In this document, you will learn how to use the CAS Standards and their associated Self-Assessment Guides (SAGS) to evaluate programs and services. You will then learn how to use the Frameworks for Assessing Learning & Development Outcomes (FALDOs) to assess student learning.

**What are CAS Standards?**

- They are professional standards for student services, academic support programs, and related programs and services.
- CAS Standards are used to conduct self-assessment of programs and services.
- The standards are used to improve programs and services by providing objective self-assessment of a program’s strengths and areas of needed improvement.
- CAS was created through collaboration between ACPA and NASPA. These standards have been approved by over 35 member associations (the US and Canada) representing over 100,000 members.
What is your CAS Functional Area?

CAS has 41 Functional Areas pertaining to programs in Student Affairs (the 41st FA is the Masters-Level Graduate Programs for Student Affairs). 40 of the Functional Areas have Self-Assessment Guides called “SAGs”. So, there are 40 sets of standards, 40 Self-Assessment Guides.

1: Academic Advising
2: Admission Programs
3: Adult Learner Programs
4: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Programs
5: Assessment Services
6: Auxiliary Services
7: Campus Activities Programs
8: Campus Information and Visitor Services
9: Campus Religious & Spiritual Programs
10: Career Services
11: Clinical Health Services
12: College Honor Societies
13: College Unions
14: Commuter and Off-Campus Living Programs
15: Conference and Events Programs
16: Counseling Services
17: Dining Services
18: Disability Support Services
19: Distance Education Programs
20: Educ. Abroad Programs and Services
21: Financial Aid
22: Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs
23: Graduate and Professional Student Programs
24: Health Promotion Services
25: Housing and Residential Life Programs
26: International Student Programs
27: Internship Programs
28: Learning Assistance Programs
29: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs
30: Master’s Level Student Affairs Administration Preparation Programs
31: Multicultural Student Programs and Services
32: Orientation Programs
33: Parent and Family Programs
34: Recreational Sports Programs
35: Registrar Programs and Services
36: Service-Learning Programs
37: Student Conduct Programs
38: Student Leadership Programs
39: TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity Programs
40: Undergraduate Research Programs
41: Women Student Programs
CAS standards vs. guidelines

Do you know the difference between a standard and a guideline? What do you think might be the difference?

Standards:
- are in bold text,
- use "must" and "shall" verbs, and
- are required of the program or service.

Guidelines:
- appear as regular text (not in bold),
- use "should" and "may" verbs,
- are not required practice within the program or service, and
- clarify and amplify standards

Here is an example. The following are examples of a standard and a guideline taken from the functional area of Fraternity and Sorority Advising.

(Standard)

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

(Guideline)

- Appropriate preparatory graduate level course work may include organizational behavior and development, oral and written communication, research and evaluation, ethics, appraisal of educational practices, group dynamics, budgeting, counseling techniques, leadership development, learning and human development theories, higher education administration, performance appraisal and supervision, administrative uses of computers, legal issues in higher education, and student affairs functions.
Each CAS Standards has 14 sections

Each CAS Functional Area has these 14 sections that have associated self-assessment guides (SAGS).

1) Mission 8) Legal responsibilities  
2) Program 9) Equity and access  
3) Leadership 10) Diversity  
4) Organization and management 11) Campus and external relations  
5) Human Resources 12) Ethics  
6) Financial resources 13) Assessment and evaluation  
7) Technology  
14) Facilities and equipment
How to use CAS Standards and Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)

Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)

- SAGs are the tools to assess program functioning in each of the 14 areas.
- SAGs allow you to identify strengths and deficiencies, determine how to enhance programs and services that will benefit student learning and development, and gain an informed perspective that will support staff development.

