



Doctor of Strategic Leadership

School of Communication & Public Affairs

College of Arts & Cultural Studies

Online & Lifelong Learning

Program Guide, v5.1

2026-2027

Oral Roberts University
7777 South Lewis Ave. Tulsa, Oklahoma 74171
<https://www.oru.edu>
online@oru.edu
(918) 495-6363

This program guide provides prospective and current students with an overview of ORU's [Doctor of Strategic Leadership](#) program. It is important that each student becomes familiar with the policies and procedures outlined in this guidebook and assumes their responsibilities concerning them. The University reserves the right to make necessary changes without prior notice. Students, faculty, and staff should [use this link](#) to access the most updated copy of this guidebook. The latest [ORU University Catalog](#) supersedes any information in this program guide, if there is a conflict between these two documents.

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Welcome

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A DOCTORAL PROGRAM that can empower you to lead the way, you have come to the right place.

Our motto at Oral Roberts University is “Whole Leaders for the Whole World.” Our unique mission to develop Spirit-empowered leaders will accelerate your premium leadership skills.

No matter what sector you serve, media, healthcare, education, technology, business, ministry, or military, ORU’s online multi-disciplinary Doctor of Strategic Leadership (DSL) will accelerate your career track at a time shaped by opportunity and challenge.

Developed by our senior faculty, who share more than two decades of experience working with mid- to senior-career professionals, the DSL will give you a unique opportunity to build your personal, organizational, and public leadership skills.

This program is built for you—as a working adult. You study year-round, but fit classes into your schedule to balance work and family commitments. You take one course at a time, every seven weeks. You meet with your cohort every two weeks in a professor-led MeetUp that works together to solve real problems in your world.

By your second year, you enter one of four concentrations (Leadership Coaching, Change Management, Strategic Foresight, or Applied Research). Your third year is devoted to designing and deploying a doctoral project that provides value to your sector under faculty supervision.

The DSL will ground you in theory and practice, which is vital to organizational success. Upon completion, you will step into your destiny as a Spirit-empowered leader who can inspire individuals, teams, and organizations to reach their God-given potential.

We pray that the DSL will be your passport into a new world of strategic leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Gary", with a stylized, flowing script.

Jay Gary, Ph.D., APF
DSL Program Director
Professor of Strategic Leadership
Associate Dean of Online and Lifelong Learning

ORU Vision and Mission

Vision

Raise up your students to hear My voice, to go where My light is dim, where My voice is heard small, and My healing power is not known, even to the uttermost bounds of the earth. Their work will exceed yours, and in this, I am well pleased.

Mission

To develop Holy Spirit-empowered leaders through whole-person education to impact the world.

Academics

Oral Roberts University's academic mission is to transform students by the power of the Holy Spirit into whole, competent servant-leaders through liberal arts and professional education that is fully Christian. Within a Spirit-filled healing community, administration, faculty, and staff love and serve students by helping them grow in knowledge, skills, wisdom, character, and spirit. Student transformation is measured through the evaluation of student expression of university learning outcomes as demonstrated through the following factors.

- 1 Spiritual Integrity
- 2 Personal Resilience
- 3 Intellectual Pursuit
- 4 Global Engagement
- 5 Bold Vision

Honor Code

As a criterion for admission, all ORU students make an [Honor Code Commitment](#) that reflects their alignment with ORU's vision and mission and standards of conduct. The Honor Code is the central criterion of conduct for all who are a part of the ORU community. It is a concept of personal honor based on the principles of integrity, common sense, reverence for God, esteem for others, and respect for social and spiritual laws. ORU considers these qualities an inherent part of the ethical code embraced by its Whole Person approach to education.

DSL Program

The Doctor of Strategic Leadership (DSL) is a multi-disciplinary program that provides mid- to senior-career professionals with substantial work experience and an earned master's degree the opportunity to build their personal, organizational, and public leadership skills. Learning experiences are sequenced within courses to enable students to reflect on prior experience, relate that experience to existing theory from leadership, organizational, and sector studies, and use those new competencies to empower others, whether in teams, as managers, or as department leaders. Students will select one of four concentration tracks (Leadership Coaching, Change Management, Strategic Foresight, or Applied Research). Upon completion, the DSL graduate can recast their future, create meaningful change, and cultivate talent through coaching.

Overview

The DSL is a professional doctorate that combines theory and practice at the cutting edge of a field to advance the professional trajectories of the graduate. The design of professional doctorates emerged from early twentieth-century pedagogies that embraced action learning, reflective practice, field-based ethnography, and insider research. Rather than advancing the knowledge base of a discipline, the DSL is focused on solving work-based problems of mid- to senior-career professionals. Problems that relate to strategic leadership are defined broadly, including the processes and impacts of community, organizational, and leader development.

To this end, the DSL is similar in orientation to a Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.), an Educational Doctorate (Ed.D.), or a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min). To complete their DSL, students produce a Capstone Project that focuses on a problem especially germane to their professional work. Across both core and concentration courses, candidates build their capacity through portfolio projects as “scholarly professionals” as preparation for their Capstone Project. The steps below represent projects in various DSL courses that students complete before their Capstone courses, preparing them for their culminating project phase.

