Council for the
Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

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We are pleased you are interested in the Standards and Guidelines developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). This CAS member association has permission to post a link to this standard on their website. Standards are developed through a consensus model of member associations and other experts, including the association on whose page this link is found. You are invited to use the attached CAS statement in the design and assessment of your programs and for your staff training and development. *This statement may not be duplicated for other purposes without permission from CAS.*

This standard and all other standards are available along with information on self-assessment procedures in the most recent edition of the ***CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education*** book. You are particularly encouraged to examine the learning and developmental outcomes (see www.cas.edu and in the standards book) in the design and assessment of your programs.

This standard has a Self Assessment Guide (SAG) available for purchase from www.cas.edu for use in program evaluation.

CAS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is to promote the improvement of programs and services to enhance the quality of student learning and development. CAS is a consortium of professional associations who work collaboratively to develop and promulgate standards and guidelines and to encourage self-assessment.

CAS STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Each CAS standard contains 12 common criteria categories (referred to as "general standards") that have relevance for each and every functional area, no matter what its primary focus. In addition to the general standards, all functional area standards are comprised of both specialty standards and guidelines. All standards use the auxiliary verbs "**must**" and "**shall**" and appear in **bold print** so that users can quickly identify them. Guidelines are designed to provide 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. CAS guidelines appear in regular font and use the auxiliary verbs "should" and "may."

OVER THIRTY YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has been the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs since its inception in 1979. For the ultimate purpose of fostering and enhancing student learning, development, and achievement and in general to promote good citizenship, CAS continues to create and deliver a dynamic and credible Book of Professional Standards and Guidelines and Self-Assessment Guides that are designed to lead to a host of quality-controlled programs and services. These standards respond to real-time student needs, the requirements of sound pedagogy, and the effective management of 43 functional areas, consistent with institutional missions. Individuals and institutions from nearly 40 CAS member organizations comprise a professional constituency of over 100,000 professionals.

DISCLAIMER

The standards and guidelines published in "The Book of Professional Standards for Higher Education" by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and referred to in each of the "CAS Self-Assessment Guides" (SAGs) are developed through the voluntary efforts of leaders of professional associations in higher education. The purpose of the standards and guidelines is to identify criteria and principles by which institutions may choose to assess and enhance various areas of their academic, administrative, or student affairs programs and services. CAS specifically disclaims any liability or responsibility for any perceived or actual shortcomings inherent in the text or application of the standards. Further, CAS does not certify individuals nor accredit programs. No institution, whether it has met some or all of the CAS standards, is authorized to indicate that it is "approved, endorsed, certified, or otherwise sanctioned by CAS." Institutions that have conducted a self-assessment of one or more functional areas addressed by CAS Standards and Guidelines using the appropriate CAS Self-Assessment Guide (SAG) may, where that self-assessment provides evidence that an institution meets these standards, are free to make accurate representations to the effect that the designated program or service meets the CAS Standards.

Direct your questions to the CAS Executive Office, One Dupont Circle NW Suite 300 Washington, DC 20036-1188, 202-862-1400, (email contact: Marybeth Drechsler Sharp, Executive Director, www.cas.edu)

The Role of Recreational Sports Programs

CAS Standards Contextual Statement

The concept and practice of providing activities to enhance student growth during college is grounded in various student developmental theories and postulates. Among the most noted are theories related to identity development (Chickering, 1969; Marcia, 1966); cognitive process (Perry, 1968), moral development (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Gilligan, 1982); spirituality and authenticity (Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006); interpersonal and intrapersonal changes (Knefelkamp, Widick, & Parker, 1978); and gender identity (McCewan, 1996). Student services practice also focuses on involvement and engagement in on and off-campus curricular and co-curricular activities as a method to enhance student retention and success (Astin, 1984; Pascarella & Terrenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1994). *Learning Reconsidered* provided and galvanized the recent focus on student service based learning by defining learning as "a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development, processes that have often been considered separate and even independent of each other" (American College Personnel Association & National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 2004, p. 2). The context in which development, engagement, and learning occurs on a college campus is important and ranges from the curricular offerings connected with academic units to those associated with co-curricular units provided by a myriad of student services, including recreational sports.

