

Glossary of Terms

accreditation. A voluntary process conducted by peers through non-governmental agencies for purposes of improving educational quality and assuring the public that programs and services meet established standards. In higher education, accreditation is divided into two types - institutional and specialized. Although both are designed to assure fundamental levels of quality, the former focuses on the institution as a whole while the latter focuses on academic pre-professional or specialty professional programs such as law, business, psychology, and education; or services such as counseling centers within the institution. Although the CAS Standards have utility for accreditation self-study, CAS is not an accrediting body.

affirmative action. Policies and/or programs designed to redress historic injustices committed against racial minorities and other specified groups by making special efforts to provide members of these groups with access to educational and employment opportunities. This may apply to students as well as to faculty and staff members.

best practice. A level of professional conduct or practice identified as being necessary for college and university personnel to exhibit in their daily work for the host program or service to be judged satisfactory, sufficient and of acceptable quality. CAS Standards and Guidelines represent best practice.

CAS. The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. A consortium of professional associations concerned with the development and promulgation of professional standards and guidelines for student support programs and services in institutions of higher learning. The CAS Board of Directors is composed of representatives from member associations and meets semiannually in the spring and fall. Prior to 1992, the consortium's name was the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs.

CAS Blue Book. The informal name of the publication entitled *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education* (previous editions were "*The CAS Book of Professional Standards for Higher Education*") that presents the CAS standards and guidelines. The first iteration of the CAS standards was published in 1986. Revised editions were published in 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, and the current 2006 edition. CAS policy calls for an updated revision to be published biannually.

CAS Board of Directors. A body of representatives from professional higher education associations in the U.S. and Canada that have joined the CAS consortium, pay annual dues, and keep their memberships informed about CAS standards and related initiatives. Each member association may designate two official representatives (Director and Alternate) to act on its behalf at CAS Board meetings; each association has one vote on the Council.

CAS consortium. An alliance of professional U.S. and Canadian higher education associations established in 1979 to develop and promulgate professional standards that guide and enhance the quality of student life, learning, and development through support programs and to educate practitioners in this regard.

CAS Executive Committee. A body of elected CAS officers, including president, secretary, treasurer, members at large, and others elected at the discretion of the Board of Directors. This body meets periodically to deal with CAS governance issues and to review penultimate standard statements prior to final review and adoption by the Board of Directors.

CAS Internet URL. <http://www.cas.edu> The CAS web site at which various CAS initiatives and resources are described, publications may be ordered, and links to CAS member associations are listed.

CAS member association. One of the higher education professional associations that has joined the CAS consortium and is committed to the development and promulgation of professional standards for college student learning and development support services.

CAS preparation program standards. A set of professional standards developed and promulgated for purposes of providing student affairs administration master's level programs with criteria to guide the professional education and preparation of entry-level practitioners in student affairs.

CAS Public Director. An individual appointed to the CAS Board of Directors to represent the public at large. CAS by-laws call for the appointment of public directors who do not represent a specific functional area or professional association.

CAS Standards and Guidelines. Published criteria and related statements designed to provide college and university support service providers with established measures against which to evaluate programs and services. A standard uses the auxiliary verbs "must" and "shall," while a guideline uses the verbs "should" and "may." Standards are essentials, guidelines are not.

certification. Official recognition by a governmental or professional body attesting that an individual practitioner meets established standards or criteria. Criteria usually include formal academic preparation in prescribed content areas and a period of supervised practice, and may also include a systematic evaluation (that is, standardized test) of the practitioner's knowledge.

compliance. Adherence to a standard of practice or preparation. Compliance with the CAS standards implies that an institution or program meets or exceeds the fundamental essential criteria established for a given functional area program and service or for an academic student affairs administration preparation program.

FALDOs. Frameworks for Assessing Learning and Development Outcomes. A companion publication to the CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education, the “FALDOs” are designed to assist practitioners in designing and implementing assessment of outcomes. Based on the outcome domains listed in Part 2, Program, of each functional area standard, the FALDOs include a theoretical description of the learning outcome domain (e. g., leadership development, social responsibility, career choices), assessment examples, list of possible instruments, and additional resources. The FALDOs are published in both book and CD format.

functional area standard. A statement that presents criteria describing the fundamental essential expectations of practice agreed upon by the profession at large for a given institutional function. Standards are presented in **bold** type and use auxiliary verbs “**must**” and “**shall**.” Currently there are 35 sets of CAS functional area standards (see Table of Contents).

general standards. Statements presenting criteria that represent the most fundamental essential expectations agreed on by the profession at large for all higher education support programs and services. The general standards are contained within every set of functional area standards; they apply to every area. These “boilerplate” criteria are presented in **bold** type and use the auxiliary verbs “**must**” and “**shall**” as do all CAS standards. The most recent revision of the General Standards, including significant expansion of the section on learning and development outcomes, was adopted in 2002.