- Exploring one's own prior learning as a professional.
- Writing a review of literature on one's focus domain.
- Modeling the problem as an interactive system and identifying levers of change.
- Activating learning communities in that space among stakeholders.
- Devising prototype programs that might address that real-world problem.
- Evaluating the impact of that program, with recommendations for strategic leadership.

By the time of their second residency, a candidate may select from the faculty a doctoral chair whose expertise matches their interests. Candidates then, in their doctoral project courses, will work one-on-one with their faculty chair to develop a doctoral proposal, write their doctoral project, and prepare to present its impact to peers.

During the third project course, candidates will submit the dissertation to a doctoral panel consisting of the faculty chair, an examiner, and the DSL program director. At that stage the panel designates the doctoral project one of the following status levels: (1) acceptance as satisfactory, (2) acceptance pending completed revisions approved by the chair, or (3) deemed not satisfactory with further work required as documented, subject to re-examination by the panel. Following acceptance of their project, the candidate presents their work at a leadership summit to faculty, alumni, and industry partners.

Outcomes

Personal and professional growth is an integral part of the DSL program. To help achieve this, the DSL is aligned to six life-work goals for Spirit-empowered leaders, with measurable outcomes listed under each.

1. **Integrity:** Lives wholistically in relationship with the Holy Spirit, oneself, and others.
 - 1a. Authenticity – acts according to internalized values in service to others.
 - 1b. Alignment – relates ethics to critical issues facing organizations and communities.
2. **Wellness:** Embraces practices that restore one's spirit, mind, and body.
 - 2a. Intentional – engages in self-care through disciplined positive habits.
 - 2b. Resourceful – persists in personal growth and service in the face of adversity.
3. **Knowledge:** Pushes the boundaries of applied leadership in their profession.
 - 3a. Explores – potential solutions to problems through applied research as a professional.
 - 3b. Interprets – complex ideas and problems based on analyzing and synthesizing information.
4. **Collaboration:** Takes responsibility for action learning across institutional and community contexts.
 - 4a. Inclusive – ability to form diverse teams that can identify and assess appropriate solutions.
 - 4b. Creates – organizational change projects based on broad participation.
5. **Communication:** Inspires others to move dreams into reality.
 - 5a. Develops – presentations, workshops and papers that engage and inspire stakeholders.
 - 5b. Communicates – with audiences using appropriate modes to sustain strategic conversations.
6. **Professional Practice:** Cultivates a competency within a mode of practice, whether:
 - 6a. Leadership Coaching to enable leader development in individuals and teams.
 - 6b. Change Management to enable organizations to implement systemic change.
 - 6c. Strategic Foresight to enable institutions to anticipate and leverage the future.
 - 6d. Applied Research to demonstrate expertise in a specialized area.

Assessment

Aligning upward to program outcomes, each course in the DSL program enables students to develop leadership skills across various program outcomes. Learning experiences sequenced within courses enable students to reflect on prior experience, relate that experience to existing theory from leadership, organizational and sector studies, and use those new competencies to empower others, whether in teams, as managers, or as department leaders. The DSL student works with their cohort and professors to build a portfolio of work, with proposals, assessments, white papers, slide decks, and workshops for individuals or organizations. Students participate in live meetings every two weeks to debrief their accomplishments, work in groups on new proficiencies, and preview forthcoming assignments. Faculty members offer custom feedback to students through grading. As an extension of this procedure, various assignments are designated for program assessment. Faculty score these with assessment rubrics to ensure that the student progressively meets the program outcomes across diverse course practices. Grades are assigned on a standard scale: A=90-100% B=80-89% C=70-79% D=60-69% F=59%. Incoming doctoral students receive an overview of the learning cycle and assessment program, along with an explanation of its specific requirements.

DSL Curriculum

The Doctor of Strategic Leadership program requires 48 credit hours of doctoral study across ORU distinctive courses, core courses, concentration courses, and doctoral project courses. As listed in the ORU University Catalog, this section offers the DSL course numbers, names, and descriptions. The number of credit hours is in parentheses after the course name.

Distinctive Courses

GLDR 701	Graduate Orientation (0) Introduces students to action research at the doctoral level, their cohort, courses, and proven learning strategies. Grade Type: Pass/Fail
GLDR 702	Spirit-Empowered Leadership (3) Explores how emerging leaders shape their spiritual life and professional identities related to life transitions and personal fitness.

Core Courses

GLDR 703	Critical Inquiry and Research Methods (3) Examines how critical inquiry, applied hermeneutics, and research can illuminate problems facing organizations and communities.
GLDR 713	Coaching and Talent Development (3) Examines how organizations use performance coaching, learning and