Student involvement in sports activities has been part of the college experience since the earliest days of the colonial colleges. Organized by students, sports activities were considered a diversion from the rigors of academic life and limited to competitive activities between classmates within the institution. More formalized "intramurals," a term derived from the Latin words *intra*, meaning within, and *muralis*, meaning walls, began in U.S. colleges and universities during the 19th century and were, for the first part of that century, almost exclusively the only form of structured competition for students (Mueller, 1971). By the century's mid-point interest in competitive sport intensified and intercollegiate athletics was born, overshadowing intramural contests as the primary sport engagement focus on campus.

A resurgence of the intramural movement occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and was formalized by the construction of the first dedicated intramural facilities in 1913, and the employment of professional staff members focused on providing increasingly popular sport related programs. The formation of a national professional organization for intramural sports directors first occurred in 1950 when the National Intramural Association (NIA) was formed (NIRSA, 2006e; Clark, 1978).

Over-time, intramural programs diversified to broader recreational pursuits and participation increased. The rise in popularity of aerobic exercise and a societal push toward greater gender equity, including implementation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, produced an influx of women into competitive athletics resulting in even higher levels of interest and participation for varied recreational pursuits. The NIA changed its name in 1975 to the National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) to reflect the "sport-for-all" mindset held by the organization's membership. Separate standards and guidelines for specializations are governed by professional organizations associated with the specific functional area and/or published by NIRSA. As programs continued to grow and gain both student and institutional support, additional multi-faceted facilities were built, many exclusively, for recreational sports

activities. By the late 1980s, the field of recreational sports witnessed a period of rapid growth in programs and the advent of new and better campus facilities for physical activities.

The beginning of the 21st Century found even greater expansion of collegiate recreational sports opportunities and facilities, reaching an estimated combined enrollment of 7.1 million students, with an estimated 5.3 million students considered heavy or regular users of established programs and facilities (NIRSA, 2005). New construction and refurbishing of existing facilities continues unabated and has helped to provide needed services to students to enhance their growth and maturation, particularly in the areas of health, fitness, and wellness. NIRSA reported that, between 2005–2010, at least $3.17 billion will be spent in new construction and renovations for indoor campus recreational sports facilities at 333 NIRSA member institutions at an average cost of $14.2 million. Total student enrollment for the reporting colleges and universities is 3.8 million (NIRSA, 2005).

During this period of tremendous growth, recreational sports programs experienced changed perceptions about institutional roles and standards of practice. Recreational sports programs are placed under the administrative auspices of a division of student affairs at 72 percent of NIRSA member institutions (Franklin, 2007), though some programs are found within a variety of other administrative structures including intercollegiate athletic departments, academic programs, and business units. NIRSA suggests that, while organizational designs vary among institutions, the full realization of recreational sports contributions to any campus depends upon institutional commitment to that endeavor.

NIRSA (2004) found that, at schools with established campus recreational sports departments, 75 percent of students participated in recreational sports programs and that participation in these programs was a key determinant of college satisfaction, success, recruitment, and retention. Student participation also encouraged the development of critical thinking skills and the creation of problem-solving strategies, honed decision-making skills, enhanced creativity, and promoted the synthesis and integration of information into all aspects of their lives. In this way, students both perform more effectively in an academic environment and flourish throughout all phases of the collegiate experience. Research also found that recreational sports programs contributed to the development of a student's positive self-image, awareness of strengths, increased tolerance and self-control, stronger social interaction skills, and maturity. These programs have been endorsed by institutions for their value in helping students maintain good physical and mental health by providing a respite from rigorous academic work and in teaching recreational skills with a carryover for leisure time exercise throughout life.

Viewed as an essential component of higher education, the field of recreational sports has grown into a dynamic organized profession contributing to the educational process through the enhancement of students' physical, mental, social, and emotional development. Recreational sports practitioners provide quality co-curricular opportunities to enhance the overall growth and development of students by remaining grounded to a commitment to student development and learning; a set of ethical codes and standards; and continuous professional improvement.

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RECREATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAMS

CAS Standards and Guidelines

Part 1. MISSION

The mission of Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be to enhance the mind, body, and spirit of students and other eligible individuals by providing programs, services, and facilities that are responsive to the physical, social, recreational, and lifelong educational needs of the campus community as they relate to health, fitness, and learning.

