

## **Frequently Asked Questions – Professional Leadership Program 2021-2022**

### **What is PLP?**

The Professional Leadership Program (PLP) is a mentoring, leadership, and soft-skills development program for students at the University of North Texas. The purpose of PLP is to give our students exposure to the leadership skills needed to be a servant leader in any industry or position they seek after college. Students are given the opportunity to network with the corporate community, attend weekly employability development meetings, and engage in a yearlong mentoring relationship with industry professionals.

In short: PLP focuses on cultivating servant leadership in UNT students through weekly meetings & connection with industry mentors.

### **How do you recruit and select students?**

We look for high-achieving students with prior leadership experience who demonstrate a coachable mentality. We do not recruit to a specific number, but rather a quality in our candidates. Therefore, class sizes vary from year to year. The 2019-2020 PLP class accepted 122 new members, along with 11 returning members as student director for a total class size of 131 program members. In contrast, the 2020-2021 PLP class accepted 47 student members, along with 8 returning members as student directors for a total class size of 55 program members.

Applicants come from all majors across campus. Recruitment runs from January to March of every year, with selection made in April for the following academic year. Prospective members must complete an online application including answering self-assessment questions and submitting supporting materials. After applications close in March, interviews will be conducted and members will be selected.

### **What are the requirements for students to apply?**

Applicants for PLP need to be of sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate status by the beginning of the PLP term (fall semester). In addition, applicants must have a 3.25+ GPA.

### **What majors do you target for PLP?**

We are housed in the G. Brint Ryan College of Business, but PLP is open to all majors. The 2020-2021 PLP class is comprised of 76% business majors, with 11 university colleges and over 24 different majors represented.

### **What is the profile of the 2020-2021 PLP Class?**

15% International Students  
76.4% G. Brint Ryan College of Business students  
55% Female / 45% Male  
9% Graduate students

### **What curriculum and content do you deliver to PLP students?**

We focus on providing content that covers our seven core competencies: stewardship, servant leadership, communication, teamwork, diversity & inclusion, problem solving, and ethical practice.

During the course of the academic year, our facilitators present content on a wide array of topics such as Time & Attention Management, Ethics, Global & Social Awareness, Diversity & Inclusion, Emotional Intelligence, Servant Leadership, Negotiating Skills, Personal Branding, Social Media, Organizational Culture, and more.

### **Who are the facilitators that deliver the curriculum & content?**

The facilitators are “Subject Matter Experts” from industry and not-for-profit sectors across the DFW metroplex. Many represent businesses that are national and international in scope, providing our students with an opportunity to learn both the theory and experiential sides of management and leadership.

### **What type of practical experience does PLP offer its participants?**

PLP offers practical experiences in several ways, including a McKinsey & Company case study and “Business After Hours” networking events.

- Once per year, students are presented with a McKinsey case study. Working with a team of students from diverse majors, students analyze a situation and conduct evaluations of a real business scenario, culminating with a presentation of their findings to a panel of judges. Through this process, students learn to effectively collaborate and utilize critical thinking skills to solve real-world business problems.
- Twice per semester, students are given the opportunity to practice their networking skills. Hosted at various locations throughout the metroplex by our corporate partners, students mingle with PLP mentors, sponsors and business executives, learning how to present themselves professionally and leverage their experiences to make meaningful connections.

### **Where are your weekly meetings held?**

PLP meetings are held every Wednesday from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. on the UNT campus (typically in the Business Leadership Building). During COVID-19 precautions, PLP has met over Zoom.

### **Do you support community service projects?**

Servant Leadership is a strong driving principle of the Professional Leadership Program. As such, community service and volunteer projects are very important for the development of our participants. Students are required to complete at least 4 hours of community service during the fall semester.

### **How long has the program been in existence?**

PLP was started in 1994 by the dean for the College of Business (at the time), Clayton Singleton, who had a vision to shift the paradigm from a classroom-only learning experience for business students to one that is experiential-based and linked to developing skills and competencies that are essential in the marketplace.

### **How do you recruit and select mentors?**

Mentors for PLP are volunteers and are recruited from the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors across the DFW metroplex. This results in a diverse mix of companies and industries providing a wide range of experiences. The recruitment effort is led by the PLP Staff in collaboration with the Board of Directors, UNT faculty and staff, current mentors, and PLP Alumni. Mentor recruitment is ongoing throughout the year but focused on the spring semester. Prospective mentors read information about the program and complete an online mentoring profile. After PLP student members are selected,

approved mentors are matched with a student based on career interests/experience, location, and other key factors.

### **What are the requirements to become a mentor?**

- Mentors must have 5+ years of professional experience
- New mentors must either have a recommendation from a PLP community member or hold a screening call with PLP staff
- Servant leadership mentality
- Willingness to incorporate mentee into business aspects of organization
- No previous felony convictions or listed on National Sex Offender Registry

Mentors fill out an online profile, which will be compared to student applications using a matching algorithm. The algorithm helps the PLP staff to narrow down the pairings, but all matches are verified for the best matches based on interests, industry, experience, and more.

Not all mentor applicants will be paired with students, as matching is dependent upon mentor/mentee fit and the number of students accepted into the program.

### **What am I committing to as a mentor?**

- Commitment to 1 academic year, meeting once every month
  - Paired in summer
  - Mentoring from August – May
- Consistency in mentoring relationships
  - Phone calls and email communication in between meetings
  - Being proactive with your student when necessary
- Attending PLP events, as able
  - Mentor Training (summer)
  - Summer Mixer
  - Fall Kick-Off (early September)
  - Business After Hours (twice per semester)
  - Open PLP Meetings

### **How do I apply to be a mentor for the 2021-2022 PLP class?**

Mentor applications are open through June 1, 2021.

Visit <https://plp.xinspire.com/> to create an account and begin your mentor application.

### **How has mentoring changed due to COVID-19?**

Previously, mentoring meetings were required to take place in-person. As long as COVID-19 is a relevant concern, all mentoring is encouraged to take place over live video technology such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc.

### **How has PLP changed due to COVID-19? Will PLP remain virtual in the future?**

PLP has converted to a virtual format, utilizing Zoom for all PLP meetings. In-person networking events have been suspended. Once it is safe to do so, PLP plans to resume regular, in-person activities including networking events, PLP meetings, community service, etc.