

HANDBOOK*

MASTER OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

School of Public Affairs

University of Colorado Denver

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1. PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to facilitate a student's progress toward the degree of Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ). The School of Public Affairs (SPA) and the University of Colorado have specific rules and regulations for the MCJ program which must be followed in order to obtain the degree. This handbook explains SPA policies and procedures, which are subject to change and can be affected by changes in the policies of the University of Colorado. University-wide policies have priority over the policies of SPA. Students with questions concerning certain policies or procedures should consult their faculty advisor, the MCJ Director, the Associate Dean, or the Dean.

2. SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The University of Colorado's School of Public Affairs offers and administers four degrees: the Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, the Master of Criminal Justice, the Master of Public Administration, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Public Affairs. The principal functions of the School are to provide programs of professional education, training, and service for the public and nonprofit sectors and to undertake research on issues of concern to federal, state, and local governments. SPA provides an opportunity for students to enhance their management, administrative, policy, research, and analytic skills.

3. MASTER OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

Criminal justice began as an area of concentration in SPA's Master of Public Administration program in 1974. The Master of Criminal Justice program was established in 1980 as a separate degree program within SPA upon recommendation of the University of Colorado Board of Regents and approval by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

The MCJ program is designed for students interested in comprehensive professional graduate education in the discipline of criminal justice. The MCJ program addresses management, policy, and research issues involving the administration of the American criminal justice system, including law enforcement, judicial and correctional subsystems, as well as the legislative component through which substantive and procedural codes are established. The program emphasizes critical decision-making in the development, implementation, and assessment of criminal justice policies and procedures. The MCJ program seeks to prepare men and women not only to administer the system as it presently exists, but also to analyze, to evaluate, and to change its design and processes in effecting a more responsive and equitable system of justice.

3.1 Mission

The mission of the MCJ program is

- (a) to provide an intellectually stimulating academic and professional environment in which students and faculty may grow and develop to their full potential;
- (b) to educate students who are preparing for or pursuing a career in criminal justice, giving each a realistic preparation for practical success in his or her chosen work, and facilitating the development of skills and capabilities necessary to become a catalyst within the profession so as to enhance the viability and growth of the discipline in an ethical and just manner; and
- (c) to make continuing significant contributions to knowledge and excellence of practice in the fields of criminal justice and allied social and behavioral sciences through teaching, research, dissemination of knowledge to the public, and direct service to local, state and national constituent communities and criminal justice agencies.

The MCJ program serves three major categories of students: those ultimately interested in teaching and research in criminal justice and related fields; those who desire entry to various criminal justice positions; and those already employed in criminal justice agencies

who need graduate-level education for career development and advancement.

3.2 Curriculum Objectives

Objectives for students in the MCJ program are:

- (a) to provide students with a broad-based knowledge of theory and practice concerning criminal justice administration, management and policy;
- (b) to provide students with decision-making and problem-solving skills required in criminal justice administration, management and policy;
- (c) to provide students with substantive expertise required for positions in police administration, judicial administration or correctional administration or in private sector organizations concerned with criminal justice administration;
- (d) to provide theoretical, analytical and research skills necessary for criminal justice administration, management and policy analysis and/or as preparation for doctoral-level graduate study; and
- (e) to provide students with a comprehensive, integrated model of criminal justice administration theory and practice, stressing conceptual, methodological and contextual knowledge development and application.

3.3 MCJ Administration

The MCJ program is administered by SPA. The School has its own internal procedures and requirements for the MCJ degree. Forms and information are available from the SPA office. Completed forms should be returned there. The MCJ Director is the key administrative officer for the program. He/she chairs the MCJ Committee, which recommends overall MCJ policies, and serves as the central contact for questions concerning the program.

4. ADMISSIONS

4.1 Admission Requirements

Students who wish to apply for admission to the MCJ program should request an application package from the SPA office. Prospective students need to submit a completed University of Colorado Graduate Admission Application form. All application materials, including letters of recommendation, transcripts, and test scores, should be sent directly to SPA at the Denver Campus. Transcripts and examination scores issued to the student cannot be accepted.