guideline. A statement that clarifies or amplifies professional standards. Although not required for acceptable practice, a guideline is designed to provide institutions with suggestions and illustrations that can assist in establishing programs and services that more fully address the needs of students than those mandated by a standard. Guidelines may be thought of as providing guidance in ways to exceed fundamental requirements, to approach excellence, or to function at a more optimal level. CAS Guidelines use the auxiliary verbs “should” and “may.”

learning and development outcomes. Change occurring in students as a direct result of their interaction with an educational institution and its programs and services. Part 2 of the CAS standards identifies 16 learning and development outcomes that students should accomplish as a result of their higher education experiences. A number of outcome indicators are also included to guide assessing the outcomes.

in-service (or inservice) education. Educational skill-building activities provided by an institution to staff members within the context of their work responsibilities. A form of staff development designed to strengthen the ability of practitioners to carry out their duties more effectively.

licensure. Official recognition, usually by a government entity, that authorizes practice in the public arena. A license is usually granted only upon the presentation of compelling evidence that the individual is well qualified to practice in a given profession. Granting of a professional license typically authorizes holders to announce their qualifications to provide selected services to the public and attach professional titles to their names. Insurance companies often require individuals to be licensed to qualify for third-party payments.

paraprofessional. An individual who has received an adequate level of training and supervision to work in support of professional practitioners, their offices, and programs. Paraprofessionals may be students, staff members, or volunteers who have not undertaken formal or graduate level professional preparation or earned credentials to function as a professional practitioner.

personal development. Closely related to student development, this term refers to the processes associated with human maturation, especially those concerned with evolving psychosocial, morale, relational, and self-concept changes that influence an individual’s quality of life.

pre-professional. An individual who is in the process of obtaining professional education that will qualify her or him for professional practice (e.g., graduate student, intern).

program. Refers to one of two types. (a) organizational, a departmental level administrative unit or sub-unit; (b) activity, an institutional support service such as an invited lecture, a workshop, a social event, or a series of organized presentations over time (e.g., a “lunch and learn” program).

quality assurance. The *raison d’être* for the CAS standards and virtually all types of credentialing activities devised to assure the public that educational institutions, programs, and services and those providing them exhibit high levels of competence leading to excellence. Quality assurance initiatives are intended to ensure that those accessing available programs and services will truly benefit from them.

registry. An official record of the names and qualifications of individuals who meet pre-established criteria to function as professional practitioners. The names of professionally licensed and/or certified practitioners are typically listed in a registry. In some instances a professional “register” may be maintained for purposes of providing individuals, institutions, and organizations with the names of those who meet an established level of competence for employment or other activity such as consulting or lecturing. A registry may also be used to identify those judged to possess relevant knowledge or skill outside the context of licensure.

Self-Assessment Guide (SAG). An operational version of the CAS Standards and Guidelines designed to provide users with an assessment tool that can be used for self-study or self-assessment purposes. A SAG is available for each functional area for which a CAS standard exists.

self-study. An internal process by which institutions and programs evaluate their quality and effectiveness in reference to established criteria such as the CAS standards. This process, often used for institutional and specialty accreditation purposes, results in a formal report presenting the findings of the internal evaluation implemented by institutional employees. For accreditation purposes, this report is then validated by a visiting, external committee of peers from comparable institutions or programs. CAS SAGs have great utility for this purpose.

self-regulation. The recommended process by which the CAS Standards and Guidelines can best be used to evaluate and assess institutional support programs and services. This approach calls for institutions and programs to establish, maintain, and enhance the quality of their offerings and environments by using the standards to evaluate themselves. From the CAS perspective, each institution and its programs can and should seek to identify and regulate its own best practices rather than relying on external agencies to do so.

staff development. Refers to the programs, workshops, conferences, and other training related activities offered by institutions, professional associations, and corporate agencies for purposes of increasing effectiveness in accomplishing work responsibilities of staff members.

standard. A statement framed within the context of a professional arena designed to provide practitioners with criteria against which to judge the quality of the programs and services offered. A standard reflects an essential level of practice that, when met, represents quality performance. CAS standards use auxiliary verbs “**must**” and “**shall**” presented in **bold** print.

student development. Refers to those learning outcomes that occur as a result of students being exposed to higher education environments designed to enhance academic, intellectual, psychosocial, psychomotor, moral, and, for some institutions, spiritual development. This concept is based on applying human development theories within the context of higher education. In some instances, the term has also been applied to administrative units (e.g., center for student development).

student learning and development. Refers to the outcomes students realize when exposed to new experiences, concepts, information, and ideas; the knowledge and understanding gleaned from interactions with higher education learning environments. Learning means acquiring knowledge and applying it to life, appreciating human differences, and approaching an integrated sense of self.