

University of Akron
Student Affairs Assessment Committee

CAS Basics

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

**CAS Standards, Self-Assessment, and
Student Learning Outcomes in Higher Education**



CAS

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

- *Founded in 1979*
- *A consortium of 36 professional organizations comprising a constituency of over 100,000*
- *Member associations send representatives to the CAS Board of Directors*
- *Consensus-oriented, collaborative*
- *Focused on quality programs and services for students*
- *Guide practice by student affairs, student development, and student support service providers*



Member Associations

- Am. Assoc. for Employment in Educ. ([AAEE](#))
- Am. Counseling Assoc. ([ACA](#))
- Am. College Counseling Assoc. ([ACCA](#))
- Assoc. of Collegiate Conference & Events Directors-Int'l ([ACCED-I](#))
- Am. College Health Assoc. ([ACHA](#))
- Assoc. of College Honor Societies ([ACHS](#))
- Am. College Personnel Assoc. ([ACPA](#))
- Assoc. of College & Univ. Housing Officers -- InterNat'l ([ACUHO-I](#))
- Assoc. of College Unions InterNat'l ([ACUI](#))
- Assoc. of Fraternity Advisors ([AFA](#))
- Assoc. on Higher Educ. & Disability ([AHEAD](#))
- Assoc. for Student Judicial Affairs ([ASJA](#))
- Canadian Assoc. of College & Univ. Student Services ([CACUSS](#))
- Collegiate Information & Visitor Services Assoc. ([CIVSA](#))
- Council for Opportunity in Education ([COE](#))
- College Reading and Learning Assoc. ([CRLA](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. for Campus Activities ([NACA](#))
- Nat'l Academic Advising Assoc. ([NACADA](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. of College Auxiliary Services ([NACAS](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. of Colleges and Employers ([NACE](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. of College Stores ([NACS](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. of College & Univ. Food Services ([NACUFS](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. for Developmental Educ. ([NADE](#))
- NAFSA - Assoc. of InterNat'l Educators
- Nat'l Assoc. of Student Affairs Professionals ([NASAP](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. of Student Financial Aid Administrators ([NASFAA](#))
- Nat'l Assoc. of Student Personnel Administrators ([NASPA](#))
- Nat'l Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs ([NCCP](#))
- Nat'l Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs ([NCLP](#))
- Nat'l Consortium of Directors of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Resources in Higher Education ([Consortium](#))
- Nat'l Council on Student Development ([NCSD](#))
- Nat'l Intramural and Recreational Sports Assoc. ([NIRSA](#))
- Nat'l Orientation Directors Assoc. ([NODA](#))
- Nat'l Society for Experiential Education ([NSEE](#))
- Nat'l Women's Studies Assoc. ([NWSA](#))
- The Network: Addressing Collegiate Alcohol & Other Drug Issues ([The Network](#))
- Southern Assoc. for College Student Affairs ([SACSA](#)) -- Associate Member

Essential Elements in the CAS Approach

- *An institutional culture that values involvement of all its members in decision-making*
 - *Quality indicators that are determined by the institution*
 - *Use of standards & guidelines in quality assurance initiatives*
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CAS Mission

- Establish, adopt, and disseminate unified and timely professional standards to guide student learning and development programs and services
- Promote assessment and improvement of higher education programs and services through self-study
- Establish, adopt, and disseminate unified and timely professional preparation standards for the education of student affairs practitioners, and to promote the assessment and improvement of graduate preparation programs
- Advance the use and importance of professional standards
- Develop and provide materials to support the use of standards
- Promote & encourage a focus on quality assurance
- Promote inter-association efforts to address these issues



CAS Essentials

- The CAS Standards provide an important tool that expresses to students, faculty, and administrators alike the complex and vital nature of student support programs and services, and their relationship to student learning and development.



CAS Guiding Principles

- **Students and Their Institutions**
 - Student is considered as a unique, whole person
 - Institutional environments shape learning
 - Responsibility for learning rests with the student
 - Institutions provide opportunities for learning
 - Institutions reflect society and its diversity



Students and Their Institutions

“When a college or university provides programs and services that meet or exceed the CAS criteria, the institution will have effectively implemented an intentional educational environment conducive to the learning and development of its students.”



CAS Guiding Principles

- **Diversity and Multiculturalism**
 - Institutions embrace diversity and eliminate barriers that impede student learning
 - Justice and respect for differences bond individuals to community



CAS Guiding Principles

- **Organization, Leadership, and Human Resources**
 - Leadership is essential for institutional success
 - Institutional success is related to clarity of mission
 - Qualifications of staff members are tied directly to quality of educational programs and services
 - Leaders possess sound educational preparation and experience



CAS Guiding Principles

- **Health Engendering Environments**
 - Educational programs and services prosper in benevolent environments that provide students with appropriate levels of challenge and support.



CAS Guiding Principles

- **Ethical Considerations**
 - Educational service providers provide impeccable ethical behavior in their professional and personal lives
 - See CAS statement of Shared Ethical Principles



Self-Regulation & Self-Assessment

- Self-regulation relies on the willingness & capacity of the organization to examine itself meticulously, faithfully, and reliably, and then to assemble the pertinent results of that examination into coherent reports that constituents can comprehend and use
- CAS – promotes focus on self-assessment and regulation vs. externally motivated regulation



Uses of the CAS Standards

- Measures of program & service effectiveness
- Institutional self-studies
- Preparation for accreditation
- Design of new programs & services
- Staff development
- Academic preparation
- Credibility and accountability