To accomplish this mission, RSP should

- provide programs and services for participants that are conducive to the development of holistic health, particularly fitness and wellness
- provide comprehensive programs and services in a variety of program formats that reflect and promote the diversity of participant interests, needs, and ability levels
- provide participation, employment, and leadership opportunities designed to enhance learning, growth, and development
- provide participation, employment, and leadership opportunities designed to increase interaction and understanding among individuals from various backgrounds
- contribute to the public relations efforts of the institution, including the recruitment and retention of students, faculty members, and staff members
- facilitate service-learning opportunities for students
- work in collaboration with academic units to facilitate professional preparation opportunities for students
- provide programs, facilities, and equipment that are delivered in a safe, healthy, clean, accessible, and enjoyable environment
- ensure the effective administration, operation, and stewardship of all aspects of the RSP, working in collaboration with other services, programs, campus affiliates (e.g., faculty, staff, alumni, guests, families, general public), and academic units where appropriate

RSP must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their missions. The mission must be consistent with the mission of the institution and with professional standards. The mission must be appropriate for the institution's student populations and community settings. Mission statements must reference student learning and development.

Part 2. PROGRAM

The formal education of students, consisting of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, must promote student learning and development outcomes that are purposeful, contribute to students' realization of their potential, and prepare students for satisfying and productive lives.

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must collaborate with colleagues and departments across the institution to promote student learning and development, persistence, and success.

Consistent with the institutional mission, RSP must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes from among the six domains and related dimensions:

Domain: knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application

- **Dimensions: understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences; constructing knowledge; and relating knowledge to daily life**

Domain: cognitive complexity

- **Dimensions: critical thinking, reflective thinking, effective reasoning, and creativity**

Domain: intrapersonal development

- **Dimensions: realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics and integrity; and spiritual awareness**

Domain: interpersonal competence

- **Dimensions: meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, and effective leadership.**

Domain: humanitarianism and civic engagement

- **Dimensions: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences, social responsibility, global perspective, and sense of civic responsibility**

Domain: practical competence

- **Dimensions: pursuing goals, communicating effectively, technical competence, managing personal affairs, managing career development, demonstrating professionalism, maintaining health and wellness, and living a purposeful and satisfying life**

[LD Outcomes: See *The Council for the Advancement of Standards Learning and Developmental Outcomes* statement for examples of outcomes related to these domains and dimensions.]

RSP must

- **assess relevant and desirable student learning and development**
- **provide evidence of impact on outcomes**
- **articulate contributions to or support of student learning and development in the domains not specifically assessed**

- **articulate contributions to or support of student persistence and success**
- **use evidence gathered through this process to create strategies for improvement of programs and services**

RSP must be

- **intentionally designed**
- **guided by theories and knowledge of learning and development**
- **integrated into the life of the institution**
- **reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population**
- **responsive to needs of individuals, populations with distinct needs, and relevant constituencies**
- **delivered using multiple formats, strategies, and contexts**

Where institutions provide distance education, RSP must assist distance learners to achieve their educational goals by providing access to information about programs and services, to staff members who can address questions and concerns, and to counseling, advising, or other forms of assistance.

RSP must reflect the needs and interests of students and other eligible users.

Valid indicators include needs assessment surveys, research findings, and documented best practices.

RSP, in collaboration with other campus units and community providers when appropriate, should design programs and services through participation, employment, volunteerism, and leadership opportunities to encourage, enhance, and highlight the value of learning outcomes.

RSP should utilize various program delivery formats including

- informal - to provide for self-directed, individualized approach to participation. Specific times and facility locations should be reserved to provide a variety of self-directed individual or small group participation opportunities.
- intramural - to provide structured contests, challenges, meets, tournaments, and leagues for participants within the institution
- club - to provide opportunities for individuals to organize around a common interest. Opportunities should be available to students for a variety of interests within or beyond the institution.
- instructional - to provide individualized or group learning opportunities, knowledge, and skills through activity sessions, lessons, clinics, workshops, and various media
- extramural - to provide structured tournaments, contests, and meets between campus participants and other institutions

In addition to these program formats, the RSP may utilize specialized designations to describe programs or service delivery, including aquatics, fitness, wellness, outdoor, special events, special populations, and facilities.

