

PUBLIC EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

WHEREVER YOU LEAD, WE'LL MEET YOU THERE.

SESSION 1: JULY 12-17, 2026

Sunday, July 12 - Orientation

4:30	Arrival & Check-In <i>The Graduate, Chapel Hill</i>
6:00	Orientation, Dinner, and Park Bench <i>411 West @ 411 W. Franklin Street (2-min walk from hotel)</i>

Monday, July 13 - Setting the Context for the PELA Experience

8:30	The PELA Perspective & Adaptive Leadership	Kim Nelson
10:00	Understanding the Context for Change	Colt Jensen
11:00	GPS Report—nclIMPACT	Michael Welker
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Leading & Managing in an Era of “Certain-Uncertainty”	James Johnson
3:15	Understanding the PELA Workbook & Peer Learning Model	John Stephens
4:00	Learning Team Debriefings	PELA Faculty
5:00	Adjourn—dinner on your own	

Tuesday, July 14 - Public Engagement, Collaboration, and Community Building

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Team Kim
9:00	Community Engagement	Rick Morse
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Community Building & Developing Productive Partnerships	Lee Worsley/Panelists
3:00	Learning Team Debrief—Adaptive Change Projects	PELA Faculty
5:00	Learning Team Dine-Around	

Wednesday, July 15 – Building Resilient Communities

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Team Colt
9:00	The Local Government Imperative	Bob O'Neill
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Leading Democratically: Fostering Management Innovation, Advancing Public Trust, and Building Resilient Communities	Valerie Lemmie
4:00	Adjourn—dinner on your own	

Thursday, July 16 – The Multi-Level Leader: Thinking Systematically, Acting Regionally, Leading Relationally

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Team Rick
9:00	Using Systems Thinking to Tackle Complex Problems	Kim Nelson
11:00	Regional Cooperation and Coordination	Colt Jensen
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Creating a Culture of Relational Leadership	Kimalee Dickerson
4:00	Adjourn	
5:15	Ackland activity 5:15 – 7:45 (<i>lite fare included, dinner on your own after</i>)	

Friday, July 17 – Leading from ‘Inside Out’

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Teams Kimalee & John
9:00	Personality and Leadership: Tapping into Your Strengths, Understanding Your ‘Soft Spots’	Robert Goldberg
12:00	Lunch in Learning Teams	
1:00	Taking Care of Ourselves: Building Resilience and Avoiding Burnout	Robert Goldberg
4:00	Adjourn until Week 2	

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Session 2: August 2-7, 2025

Sunday, August 2 – Welcome Back and Team Mix-up Dinner

4:30	Arrival & Check-In <i>The Graduate, Chapel Hill</i>
6:00	Team Mix-up Dinner <i>Meet in lobby</i>

Monday, August 3– Innovation and Systems Thinking

8:30	Welcome back	Kim Nelson
9:00	Innovation in Local Government	Mitch Sava
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Local Growth and Development Decisions: Who Benefits?	Jonathan Morgan Tyler Mulligan
4:00	Team Debrief-Leadership Development Workbook	PELA Teams
5:15	Adjourn—Dinner on your own	

Tuesday, August 4 – Framing and Communicating Your Message

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Team Kimalee
9:00	Getting your Message Across	Valonda Calloway
12:30	Lunch	
1:30	Communication: A Leader's Imperative	Willow Jacobson
4:30	Leadership Adventure—Museum of Life and Science—PELA's Amazing Race	

Wednesday, August 5 – Practicing Collaborative Process Skills

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Teams Rick & Colt
9:30	Facilitation-Collaboration Skills Stakeholder Collaboration Simulation – Part 1	John Stephens
12:30	Lunch with Leadership Teams	
1:30	Stakeholder Collaboration Simulation – Part 2	John Stephens
4:30	Break	
4:45	Debrief, Connections to Adaptive Change Projects	John Stephens
5:30	Adjourn—Dinner on Your Own	

Thursday, August 6 – Crisis Communications

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Team John
9:00	Advanced Crisis Communications & Social Media – Part 1	Mark Weaver
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Advanced Crisis Communications & Social Media – Part 2	Mark Weaver
4:00	Leadership Adventure—Cooking School	

Friday, August 7 – Graduation Day

8:30	Learning Team Spotlight	Team Kim
9:00	PELA Wrap Up	Rick Morse Kimalee Dickerson
9:30	Learning Team Final Meetings	PELA Faculty
10:30	Break and Graduation Pictures	
11:00	Park Bench Reflections	
12:15	Graduation, George Watts Hill Alumni Center	Eddie Smith Dean Aimee Wall