CAS Standards Format

13 Component Parts

- 1. *Mission***
 - 2. *Program***
 - 3. *Leadership***
 - 4. *Organization & management***
 - 5. *Human resources***
 - 6. *Financial resources***
 - 7. *Facilities, technology, & equipment***
 - 8. *Legal responsibilities***
 - 9. *Equity and access***
 - 10. *Campus and community relations***
 - 11. *Diversity***
 - 12. *Ethics***
 - 13. *Assessment & evaluation***
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Understanding CAS Standards

- CAS standards . . .
 - *Represent indispensable requirements of practice*
 - *Are achievable by any and all programs of quality*
 - *Appear in **bold print***
 - *Use auxiliary verbs **must** & **shall***



Understanding CAS Guidelines

- CAS guidelines . . .
 - *Clarify & amplify standards*
 - *Guide enhanced practice beyond essential functions*
 - *Appear in **light-faced** type*
 - *Use verbs **should** & **may***



Standard & Guideline Example

STANDARD

BOLD TYPE; AUXILIARY VERBS *MUST & SHALL*

DSS must also work to maintain positive relations with students, faculty members, staff , the institution legal counsel, the administration, all support offices, community agencies, the medical community, diagnosticians, and equal opportunity compliance officers.

GUIDELINE

LIGHT- FACED TYPE; AUXILIARY VERBS *SHOULD & MAY*

DSS should take an active role in the coordination of the institution's response to the needs of persons with disabilities. This is essential to ensure the continuity of services, resource management....



Program: Learning and Development Outcome Domains

- Intellectual growth
- Effective communication
- Enhanced self-esteem
- Realistic self-appraisal
- Clarified values
- Career choices
- Leadership development
- Healthy behavior
- Meaningful interpersonal relationships
- Independence
- Collaboration
- Social responsibility
- Satisfying and productive lifestyles
- Appreciating diversity
- Spiritual awareness
- Personal and educational goals

Identify areas of focus for the program or service



Frameworks for Assessing Learning and Development Outcomes

- “FALDOs” – companion to standards book
- Chapters for each learning outcome domain with a theoretical description of the domain (e. g., leadership development, social responsibility, career choices), assessment examples, list of possible instruments, and additional resources
- Published as book & CD set



The CAS SAG: A Self-Assessment Guide

- **Translates CAS standards into an effective workbook format**
- **Promotes program self-assessment and development**
- **Informs on program strengths and weaknesses**
- **Supports professional staff development**
- **Leads to enhanced student learning and development**



Steps in the Self-Assessment Process



Establish the Self-Study Process and Review Team

- Educate/ train staff members on new APR process
- Decide upon steps you will take to undergo APR
- Decide upon review/ preparation timeline
- Appoint committees/ review teams within your office



Establish the Self-Study Process and Review Team

Appoint and Train the Self-Assessment Team

- © *Single functional area typically calls for 3-5***
- © *Include members from the outside***
- © *Establish team ground rules***
- © *Establish team's inter-rater reliability***
- © *Encourage team discussion and expect team members to disagree***
- © *The assessment committee will do the training for APR teams***

Understand CAS Standards and Guidelines and the SAG

- Ensure that you understand the CAS Standards as they are specifically applied to your department
- Make sure staff members in your offices are reasonably well-versed in the CAS standards
- Work with the staff in your offices to decide upon the quality indicators you will use to demonstrate compliance with each of the standards



Compile & Review Evaluative Evidence

- Gather and organize evidence to support the quality indicators and ultimately compliance with the Standards
- Get “buy-in” from all constituencies/ stakeholders
- Request feedback regarding how to examine the area with respect to each of the Standards



Examples of Evaluative Evidence

STUDENT RECRUITMENT MATERIALS:

- Brochures & other program information
- Participation policies & procedures

PROGRAM DOCUMENTS:

- Mission statements; program purpose & philosophy statements
- Catalogs & related materials
- Staff & student manuals; policies & procedures statements

ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS:

- Organization charts; student & staff profiles
- Financial resource statements & budgets
- Annual reports

STAFF ACTIVITY REPORTS:

- Curriculum vitae & resumes; professional activity
- Service to other programs, departments, or community

STUDENT ACTIVITY REPORTS:

- Portfolios, developmental transcripts, resumes
- Reports of student service

RESEARCH & EVALUATION DATA:

- Needs assessments & self-studies
- Program evaluation; graduate & follow-up studies

Quantitative Data

- *Summaries of objective responses on a questionnaire or program evaluation*
- *Statistics about use by students and various population subgroups*
- *Needs assessments, follow-up studies, and self-study reports*
- *Institutional research reports and fact books*
- *Use the Office of Institutional Research!*

Qualitative Data

- *Focus group information*
- *Written summaries of responses to open-ended questions in interviews and on evaluations*
- *Client satisfaction surveys, self-reports, and written comments, both solicited and unsolicited*



Use SAG Workbook – Judge Performance

- SAGs offer a ready format for evaluation
- In most instances, there are multiple criterion statements for each standard
- Functional area staff members rate themselves and submit ratings to APR team
- Be honest about strengths and areas for growth
- As applicable, add additional criterion measures into the rating procedures prior to the self-assessment process

Complete Assessment Process

- Two-tiered approach
 - Functional area ratings
 - Team ratings
- Collective review and analysis
- Solidify action plan as needed



Closing the loop

- Purpose & scope of APR is defined
- Self-study team is trained; Staff are trained
- Self-study/ APR is conducted
- Evaluative evidence is collected
- Discrepancies with the standards are identified
- Appropriate actions are determined
- Special actions for program enhancement are recommended
- Action plan is developed and communicated

The 13 Standards

How to guide...



Addressing the CAS Standards in the APR process

1. Review standard; break it down
2. Consider the extent to which the department complies with each aspect of the standard
3. Consider evidence of the compliance
4. Respond to criterion measures
 - Through ratings
 - Through description/ explanation/ rationale
5. Answer the overview questions

