

Graduation Requirements



This 2-page document describes some of the time commitments, group projects, and other activities you'll be involved in as a member of the Leadership Series. We understand this may look like a lot of work but looks can be deceiving!

While it's true that you'll be busy, we guarantee the Leadership Series is NOT your typical classroom. Chances are the activities and the time we spend together will be unlike anything you have ever experienced in school.

For example, you don't need any special training or technical skills to join us. Don't worry if you've never done some of the things on this list, like attending meetings using the Zoom Video App, researching an important topic online, or giving a Virtual Presentation in front of a large group of people; we'll teach you!

We meet often, so there's no need to rush. You'll have plenty of time to relax, ask questions, and get to know your classmates. We also practice what we learn together before asking anyone to do something in front of an outside audience. If you don't feel ready, say the word, and we'll practice some more.

In addition, we have a team of Peer Mentors available to assist as needed. Peer Mentors are Leadership Series graduates who work for Advocates in Action to support current members. Mentor can meet with you between classes to help with assignments and answer questions.

And speaking of homework, you should also know that we don't grade your work. That means the only way to "fail" is by refusing to try. To graduate, you need to come to class, give it your best effort, and remember that it's okay to ask for help.

Rest assured that our Leadership Series team is flexible, creative, and committed to your success. We know you'll be amazing, and pledge to work with you to help figure things out!

Everyone must agree to the following Graduation Requirements, which are also listed on the 2026 Leadership Series Application.

☐ **Requirement 1: Attend the Kick-Off retreat on Wednesday, February 4th, 2026**

The retreat will take place on Zoom from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with an hour-long lunch break at noon.

☐ **Requirement 2: Attend weekly classes on Wednesdays from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.**

The Leadership Series is a BIG commitment! Classes meet every **Wednesday, from February 11th to June 24th, 2026.**

You must attend and participate in weekly classes to graduate! Members should only miss class if they have an excused absence. An "excused absence" means you can't attend class due to circumstances beyond your control.

For example, missing class because you're sick or you lose your internet connection are both excused absences. On the other hand, deciding to skip class and go to the beach isn't an excuse.

❑ Requirement 3: Do the Work

As a member of the Leadership Series, you'll have various assignments to work on outside of class. You'll also have a team of Peer Mentors available to assist you.

While we don't assign grades, we do require members to make an effort to complete these assignments and bring their answers to class. We also encourage everyone to ask for help as needed. After all, asking questions is one of the best ways to learn!

❑ Requirement 4: Be as Involved as Possible

Extra activities outside of class can include field trips, in-person meetings, public forums, webinars, songwriting sessions, and other team-building activities.

Many of these will be optional, but we encourage members to attend whenever possible.

❑ Requirement 5: Practice Your Leadership Skills

Leadership Series members will actively participate in planning and presenting at Rhode Island's Annual Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference, scheduled for Thursday, May 7th, 2026.

The Conference Day will be held on Zoom from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and members are required to attend.

The Conference Dinner Dance will be at the Providence Marriott on Friday, May 8th.

Evening participation is optional, but we strongly encourage everyone to join us at this fun-filled event!

❑ Requirement 6: Respect Privacy

The Leadership Series is a safe place to share personal information related to the topics we'll be discussing. This information is private, and you must respect the confidentiality of fellow class members and our Leadership team!

This means you agree not to repeat confidential conversations that take place during class and won't share a fellow member's personal contact information without their consent.

❑ Requirement 7: Photo/Video Release

Advocates in Action will share recordings from our retreat and weekly classes on our private Leadership Series web page. We also take photos during our in-person activities.

Class members must agree to be recorded and allow Advocates in Action to use some of the media we produce on our website and other social media platforms.