Applicants must submit the following materials:

1. Part I and Part II of the University of Colorado Graduate Admission Application.
2. Two sets of official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work are required. The transcript must show a baccalaureate degree from a college or university of accredited standing, preferably with a minimum grade-point average of 2.75 (where 4.0 = A).
3. A \$50 application fee (\$75 for international students). A check for this amount made out to the University of Colorado Denver must accompany the completed admission application.
4. Three recommendations from qualified references on forms that the applicant will receive when he/she requests an application package. Recommendations may come from professors, employers, or others who are acquainted with the prospective student's scholarly abilities and/or professional work.
5. Official reports of scores on a scholastic aptitude test, either the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Law School Aptitude Test (LSAT). These aptitude test scores should be no more than 5 years old. Information about examinations and the registration forms may be obtained from the UC Denver Assessment and Testing Center. If an applicant plans to take the GRE examination in the future, he/she should specify that his/her graduate major at the University of Colorado will be Criminal Justice (Institution Code R-4875 on the GRE application form).

Students must take the verbal and quantitative portions of the test.

The MCJ committee will weigh all the materials described above in making admissions decisions. Admission to the MCJ program is based upon the candidate's formal academic record (undergraduate and, if any, graduate work), standardized test scores, length and level of work experience, and potential for academic and career success.

4.2 Provisional Admission

Students who do not meet the minimum qualifications for admission may be considered for admission as provisional students. The conditions for this status are specified in the letter of acceptance. Typically, if the student completes 12 credit hours of criminal justice course work with a GPA of 3.0 or better within his/her first year of study, he/she will be moved from provisional status to regular status, subject to meeting any other provisions stated in the letter of acceptance.

4.3 Admission Calendar

Admission to the MCJ program is made on a semester basis. The calendar for submission of admission materials is as follows:

Fall Semester	March 15 th (<i>Preferred</i>) August 1 st (<i>Final</i>)
Spring Semester	October 15 th (<i>Preferred</i>) December 1 st (<i>Final</i>)
Summer Session	March 15 th (<i>Preferred</i>) May 1 st (<i>Final</i>)

All application materials should be received by these deadlines.

Applications may be considered by the MCJ committee at any time, which means that files are reviewed as soon as they are complete and students are notified by letter as soon as admission is granted by SPA. The University processes admissions on the schedule shown above; however, students may be admitted by SPA before they are admitted by the University. Please note that only students officially admitted by the University are eligible for financial aid.

4.4 Non-Degree Admission

Students need not be admitted as degree-seeking students to the MCJ program in order to take classes in the MCJ program. Students may attend classes as non-degree students by completing an Application for Non-Degree Admission. These applications are available from the UC Denver Office of Admissions and Records. Nine credit hours of course work taken under this status may be applied to the MCJ program once a student is admitted as a degree-seeking student.

4.5 Readmission of Former and Suspended Students

Students who have been admitted to SPA must complete their course work within six years from their date of admission (see Section 3.2). Occasionally, however, students find it necessary to interrupt their course work for one or more semesters.

If fewer than three semesters, including summer session, have passed since the student was last enrolled in a course, readmission requires only that the student contact the Office of Admissions and Records.

If more than three but less than nine semesters (one to three academic years) have elapsed, the student should:

1. Contact the SPA office to determine his/her eligibility to return and pursue the same degree; and
2. Submit a new Application Part I to the UC Denver Office of Admissions for the term in which they expect to return to the University. A \$50 application fee is required (\$75 for international students).

If more than twelve semesters (four academic years) have passed, readmission requires following the full application process (see Section 2.0).

A suspended student (see Section 6.1.2(3)) is eligible to apply for readmission after one year from date of suspension. Approval or rejection of this application rests jointly with the student's faculty advisor, the MCJ Director and the Dean. The student may appeal this readmission decision to the UC Denver Graduate Council for consideration.