Program planning and implementation process must be inclusive and include

- equitable participation for men and women, with opportunities to participate at various levels of ability and disability
- interpretation of institutional policies and procedures
- a variety of opportunities that reflect and address cultural diversity
- participant involvement in shaping program content and procedures
- co-recreational activity with opportunities to participate at various levels of ability and disability

Program operational planning and implementation process must include

- participant safety through the use of rules, regulations, and facilities management
- effective risk management policies, procedures, and practices
- supervision of recreational sports activities and facilities
- facility coordination and scheduling
- consultation with groups and organizations for sport and fitness programming
- training of office and field staff
- conflict resolution management protocols
- procedures for the inventory, maintenance, and use and security of equipment
- recognition for participants, employees, and volunteers
- publicity, promotion, and media relations
- volunteerism in service delivery and leadership
- customer service practices
- promotion of socially responsible behaviors

Part 3. ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

To achieve student and program outcomes, Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be structured purposefully and organized effectively. RSP must have

- **clearly stated goals**
- **current and accessible policies and procedures**
- **written performance expectations for employees**
- **functional work flow graphics or organizational charts demonstrating clear channels of authority**

Leaders with organizational authority for the programs and services must provide strategic planning, supervision, and management; advance the organization; and maintain integrity through the following functions:

Strategic Planning

- **articulate a vision and mission that drive short- and long-term planning**
- **set goals and objectives based on the needs of the population served and desired student learning or development and program outcomes**
- **facilitate continuous development, implementation, and assessment of goal attainment congruent with institutional mission and strategic plans**
- **promote environments that provide meaningful opportunities for student learning, development, and engagement**
- **develop and continuously improve programs and services in response to the changing needs of students served and evolving institutional priorities**
- **intentionally include diverse perspectives to inform decision making**

Supervising

- **manage human resource processes including recruitment, selection, development, supervision, performance planning, evaluation, recognition, and reward**
- **influence others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the unit**
- **empower professional, support, and student staff to accept leadership opportunities**
- **offer appropriate feedback to colleagues and students on skills needed to become more effective leaders**
- **encourage and support professional development, collaboration with colleagues and departments across the institution, and scholarly contribution to the profession**

Managing

- **identify and address individual, organizational, and environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement**
- **plan, allocate, and monitor the use of fiscal, physical, human, intellectual, and technological resources**
- **use current and valid evidence to inform decisions**
- **incorporate sustainability practices in the management and design of programs, services, and facilities**
- **understand appropriate technologies and integrate them into programs and services**
- **be knowledgeable about codes and laws relevant to programs and services and ensure that staff members understand their responsibilities through appropriate training**
- **assess potential risks and take action to mitigate them**

Advancing the Organization

- **communicate effectively in writing, speaking, and electronic venues**
- **advocate for programs and services**
- **advocate for representation in strategic planning initiatives at appropriate divisional and institutional levels**
- **initiate collaborative interactions with internal and external stakeholders who have legitimate concerns about and interests in the functional area**
- **facilitate processes to reach consensus where wide support is needed**
- **inform other areas within the institution about issues affecting practice**

Maintaining Integrity

- **model ethical behavior and institutional citizenship**
- **share data used to inform key decisions in transparent and accessible ways**
- **monitor media used for distributing information about programs and services to ensure the content is current, accurate, appropriately referenced, and accessible**

RSP leaders also must

- **empower student staff and participants to build their own leadership skills**

- **value diversity through effective recruitment and retention of professional and student staff**
- **identify organization values and innovative opportunities**
- **establish risk management, technology, and marketing plans**
- **establish strategic, operational, and resource utilization plans**
- **manage facility resources**
- **advocate for financial and physical resources**

RSP leaders must educate other institutional leaders about the significant differences in mission among intercollegiate athletics, physical education and recreation academic units, and the recreational sports programs.

Leaders should establish effective working relationships throughout their institution, with special emphasis on those units that impact, affect, or support the mission of the RSP. Leaders should actively seek opportunities for collaboration that may result in partnerships that benefit the institution as well as the RSP.

Members of the campus community should be involved in the selection, design, governance, and administration of programs and facilities. Students and other eligible users may be involved through participant, employee, and living unit committees, councils, and boards.

The organizational placement of recreational sports within the institution should ensure the accomplishment of the program's mission.

To fulfill its mission and goals effectively, RSP must maintain well-structured management functions, including planning, personnel, property and risk management, emergency response, purchasing, contract administration, marketing, financial control, and information systems.

A short and long range planning document that specifies goals, objectives, student learning outcomes, strategies, and timelines should be developed to provide direction for the program. This plan should be reviewed annually.

