Using CAS for Evaluating Student Learning and Program Effectiveness

2019 Assessment Institute

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Learning Goals

• Identify approaches to quality assurance and the use of professional standards in higher education
• Describe CAS and the CAS standards
• Articulate how the CAS standards can be used for program self-assessment
Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

- Founded in 1979 (40th Anniversary)
- Consortium of 39 member organizations
- Council comprised of representatives from member associations
- Consensus-oriented, collaborative approach
- 47 sets of functional area standards and self-assessment guides (SAGs)
- 3 Cross-Functional Frameworks
CAS Functional Areas

Academic Advising Programs
Alcohol and Other Drug Programs
Assessment Services
Auxiliary Services Functional Areas
Campus Activities Programs
Campus Information and Visitor Services
Campus Police and Security Programs
Campus Religious, Secular, and Spiritual Programs
Career Services
Case Management Services
Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Programs
Clinical Health Services
College Honor Society Programs
College Unions
Collegiate Recreation Programs
Conference and Event Programs
Counseling Services
Dining Services Programs
Disability Resources and Services
Education Abroad Programs and Services
Financial Aid Programs
Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs
Graduate and Professional Student Programs and Services
Health Promotion Services
Housing and Residential Life Programs
International Student Programs and Services
Internship Programs
Learning Assistance Programs
LGBTQ+ Programs and Services
Master’s Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs
Multicultural Student Programs and Services
Orientation Programs
Parent and Family Programs
Post-Traditional and Commuter Student Programs and Services
Registrar Programs and Services
Sexual Violence-Related Programs and Services
Student Conduct Programs
Student Leadership Programs
Student Media Programs
Sustainability Programs
Testing Programs and Services
Transfer Student Programs and Services
TRIO and College Access Programs
Undergraduate Admissions Programs and Services
Undergraduate Research Programs
Veterans and Military-Connected Programs and Services
Women’s and Gender Programs and Services
Principles Underlying All CAS Standards

Students and Their Environments
Parts 1. Mission; 2. Programs and Services; 3. Student Learning, Development, and Success, and 4. Assessment

Advocating for Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities
Part 5. Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
Organization, Leadership, and Human Resources


Ethical Considerations

Part 9. Ethics, Law, and Policy

Learning-Conducive Structures, Resources, and Systems

Parts 10. Financial Resources; 11. Technology; and 12. Facilities and Infrastructure
Applications for CAS Standards

- Design new programs and services
- Focus time, energy, and resources
- Devise staff development
- Guide strategic planning
- Develop learning and development outcomes
- Measure program and service effectiveness
The General Standards (2018)

1. Mission
2. Program and Services
3. Student Learning, Development, and Success
4. Assessment
5. Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
6. Leadership, Management, and Supervision
7. Human Resources
8. Collaboration and Communication
9. Ethics, Law, and Policy
10. Financial Resources
11. Technology
12. Facilities and Infrastructure
Standards are comprised of Two Types of Statements

General Standards
Common across all functional areas
Appear verbatim in every set of functional area standards

The functional area must develop and define its mission.

Functional Area Standards
Address issues specific to the functional area.

The mission of Career Services (CS) is to assist students and other designated clients in developing, evaluating, and implementing career, education, and employment readiness goals.
Understanding Standards & Guidelines

Standards

Indispensable requirements

Achievable by any & all programs of quality

Appear in bold type

Use must & shall

Guidelines

Clarify & amplify Standards

Guide enhanced practice beyond essential function

Appear in light-faced type

Use verbs should & may
CAS Learning and Domains and Dimensions
Student Learning, Development, and Success Section

Six Student Learning & Development Outcome Domains are a part of the CAS General Standards

Stated expectation in the CAS General Standards that all functional area programs must place emphasis on identifying relevant learning outcomes and assessing their achievement by students.
CAS Learning and Development Outcomes

Part of the CAS General Standards

• Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application
• Cognitive Complexity
• Intrapersonal Development
• Interpersonal Competence
• Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement
• Practical Competence
Student Learning, Development, and Success Section

The functional area MUST…

• Provide evidence of the extent to which student learning and development outcomes are achieved