4.6 Faculty Advisors

After a student has been admitted to the MCJ program, a faculty advisor will be assigned to the student by the SPA office. The faculty advisor provides the student with information and advice on the MCJ curriculum and specific course offerings, as well as offering general advice on the program and signing program forms. The student should schedule a meeting with his/her faculty advisor within the first two weeks of the first semester of attendance. An MCJ degree plan that outlines the courses which the student plans to take throughout the MCJ program must be completed by the student and his/her faculty advisor during the first semester of course work. Should a student wish to change faculty advisors, he/she can do so by asking another faculty member to serve as advisor and, upon obtaining both the faculty member's consent and the MCJ Director's approval, notifying the SPA office of the action.

5. MCJ DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Course Load

The normal course load for a full-time student is 9 to 12 credit hours per semester; full-time status for graduate students is 5 credit hours per semester for financial aid determination. A student who is employed full-time normally will not carry more than 6 semester hours.

Students who wish to carry a course load above 12 hours per semester should consult their faculty advisor.

5.2 Credit Hour Requirements

The minimum credit hour requirements for the MCJ degree are as follows:

1. The completion of a minimum of 36 semester hours of graduate work with a grade-point average of B or better. Students must receive a grade of B- or better in all required core courses (see Section 3.3). If a student receives a C+ or below in any of the required core courses, he/she must retake the course and receive the grade of B- or better. Grades lower than a C- are not accepted toward a student's degree requirements.
2. Pre-service students (those who have not had the equivalent of at least one year of professional practical experience in the field of criminal justice) must take 3 semester credit hours of field study by enrolling in CJ 6910, Field Study in Criminal Justice (see Section 3.8).

5.3 Time Requirements

Although the MCJ program requires intensive commitment, it does not require full-time study. Almost all courses are offered during late afternoon or evening hours each semester, including summer session. Students should expect to complete the degree in no less than one and no more than six calendar years (the average is about two and one-half years).

With the approval of their faculty advisor and the MCJ Director, students who are making steady progress toward the degree may be allowed to extend the six-year limit by one or two additional semesters. Such approval should be sought as far as possible in advance of the student's planned graduation date.

5.4 Coursework Requirements

5.4.1 Core Courses

All MCJ students must complete the following four required core courses, representing 12 credit hours:

CJ 5000. Law and Social Control. This course provides an overview of the theory and application of criminal law in the context of social control and social justice. The course reviews various theoretical perspectives on law and society, focusing on the relationship between law and the structure and function of other social institutions. The course also examines aspects of the criminal law in action, assessing how legal definitions and sanctions are differentially interpreted and applied.

CJ 5100. Administration of Criminal Justice. This course analyzes the policies and practices of agencies involved in the criminal justice process from the detection of crime and arrest of suspects through prosecution, adjudication, sentencing and imprisonment to release. The patterns of decisions and practices are reviewed in the context of a systems approach.

CJ 5120. Nature and Causes of Crime. This course analyzes the social origins of criminal behavior and the impact of crime on society. Various categories of deviant, delinquent and criminal behaviors are examined, and attempts to control such behavior are assessed. Connections between social institutions, social problems, and illegal activities, and the response of the public to the threat of crime are examined.

CJ 5321. Research Methods in Criminal Justice. This course provides an assessment of research strategies in criminal justice through an examination of applied research designs and analytical models. The logic and rationale of these various strategies are contrasted, and their relative merits are critiqued. Selected research problems in the criminal justice system are utilized to illustrate the application and interpretation of alternative strategies.

5.4.2 Elective Courses

Students must complete a minimum of five elective courses (15 semester hours) in criminal justice. Students should discuss elective options with their faculty advisor. All elective courses are three credit hours. Please consult the University of Colorado Denver Catalog for a complete description of elective courses:

<http://www.cudenver.edu/Academics/Catalog/Pages/default.aspx>

5.4.3 Other Elective Courses

With approval of one's faculty advisor, a student may have up to nine semester credit hours of non-criminal justice course work apply toward the MCJ degree. Students may take these elective courses in SPA's MPA program, as well as graduate-level courses in other schools and colleges within UC Denver and the University of Colorado system or at other accredited universities and colleges.

5.4.4 Transfer Credits

Students who have taken criminal justice course work at other institutions may be able to transfer some portion of that work into the SPA MCJ program. A maximum of nine (9) graduate level semester hours may be transferred. Students should request transfer of credits immediately after successfully completing one semester of course work as a regularly admitted degree student. In order to request a transfer of credit, students need to complete the Transfer of Credit Form available in the SPA office and attach official transcripts to the form (if SPA does not have a copy of the official transcripts). The request is then reviewed by the student's faculty advisor, the MCJ Director and the Dean. Following this review process, the Dean's office will notify the student of acceptance or rejection of his/her request.

5.4.5 Independent Study

Students who are interested in pursuing a specific line of study or inquiry which is not covered through the regular course offerings may elect to establish a program of independent study with one of the faculty. The student needs first of all to consider what area of study she/he would like to pursue and discuss the topic with a willing faculty supervisor. The student and the faculty member will then develop a course of study which meets the requirements of the University and SPA and the needs of the student. The student must then complete a UC Denver Special Processing Form (available from the SPA office) and have it approved by the supervising faculty member. The form must be submitted and approved by the posted add/drop period. Upon completing this process, the student will then be registered for CJ 6840, Independent Study.

Independent study courses are subject to the following conditions. Participating students must be fully admitted to the MCJ program. Students must have completed a minimum of 12 semester credit hours in criminal justice course work with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0. The credit hours for any one independent study course may vary from 1-3 for a semester; the exact credit hours are determined by the faculty supervisor and will be appropriate with the degree of complexity and difficulty of the project. The maximum independent study credit hours which may apply toward MCJ degree requirements are six.

5.4.6 Field Study

Students who have not had the equivalent of at least one year of professional experience in the field of criminal justice are required to enroll in Field Study in Criminal Justice (CJ 6910). Students work part-time or full-time as interns for local, state, or federal criminal justice or juvenile justice agencies. The internships may be paid or unpaid, depending upon the agency involved. The objectives of the internship are:

- (a) to expose MCJ students to the challenging career opportunities

- that exist in the criminal justice system;
- (b) to enable criminal justice agencies and organizations to attract good students to government, thereby improving the overall quality of the criminal justice system;
- (c) to provide pre-service students with practical work experiences to allow them to link classroom training with praxis in the criminal justice system; and
- (d) to enhance students' experiences which will allow them to make informed career decisions.

5.4.6.1 Application and Administration Procedures

Students who wish to begin an internship can pick up application materials from the SPA office. The completed request form should be returned to the SPA office, at which time a student's eligibility for an internship will be assessed. The basic requirements for beginning an internship are that the student (a) be fully admitted to the MCJ program, (b) has an approved degree plan, and (c) has completed a minimum of 18 semester credit hours of criminal justice course work with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. (Exceptions to this last requirement must be approved by both the student's faculty advisor and the MCJ Director.)

Students must be aware of registration dates and deadlines for the semester they are planning to complete their internship through SPA and register for CJ 6910 using the UC Denver Special Processing Form.

Once a student has completed the Request for Internship form (see SPA Internship Information Package) and has been approved for the internship, he/she may begin the process of identifying a suitable position. Requests for interns from criminal justice agencies and organizations are kept on file in the SPA office. Students may use this file to identify potential positions. Alternatively, they may contact agencies not in these files to determine their interest in an internship relationship. The student is responsible for identifying potential internships, contacting the agencies, and arranging for interviews. MCJ faculty may help facilitate this process through referrals and recommendations, but the final responsibility for the internship placement lies with the student.

5.4.6.2 Requirements

Students must meet both the requirements of their employing agency and those of SPA. When the student has initially established an internship relationship with an agency or organization, the intern's supervisor will need to complete a short form outlining the agreement between the organization and the student and identifying the tasks in which the intern will be involved. The requirements of the employer are established in this document. The written agreement must be approved in advance by the field study instructor (who is typically the student's faculty advisor). In order to earn three semester credit hours, students must work a minimum of 240 hours on the job. The work period can be for an academic semester or during the summer. Work schedules are arranged with the student's employing agency. In addition, both the employer and the student will complete an evaluation form assessing the internship experience at the completion of the internship placement. These forms are available from the SPA office. Finally, the student must submit a comprehensive, annotated field diary to his/her field study instructor that documents the internship activities engaged in and provides a contemporaneous assessment of the work experiences from a criminal justice disciplinary perspective. The form and content of the field diary should be discussed with the field study instructor in advance of the field placement and at regular intervals during the internship period.

5.4.6.3 Request To Waive Internship Requirement

Students who have worked in the field of criminal justice for more than one year may request a waiver of the internship requirement. To do so, they should obtain the Request To Waive the Internship Requirement form from the SPA office. After completing the form (which requests the attachment of a current resume and a written description documenting the applicable work experience), the student should discuss the request for waiver with his/her faculty advisor and obtain his/her approval.

5.5 Comprehensive Examination

All MCJ students must take a written comprehensive examination in criminal justice. [In lieu of the comprehensive exam, certain qualifying students may be approved to pursue a thesis option. See Section 5]. The comprehensive exam will cover the entire field of criminal justice, including the system components of police, courts, and corrections. The exam questions will be derived in general from the literature included in the MCJ core classes, plus literature in two criminal justice elective courses taken in the program. Thus, a total of six mandatory, essay-based questions—four covering each of the core courses and two covering elective courses—comprise the exam. Students are expected to take the comprehensive exam in the last semester of completing all required course work. No student will be permitted to take the comprehensive exam who has not successfully completed all MCJ core courses and a minimum of 15 semester credit hours in criminal justice elective courses with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

5.5.1 Administration

The comprehensive exam will be offered mid-November during the fall semester and mid-April during spring semester. It comprises a four-day, written take-home exam that is designed and graded by faculty members in the MCJ program. The administration of the exam is subject to the academic honesty provisions contained in the UC Denver Student Academic Honor Code (see Section 6.3).

5.5.2 Grading

There are two grades for the comprehensive exam: pass or fail. A pass grade is given to students who demonstrate proficiency on all six exam questions. A fail grade is given to students who demonstrate deficiency on three or more of the exam questions. A contingent pass is given to students who demonstrate proficiency on at least four of the six questions. Students failing either one or two questions will be

given the opportunity to address their deficiencies in a subsequent re-write of these questions before the end of the semester in which the exam is taken. If the re-write demonstrates proficiency, then the student is given a pass on the exam; if the re-write is deficient, the student receives a fail on the exam. Students who fail the exam will have a second opportunity to retake the exam the following semester. If a student fails the comprehensive exam a second time, he/she will be required to leave the program.

5.6 Thesis Option

The MCJ program offers a thesis option for students meeting certain eligibility criteria. Students must receive the approval of both their faculty advisor and the MCJ Director to pursue a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive exam. Thesis hours vary from 1-6 credit hours.

5.6.1 Eligibility

The thesis option is available for MCJ students who have achieved an exceptional academic record and who wish to pursue independent research of an empirical nature. It is particularly suitable for students who wish to pursue a Ph.D. degree or to enter a research or policy analysis environment upon completion of the MCJ degree.