Here is an example of a SAG for 3) leadership. This example is taken from the Academic Advising Functional Areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ND</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>NR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Done</td>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Minimally Met</td>
<td>Well Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Not Rated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criterion Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>AAP leaders:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>articulate a vision and mission for the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1</td>
<td>set goals and objectives based on the needs of the population and desired student learning and development outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3</td>
<td>advocate for the program and services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Process Using the SAGS

There are five steps in the self-assessment process. By following the steps you can be confident about writing your improvement plan. It is important for the team members to have the authority and motivation to gather the information and make the assessment worthwhile.

Step 1: Establish your assessment team

- Select folks directly involved in the program/service
  - Be aware of not only who, but why you are selecting each person.
  - Select folks that will allow an honest appraisal of strengths and weaknesses.
- Your group needs to function as a team.
  - The team needs to understand the self-assessment process, the amount of work before them, and recognize the personal strengths each person brings.
  - Team members need to have equal status so that all opinions can be freely expressed.

Step 2: Speak the same language. Ensure that the team members

- understand the 14 functional areas
- know the difference between a standard and a guideline
- know how to use the self-assessment guides:
  - develop common definitions for rating terms – like “well met” or “fully met,”
  - teach what a standard is and what a guideline is
  - have the group decide which guidelines to include in the self-assessment (Remember guidelines are optional enhancements that you can choose to add to your self-assessment.)
  - Debates over the rating terms like “well met” or “fully met” are natural and probably desirable. In order for the team to complete its assignment, they will need to think through the rating scale ahead of time before completing their individual scoring. The rating scale on this page is just like the rating scale in a SAG.

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Step 3: Compile your evidence

Both qualitative and quantitative data are important and each provides utility in a self-assessment process. Use existing data, don’t collect it if it exists.

Qualitative Data is in the form of words, text, sound or visual

- Student recruitment materials
• Brochures and other sources of information about the program
• Participation policies/procedures
• Participant evaluations
• Program documents
• Mission statements
• Catalogs and related statements
• Staff and student manuals
• Policies and procedure statements
• Evaluation and periodic report
• Contracts
• Staff memos
• Institutional administrative documents
• Statements about program purpose and philosophy relative to other educational programs
• Organization charts
• Student and staff profiles

Quantitative Data

• Financial resource statements
• Assessment reports
• Research, assessment, and evaluation data staff activity reports
• Reports of scholarship or other professional contributions
• Student activity reports
• Follow-up studies
• Program evaluations
• Previously published institutional self-study reports
• Vitae
• Annual reports of performance
• Service to other departments
• Portfolios
• Developmental transcripts
• Other evidence of student contributions to the institution, community, or profession
• Reports of special student accomplishments exit interview
• Student journals
• Student diaries
• Student papers
• Observations

Step 4: Judge the performance (i.e., assess)

• Ready the team to judge how well your program or service meets the standards. Each team member gets a complete copy of the SAG along with the guidelines you have selected for rating and all of the documentary evidence you and your team gathered.
• During the judging performance step, each member of the team will review, judge, and document his or her rating as to how well a standard is met.
• Use "Fully met" only when a program is fully in compliance with every aspect of the standard or guideline. Any score below “Fully met” indicates that change strategies will be necessary.
• The strategies are later written into an action plan for improvement.
• After you have reviewed and analyzed the ratings and made comments as a team, all of the collected work and effort will be combined into a single rating and reviewed.
Up until this point, each team member independently has accessed all 14 sections of the Functional Area. Now it is time to bring all the individual ratings together.

Forms A, B, and C at the end of the SAG will help you and your team combine the ratings into a single review and will also help you organize your writing for the action plan.

- They have space for you to detail corrective actions, who would be responsible for completing the work, timelines, and due dates.
- The team should prioritize the action items to ensure that the most critical items for improvement are noted in the report.
- The report becomes an improvement plan for the program or service based on collected evidence, honest review of data, and critical thinking by the institution and community members.

