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 43 Functional Areas pertaining to programs in Student Affairs. These Functional Areas have Self-Assessment Guides called “SAGs”. Therefore, there are 43 sets of standards and 43 Self-Assessment Guides.

1. Academic Advising Programs
2. Adult Learner Programs and Services
3. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Programs
4. Assessment Services
5. Auxiliary Services Functional Areas
6. Campus Activities Programs
7. Campus Information and Visitor Services*
8. Campus Police and Security Programs*
9. Campus Religious and 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 Event Programs*
16. Counseling Services*
17. Dining Service Programs
18. Disability Resources and Services
19. Education Abroad Programs
20. Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs
21. Graduate and Professional Student Programs and Services
22. Health Promotion Services
23. Housing and Residential Life Programs
24. International Student Programs and Services
25. Internship Programs
26. Learning Assistance Programs
27. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and Services*
28. Master’s Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs
29. Multicultural Student Programs and Services
30. Orientation Programs
31. Parent and Family Programs*
32. Recreational Sports Programs
33. Registrar Programs and Services
34. Service-Learning Programs
35. Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Prevention Programs*
36. Student Conduct Programs
37. Student Leadership Programs
38. Transfer Student Programs and Services*
39. TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity Programs
40. Undergraduate Admissions Programs and Services*
41. Undergraduate Research Programs
42. Veterans and Military Programs and Services*
43. Women Student Programs and Services

*New or revised since 2009 edition
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.
CAS standard sections

Each CAS Functional Area has 12 sections that have associated Self-Assessment Guides (SAGS).

1) Mission
2) Program
3) Organization and 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
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 12 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 section 3) Organization and Leadership. This example is taken from the Academic Advising Functional Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ND</th>
<th>Does Not Apply</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Does Not Meet</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Partly Meets</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Meets</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Measures</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 The Academic Advising Program (AAP) has</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 clearly stated goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2 current and accessible policies and procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3 written performance expectations for employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.4 functional work flow graphics or organizational charts demonstrating clear channels of authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Self-Assessment Process Using the SAGs

There are several 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 and prepare the self-assessment team**

- **Select team members**
  - Select a representative group of 3-5 members directly involved in the program/service.
  - Select one or more knowledgeable individuals from outside the program to complete the team.
  - 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.

- **Establish ground rules and plans to function as a team.**
  - Team members need to understand the self-assessment process and the amount of work before them.
  - Recognize the personal strengths each person brings.
  - Honor that team members have equal status so that all opinions can be expressed freely.

- **Speak the same language: Ensure that the team members understand the 12 Functional Areas and how to use the Self-Assessment Guides.**
  - Develop common definitions for rating terms – like “partly meets” or “meets”
  - Know the difference between a standard and a guideline
  - 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 “exceeds” or “exemplary” 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAS Criterion measure rating scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will use the assessment criterion measures to judge how well areas under review meet CAS Standards. The CAS Standards use a 5-point rating scale, with Does Not Apply (ND) and Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate (0) ratings outside the scale. This rating scale provides estimates of the extent to which a given practice has been performed. Use the ND rating when a standard does not apply to your programs and services. In most cases this will be the exception, as standards are considered a “must do”. The 0 response can be used when relevant data are unavailable to support a judgment. When either the ND or the zero rating is used, an
explanatory note should be entered. Zero (0) items should generate careful group consideration and follow-up action as appropriate.

- **Compile the evidence.** Both qualitative and quantitative data are important and each provides utility in a self-assessment process. Remember: Use existing data; do not 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

Quantitative data is in the form of numbers.

- Financial resource statements
- Assessment reports
- Research, assessment, and evaluation data staff activity reports
- Reports of scholarship or other professional contributions
- Student activity reports

- Student and staff profiles
- 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

- Employer reports
- Program evaluations
- Participant evaluations
- Needs assessment
- Follow-up studies
- Program evaluations
Step 2: Review the evidence and evaluate

- 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 "Meets" only when a program complies with every aspect of the standard or guideline. Any score below “Meets” 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 12 sections of the Functional Area. Now it is time to bring all the individual ratings together.

Step 3: Review ratings

- Team members will compare their individual ratings. In particular, members will focus on discrepancies in ratings between two or more raters.

<table>
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<th>2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate</td>
<td>Does Not Meet</td>
<td>Partly Meets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Forms A, B, and C will help team members combine the ratings into a single review. These forms have space to detail corrective actions, and to assign responsibility for completing 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 4: Write action plan for improvement and implement**

• From the combined ratings, the team prepares a draft action plan.
• The action plan would describe the discrepancies between the program and the standards and set the date for the next self-assessment. The action plans includes:
  o Actions required for the program to fully meet all its standard.
  o Areas that need follow up because they are less than satisfactory.
  o Resources that will be needed to fully meet a standard.
  o Dates for completion.
  o 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)**

- FALDOs are organized around the learning domain and are designed to emphasize learning & development outcomes.
- FALDOs enable practitioners to conduct assessment focused on learning & development over mere satisfaction and 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.
- Learning assessment may or may not have specific Functional Area ties; learning is ubiquitous---occurring everywhere at all times. Student learning and development is confined neither to a single program nor to 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:
