<u>What is the Academic Leaders Institute Competency Model?</u>

This Academic Leaders Institute Competency Model is a collection of competencies that define the successful performance of academic leaders at the University of Colorado Boulder. These competencies are the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for successful leadership at CU.

What is the Academic Leaders Institute?
The Academic Leaders Institute (ALI) helps academic administrators develop competencies—knowledge, skills, and abilities—needed for successful leadership at CU Boulder. Faculty Relations, in the Office of Faculty Affairs, facilitates ALI by providing Orientation and Onboarding for new academic leaders as well as Ongoing Professional Development for all academic leaders.

Why was the model developed?
The university requires that campuses develop appropriate orientation programs for academic leaders on campus. At CU Boulder, the Provost and Chancellor have designated the Office of Faculty Affairs to create this program.

Often academic leaders are thrown into their new roles with good intentions, and everyone wishing them well. While these faculty may be excellent scholars, they may not have knowledge of, or experience with, leadership. One challenge of training programs is that they often provide too much too soon, and too little too late, either giving information so rapidly, it is like drinking from a firehose or giving information too late to be effective. The goal underlying the model development was to create programming that provides information in a just-in-time fashion, to deliver material and resources at the moment academic leaders need it.

What is a competency model? How are they useful?
There are several ways to create a competency model; one way originated from what is called star groups. Star groups look at who is doing something best, looking at top performers, and figuring out what is the stuff that they've got. What knowledge do they have, what skills do they have, and what abilities do they have that others just don't have.

Harvard researcher David McCullough discovered this way of creating a competency model in the 1970s. He was studying motivation theory and top performers. He looked at the differences between those who do something well and those who are intelligent and capable but don't do it as well.

McCullough looked at high achievers, people who were great at their position, and some who were just adequate at it. If you want to know what a person who is good at their work can do, find people who are good at the job, and find out what they know and do. Put another way, identify a group of high performers and find out what knowledge they have, what skill sets they have, and their personal attributes. This method is the foundation of how he developed a competency model and underlies how the ALI competency model was created.

How was the ALI Competency Model developed?
The model development was undertaken carefully and with input from key constituents over 18 months.

The idea of creating a competency model for academic leaders was presented to Provost Russell Moore in Spring 2017. With his approval to develop the model, the creators began by reading the relevant literature and gathering background information of existing leadership models from other universities.

Focus group members were identified based on their experience as successful leaders at CU. Following the path by McCullough, we chose to look at star groups, leaders who were leading best, and we sought to find out what knowledge, skill sets, and personal attributes they had. The Provost named some star performers, identifying individuals who had been academic leaders on this campus for some years and had distinguished themselves in their leadership roles. These academic leaders, seen as capable and top performers, were invited to participate in one of two focus groups.

During the focus groups, these leaders were asked what knowledge, skills, and dispositions are needed to be a successful leader at CU? Their ideas were synthesized into major themes. The first draft of the competency model was developed based upon the themes identified from the focus groups. Each competency was named, a definition was created, and the key behaviors associated with each were described to know what it looks like when someone demonstrates this competency.

The development of the model was an iterative process. The first version of the model was circulated back to the focus group members asking if the model reflected the focus group discussions. Did the model resonate with them? Was there anything missing in the model? Were changes needed? Their feedback, suggestions for additions, deletions, or edits to the competency names, definitions, and behaviors were incorporated into a revision, the second draft of the model.

This second version was subsequently presented to two different groups of academic leaders. One group was members of the Dean's Council. After explaining the competency model process, we asked for their thoughts on the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to be an academic leader at CU. They were provided an opportunity to review the model, and their input and comments were added to the model to create a third draft.

The last step was to share version three with the current academic leaders who participate in the Provost's monthly Chairs and Directors meetings. The process was similar to the one used with the Dean's Council and asked, at what point in your leadership role do you need this most? For example, at what point are you ready to hear about strategic thinking? We recognized those at the beginning of their leadership term are enmeshed in survival. At what point in time, after being in the role for a while, can you think about being a strategic leader? Is it the first

three months, the first 6-9 months, or the first year? We want to know what needs to be known with the greatest urgency or seems to be most appropriate.

Last, we asked our academic leaders who would be the best on our campus to deliver this training? These identified CU faculty and staff have become our campus experts who provide the delivery of our training. At the same time, the Academic Leaders Institute, within the Office of Faculty Affairs, is responsible for implementing this leadership program.

Consensus has been reached; the model is complete. The fourth and final version follows, *a comprehensive representation of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to be a successful academic leader at CU*. The Academic Leaders Institute Competency Model, presented to all academic leaders in August 2018, consists of 11 competencies, their definitions, and descriptions of the key activities or behaviors associated with each competency.

In addition to the model, we used the input from the final review of the model to create a curriculum grid of when to offer various training to help leaders develop these competencies fully. In addition, some competencies are provided through an administrative toolkit.

The Academic Leaders Institute Competency Model helps CU create a pipeline for those thinking of becoming a leader. We encourage those in leader-elect positions to begin attending events in the year before assuming their formal leadership role. When room allows, any faculty member interested in participating in our events is welcomed to attend. The offerings through ALI continue to grow, becoming a more extensive, richer, expanded program.

ALI provides Orientation, Onboarding, and Ongoing Professional Development for academic leaders. Orientation is a yearly event offered in the summer before the start of each academic year to support leaders newly appointed in their roles. The orientation content is provided through a two-day synchronous training and asynchronous content access through Canvas. ALI provides onboarding during the academic year, providing a full year of support for our new leaders through a series of events that flushes out the rest of the knowledge academic leaders need to know to carry out their responsibilities. These Getting You Prepared workshops teach what it takes to get up to speed in their new roles to get to higher levels of productively without struggling. Lastly, ALI provides Ongoing Professional Development for continuing academic leaders. Our annual mini-conference focused on current leadership issues. Our trainings teach practical skills, such as holding difficult conversations or holding people accountable, tools to help leaders work more effectively. A series of Innovate Hours cover important ideas in academic leadership and include specific skill-building activities focusing on concrete actions or tools for leaders to use. An Administrative Toolkit provides the basis for the other knowledge and skills not offered through in-person events.