Minimum eligibility requirements include:

1. Matriculation in the MCJ program;
2. Successful completion of all MCJ core courses and a minimum of 15 semester credit hours earned in approved criminal justice elective courses;
3. Overall GPA of 3.75 or better;
4. Demonstrated ability to pursue empirically-based work, as evidenced by two submitted research papers developed in MCJ courses;
5. Preliminary identification of a thesis topic or area of interest;

6. Agreement of at least two MCJ faculty members to serve on a three-person thesis committee (one serving as thesis advisor); and
7. The submission of a thesis prospectus developed under the supervision of a faculty thesis advisor and approval of this document by the thesis committee.

5.6.2 Process

Eligible students will be expected to follow a prescribed process in completing the requirements of the thesis option. An overview of the process is provided below. (Detailed procedures and required forms are available in a separate document; see MCJ Thesis Option Guidelines: II. – Procedures)

A student wishing to undertake the thesis option applies formally through her/his faculty academic advisor, first, to establish eligibility with respect to the above criteria, and, second, to identify appropriate faculty members to serve as the student's three-person thesis committee. The thesis committee will consist of two full-time MCJ faculty members, one of whom will serve as thesis advisor and chair. The third member of the committee may be selected from any full-time or adjunct member of the SPA faculty. (Note: Although the formal procedure entails application through the academic advisor, the student is encouraged to make informal contacts with appropriate subject-matter faculty to determine interest and availability.)

Before the student will be allowed to enroll for thesis credit, the thesis committee must formally approve a written thesis prospectus or proposal, which includes a thesis plan, a preliminary literature review, problem statement, and a timetable for completion. Upon approval of the prospectus, the student will be allowed to enroll in CJ 6950, Master's Thesis. The grade "In Progress" (IP) will be awarded until the thesis has been completed and approved. During this time, the student will work with the thesis committee in pursuing the thesis plan.

The thesis document will be prepared in accordance with "Directions for Preparing Masters' and Doctoral Thesis," available from the MCJ

Director, SPA Student Coordinators, or the UC Denver Graduate School.

6. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

6.1 Overview

Financial assistance is designed to assist those students who would not be able to attend SPA without aid. The primary source of student financial assistance is the Office of Financial Aid/Student Employment.

The Colorado Graduate Grant is administered by the Office of Financial Aid. Competition for these funds is based on demonstrated need and is open to graduate students who are residents of the State of Colorado. Grant awards are announced each semester for the following term. Applications are available from the Office of Financial Aid.

The Office of Financial Aid also provides short-term loan assistance to students who have completed one or more semesters in residence. Short-term loans are designed to supplement inadequate personal funds and to provide for emergencies. Application is made directly to the Office of Financial Aid.

Additionally, SPA offers several types of financial assistance to students. These awards are given out both semi-annually and annually. Applications are submitted directly to SPA.

6.2 Application Procedure

In order to be considered for university-wide student aid, students must complete application forms available in the Office of Financial Aid. Students should submit an institutional application and a needs analysis form. Eligibility requirements are outlined in the University catalog and can be explained at the Office of Financial Aid. Students who wish to apply for SPA assistance should submit the SPA Scholarship Form by March 15 for fall semester and by October 15 for spring semester.

7. GRADUATION PROCEDURES

7.1 Calendar

Students who have completed all the requirements for the MCJ degree can apply for candidacy and graduation in the fall, spring, or summer semesters. There are, however, deadlines for the submission of graduation materials. Students unable to meet these deadlines or to complete all the degree requirements by the end of the semester in which they seek to graduate may reapply for graduation in a subsequent term.

7.2 Application Procedure

In order to graduate, a student must:

1. Submit an approved Application for Admission to Candidacy form (available in the SPA Office) to SPA no later than the second week of the semester in which the student plans to graduate—
 - a. indicating that by the date of graduation the student will have completed all courses approved on his/her Degree Plan with at least a 3.0 average; and
 - b. having been reviewed and signed by the student's faculty advisor.
2. Submit an Application for Diploma card to the SPA office no later than the dates listed above. This form can be picked up in the SPA office and will indicate the exact spelling of the student's name, as it will appear on the diploma.