	development, and talent programs to enhance their employee's professional development.
GLDR 723	Organizational Culture and Design (3) Examines components that shape organizations: strategy, environments, structure, culture, and information processes, as the basis for designed change.
GLDR 733	Modeling Systems Change (3) Applies systems thinking to identify levers of change in complex systems by specifying variables, links and interactive loops, along with stock and flows.
GLDR 741	Doctoral Residency – Year 1 (0) Provides time for sustained participation with peers and faculty members in a shared community of professional life. Grade Type: Pass/Fail
GLDR 743	Global Entrepreneurship (3) Examines how social entrepreneurs form multi-cultural teams to solve intractable community problems.
GLDR 753	Collaborative Leadership (3) Examines how leadership teams work together across functional boundaries to make decisions and keep organizations thriving.
GLDR 763	Innovation and Change Management (3) Explores practices that organizations use to help their leaders think strategically, and create change to sustain success.
GLDR 773	Decision and Data Analytics (3) Examines how professionals transform data into actionable insights to improve data-driven decision-making within organizations.
GLDR 783	Anticipatory Leadership (3) Examines how future focused leaders create alternative visions that enable teams to shape a future that exceeds expectations.
GLDR 791	Doctoral Residency – Year 2 (0) Provides time for sustained participation with peers and faculty members in a shared community of professional life. Grade Type: Pass/Fail

Concentrations

Building on distinct core courses and in preparation for their doctoral project, second-year DSL students enroll in a 3-course Concentration that qualifies them to sit for a credentialing exam in one of three areas:

- **Leadership Coaching**

Leadership coaching is the intentional process of cultivating talent within individuals so they can effectively lead others. This concentration builds on skills assessments, leadership training, career planning, and business development. A DSL in Leadership Coaching will be able to use psychometric tools, deliver personalized coaching for executives, integrate

coaching into training programs, and foster open conversations across organizations to improve results.

- **Change Management**

Change Management is the systematic process for leading organizations through significant transitions, given substantial challenges. This concentration builds on strategic planning, project management, organizational development, and process improvement. A DSL in Change Management will be able to conduct divisional design audits, help teams clarify their vision, engage diverse stakeholders, develop adaptive planning processes, and integrate projects into an overall change management program.

- **Strategic Foresight**

Strategic foresight is the comprehensive process for helping institutions frame, anticipate, and create the future through innovation. This concentration builds on practices such as horizon scanning, domain forecasting, scenario planning, and policy interventions. A DSL in Strategic Foresight will be able to lead strategic initiatives, help teams become future-focused, explore signals of change, identify alternative futures, manage emerging issues, test strategy through scenarios, and design innovative prototypes.

- **Applied Research**

A fourth concentration, Applied Research, is available for those who would like to demonstrate their expertise in a specialized field, such as developing validated assessments or conducting discipline-specific empirical research.

Incoming students are asked to select a Concentration in their application, but may petition to change that designation up to and through their second year.

Leadership Coaching – 9 credits	
GLDR 803	Coaching Theory and Practices (3) Examines the core competencies of professionally certified coaches including the theories, purpose, concepts, techniques and, screening/orientation of coaching. Prerequisite: GLDR 713
GLDR 806	Personal and Professional Coaching (3) Examines how coaches help others make life and career changes by using adult learning, motivation, intentional change, emotional intelligence, and psychology. Prerequisite: GLDR 713
GLDR 809	Business and Executive Coaching (3) Examines coaching approaches for organizations including ethical and professional practices to accelerate workforce performance and organizational adaptability. Prerequisite: GLDR 713
Change Management – 9 credits	
GLDR 813	Change Management Practices (3) Applies change management skills and processes needed to lead systemic change projects in today's changing environment. Prerequisite: GLDR 763

GLDR 816	Strategic Planning Teams (3) Examines how teams clarify shared vision, create roadmaps, implement plans, and revise strategies for breakthrough performance. Prerequisite: GLDR 763
GLDR 819	Multisector Partnerships (3) Examines how the public, private, and civil sector work together to build ecosystems in view of sustainable development goals. Prerequisite: GLDR 763
Strategic Foresight – 9 credits	
GLDR 823	Cultivating Strategic Foresight (3) Examines how team leaders or consultants use participatory futures practices in organizational contexts. Prerequisite: GLDR 783
GLDR 826	Leading Social Change (3) Examines how change agents frame emerging issues, advance interests, and resolve public policy challenges, informed by social change theory. Prerequisite: GLDR 783
GLDR 829	Shaping Global Futures (3) Uses global models to evaluate policy interventions in developing economies, against baseline forecasts of regions or countries. Prerequisite: GLDR 783
Applied Research – 9 credits (Option 1: Open to all)	
	The selection of any two 800-level courses from any DSL Concentration above, followed by GLDR 890.
GLDR 890	Independent Research (1-3) Appropriate independent research in leadership studies under the direction of a faculty advisor. Prerequisite: Advisor approval
Applied Research – 9 credits (Option 2: By Faculty Invitation)	
GLDR 843	Applied Action Learning (3) Examines how practitioner-scholars frame adaptive leadership challenges as researchable questions, evaluate existing evidence, and translate their findings into practical applications. Restriction: Advisor approval
GLDR 846	Applied Research Methods (3) Equips practitioner-scholars to employ quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data through AI tools to yield insights for strategic improvement. Prerequisite: GLDR 843
GLDR 849	Applied Research Design (3) Explores how applied researchers design rigorous yet feasible studies in professional contexts that balance methodological integrity with organizational constraints. Prerequisite: GLDR 846

Doctoral Project

GLDR 893	Doctoral Project Proposal (3) Candidates begin research on their doctoral project, culminating in a proposal to their doctoral chair. Prerequisite: Successful completion of all required coursework.
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GLDR 894	Doctoral Project Preparation (3) Candidates start their project to make an original contribution to their professional field. Prerequisite: GLDR 893
GLDR 895	Doctoral Project Presentation (3) Candidates finish their project and present their work at a leadership summit to faculty, alumni and industry partners. Prerequisite: GLDR 894
GLDR 896	Doctoral Project Continuation (1) Students continue their doctoral work, as needed, taking this course each term until they complete their doctoral project. Prerequisite: GLDR 895 Grade Type: Pass/Fail

Orientation Week

The DSL program begins with a Graduate Orientation Week, the week before the student's first 7-week term. Orientation opens with a Monday webinar with the Program Director, followed by online study in GLDR 701 Graduate Orientation, a required course. This tuition-free course requires students to invest up to 3 hours a day of self-study during that week, interacting with their peers and instructor in ORU's Brightspace/D2L learning management platform, becoming acquainted with doctoral standards and online learning processes.

Annual Residencies

In both their first and second year, DSL students participate in a required multi-day annual residency on ORU's beautiful Tulsa campus, with live-stream attendance for international students unable to travel. Residency offers students a signature Whole Person approach to an immersive time to get to know their peers, interact with their advisors, present mini-TEDx talks to their cohort, and receive counsel on Concentration and Doctoral Project options.

Residency requirements are mandatory and cannot be waived. Residencies are structured as non-tuition doctoral courses, GLDR 741 and 791, yet are considered Degree Plan requirements for graduation. Beyond live participation, students must submit assignments for their Residency course within 3 days of the event.

DSL Residency is scheduled from Monday to Wednesday following ORU's annual Commencement ceremony, on Friday, and Saturday. To accommodate domestic travel, the program begins with an on-campus reception on Monday at 4 pm and runs until Wednesday at noon. Students attending Residency on campus must confirm their participation by the end of February by purchasing a \$100 event ticket. The dates of DSL Residency are:

Year	Dates
2027	May 3 – 5
2028	May 8 – 10
2029	May 7 – 9
2030	May 6 – 8

Students should confirm these dates with their Success Coach before making travel arrangements. See ORU's [Visit Information](#) page for campus maps, travel arrangements, and nearby hotels. If a student would like to share the cost of housing and/or car rental, they are welcome to explore options with their peers in the community discussion forum for their Spring course, 7-13 weeks before Residency.

Course Syllabi

Students have access to their courses two weeks before each term begins. Course Syllabi are available two weeks before each term in the designated course. As DSL courses are taught for the first time, each Course Syllabus, as it is released, may be referenced at <https://syllabi.oru.edu/>.

Degree Plans

All students are required to take the core courses when offered, according to the rotation schedule in DegreeWorks <https://degreeworks.oru.edu/>. Students must submit a petition to their [Success Coach](#) to request approval to take fewer than 6 credit hours per semester.

Co-Curricular

As DSL students move through their core courses, they are encouraged to join the [International Leadership Association](#) (ILA), the premier global network for those who practice, study, and teach leadership. ILA hosts numerous all-member access webinars each month. In addition, members may join various online [member communities](#), such as business, healthcare, public, education, or women, to name a few. Students are encouraged to attend and present at ILA's annual Global Conference, to share meals with ORU faculty, and to network with fellow professionals in practice.

As DSL students enter their concentration, they are encouraged to join a professional association related to their focus, such as the [International Coaching Federation](#), the [Association of Change Management Professionals](#), or the [Association of Professional Futurists](#).

DSL students are also encouraged to participate in [Empowered21](#) (E21), a global relational network that aims to shape the future of Spirit-empowered Christianity through perspectives on crucial issues and intergenerational impartation. E21 is an ORU-affiliated organization that hosts regional and global congresses on the Holy Spirit as the Church moves toward Pentecost 2033.

Upon graduation, DSL alumni gain access to ORU's proprietary DSLx platform, where members support each other virtually, offer short courses, and receive notifications of calls for presentations and publications.

DSL Admission

Prospective students receive a list of requirements to submit applications online. The Admissions Committee selects applicants with the strongest qualifications. Candidates who meet minimal requirements in some areas but are exceptional in others may be accepted. The admissions process assesses the applicant's overall combination of strengths. Applicants attach documents to their application at: <http://apply.oru.edu/>

Requirements

Applicants to the Doctor of Strategic Leadership program will be reviewed for admission on the strength of their ability to successfully complete doctoral studies and based on the criteria listed below:

- Application to the DSL program.
- A Master's degree from an accredited institution, with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0.
- Work experience as a mid-level contributor or first-level supervisor in an organizational context for 6-plus years.
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.
- A professional resumé with contact information, career objectives, work history, education, articles published, certificates and/or training, memberships, and community service.
- A personal essay that states one's reason to pursue this degree, how the DSL courses and concentration might help them in their present work, and help them meet their life-work goals (see checklist link below for 4 DSL essay questions).
- Documentation of English proficiency for any student whose first language is not English, as evidenced by a minimum TOFEL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score: 500, paper-based; 173, computer-based; or 61, Internet-based; or a minimum 6.5 IELTS score (International English Language Testing System) on the Academic Module; or a Duolingo score of 120 or better.
- Signed Honor Code Pledge, reflecting alignment with ORU's vision and mission, and standards of conduct.