Purchasing and property management procedures should be designed to ensure value for money spent, security for equipment and supplies, and maintenance of property inventories.

Other areas for consideration in determining structure and management of the RSP should include

- size, nature, and mission of the institution
- scope of recreational sports programs
- philosophy and method of service delivery
- financial resources
- availability and characteristics of facilities

Part 4. HUMAN RESOURCES

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish mission and goals.

Within institutional guidelines, RSP must

- **establish procedures for staff recruitment and selection, training, performance planning, and evaluation**
- **set expectations for supervision and performance**
- **assess the performance of employees individually and as a team**
- **provide access to continuing and advanced education and appropriate professional development opportunities to improve the leadership ability, competence, and skills of all employees.**

RSP must maintain position descriptions for all staff members.

To create a diverse staff, RSP must institute recruitment and hiring strategies that encourage individuals from under-represented populations to apply for positions.

RSP must develop promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and non-discriminatory.

To further the recruitment and retention of staff, RSP must consider work life initiatives, such as compressed work schedules, flextime, job sharing, remote work, or telework.

RSP professional staff members must hold an earned graduate or professional degree in a field relevant to the position they hold or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.

RSP professional staff members must engage in continuing professional development activities to keep abreast of the research, theories, legislation, policies, and developments that affect their programs and services.

RSP must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish their mission. All members of the staff must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions, be knowledgeable about ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training and resources to support the performance of their assigned responsibilities.

Technical and support staff includes those positions with an expertise in such areas as customer service, facility/equipment maintenance and operations, marketing, information technology, fundraising, research, and business services.

Degree- or credential-seeking interns or graduate assistants must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and by relevant experience. These individuals must be trained and supervised adequately by professional staff members holding educational credentials and related work experience appropriate for supervision. Supervisors must be cognizant of the roles of interns and graduate assistants as both student and employee and closely adhere to all parameters of their job descriptions, work hours, and schedules. Supervisors and the interns or

graduate assistants must agree to compensatory time or other appropriate compensation if circumstances necessitate additional hours.

RSP should provide graduate assistant and/or internship opportunities to enhance professional preparation experiences. Desirable characteristics of interns and graduate assistants should include: knowledge of the principles and philosophy of recreational sports, demonstrated skills on leadership and communication, a well-developed sense of responsibility, sensitivity to individual differences, academic success, enthusiasm for working with students, and an understanding of current issues facing students.

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. They must be educated on how and when to refer those in need of additional assistance to qualified staff members and must have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments. Student employees and volunteers must be provided clear job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing development.

RSP should develop mechanisms designed to recognize employees and volunteers. These efforts should recognize contributions, improvements, and involvement.

All RSP staff members, including student employees and volunteers, must receive specific training on institutional policies pertaining to functions or activities they support and to privacy and confidentiality policies and laws regarding access to student records and other sensitive institutional information.

All RSP staff members must receive training on policies and procedures related to the use of technology to store or access student records and institutional data.

RSP must ensure that staff members are knowledgeable about and trained in emergency procedures, crisis response, and prevention efforts. Prevention efforts must address identification of threatening conduct or behavior of students, faculty and staff members, and others and must incorporate a system for responding and reporting.

RSP must ensure that staff members are knowledgeable of and trained in safety and emergency procedures for securing and vacating facilities.

Part 5. ETHICS

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must review relevant professional ethical standards and must adopt or develop and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice.

RSP must publish and adhere to statements of ethical practice and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

RSP must orient new staff members to relevant ethical standards and statements of ethical practice and related institutional policies.

Ethical standard statements utilized by relevant professional associations should be reviewed in the formulation of RSP ethical standards.

Statements of ethical standards must specify that staff members respect privacy and maintain confidentiality in all communications and records to the extent that such communications and records are protected under relevant privacy laws.

Statements of ethical standards must specify limits on disclosure of information contained in students' educational records as well as requirements to disclose to appropriate authorities.

Statements of ethical standards must address personal and economic conflicts of interest, or appearance thereof, by staff members in the performance of their work.

Statements of ethical standards must reflect the responsibility of staff members to be fair, objective, and impartial in their interactions with others.

Statements of ethical standards must reference management of institutional funds.

Statements of ethical standards must reference appropriate behavior regarding research and assessment with human participants, confidentiality of research and assessment data, and students' rights and responsibilities.