Students who have completed the Application for Admission to Candidacy and are on the graduation list but find that they will not be able to complete the program requirements before graduation should

notify the SPA office as quickly as possible. Any questions regarding graduation procedures should be directed to the SPA office.

8. SPA GRADE POLICIES

8.1 Grading Scale

Grades assigned in SPA courses (except thesis) are based on an *A* to *F* scale, with each letter grade representing the following standard narrative description:

A = Excellent performance in all aspects of the work of the course; significant intellectual contributions to class based on assigned reading and personal background. (*A* = 4.0 grade points; *A*- = 3.7 grade points.)

B = Excellent performance in some aspects of the work of the course, good performance in other aspects; ability to make contributions on the basis of reading and personal background. (*B*+ = 3.3 grade points; *B* = 3.0 grade points; *B*- = 2.7 grade points.)

C = Good performance in some aspects of the work of the course, but below the standard expected of graduate students in other aspects; identifiable weaknesses in comprehension of some of the assigned reading material. (*C*+ = 2.3 grade points; *C* = 2.0 grade points; *C*- = 1.7 grade points.)

D = Substandard performance in all aspects of the work of the course; inadequate comprehension of assigned reading material. (*D*+ = 1.3 grade points; *D* = 1.0 grade point; *D*- = 0.7 grade point.)

F = Level of performance demonstrably below that expected of a graduate student; little or no indication, based on performance, that the student can succeed in a graduate program. (*F* = 0.0 grade points.)

8.2 Incomplete Work

An Incomplete Failing (IF) or Incomplete Withdrawal (IW) grade is given at the instructor's discretion and only when students, for reasons beyond their control, have been unable to complete course requirements. The terms and conditions of arrangements for successful completion of the course are determined by the instructor with the informed consent of the student; this agreement should be formally documented in writing.

It is the responsibility of the student to request a grade of W when he/she needs to withdraw officially from a course. Students who stop attending class without notifying in writing both the instructor and the SPA office will receive a grade of F.

Upon completion of the course requirements, the appropriate letter grade will be submitted to the Registrar by the instructor. This letter grade will appear alongside the IF or IW on the student's transcript. If no report is received from the instructor within one year of original course completion, the grade will become an F or W, respectively. Should the student later wish to receive credit for any course for which a W has been recorded, he/she will have to register, pay for tuition again and complete all the course requirements.

The grade of In Progress (IP) can only be given for internship or thesis credits and will be valid until the internship or thesis has been completed.

8.3 Other General Rules

The following other general rules apply to grading policy:

1. The calculation of cumulative GPA shall be based on all course work applied to the degree, including any courses taken as a nondegree student. (Note: Courses taken in nondegree status are not included in the overall calculation of GPA on the official transcript, but are included in the overall calculation of GPA within SPA for graduation purposes.)

2. A student who fails to maintain an overall B (3.0 grade-point) average will be placed on probation. A student receiving a grade of F in any course is automatically placed on probation.
3. Probationary status shall not be allowed to extend beyond three semesters (including summer session) during which the student is enrolled. Failure on the part of the student to remove himself/herself from probation (i.e., by achieving a GPA of at least 3.0) during this time interval will result in automatic suspension from SPA.

9. ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

9.1 General

This statement describes formal procedures by which a student may seek to remedy academic grievances within SPA. The School strongly encourages that these matters be settled informally whenever possible. Formal procedures normally should be used only when satisfaction cannot be obtained by informal means.

Procedures described below are for grievances of academic nature. Students with non-academic grievances may use established university mechanisms for such actions. Authority for final action on any grievance within SPA shall rest with the Dean.

9.2 Faculty

Students are strongly encouraged to attempt to settle academic grievances first through discussion and negotiation with the faculty member(s) involved. Appeals should normally be filed with the Dean only if the matter is not settled to the satisfaction of the student with the faculty member(s).