Applicants should check the [DSL Graduate Application Checklist](#) for full instructions on how to best complete their application packet.

Acceptance

After completing a portfolio as listed above, candidates who meet the minimum criteria will be invited to participate in an admissions web-cam interview to discuss their qualifications and respond to questions.

The admissions committee will review the applicant's record when all information is complete. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all required information is made available to ORU for an admissions decision. Applications are evaluated in the order in which they are received. Admissions decisions are communicated to applicants in writing as soon as possible after the decision has been made.

In considering a candidate for admission, the faculty/admissions committee considers how the candidate's portfolio matches the DSL program in terms of career goals, value-added diversity (age, gender, ethnicity, interests, talents, and geographic origin), and room in the program. The committee may recommend unconditional admission, admission with specified conditions, admission on probation, or may deny admission. Admission may be denied for crimes, moral turpitude, misconduct, prior suspension, or any other factors that would be detrimental or disruptive to the university or its students. Any applicant who intentionally withholds or falsifies pertinent information may be required to withdraw from ORU.

Enrollment

Following admission to the DSL, students are assigned to an Admissions Representative to help them [complete their registration](#). This includes receiving one's unique Z-number, setting up one's ORU email and accessing one's student profile. You may connect with your representative by calling 918.495.6363 or emailing online@oru.edu.

Following their agreement to their student authorization, release, and financial contract, students are be connected to their Success Coach to complete their registration. This includes reviewing their degree plan and discussing their textbook options. If they haven't done so by that time, they may complete their FAFSA-Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Then ORU's Financial Aid department will create a package that outlines grant and loan options for eligible students.

Transfer Credits

At the time of admission, DSL applicants may request a transfer of up to 6 credit hours of doctoral work from another school into their degree plan. The following conditions must be met to replace a DSL course:

1. The courses are from an accredited institution.
2. The course credit must be at least 3 semester hours or five-quarter hours.
3. The student must have earned a grade of 3.00 or higher on a 4.00 scale.
4. The course must align up to 80% with one of the DSL core courses.
5. The course was completed within five years of the application date for admission.
6. The course has not been applied to another earned diploma or degree.

DSL Student Services

Success Coaches

ORU Online and Lifelong Learning provides each DSL student with direct access to a Success Coach to offer professional support and personal encouragement from their first day of enrollment to achieving their goal of degree completion. Success Coaches provides students a safe place to discuss goals, receive accountability, solve problems, and connect with the many available support services for online students. They also inform students of deadlines for registration for upcoming terms, provide information on academic and counseling resources, and contact students after missed academic deadlines. Students may find [contact information](#) for their Success Coach at the end of this document.

IT Help Desk

[Information Technology](#) (IT) at ORU provides students with live digital or remote device support services via phone, email, or live text chat. Students may find their answer before contacting IT, in their [FAQ](#). To contact IT via email: studenthelpdesk@oru.edu; or by phone: 918-495-6321. Hours of operation are 8:00 am - 4:30 pm (CT), Monday – Friday.

ORU provides its students with free subscription access to various academic programs. Students may create their accounts using their ORU email (@oru.edu) to take advantage of these educational offers.

- Microsoft Office 365, <http://www.office.com>
- ZOOM web conferencing, <https://oru.zoom.us/signup>
- Grammarly Assistant & Authorship, <https://www.grammarly.com/edu/signup>

Brightspace/ D2L

ORU uses Brightspace by D2L as its virtual learning environment. The login is <https://d2l.oru.edu>. Students access this with their ORU username/password. D2L is the learning platform where students find their online courseware, interact with their peers, upload their assignments, and receive feedback from their professor. Registered students receive access to their D2L courses 14 days before the start of term.

Textbooks

ORU's [campus bookstore](#) provides DSL students with precise required textbook information for upcoming courses, so students can purchase print textbooks. Many DSL courses qualify as a "BNC Course+," which means the student's required textbooks are included as digital texts in their online course, at a fee charged to their student account. Students may opt out of "BNC Course+" through the first week of their course. At the time of registration for each upcoming

term, students may lean on their Course Syllabus or their Success Coach for further information on ordering textbooks through the ORU Bookstore or a bookstore of their choice.

University Catalog

The latest [ORU University Catalog](#) is available online. It contains information on the university's administration, accreditation, commitments, campus, library, technology, admissions, academic records, financial aid, registration, continuation, grading, graduation, curriculum, student life, athletics, academic colleges, online learning, and course descriptions.

Registrar

ORU's [Registrar office](#) maintains [academic calendars](#), student records, transcripts, and processes student petitions according to [approved policies](#). Students use [VISION](#), the university's electronic enrollment and registration system, to check their current schedule, financial aid, course grades, and their official transcript. [DegreeWorks](#) is a self-service app that enables students to see their progress in the program. The Registrar's office is also the source for graduation information on ORU's annual Commencement in April/May of each year.

