Intended Outcomes

Become acquainted with:

- CAS as an organization and its standards and guidelines
- CAS process for self-study and the use of the Self-Assessment Guide
Understanding CAS
Mission of CAS

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.

- Promulgates standards and guidelines for practice and preparation
- Promotes assessment in educational practice
- Promotes the use of standards in practice
- Promotes quality assurance within higher education
History of CAS

- Founded in 1979
- First book of standards published in 1986
- A consortium of 45 professional organizations in the U.S. and Canada
- Constituency of over 100,000
- Member associations can send a Director and an Alternate Director to the meeting of the CAS Board of Directors
- Consensus-oriented, collaborative
- Focused on quality programs and services for students
- Guide practice by student services, student development, and student support service providers
CAS Fundamental Elements About Self-Assessment

- Internally driven
- Provides useful information
- Provides reasonably accurate information
- Is systematic & regular
- Is effective in terms of time, cost, etc.
- Charts quality program development & professionalism
- Develops a shared vision among constituents
- Guides solid staff development
- Relies on honesty with meticulous evaluation
- Assembles results into an action plan for improvement
Format of CAS Standards & Guidelines
Organization of CAS Standards & Component Parts

Contextual Statement

Standards

1. Mission
2. Program
3. Organization & Leadership
4. Human Resources
5. Ethics
6. Law, Policy, and Governance
7. Diversity, Equity, and Access
8. Institutional and External Relations
9. Financial Resources
10. Technology
11. Facilities and Equipment
12. Assessment and Evaluation

Self-Assessment Guide (SAG)
CAS Standards

- Standards and guidelines are basic statements that should be achievable by any program in any institution when adequate and appropriate effort, energy, and resources are applied.

- Standards reflect a level of good program practice generally agreed upon by the profession at large.
Understanding CAS Standards

CAS Standards . . .

• Represent **indispensable** requirements of practice
• Are achievable by all programs
• Appear in **BOLD** print
• Use auxiliary verbs **must** and **shall**
Understanding CAS Standards

Example:

Standard (BOLD type)

Auxiliary verb MUST or SHALL

To support the institution’s mission and goals, Career Services MUST provide faculty and staff and administrative units with information, guidance, and support on career development and employment issues and linkages with the broader community.
Understanding CAS Guidelines

CAS Guidelines . . .

- Clarify & amplify standards
- Guides enhanced practice beyond essential functions
- Appear in light-faced or regular type
- Use verbs should and may
Understanding CAS Guidelines

Example:
Guideline (LIGHT-FACED type)
Auxiliary verb SHOULD or MAY

Career Services should support faculty and staff and administrative units by:

✓ Identifying and disseminating information on employment trends, top employing organizations, and co-op and internship sponsors.
Standards and Guidelines

Standards
- Indispensable Requirements
  - Achievable by any and all programs of quality
  - Appear in **bold** type
  - Use verbs “must” and “shall”

Guidelines
- Clarify and Amplify Standards
  - Guide and enhance practice beyond essential function
  - Appear in light-face type
  - Use verbs “should” and “may”
CAS Process for Self-Assessment
CAS Self-Assessment Process

Six Steps of the Self-Assessment Process

1. Assemble Working Team (completed)
2. Educate Team
3. Initiate Self-Study, Review Evidence & Conduct Rating
4. Complete Action Plan
5. Prepare a Descriptive Report
6. Close the Loop
Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)

Self-Assessment Guides

- Translates CAS standards into an effective workbook format to enable self-assessment
- Is used for self-assessment of a program’s strengths and weaknesses and the development of an action plan
- Are organized into the fourteen components of the CAS Standards
- SAGs offer a ready format for evaluation
- In most instances, there are multiple criterion statements for each standard
- Each criterion measure focuses on a particular aspect of the standard, allowing raters to express more detailed and specific judgments
Part 1. Mission

Programs and services 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.

Criterion Measures

1.1 The program
   1.1.1 develops, disseminates, and implements its mission
   1.1.2 regularly reviews its mission

1.2 The mission statement
   1.2.1 is consistent with that of the institution
   1.2.2 is consistent with professional standards
   1.2.3 is appropriate for student populations and community settings
   1.2.4 references learning and development

Part 1. Mission Overview Questions

1. What is the program mission?
2. How does the mission embrace student learning and development?
3. In what ways does the program mission complement the mission of the institution?
CAS Self-Assessment Process

- ND: Does Not Apply
- 0: Insufficient Evidence or Unable to Rate
- 1: Does Not Meet
- 2: Partially Meets
- 3: Meets
- 4: Exceeds
- 5: Is Exemplary
CAS Self-Assessment Process

Educate Team

- Establish team ground rules
- Role of Student Services Staff vs. Team Raters
- Discuss meaning of each standard
- Establish team’s inter-rater reliability
  - Discuss, consider & set criteria
  - Build a common language, i.e. “well met”, “full met”, standards, guidelines
- Encourage team discussion; expect disagreements; commit to consensual resolution
- Adapt to institution
CAS Self-Assessment Process Cont.

Initiate Self-Study, Review Evidence & Conduct Rating

- Should rate all standards (in bold type), but sometimes a standard won’t apply (rarely)
- Review evidence and conduct rating
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

- Summary 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
- Comparative or benchmark data at local, regional or national level
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
CAS Self-Assessment Process

Initiate Self-Study, Review Evidence & Conduct Rating

- Team uses scale based on established criteria
- Individuals rate each and every criterion measure and then gather consensus
CAS Self-Assessment Process

Complete an Action Plan

- Respond to the Overview Questions at the end of each rating section
  - Designed to stimulate summary thinking about overarching issues
- Identify areas of program strength (Work Form A)
  - Where excellent performance or accomplishment exceeds criterion and is viewed as excellent or exemplary
- Identify areas of program weakness (Work Form A)
  - Program shortcomings that fail to meet criterion measures and/or rating discrepancies among raters of two point or more
  - Viewed as unsatisfactory by at least one rater
- Describe practices requiring follow-up (Work Form A)
  - Note criterion measure numbers deemed less than satisfactory and describe practice shortcomings that need to be strengthened
CAS Self-Assessment Process

Your job is done!

Congratulations!