

Mission

The School of Public Affairs prepares the next generation of leaders in public service and criminal justice professions to solve society's most pressing problems. Working together, faculty, staff and students also conduct research that improves the quality of life and informs policy making and management in the public and nonprofit sectors.

Strategic Plan

Approved September 2008

The School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, nationally known for its teaching and research in the foundational areas of public affairs and public management, reaffirms its commitment to academic excellence and commits to the following priorities for growth and improvement in the future.

1. Develop and support **unique programs** for which the school is nationally known. **Create multi-disciplinary applied learning and research opportunities** for faculty and students where practice and theory are integrated to inform better public policy and management. Areas that are currently "signatures" for the school include:
 - Education Policy
 - Homeland Security and Emergency Management
 - Domestic Violence
 - Climate Change and the Environment
 - Local Government
2. **Build new programs**, working in collaboration with other schools and colleges, **to serve undergraduate and graduate students**, assuring that undergraduate programs provide clear pathways to graduate education. These programs should include:
 - Criminal Justice BA-MCJ program
 - Nonprofit Management
 - Public Policy
 - Participation in the undergraduate Core Curriculum
 - Certificate programs
3. **Model an inclusive multi-cultural environment**, recruiting and welcoming students, faculty, and staff with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and views, and actively implementing the provisions of the school's diversity plan. The School of Public Affairs will provide a living example of an inclusive

community, where students of all nationalities, ethnic and racial heritage, belief systems, physical capabilities, sexual identities, and sexual orientations learn and explore together.

4. **Pursue and maintain constant quality improvement of academic programs.** This will require commitments to:
 - Data-based decision-making for program improvement
 - Demonstrating the value of a SPA education for students
 - Documenting and benchmarking programs and courses that exemplify best practices.
5. **Improve the school's financial health and assure that the school's programs are accessible to all qualified students regardless of their ability to pay.** Strategies will include:
 - Improving financial sustainability by adding undergraduate programs
 - Fundraising to support programs and students
 - Maintaining an optimal mix of state- and cash-funded programs
 - Increasing the school's research grants and contracts
6. **Provide a rich student experience** that includes learning experiences both in and outside of the classroom. In-class learning will draw on the collective expertise of faculty and will provide multiple opportunities for creative thinking and problem-solving, in addition to the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for student success. Extracurricular learning opportunities will include events and speakers, work and research opportunities with the School of Public Affairs' applied research centers, internships with community organizations, involvement with practitioners, and others.
7. **Create meaningful partnerships with public, nonprofit and private organizations** that engage the power of those organizations to further the school's effectiveness, advance the work of the applied research centers housed at the School of Public Affairs, and engage the skills of faculty and students to help solve society's pressing problems.