Library

DSL students have 24/7 full access to the [ORU Library](#) that holds over 500,000 items, including 3,000 e-books on leadership and 50,000 electronic journals. Through [EagleSearch](#) database searching, abstract and full-text availability, and inter-library loan, doctoral students have outstanding access to public and organizational leadership literature. Reference Desk phone support runs most evenings until 9:30 pm (CT). Students should refer to the [Online Access to Library Services](#) page, and complete the [Distance Learner Registration Form](#).

ORU's faculty have designated these 12 peer-reviewed journals as essential to the DSL program. The ORU Library carries these journals via digital access:

- *Leadership Quarterly* (since 1995, via Science Direct)
- *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* (1993 – 2021, via Sage)
- *Journal of Leadership Studies* (since 2009, 1 year delay, via Wiley)
- *Administrative Science Quarterly* (since 1956, via Political Science Complete)
- *American Psychologist* (since 1946, via PsycArticles, EBSCO)
- *Academy of Management Journal* (since 1963, via Business Source Complete)
- *Academy of Management Review* (since 1967, via Business Source Complete)
- *Harvard Business Review* (since 1992, via EBSCO)
- *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* (since 1995, via Science Direct)
- *International Coaching Psychology Review* (since 2008 via Academic Search Complete)
- *Futures* (London) (Since 1995 via Science Direct)

Citation Management

DSL students are introduced to the value of using a citation or reference management tool as they start their program. Citation management tools help students save time and stay organized by keeping track of their research from journal articles, books, and documents for present and future use. Students should use [Zotero](#) – a free cloud-based citation management program or purchase a subscription to [EndNote](#). First-term DSL students should attend [Zotero](#) virtual workshops, as announced by the DSL program director.

APA Writing Style

The DSL program uses the American Psychological Association (APA), 7th edition, writing style for its dialogues and academic papers. Students must use both in-text citations and end of paper reference lists. The reference book is:

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 7th edition. ISBN: 978-1433832154

APA offers a “[quick answers](#)” online page. Purdue offers their [Owl Writing Lab—APA](#). When citing the Hebrew Bible or New Testament, students should use standard Bible [book abbreviations](#) for in-text citations and abbreviate the translation version in text. Papers do not need a corresponding reference page entry for the Bible, only an in-text citation.

Writing Software

ORU offers students a free premium version of [Grammarly](#), an online professional writing app to make writing clear and engaging. See these [instructions](#) to set up a new account using your ORU email.

Tutoring

ORU offers free 24/7 live, personalized writing review services via [Brainfuse](#) tutoring. Students can connect with an e-tutor via a direct link in each D2L course.

Disability

ORU’s [Disability Services Office](#) offers student consultation on disability issues. They facilitate reasonable accommodations to students based on their individual needs, in compliance with the American Disabilities Act, to facilitate their independence and academic progress. Accommodations must be renewed each semester.

Graduation Requirements

To complete the DSL program, students must fulfill the following graduation requirements:

1. Completion of all required courses as specified by their Advisor—approved DSL Degree Plan, with maintenance of a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) at or above 3.0.
2. Successful completion of 1.0 credit of a Graduate Health Fitness course to fulfill ORU's mission.
3. Successful completion of a required Graduate Orientation seminar before completing their first 3 hours in the program and two Residencies in Years 1 and 2, on a Pass/Fail basis.
4. Completion of a faculty panel-approved Doctoral Project, with prior ORU Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for research involving human subjects.
5. Presentation of their Doctoral Project at an ORU-hosted virtual Leadership Summit.
6. Successful completion of all program requirements within 7 years of matriculation.
7. Apply to graduate by January 30 of the same year.
8. Receive approval to graduate from the DSL Program Committee.

Commencement

ORU holds Commencement once a year on the last weekend in April or the first weekend in May, beginning on Friday with a college Hooding ceremony and continuing into Saturday for the whole university Commencement. The Registrar maintains upcoming [graduation information](#). Students may order their academic regalia: their cap, gown, and graduation announcements from [Herff Jones](#). Students must confirm their participation in Commencement with a graduation application by February 28th.

Year	Dates
2027	April 30 – May 1
2028	May 5 – 6
2029	May 4 – 5
2030	May 3 – 4

The DSL has three intake periods each year for new students: summer, fall, and spring. The DSL program runs for 2 and 2/3rd years. The Summer and Fall entry students will finish their DSL Doctoral Project before or by ORU's annual Commencement ceremony in May. By contrast, the Spring entry students will finish their Doctoral Project in August and be considered Doctors, but must wait to participate in Commencement the following May.

Veteran's Experience

The [Military Experience](#) wing of ORU's Welcome Center serves as the first point of contact at ORU for a prospective graduate student veteran as they consider their future. ORU's Military Liaison is ready to greet you, answer your questions regarding [VA education benefits](#), and guide you to the numerous resources ORU has developed for its student veteran population. Students may find [contact information](#) for ORU's Military Liaison at the end of this document.

DSL Policies

Tuition and Financial Aid

Federal and private student aid can be used to cover the cost of your DSL. Prospective and current DSL students may confirm current online [tuition fees](#) and financial aid options. Tuition rates can change at the start of new academic years in the fall. In accepting a student loan, students should factor in the total Cost of Attendance for which they are responsible.