• Use evidence to create strategies for improving student learning, development, and success
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Acquisition, Integration, &amp; Application</td>
<td>Knowledge of Human Cultures &amp; the Physical &amp; Natural World</td>
<td>Knowledge Acquisition, Construction, Integration, &amp; Application</td>
<td>Knowledge Bases</td>
<td>Specialized Knowledge Broad &amp; Integrative Knowledge</td>
<td>Career-specific knowledge</td>
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<td>Cognitive Complexity</td>
<td>Intellectual &amp; Practical Skills</td>
<td>Cognitive Complexity</td>
<td>Critical Thinking Management &amp; Collaborative Leadership</td>
<td>Intellectual Skills</td>
<td>Problem solving Decision making Quantitative analysis Information processing</td>
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<td>Interpersonal &amp; Intrapersonal Competence</td>
<td>Personal &amp; Social Responsibility</td>
<td>Interpersonal Competence</td>
<td>Interpersonal Relations with Diverse Others Intrapersonal Attributes &amp; Competencies Ethics</td>
<td>Civic and Global Learning</td>
<td>Teamwork Verbal communication</td>
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<td>Humanitarianism Civic Engagement</td>
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<td>Practical Competence Persistence &amp; Academic Achievement</td>
<td>Integrative &amp; Applied Learning</td>
<td>Practical Competence</td>
<td>Professional Skills Life-long Learning</td>
<td>Applied &amp; Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>Writing and editing reports Computer software skills Workflow planning</td>
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CAS Self-Study
Overview and Application
CAS Fundamentals About Self-Assessment

- Internally driven
- Systematic and regular
- Effective in terms of time, cost, etc.
- Provides reasonably accurate, useful information
- Supports staff development
- Provides recognition and rewards at a local level
CAS Fundamentals About Self-Assessment

- Charts quality program development and professionalism using widely agreed-upon quality indicators
- Develops a shared vision among constituents
- Relies on honesty with meticulous evaluation
- Assembles results into an action plan for improvement
Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)

- Provides an effective workbook/format for evaluation, self-assessment, and institutional reviews
- Translates standards into multiple criterion statements which can be measured
- Clusters of criterion measures focus on subsections of the standards, allowing raters to express detailed and targeted judgments
- Informs on program strengths and weaknesses
- Leads to an action plan to enhance programs and services that benefit student learning and development
Part 4. ASSESSMENT

Suggested Evidence and Documentation for Part 4:
1. Functional area goals, key indicators, outcomes, and related assessment data
2. Assessment data related to student learning, development, and success outcomes
3. Assessment plans and annual reports
4. Minutes of meetings at which assessment activities and results are discussed
5. Professional development activities to improve assessment competence

4.1 Establishing a Culture of Assessment
- The functional area develops assessment plans and processes that document progress toward achievement of mission, goals, outcomes, and objectives.
- The functional area designs assessment plans that incorporate an ongoing cycle of assessment activities.
- The functional area has fiscal, human, professional development, and technological resources to develop and implement assessment plans.

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<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply</td>
<td>Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate</td>
<td>Does Not Meet</td>
<td>Partly Meets</td>
<td>Meets</td>
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- Simplified scale for evaluation -

Justification for 4.1 Rating:

Space to write your narrative explanation of above ratings
CAS Program Review Steps

- The Process
- The Team
- The Evidence
- The Action Plan
- The Ratings
- The Report
- The Improvements
Plan the Process
Decisions to be Made Before Beginning

What is your purpose for using the CAS standards?
- Assessment and/or accreditation
- Other purposes

What is the scope of the self-study?
- Extensive study or snap shot?

Do you have other things on the agenda?
- Enhance collaboration
- Enhance consistency between campus sites
- Need evidence to increase funding, facilities, or staffing
Plan the Process

- Take stock of the current assessment landscape
- Map out your steps
- Identify outcomes for self-study
- Develop a preliminary timeline
Assemble and Educate Team
Assemble and Educate Team

Identify an individual to coordinate self-assessment

– Coordinator should not be the unit leader; ideally, appoint someone outside the unit

Identify and invite members of the institutional community to participate

– Internal and external composition could include:
  • 1 staff member from elsewhere in the division
  • 1 staff member from outside the division
  • 1 faculty member
  • 1 student
Assemble and Educate Team

– Recommended size of team
  • 3-5 members for a single functional area, comprised of stakeholders including students
  • 8-10 members for a large diverse department or division, comprised of stakeholders including students
Assemble and Educate Team

• Include representatives from key stakeholder groups
• Think about the power dynamics
• Which set-up works best for the personalities and experience level of your group?
  – Chair, Co-chairs, Chair and Vice Chair, Others?
Assemble and Educate Team

Make sure the team…

• Reviews the standards/criteria being used for the self-assessment
• Arrives at consensus about rating scale definitions
• Agrees on guidelines for discussions
• Discusses expectations for timeline, responsibilities, and process
• Discusses the expectations for the group’s final product
Assemble and Educate Team