Statements of ethical standards must include the expectation that RSP staff members confront and hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

Statements of ethical standards must address issues surrounding scholarly integrity.

As appropriate, RSP staff members must inform users of programs and services of ethical obligations and limitations emanating from codes and laws or from licensure requirements.

RSP staff members must recognize and avoid conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their judgment or objectivity and, when unavoidable, recuse themselves from the situation.

RSP staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their position, training, expertise, and competence.

When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

Promotional and descriptive information must be accurate and free of deception.

RSP must adhere to institutional policies regarding ethical and legal use of software and technology.

Part 6. LAW, POLICY, AND GOVERNANCE

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be in compliance with laws, regulations, and policies that relate to their respective responsibilities and that pose legal obligations, limitations, risks, and liabilities for the institution as a whole. Examples include constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; relevant law and orders emanating from codes and laws; and the institution's policies.

To address and minimize the risks inherent in RSP, a comprehensive risk management plan must be implemented.

Development and implementation of a risk management plan should include: identification of appropriate certifications, training and development of personnel, development and implementation of emergency action and critical incident plans, accident care and documentation, participant waivers and consents, participant conduct policies, and the inspection, supervision, and care of facilities and equipment.

RSP must inform staff members, appropriate officials, and users of programs and services about existing and changing legal obligations, risks and liabilities, and limitations.

RSP must have written policies on all relevant operations, transactions, or tasks that have legal implications.

RSP must regularly review policies. The revision and creation of policies must be informed by best practices, available evidence, and policy issues in higher education.

RSP staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution and its officers, employees, and agents. RSP staff members must be informed about institutional policies regarding risk management, personal liability, and related insurance coverage options and must be referred to external sources if the institution does not provide coverage.

The institution must provide access to legal advice for staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

Recreational sports professionals should understand legal responsibilities related to individual rights and liability including but not limited to due process, employment procedures, equal opportunity, civil rights and liberties, and liability of wrongful or negligent acts.

RSP should conduct a periodic audit of its policies and practices with university counsel and risk management officials.

RSP must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for responding to threats, emergencies, and crisis situations. Systems and procedures must be in place to disseminate timely and accurate information to students, other

members of the institutional community, and appropriate external organizations during emergency situations.

RSP staff members must neither participate in nor condone any form of harassment or activity that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

RSP must obtain permission to use copyrighted materials and instruments. RSP must purchase the materials and instruments from legally compliant sources or seek alternative permission from the publisher or owner. References to copyrighted materials and instruments must include appropriate citations.

RSP staff members must be knowledgeable about internal and external governance systems that affect programs and services.

Part 7. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND ACCESS

Within the context of each institution's unique mission and in accordance with institutional polices and all applicable codes and laws, Recreational Sports Programs (RPS) must create and maintain educational and work environments that are

- **welcoming, accessible, and inclusive to persons of diverse backgrounds**
- **equitable and non-discriminatory**
- **free from harassment**

RSP must not discriminate on the basis of ability; age; cultural identity; ethnicity; family educational history (e.g., first generation to attend college); gender identity and expression; nationality; political affiliation; race; religious affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; economic, marital, social, or veteran status; or any other basis included in institutional policies and codes and laws.

RSP must

- **advocate for greater sensitivity to multicultural and social justice concerns by the institution and its personnel**
- **modify or remove policies, practices, facilities, structures, systems, and technologies that limit access, discriminate, or produce inequities**
- **include diversity, equity, and access initiatives within their strategic plans**
- **foster communication that deepens understanding of identity, culture, self-expression, and heritage**
- **promote respect about commonalities and differences among people within their historical and cultural contexts**
- **address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing culturally relevant and inclusive programs, services, policies, procedures, and practices**
- **provide staff members with access to multicultural training and hold staff members accountable for integrating the training into their work**
- **respond to the needs of all students and other populations served when establishing hours of operation and developing methods of delivering programs, services, and resources**

- **ensure physical, program, and resource access for persons with disabilities**
- **recognize the needs of distance learning students by providing appropriate and accessible services and resources or by assisting them in gaining access to other appropriate services and resources in their geographic region**

RSP must adhere to applicable government standards and legal directives regarding access.

RSP must define the eligible user population, with consideration given to such groups as undergraduate and graduate students, faculty members, staff, retirees, alumni, and the general public.