- Tuition and Fees related to courses.
- Costs from buying textbooks and course materials.
- Expenditures related to their annual residency in Tulsa.
- Costs incurred from purchasing academic regalia and travel to commencement.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism, as defined in the ORU catalog and course syllabi, is a serious academic offense and is not tolerated. Consequences include a zero on the assignment. It may include an "F" for the course, academic probation, suspension, or expulsion from the program. For more, see ORU's [Plagiarism Policy](#) and [Library Guide on Plagiarism](#). This includes using essay-writing services such as JustDoMyEssay or paper-sharing sites such as CourseHero. It also includes copy/pasting the output text of an A.I. tool such as ChatGPT into a post or paper.

Time Limit

Students may have up to 7 years from the date of entry into the program to fulfill all degree requirements. Exceptions to the time limit are granted only in extraordinary circumstances.

Sitting Out a Term

If a student in good standing cannot register for a 7-week term due to family issues, military obligations, or work relocation, they should inform their Success Coach that they are sitting out a 7-week term. In doing so, they will maintain their enrollment in the DSL. If a student faces an extended illness or hospitalization, he or she may request a multi-term leave of absence by submitting an online petition. The student will be notified in writing of the decision and the duration of the approved leave of absence. Students not registered for a DSL course after a calendar year will need to reapply for admission before they may continue their degree program. Before requesting a leave of absence, students should confer with their Success Coach about the impact, if any, on their Federal financial aid.

Grade Point Average

DSL students must maintain a 3.00 cumulative GPA to remain in good standing. Students who fall below that level are placed on probation. Students whose cumulative grade point average

remains below 3.00 for two consecutive 7-week terms may be suspended from the program. Any student who earns two grades of "C" or lower shall be immediately suspended from the program. Students on probation may retake a course once in which they earned a grade lower than a "B." Successfully retaking (raising the grade to "B" or better) does not remove the course from the student's transcript, but it does replace the grade for GPA purposes. Petitions for policy exceptions to academic probation and suspension due to exceptional circumstances may receive consideration.

Course Load

Students make progress toward degree completion while working in their sector, as assignments integrate with their practice of leadership. The course load for DSL students is 6 hours per semester, year-round, while enrolled in the coursework phase of their program. Students take one 3-credit course every 7 weeks during this phase. This is considered a full-time load. Students should plan to study up to 19 clock hours each week, Fall, Spring, and Summer. Once the doctoral project phase begins, students enroll in dissertation hours each term until the doctoral project is completed. During this phase, students take a minimum full-time load of 2 hours per semester until their project is successfully accepted and presented or they withdraw from the program.

Drop/ Withdraw

Students may *drop* a course before they begin to receive a 100% tuition refund. They receive 90% refund by Day 5 of Week 1 by filing a petition. <https://petitions.oru.edu/>. Between Week 2 and 4 they may *withdraw* from a course, with refunds of 50% and 25%, respectively. Any drop or withdraw could delay receiving their degree due to [course rotations](#).

Late Work

The student is responsible for obtaining class assignments and materials, and all work is expected to be completed as scheduled. The professor may not accept late work, or it may result in a lower grade. Computer or Internet malfunctions do not constitute an excuse for late work; students should have their work prepared in time to ensure that they can get it completed, edited, and proofread before the course's due date. These responsibilities assist the student in professional development. Generally, assignments missed from a serious sickness or family crises can be made up and the instructor should be notified as soon as possible to reach an agreement on due dates and possible penalties. Each instructor has his or her own late-work policy. Instructors use their own judgment in accepting late work.

Incompletes

On rare occasions, a grade of "I" or Incomplete may be given for work that is incomplete at the time grades are given, allowing the student to finish their coursework by the end of the following 7-week term. No more than two Incompletes are allowed over the duration of this

doctoral program. An incomplete cannot be granted for any of the doctoral project courses. Instructors award an 'Incomplete' upon approval from the department chair or college dean, based on a student's petition offering "good cause." Good cause typically involves a catastrophic event that prevents a student from completing the course requirements. After completing the coursework, a student must initiate a grade change petition requesting the instructor to submit a change to the Registrar. Without an approved grade change petition, the Registrar will automatically convert the "I" to an "F" by the end of the subsequent term. Students must follow these procedures to request an Incomplete:

1. The student must establish with the instructor and the program director that work is incomplete for good cause and submit a [Petition](#) for Incomplete Grade, with documentation.
2. The Petition must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the end of a 7-week term.
3. The submission of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an Incomplete.
4. The petition must be approved by the DSL academic committee.
5. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate the electronic petition, make up any incomplete work, and submit a completed Grade Change (I, E, or M to Grade) petition (which must then be approved with a final grade authorized by the course professor) to the academic office.
6. If the work is not completed by the end of the subsequent 7-week term, the incomplete will automatically convert to an "F," unless an extension is formally granted.
7. Only two incompletes will be granted to a student throughout their DSL program.

Grievance Policies

ORU has established several situation-specific grievance and complaint processes based on categories such as (a) Academic Grievance, (b) Discrimination, Harassment, or Sexual Assault, or (c) Student Conduct and Discipline Grievances. If a student feels they have reasonably been harmed by a member of the ORU staff or faculty, through certain action(s), inaction(s), or communications, ORU has an orderly process for resolving those complaints in a fair and just manner. For more: [Grievance Policies and Procedures](#) (2015).

