



**Title:** SPA Professional Development and Mentoring Policy

**Approval:** Approved by a vote of the SPA Faculty in December, 2017

**Effective:** January 1, 2018

**Related:** University of Colorado Administrative Policy Statements (APS #1021):

<https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1021>

University of Colorado Faculty Handbook:

<https://www.cu.edu/oa/faculty-affairs/faculty-handbook>

CU Denver Campus Level Policies: [http://www.ucdenver.edu/faculty\\_staff/faculty/faculty-affairs/policies-forms/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/faculty_staff/faculty/faculty-affairs/policies-forms/Pages/default.aspx)

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## **1. Introduction**

The faculty at the School of Public Affairs (SPA) recognizes that all faculty should have access to support and guidance for advancing their professional skills and knowledge. As part of professional development, tenure-track faculty will write professional plans, at least one pre-tenure and one every five years thereafter for post-tenure review. SPA also encourages non tenure-track faculty members to develop professional plans. The professional plan communicates the faculty member's teaching, research/creative work, and leadership and service goals. It also explains how these goals support SPA and the University. Section 2 below outlines SPA's expectations for professional development plans for pre-tenure, post-tenure, and non-tenure track faculty. Section 2 also describes the expectations for annual assessments of plan progress.

Professional development also includes faculty mentoring. Section 3 below describes the mechanisms and procedures for ensuring opportunities for faculty mentoring in the school. While mentoring opportunities for faculty are also available at the campus-level and through the university, the CU Administrative Policy on Mentoring recognizes that it is typically the responsibility of the faculty member's primary unit to provide reasonable mentoring opportunities. As noted in CU Denver's APS 1021: "While the primary unit (or school/college, if not the primary unit) has a responsibility to provide reasonable mentoring opportunities, faculty members should proactively seek mentoring assistance."

Professional plans and annual merit review do not necessarily insure reappointment or tenure and promotion. For more information, please refer to the RTP Review Process policies of the School, Campus, and CU System.

## 1. Professional Plans

*Pre-Tenure Development Plan:* All pre-tenure faculty at SPA, by the spring semester of their first year of service will prepare a “tenure development plan” that describes their goals, strategies, and activities for meeting SPA and CU Denver tenure requirements. The Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs will meet with all new faculty members in the fall semester of their first year at SPA to discuss the plan and provide guidance on plan development. The plan should cover the number of years the faculty member is expected to serve before their tenure review (typically six, but may be less for faculty hired with prior service).

The pre-tenure development plan should specify the faculty member’s professional goals and strategies for achieving tenure in the areas of teaching, research, and service. The individual goals may be broad (i.e., improving teaching quality, enhancing one’s reputation with the scholarly or practitioner community). However, the strategies in the plan should focus on the specific steps the faculty member will take to meet their goals (i.e., collecting a new dataset, targeting particular journals, teaching a new class, attending teaching seminars, collaborating with other faculty on a grant proposal, serving on a community board, attending specific conferences). Faculty should take into account that the typical allocation of effort expected for tenure-track faculty is 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service when developing their plans. If the Plan calls for a distribution of effort different from the primary unit's standard assignment, a differentiated workload agreement should be included. In devising their plans, faculty are encouraged to identify which personal goals or strategies can support or enhance SPA’s Strategic Plan and Priorities.

Pre-tenure faculty should refer to the SPA **Policies, Procedures, and Criteria for the Evaluation and Development of Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty** for additional ideas on indicators of quality and quantity of their work that would be important to consider in their tenure development plan. Pre-tenure faculty are welcome to modify their tenure development plan at any time, especially after their 4<sup>th</sup>-year comprehensive review, and should consult with the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs when doing so. These plans are not meant to be punitive, or as criteria for tenure and promotion.

*Post-Tenure Development Plan:* Faculty are required to write a 5-year post-tenure development plan for the post-tenure review process (see “Criteria for Post Tenure Review” in SPA’s RTP Policy). The plans should include a statement of expected goals and activities for research, teaching, and service. In devising their plans, faculty are encouraged to identify which personal goals or strategies can support or enhance SPA’s Strategic Plan and Priorities.

*Non-Tenure Track Development Plan:* Non-tenure track faculty are encouraged to develop a professional development plan that outlines goals for teaching, as well as research and service (as appropriate). In devising their plans, faculty are encouraged to identify which personal goals or strategies can support or enhance SPA’s Strategic Plan and Priorities.

*Plan Submission:* All faculty should submit their plans electronically to the Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and to the Faculty Affairs Coordinator, who will keep the plans on file.

*Annual Plan Assessment:* Faculty will include a brief assessment (e.g., 1-2 paragraphs) of their plans as part of their summary of professional accomplishments, which is submitted to the Dean and Academic Personnel Committee (APC) along with the eFRPA (Faculty Report of Professional Activities) as part of the Annual Performance Evaluation and Development process at the beginning of the calendar year. This assessment should discuss how their activities for the year have helped meet their professional plan goals. Whether or not a faculty member meets their professional goals is not a criterion for ranking individuals in the annual peer review. Rather, it provides an opportunity for personal reflection on goals,

and an opportunity for faculty to identify potential challenges they may have encountered during the year in meeting their goals, and any areas where additional support may be needed (from SPA, the University, or outside resources) to assist in implementing their professional goals. Identifying how one's annual achievements have helped support elements of the SPA Strategic Plan or Priorities is strongly encouraged.

Faculty members should discuss their assessments of the professional development plan with the Dean at the end of their individual annual performance review meeting. The goal of the discussion of the plans will be to assist faculty in identifying ways to foster, sustain, or enhance their ongoing professional growth and development. During this meeting, extra time may be set aside for pre-tenure faculty to discuss progress toward tenure, and identify any additional resources or support the faculty member may need to help with progress toward tenure. Pre-tenure faculty also are encouraged to discuss their pre-tenure development plan with their mentors (as discussed below in Section 3).

## **2. Mentoring**

SPA faculty are encouraged to support each other in mentoring by seeking both formal and informal mentorship from colleagues and by serving as mentors to colleagues, particularly when interests align. Individual faculty are likely to need various forms of mentoring at different points in their careers, and for different issues. For example, faculty mentoring needs for teaching versus research or service often differ. Also, mentoring needs for pre-tenure faculty may differ from those needs of non-tenure track faculty, or faculty working toward full professorship, or faculty involved in administrative positions in SPA or the university. Given these diverse needs, SPA faculty will develop individualized mentoring plans, which may change over time.

At a minimum, all new faculty (tenure-track and non tenure-track) will meet with the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs in the fall semester upon starting their position at SPA to discuss mentoring needs. Mentoring needs will be determined based on the individual faculty member's career trajectory and areas where the faculty member needs professional growth and advancement. A faculty member may decide that he or she has adequate mentoring or does not need new mentor relationships. A mentor or set of mentors will be identified from within SPA, from other units on campus, or from other universities. The Associate Dean and the faculty member may consult with other faculty and staff at SPA or on campus to help identify appropriate mentors. Once mentoring relationships are identified, the Associate Dean will confirm the plan for mentoring via email with the mentors and mentees and send reminders each semester on mentoring responsibilities, cc'ing the SPA Dean and Dean's Administrative Assistant.

New faculty should plan to meet with identified mentors on a regular basis (e.g., monthly) to discuss challenges, opportunities, and recommendations for their professional growth. As faculty members' mentoring needs may change over time, they should assess the productivity of their mentoring relationships and seek out alternative arrangements when needed. The Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs will consult with all new faculty annually for the first two to three years of their appointments to help facilitate well-matched mentoring relationships.