• Hold a training session
  – Establish team ground rules
  – Review standards and guidelines
  – Discuss meaning of each standard
  – Establish team’s inter-rater reliability
    • Discuss, consider, and set criteria
    • Build a common language (i.e. “partly meets,” “meets,” standards)
Assemble and Educate Team

- Encourage team discussion, expect disagreements, and commit to consensus-based resolution
- Make sure the team has a big-picture understanding of the responsibilities of the area being reviewed (e.g., some stakeholders may only be aware of some of this work)
- Communicate expectations for the group’s final product
Identify, Collect, and Review Evidence
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Design process for compiling evidence and data (Unit)
Identify, Collect, and Review Evidence

Gather evidence and data (Unit)

– Use relevant data and related documentation
– Routinely collect and file data that can be used to document program effectiveness over time
– Needed evidence will vary depending on what’s being evaluated
Documentary Evidence to Support Evaluative Judgments

- Student Recruitment and Marketing Materials
- Program Documents
- Institutional Administrative Documents
- Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Data
- Staff Activity Reports
- Student Activity Reports
Conduct and Interpret Ratings Using Evaluative Evidence
Conduct and Interpret Ratings Using Evaluative Evidence

• A two-tiered judgment approach (individual and group) to determine the extent to which the program meets the CAS Standards is suggested

• Individual ratings should be reviewed and translated into a collective rating before the team moves to the interpretation phase of the self-assessment
Conduct and Interpret Ratings Using Evaluative Evidence

• Interpretation incorporates discussion among team members to ensure that all aspects of the program were given fair consideration prior to a final collective judgment

• After the team review is completed, meet with administrators, staff members, and student leaders to review self-assessment results
Develop an Action Plan
Develop an Action Plan

- Respond to the Overview Questions at the end of each rating section
- Identify good practice and areas of improvement
- Make recommendations for next steps
- Articulate recommendations, resources, timeframe, and responsible individuals
Develop an Action Plan

Programmatic Action Plan

• Detail actions required for the program to meet all standards
• Identify areas that need follow-up because they are less than satisfactory
• List resources necessary for program enhancements
• Include a timeline and deadline
• Identify person/people responsible for completing the work
• Final reports due
Develop an Action Plan

Strategic Action Plan

- Complete a full review of each program/service every 3-5 years
- Conduct mini-reviews of units between years
- Gather data and information about programs/services between larger-scale reviews
- Incorporate self-assessment tasks in ongoing projects
- Use CAS self-assessment findings and data to inform future strategic planning efforts
Prepare the Report

• With whom does this information need to be shared? Are there multiple groups?
• Select most effective format(s)
  – Full report
  – Brief report/executive summary
  – Video
  – Presentation
Prepare the Report

• Explain the mission, purpose, and philosophy of department/unit
• Summarize the findings including strengths and areas for improvement
• Make recommendations for strengthening/improving the program
Close the Loop
Close the Loop and Manage Change

- Make a plan for incorporating recommendations of review
- Identify specific actions for program enhancement, including action plan
- Communicate that plan
- Align actions with strategic plans
- Request resources as needed
Tips and Lessons
Tips and Lessons from CAS Self-Assessment/Program Review Users

- CAS materials are flexible – use as needed
- Leadership is critical
- Plan for administrative support
- Be clear regarding work load expectations
- Detailed timelines are critical
- Evidence/Data is key
  - Can shorten the self-study timeframe if data and evidence is gathered ahead of time
  - When compiling evidence, pull ‘representative examples’
Tips and Lessons Continued . . .

- Team members may be afraid to be honest when rating – help them understand how self-assessment enhances programs
- Allow staff to implement changes
- Define your rating scale
- Document the rationale/justification for your rating/evaluation
- Leave yourself time at the end to revisit ratings/areas that you struggled with the first time around
Tips and Lessons Continued . . .

• Incorporating informational interviews can be a powerful way to fill gaps in the committee’s knowledge
CAS Information and Resources
CAS Resources

- 10th Edition of *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education*
- DIY Guide
- Cross-Functional Frameworks
- Multifunctional Area Review Process
- Faculty Resources
- White Papers
- Developing and Assessing Outcomes (formerly FALDOs)
Connect with CAS

• User Groups
  Two-year college professionals: https://www.facebook.com/groups/839932356171547/

  Four-year college professionals: https://www.facebook.com/groups/116147689018883/

• Facebook
  https://www.facebook.com/CAS.Standards/

• Twitter
  https://twitter.com/CAS_Standards

• YouTube
  https://www.youtube.com/user/CASstandards
For More Information

• Visit www.cas.edu
• Self-Assessment Guides
  – Also available through CAS website
  – Available through Campus Labs Program Review
• CAS Resource Center at http://www.cas.edu/resources.asp