RSP should
- consider the impact of fees and charges on access to programs and services
- participate in establishing institutional facility scheduling policies to support and encourage appropriate and equitable utilization of resources

In support of diversity, RSP must
- **publish, post, and circulate a statement to articulate a commitment to diversity in programs, services, and staffing**
- **recruit, hire, and seek to retain a diverse professional and student staff**
- **include diversity education for its employees and volunteers**
- **reach out to diverse and under-represented populations through such means as surveys, assessments, focus groups, and campus organizations to identify needs and interests used in program design and delivery and in student employment practices**

Part 8. INSTITUTIONAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must reach out to relevant individuals, groups, communities, and organizations internal and external to the institution to
- **establish, maintain, and promote understanding and effective relations with those that have a significant interest in or potential effect on the students or other constituents served by the programs and services**
- **garner support and resources for programs and services as defined by the mission statement**
- **disseminate information about the programs and services**
- **collaborate, where appropriate, to assist in offering or improving programs and services to meet the needs of students and other constituents and to achieve program and student outcomes**
- **engage diverse individuals, groups, communities, and organizations to enrich the educational environment and experiences of students and other constituents**

RSP must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for
- **communicating with the media**
- **contracting with external organizations for delivery of programs and services**
- **cultivating, soliciting, and managing gifts**

- **applying to and managing funds from grants**

RSP should establish advisory councils to facilitate communication and collaboration with other campus and community units to improve programs and services. Representatives should be solicited from a variety of units and should represent diverse users. This may include representatives from student organizations, student union, clinical health services, health promotion services, counseling services, campus information visitor services, career services, student government, faculty and staff governance councils, conference services, residence halls/apartments, cultural centers, fraternity and sorority affairs, academics, campus police/public safety, athletics, alumni affairs, financial affairs, and physical plant. Community organizations may include hospitals and recreation and fitness centers.

Part 9. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have funding to accomplish the mission and goals. In establishing funding priorities and making significant changes, a comprehensive analysis must be conducted to determine the following elements: unmet needs of the unit, relevant expenditures, external and internal resources, and impact on students and the institution.

RSP must demonstrate efficient and effective use and responsible stewardship of fiscal resources consistent with institutional protocols.

Institutional funds for RSP should be allocated to ensure long-term viability. Sources of income may include governmental appropriations, student fees (e.g., general, recreational, or health), user fees, donations, contributions, sponsorships, fines, entry fees, rentals, grants, contracts, dues, concessions, and retail sales.

If student funds from any source are dedicated to RSP, those funds should be designated for programs and services that directly benefit students, and the students should retain first priority for the use of facilities, programs, equipment, and services.

The budget process must include consideration of all expenses that are incurred in order to produce a quality RSP.

Expenses include but are not limited to programs and operations, human resource processes and labor costs, support area expenses (e.g., technology, facility support, member services, marketing, research and development), equipment replacement, capital improvement, administrative cost recovery, and reserve account allocations.

Expenditures should be based upon departmental and institutional goals and protocols, periodic needs assessments, and cost/benefit analysis.

All members of RSP staff should be accountable for financial and other resources.

Part 10. TECHNOLOGY

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have adequate technology to support the achievement of their mission and goals. The technology and its use must comply with institutional policies and procedures and be evaluated for compliance with relevant codes and laws.

RSP must use current technology to provide updated information regarding mission, location, staffing, programs, services, and official contacts to students and designated clients.

RSP must explore the use of technology to enhance delivery of programs and services, especially for students at a distance or external constituencies.

When technology is used to facilitate student learning and development, RSP must select technology that reflects intended outcomes.

RSP must

- **maintain policies and procedures that address the security, confidentiality, and backup of data, as well as compliance with privacy laws**
- **have clearly articulated plans in place for protecting confidentiality and security of information when using Internet-based technologies**
- **develop plans for replacing and updating existing hardware and software as well as plans for integrating new technically-based or supported programs, including systems developed internally by the institution, systems available through professional associations, or private vendor-based systems**

Technology, as well as workstations or computer labs maintained by programs and services for student use, must be accessible to all designated clients and must meet established technology standards for delivery to persons with disabilities.