**Step 5: Write action plan for improvement and implement**

- From the combined ratings, the team prepares a draft action plan
- Action Plan would describe the discrepancies between the program and the standards and set the date for the next self-assessment.
- Action plans includes:
  - Actions required for the program to fully meet all its standard
  - Areas that need follow up because they are less than satisfactory
  - Resources that will be needed to fully meet standard
  - Dates for completion
  - Person responsible for completing work
Up until this point, this document has addressed how to use self-assessments aligned with the CAS standards to assess our programs and services. This next section covers how to assess student learning and development with a framework also aligned with the CAS standards.

**Frameworks for Assessing Learning & Development Outcomes (FALDOs)**

- Are organized around the learning domain and designed to emphasize learning & development outcomes
- Enable practitioners to conduct assessment focused on learning & development over mere satisfaction & program effectiveness
- CAS advises all programs and functional areas to incorporate learning and development outcomes into their mission and believes that they must provide evidence of their impact on the achievement of these outcomes
- Differ from SAGs which are composed of overview questions and criterion measures for each of the 13 components of effective educational programs and services
- Learning assessment may or may not have specific functional area ties; learning is ubiquitous—occurring everywhere at all times. Student learning & development is neither confined to a single program nor institutional effects because education is a much broader concept resulting from all interactions between individuals and their environments.

**FALDO Learning Domains:**
1. Intellectual growth
2. Effective communication
3. Enhanced self-esteem
4. Realistic self-appraisal
5. Clarified values
6. Career choices
7. Leadership development
8. Healthy behavior
9. Meaningful interpersonal relationships
10. Independence
11. Collaboration
12. Social responsibility
13. Satisfyingly and productive lifestyles
14. Appreciating diversity
15. Spiritual awareness
16. Personal and educational goals

Each FALDO includes the following:

1. Introduction
2. Theoretical context
3. Relevant variables and indicators - generally these are outcomes or specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and attitudes expected of college students
4. Assessment examples, including both quantitative and qualitative methodologies
5. Assessment, evaluation and research tools available in the public domain
6. Related websites
7. References
8. Related materials and recommended readings

FALDO Learning Domain Example: Personal & Educational Goals

Introduction: Pascarella & Terenzini suggest that students make significant gains in knowledge and become more ‘critical, reflective, and sophisticated thinkers’ during college... Setting realistic educational and personal goals is one of the 16 learning and development outcome domains. Indicators of its achievement include setting individual goals and articulating one’s goals and objectives.

Theoretical Contexts: Student development theory provides a guide for understanding growth and change in young adults.... While there seems to be no clear theory on educational and personal goals per se, there are a number of theories that relate to this domain. To the extent that setting educational and personal goals is related to identity, realistic self-appraisal, and self-efficacy the works of Perry, Chickering and Loevinger are important to this theoretical discussion.

Relevant Variables:

- sets & articulates individual goals
- identifies personal goals & objectives
- sets realistic goals
- understands the effect of one’s goals on self
- exhibits behaviors consistent with one’s goals
- uses goals to make decisions
● understands the effect of one’s goals on others
● identifies obstacles to achieving goals & ways to overcome them

This list is by no means exhaustive, but is intended to provide a point of departure for thinking about the assessment of dimensions of this learning domain.

Assessment Examples:
Each FALDO includes at least two assessment examples, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Available Instruments:
Each FALDO provides a list of tools available in the public domain. It is important to assure that the instrument used provides the type of data needed to assess the learning and development in this domain. To do this, determine what you want to know first and then select the instrument that will provide it.

Instruments identified for the Personal & Educational Goals domain include the following:

● Assessment of Core Goals by Nicols, n.d.
● Career Belief Inventory by Krumholtz, n. d.
● College Student Expectations Questionnaire by Kuh & Pace, 1998

Related Websites:

Personal Goal Setting  www.mindtools.org
Goal Setting Guide  www.goal-setting-guide.com
Goal Setting  www.topachievement.com/goalsetting.html
Goals for Everyone  www.mygoals.com

References:
The references related to this learning domain include Chickering, Howe & Strauss, Loevinger, Levine, Pascarella & Terinzini, Perry, and Tinto...

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