9.3 Informal Resolution

If initial attempts to resolve the matter with the faculty member are unsuccessful, a student may—but is not required to—seek informal resolution of the problem through the office of the Associate Dean. If the student exercises this option, he/she will meet with the Associate Dean to explain the nature of the problem and discuss possible resolution. The Associate Dean will then consult with the faculty member involved to determine whether an informal resolution of the problem is possible. (A faculty member may also refer a case to the Associate Dean in which attempted bilateral resolution was unsuccessful). At this stage, the Associate Dean shall act as a facilitator or mediator, assisting the student and affected faculty member in achieving a mutually acceptable, voluntary resolution of the issue. Actions of the student, faculty member, and Associate Dean at this stage are understood to be informal and off-the-record, except insofar as noting that informal resolution was attempted.

9.4 Notice of Appeal

If informal resolution at steps 2 or 3 above cannot be achieved, an appeal is initiated by the student. Barring exceptional circumstances, appeals must be filed within 30 days of the event which is the basis of the grievance (or of the unsuccessful use of steps 2 or 3). To appeal, the student must file a statement with the Dean setting forth the nature of the appeal and the remedy sought by the student. The student should append to the statement of appeal any relevant documentation or other information (e.g., statements of witnesses or others with knowledge of the basis for appeal). If such information is not available at the time the appeal is filed, it should be provided as soon as possible after filing; barring exceptional circumstances, it must be presented within 30 days of filing.

The Dean shall provide a copy of the appeal to the faculty member(s) involved within 5 working days. The faculty member(s) may respond in writing to the appeal, or provide such other documentation and information deemed relevant to decision making on the appeal.

9.5 Action by the Associate Dean

If the Associate Dean on the campus where the student is enrolled is not named in or a party to the grievance, the Dean shall refer the appeal to that person. The Dean shall instruct the student to make an appointment to meet with the Associate Dean within 5 working days in order to review and resolve the appeal. The Associate Dean shall review and investigate the appeal, and reach a determination as to the quality of the appeal. He/she shall report in writing to the Dean within 30 days of initial referral of the matter to his/her office, and shall recommend appropriate action to the Dean. The Dean shall forward a copy of the report, together with proposed final action, to the student.

9.6 Grievance Committee

If the student does not accept the recommendation of the Associate Dean, he/she may within 10 days of its receipt appeal that finding to the SPA Academic Grievance Committee (to be appointed by the Dean). Any Grievance Committee member who is named in or is a party to the appeal shall be replaced with another faculty member not involved in the instant case by the Dean.

Within 10 days of receipt of the appeal, the Grievance Committee shall convene to review the substance of the appeal and all information generated by it. At its discretion, the Grievance Committee may also obtain such other information as it deems appropriate, including interviews with the student filing the appeal and others with knowledge and information concerning the issue(s) upon which the appeal is based. Within 30 days of receipt of the appeal, the Committee shall submit a written report to the Dean. The report shall contain a summary of the Committee's information-gathering activities, its conclusions and judgments based upon the information gathered, and its recommendations for action by the Dean.

9.7 Final Action by the Dean

Within 10 days of receipt of the Grievance Committee's report, the Dean shall take final action on the appeal. Final action shall take the form of a letter to the student stating the action and the reasons for taking it. The Dean may append a copy of the Grievance Committee's report to the letter. The Dean's decision shall constitute final action by SPA.

9.8 Appeal to the Graduate Council

If the student does not accept the Dean's action, appeal can be made to the UC Denver Graduate Council, as specified in the university catalog. The Council's decision on appeal shall constitute final action by the University of Colorado Denver.

9.9 Constitutional Rights

Nothing in this procedure is intended to nor should be construed as abrogating the rights under law accruing to students in SPA.

10. ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

With respect to matters of academic dishonesty, SPA subscribes in full to provisions contained in the UC Denver Student Academic Honor Code and to procedures for its implementation in the UC Denver Catalog. Copies of the Academic Honor Code are available in the SPA office.