



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, DC

## Key Undergraduate Leadership Program (KULP)

### Developing Human-Centric Leaders for Public Impact

The **Key Undergraduate Leadership Program (KULP)** prepares students to lead with purpose, adaptability, and emotional intelligence in today's complex public and nonprofit environments. Designed for students in the School of Public Affairs, KULP blends academic learning with real-world experience to help emerging leaders navigate uncertainty, build trust, and create meaningful public impact.

Modeled after American University's nationally recognized Key Executive Leadership Program, KULP treats leadership as a **practice**—one that is learned through reflection, experience, and connection. KULP is administered by the School of Public Affairs.

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### The KULP Approach

KULP is built around four leadership pillars that shape every course and experience:

- **Strategy** – Understanding systems and solving complex problems
- **Agility** – Adapting to change and building resilience
- **Connection** – Leading with empathy, trust, and emotional intelligence
- **Self-Reflection** – Learning through feedback, reflection, and growth

Together, these pillars help students develop the mindset and skills needed to lead in dynamic public service contexts.

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### What Students Gain

Through coursework, applied learning, students will:

- Build emotional intelligence and self-awareness
- Strengthen leadership and problem-solving skills
- Apply leadership theory to real organizational challenges

- Clarify their leadership identity, values, and purpose
  - Gain professional experience in public or nonprofit organizations
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### **Certificate Requirements**

- **12 credit hours of C or better**
  - **Compliance with all regulations for a certificate (Undergraduate Academic Regulation 10.3)**
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### **Course Requirements**

#### **Required (Nine credit hours)**

- SPA-352 Leadership for Key Undergraduates (one credit)
- SPA-353 The Emotionally Intelligent Leader (three credits)
- SPA-354 Contemporary Approaches to Leadership (one credit)
- SPA-355 Problem Solving for Leaders (one credit)
- SPA-491 Key Organizational Behavior (three credits)

#### **Capstone (Three credits)**

- SPA-457 Key Leadership Capstone (three credits)
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### **KULP is ideal for students who want to:**

- Lead in public service, policy, advocacy, or nonprofit organizations
- Develop self-awareness, resilience, and emotional intelligence
- Learn through reflection, discussion, and real-world experience
- Complement their major with a leadership-focused credential