Course Rotation

This table presents the standard rotation of courses in the DSL program.

Doctor of Strategic Leadership	FALL		SPRING		SUMMER	
ORU Distinctive Courses (3 Credits)	FALL A	FALL B	SPG A	SPG B	SUM A	SUM B
GLDR 701 Graduate Orientation (0)	X		X		X	
GLDR 702 Spirit-Empowered Leadership (3)	X		X		X	
Core Courses (27 Credits)	FALL A	FALL B	SPG A	SPG B	SUM A	SUM B
GLDR 703 Critical Inquiry & Research Methods (3)		X		X		X
GLDR 713 Coaching and Talent Development (3)			X			
GLDR 723 Organizational Culture and Design (3)		X		X		
GLDR 733 Modeling Systems Change (3)					X	
GLDR 741 Doctoral Residency - Year 1 (0)					X	
GLDR 743 Global Entrepreneurship (3)				X		X
GLDR 753 Collaborative Leadership (3)	X					
GLDR 763 Innovation and Change Management (3)		X		X		
GLDR 773 Decision and Data Analytics (3)			X			
GLDR 783 Anticipatory Leadership (3)		X		X		
GLDR 791 Doctoral Residency - Year 2 (0)					X	
Concentrations (9 Credits)	FALL A	FALL B	SPG A	SPG B	SUM A	SUM B
GLDR 803 Coaching Theory and Practices (3)					X	
GLDR 806 Personal and Professional Coaching (3)						X
GLDR 809 Business and Executive Coaching (3)	X					
GLDR 813 Change Management Practices (3)					X	
GLDR 816 Strategic Planning Teams (3)						X
GLDR 819 Multisector Partnerships (3)	X					
GLDR 823 Cultivating Strategic Foresight (3)					X	
GLDR 826 Leading Social Change (3)						X
GLDR 829 Shaping Global Futures (3)	X					
GLDR 890 Independent Research (3)	X					
Doctoral Project (9 Credits)	FALL A	FALL B	SPG A	SPG B	SUM A	SUM B
GLDR 893 Doctoral Project Proposal (3)		X	X		X	
GLDR 894 Doctoral Project Preparation (3)			X	X		X
GLDR 895 Doctoral Project Presentation (3)			X	X	X	
GLDR 896 Doctoral Project Continuation (1)	X	X	X	X	X	X

DSL Faculty

ORU's outstanding faculty and administrators for the Doctor of Strategic Leadership program bring extensive experience from public to private to non-profit spheres. They hold a Ph.D. or equivalent degree and are members of professional associations relevant to the program. They have earned top awards through peer-reviewed publications and ongoing research. They have extensive experience teaching at the graduate level and are skilled in directing, supervising, and evaluating graduate-level projects. They embody a diverse practice of leadership in various sectors from a global Spirit-empowered perspective.

- William M. Wilson, President, Oral Roberts University
D.Min. Mentoring, M.A. Ministry; B.S. Secondary Education
- Kathaleen Reid-Martinez, Provost, Vice President of Academics
Ph.D. Speech Communication, M.A. Mass Communication, B.A. English
- William Curtis Ellis, Professor, Dean of the College of Arts and Cultural Studies
Ph.D. Political Science, M.A. Political Science, B.A. Political Science
- Norman C. Mintle, Professor, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Cultural Studies
Ph.D. Organizational Leadership, M.A. Communication, B.A. Broadcasting
- Jay Gary, Professor, DSL Program Director, Assistant Dean of Online
Ph.D. Organizational Leadership, M.A. Education, B.S. Industrial Management
- Virginia Richardson, Associate Professor – Adjunct
DSL, Strategic Leadership, MBA, B.A. Psychology
- David Burkus, Associate Professor – Adjunct
DSL, Strategic Leadership, M.A. Organizational Dynamics, B.A. Writing
- Chad Roehrman, Assistant Professor – Adjunct
DSL, Strategic Leadership, M.A. Defense Studies, B.S. Engineering Psychology
- Rachel Fox, Assistant Professor – Adjunct
DSL, Strategic Leadership, M.A., Organizational Leadership, B.A. Multidisciplinary Studies
- Aaliyah Russell, Assistant Professor – Adjunct
DSL, Strategic Leadership, M.A. Educational Technology, B.A. English
- Walter A. Ensign III, Assistant Professor – Adjunct
DSL, Strategic Leadership, M.Ed. Instructional Design, B.M.E. Music Education
- Debra L. Valladares, Assistant Professor, Leadership Development
DSL, Strategic Leadership, M.S., Regulatory Compliance, J.D. Family & Medical Law

DSL Contacts

Please reach out to the DSL program staff when you need help.

- Lisa Straubing, M.A., DSL Success Coach, 918.495.6209, lstraubing@oru.edu
- Michael Willcoxon, M.A., DSL Admissions Rep., 918.495.6022, mwillcoxon@oru.edu
- Will Beck, Lt. Col. (Army, Ret.), DSL Military Liaison, 918.495.6971, wbeck@oru.edu
- Jay Gary, Ph.D., DSL Program Director, 918.495.6713, jgary@oru.edu