
- willingness to actively participate in all program components

Selection decisions will be made by the JLBR Women’s Leadership Academy Committee and designated Leadership.

II. Attendance Requirements

Active participation is fundamental to the success of the JLBR Women's Leadership Academy.

Participants are expected to attend all six (6) scheduled program sessions as well as any required program-related activities.

Attendance standards are as follows:

- Participants may miss no more than one (1) session during the program year.
- If a participant misses more than 1 hour of any session they will be recorded as absent from that session
- Missing more than one (1) session may result in removal from the program or ineligibility to receive program recognition or certification.
- Participants must notify program leadership in advance / as soon as possible if an absence or delay is unavoidable.

Participants should make every effort to:

- Arrive promptly
- Minimize schedule conflicts
- Remain engaged for the full session

The JLBR Women's Leadership Academy is intentionally designed as a cohort-based learning experience including interactive learning, guest speakers, and group activities. Late arrivals or early departures can disrupt the cohort experience. Unexcused absences or repeated tardiness may be considered grounds for review of continued participation.

III. Participation Expectations

Participants are expected to arrive **on time and remain present for the full duration** of each session. Attire for all sessions is business casual.

Participants are expected to actively engage in all program components, including but not limited to:

- facilitated leadership discussions
- guest speaker and panel sessions
- leadership workshops
- collaborative exercises
- strategic leadership projects and presentations

Participants are expected to:

- come prepared for each session (materials, readings, etc.)
- actively contribute to discussions
- demonstrate intellectual curiosity and openness to learning
- support a collaborative learning environment by respecting diverse perspectives and experiences
- engage respectfully with instructors, guests, advisors, and fellow participants

The JLBR Women's Leadership Academy is designed to encourage dialogue, reflection, and leadership growth. Participants who consistently demonstrate lack of engagement or preparation may be subject to review by program leadership.

Participants are encouraged to actively build relationships with fellow cohort members and contribute to a supportive leadership network. The JLBR Women's Leadership Academy is designed not only as a learning experience, but also as a **community of leaders committed to strengthening Louisiana.**

IV. Completion and Recognition

Participants who successfully meet all program requirements will be recognized as graduates of the Junior League of Baton Rouge Women's Leadership Academy.

Graduation requirements include:

- meeting attendance standards
- demonstrating active engagement in program sessions
- completing all of the required assignments and tasks
- adhering to all program policies and conduct standards

V. Removal from the Program

The Junior League of Baton Rouge reserves the right to remove a participant from the Women's Leadership Academy if program standards are not met.

Grounds for removal may include:

- repeated absences beyond allowable limits
- failure to engage in program activities
- failure to complete program requirements
- conduct inconsistent with shared standards
- behavior that disrupts the program learning environment

Program leadership will review concerns on a case-by-case basis and determine appropriate action.

VI. Program Schedule Adjustments & Weather Policy

Weather, Emergencies, and Program Rescheduling

The safety of participants, speakers, and staff is a top priority. In the event of **severe weather, natural disasters, public safety concerns, or other unforeseen circumstances**, the JLBR Women's Leadership Academy reserves the right to adjust the program schedule as needed. Program cancellations and closures will align with LSU's official closing procedures. If LSU announces that there are no campus activities, program sessions will not be held.

Possible adjustments may include:

- Rescheduling a session to a later date
- Adjusting session times
- Moving a session to a virtual format when appropriate
- Extending the program calendar to accommodate missed sessions

Participants will be notified **as soon as possible** if a session must be modified or rescheduled.

Participant Expectations During Schedule Changes

Because JLBR WLA is a cohort-based program, participants are expected to:

- Make reasonable efforts to attend **rescheduled sessions**
- Remain flexible, if adjustments are required
- Monitor email, phone, and program communications for updates

If a participant is unable to attend a rescheduled session due to unavoidable conflicts, they should notify program leadership as soon as possible.

Communication Protocol

In the event of a schedule change, participants will receive updates through:

- Email
- Program communication platform (if applicable)
- Direct communication from program leadership

Participants are responsible for ensuring their **contact information remains current**.

VII. Participant Withdrawal & Deferral

Due to the selective nature of the JLBR Women's Leadership Academy and the limited number of seats available, participants who accept admission are expected to fully commit to the program.

If a participant must withdraw due to unforeseen circumstances, they should notify program leadership **as soon as possible**. In instances of unforeseen and unavoidable conflict, participants may request a **deferral** to the next cohort (see *Deferral Policy* for details).

If withdrawal occurs **prior to the program start date**, the program may offer the open seat to a qualified applicant from the waitlist.

Once a participant has been notified of their selection and has accepted their seat, **all program fees are non-refundable**.

JLBR WLA Cohort seats **may not be transferred to another individual**.

VIII. Deferral Policy

In recognition that significant professional or personal conflicts may arise after selection, the Junior League of Baton Rouge may grant a one-time deferral to the following program year under specific circumstances.

- **Eligibility for Deferral:** Deferral requests will be considered for participants prior to the acceptance deadline that encounter unavoidable conflicts (e.g., medical leave, family emergency, or unexpected professional relocation) that prevent them from meeting the attendance requirements for the current cohort.
- **Review Process:** All deferral requests must be submitted in writing to the Women's Leadership Academy Committee. Approvals are not guaranteed and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the **WLA Committee** and **JLBR Leadership**.
- **Timeline for Notification:** If a deferral is granted, the committee will provide the participant with a specific deadline by which they must confirm their intent to join the subsequent cohort. Failure to confirm by the established deadline may result in the forfeiture of the deferred seat, requiring the individual to re-apply in a future cycle.
- **Financial Impact:** As all program fees are non-refundable, any fees paid will be applied to the following year's tuition upon approval of the deferral. Participants may be responsible for any nominal increase in program fees between the deferral year and the active year.