When providing student access to technology, RSP must

- **have policies on the use of technology that are clear, easy to understand, and available to all students**
- **provide assistance, information, or referral to appropriate support services to those needing help accessing or using technology**
- **provide instruction or training on how to use the technology**
- **inform students on the legal and ethical implications of misuse as it pertains to intellectual property, harassment, privacy, and social networks**

Student violations of technology policies must follow established institutional student disciplinary procedures.

Students who experience negative emotional or psychological consequences from the use of technology must be referred to support services provided by the institution.

Part 11. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have adequate, accessible, and suitably located facilities and equipment to support the mission and goals. If acquiring capital equipment as defined by the institution, RSP must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and life cycle costs. Facilities and equipment must be evaluated on an established cycle, including consideration of sustainability, and be in compliance with codes and laws to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

RSP staff members must have workspace that is well equipped, adequate in size, and designed to support their work and responsibilities. For conversations requiring privacy, staff members must have access to a private space.

RSP staff members who share workspace must be able to secure their own work.

The design of the facilities must guarantee the security and privacy of records and ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information.

The location and layout of the facilities must be sensitive to the needs of persons with disabilities as well as the needs of other constituencies.

The institution must provide adequate indoor and outdoor facilities with a documented facility usage schedule that includes prioritized blocks of time for RSP to accommodate the needs and interests of the campus community. The use of the facilities must be coordinated to provide efficient and effective utilization.

The schedule should be disseminated to all user groups and reviewed periodically.

Institutions should use available research and assessment data when assessing facility needs. Consideration should be given to sustainability and to a balance of facilities that support the program delivery formats of RSP. Examples of such facilities include swimming pools, strength and cardiovascular training facilities, multi-purpose activity spaces, multi-use fields, nature trails, group exercise and dance rooms, challenge adventure facilities, martial arts mat/studio rooms, personal training rooms, mind-body studios, health and wellness labs, skateboard and rollerblade venues, and racquet sport courts. Facilities should provide activity areas that are diverse as well as flexible and spaces for such support activities as offices, member services, repair rooms, locker/shower rooms, and storage.

Social space should be provided for users to encourage socialization and an inclusive environment. Examples of such facilities include lounges, lobbies, or food service areas.

Renovation, design, and development of facilities must adhere to applicable laws.

RSP may also refer to separate standards and guidelines for specializations governed by professional organizations for the use of facilities.

Technology resources including software and hardware as well as resources for training should be available to support RSP.

RSP must provide equipment adequate to meet the needs of participants.

Institutions should use available research and other assessment data when assessing technology and equipment needs.

RSP must require personal protective equipment and safety devices as appropriate.

Processes must be established for determining needs, inspecting, cleaning, maintaining, repairing, and replacing equipment.

RSP must establish appropriate policies and procedures for responding to emergency situations, especially where RSP facilities, personnel, and resources could assist the institution.

Part 12. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have a clearly articulated assessment plan to document achievement of stated goals and learning outcomes, demonstrate accountability, provide evidence of improvement, and describe resulting changes in programs and services.

RSP must have adequate fiscal, human, professional development, and technological resources to develop and implement assessment plans.

Assessments must include direct and indirect evaluation and use qualitative and quantitative methodologies and existing evidence, as appropriate, to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission, goals, and intended outcomes are being met as effectively and efficiently as possible. The process must employ sufficient and sound measures to ensure comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other constituencies, and aggregated results must be shared with those groups. Results of assessments must be shared appropriately with multiple constituents.

Evaluation procedures should yield evidence relative to student/staff recruitment and retention, the achievement of program goals, scope of program offerings, responsiveness to expressed interests, program attendance and effectiveness, participant satisfaction, cost effectiveness, quality of facilities, equipment use and maintenance, staff performance, recruitment and retention, and data as a result of benchmarking against other programs.

Data sources should include student and other eligible users and nonusers. Data should include program evaluations and internal or external assessments and should be maintained in the office of the RSP administrator. They should be accessible to planners of subsequent programs.

RSP should pursue best practices and meaningful research to review and improve programs and services.

Results of assessments and evaluations must be used to identify needs and interests in revising and improving programs and services, recognizing staff performance,

maximizing resource efficiency and effectiveness, improving student achievement of learning and development outcomes, and improving student persistence and success. Changes resulting from the use of assessments and evaluation must be shared with stakeholders.

General Standards revised in 2011;
RSP content developed/revised in 1986, 1996, & 2007