CAS General Standards

Part 1. MISSION

Programs and services must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their mission. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission of the institution and with professional standards. Programs and services in higher education must enhance overall educational experiences by incorporating student learning and development outcomes in their mission.

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 and holistic and that prepare students for satisfying and productive lifestyles, work, and civic participation. The student learning and development outcome domains and their related dimensions are:

• knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application
  - o **Dimensions: understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences; constructing knowledge; and relating knowledge to daily life**

• cognitive complexity
  - o **Dimensions: critical thinking; reflective thinking; effective reasoning; and creativity**

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

• interpersonal competence
  - o **Dimensions: meaningful relationships; interdependence; collaboration; and effective leadership**

• humanitarianism and civic engagement
  - o **Dimensions: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences; social responsibility; global perspective; and sense of civic responsibility**

• practical competence
  - o **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**

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

Consistent with the institutional mission, programs and services must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes from among the six domains and related dimensions. When creating opportunities for student learning and development, programs and services must explore possibilities for collaboration with faculty members and other colleagues.

Programs and services must assess relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide evidence of their impact on student learning and development. Programs and services must articulate how they contribute to or support students' learning and development in the domains not specifically assessed.

Programs and services must be:
- **integrated into the life of the institution**
- **intentional and coherent**
- **guided by theories and knowledge of learning and development**
- **reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population**
- **responsive to needs of individuals, diverse and special populations, and relevant constituencies**

Part 3. LEADERSHIP

Because effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations, leaders with organizational authority for the programs and services must:
- **articulate a vision and mission for their programs and services**
- **set goals and objectives based on the needs of the population served and desired student learning and development outcomes**
- **advocate for their programs and services**
- **promote campus environments that provide meaningful opportunities for student learning, development, and integration**
- **identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement**
- **advocate for representation in strategic planning initiatives at appropriate divisional and institutional levels**
- **initiate collaborative interactions with stakeholders who have legitimate concerns and interests in the functional area**
- **apply effective practices to educational and administrative processes**
- **prescribe and model ethical behavior**
- **communicate effectively**
- **manage financial resources, including planning, allocation, monitoring, and analysis**
- **incorporate sustainability practices in the management and design of programs, services, and facilities**
- **manage human resource processes including recruitment, selection, development, supervision, performance planning, and evaluation**

- empower professional, support, and student staff to accept leadership opportunities
- encourage and support scholarly contribution to the profession
- be informed about and integrate appropriate technologies into programs and services
- be knowledgeable about federal, state/provincial, and local laws relevant to the programs and services and ensure that staff members understand their responsibilities by receiving appropriate training
- develop and continuously improve programs and services in response to the changing needs of students and other populations served and the evolving institutional priorities
- recognize environmental conditions that may negatively influence the safety of staff and students and propose interventions that mitigate such conditions.

Part 4. HUMAN RESOURCES

Programs and services must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish the mission and goals. Within institutional guidelines, programs and services must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision; and provide appropriate professional development opportunities to improve the leadership ability, competence, and skills of all employees.

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.

Degree- or credential-seeking interns 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.

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 and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing staff development.

Employees and volunteers must receive specific training on institutional policies and privacy laws regarding their access to student records and other sensitive institutional information (e.g., in the USA, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, FERPA, or equivalent privacy laws in other states/provinces or countries.)

Programs and services 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.

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

Programs and services 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 members, staff, and others and must incorporate a system or procedures for responding, including but not limited to reporting them to the appropriate campus officials.

Salary levels and benefits for all staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

Programs and services must maintain position descriptions for all staff members.

To create a diverse staff, programs and services must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and non-discriminatory.

Programs and services must conduct regular performance planning and evaluation of staff members. Programs and services must provide access to continuing and advanced education and professional development opportunities.

Part 5. ETHICS

Persons involved in the delivery of programs and services must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. Programs and services must review relevant professional ethical standards and develop or adopt and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice. Programs and services must publish these statements and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

Programs and services must orient new staff members to relevant ethical standards and statements of ethical practice.

Staff members must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained with respect to all communications and records to the extent that such records are protected under the law and appropriate statements of ethical practice. Information contained in students' education records must not be disclosed except as allowed by relevant laws and institutional policies. Staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved, or when otherwise required by institutional policy or relevant law.

Staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's policies pertaining to human subjects research and student rights and responsibilities, as well as those in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

Staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflicts of interest or appearance thereof in the performance of their work.

Staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they interact.

When handling institutional funds, staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

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

Staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

 Staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

Staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.

Part 6. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities and that may pose legal obligations, limitations, or ramifications for the institution as a whole. As appropriate, staff members must inform users of programs and services, as well as officials, of legal obligations and limitations including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial, and local governments; and the institution's policies.

Programs and services must have written policies on all relevant operations, transactions, or tasks that may have legal implications.

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

Staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution and its officers, employees, and agents. 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 coverage is not provided by the institution.

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

The institution must inform staff and students in a timely and systematic fashion about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

Part 7. EQUITY and ACCESS

Programs and services must be provided on a fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory basis in accordance with institutional policies and with all applicable state/provincial and federal statutes and regulations. Programs and services must maintain an educational and work environment free from discrimination in accordance with law and institutional policy.

Discrimination must be avoided on the basis of age; cultural heritage; disability; ethnicity; gender identity and expression; nationality; political affiliation; race; religious affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; economic, marital, social, or veteran status; and any other bases included in local, state/provincial, or federal laws.

Consistent with the mission and goals, programs and services must take action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

Programs and services must ensure physical and program access for persons with disabilities. Programs and services must be responsive to the needs of all students and other populations served when establishing hours of operation and developing methods of delivering programs and services.

Programs and services must recognize the needs of distance learning students by providing appropriate and accessible services and assisting them in identifying and gaining access to other appropriate services in their geographic region.

Part 8. DIVERSITY

Within the context of each institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, programs and services must create and nurture environments that are welcoming to and bring together persons of diverse backgrounds.

Programs and services must promote environments that are characterized by open and continuous communication that deepens understanding of one's own identity, culture, and heritage, as well as that of others. Programs and services must recognize, honor, educate, and promote respect about commonalties and differences among people within their historical and cultural contexts.

Programs and services must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

Part 9. ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT

To promote student learning and development outcomes, programs and services must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures,

written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated program and service delivery expectations.

Programs and services must monitor websites used for distributing information to ensure that the sites are current, accurate, appropriately referenced, and accessible.

Evidence of effective management must include use of comprehensive and accurate information for decisions, clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, procedures for decision-making and conflict resolution, responses to changing conditions, systems of accountability and evaluation, and processes for recognition and reward. Programs and services must align policies and procedures with those of the institution and provide channels within the organization for their regular review.

Part 10. CAMPUS and EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Programs and services must reach out to relevant individuals, campus offices, and external agencies to:
- establish, maintain, and promote effective relations
- disseminate information about their own and other related programs and services
- coordinate and collaborate, where appropriate, in offering programs and services to meet the needs of students and promote their achievement of student learning and development outcomes

Programs and services 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 and other members of the campus community during emergency situations.

Programs and services must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for communicating with the media.

Part 11. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Programs and services must have adequate funding to accomplish their mission and goals. In establishing funding priorities and making significant changes, a comprehensive analysis, which includes relevant expenditures, external and internal resources, and impact on the campus community, must be conducted.

Programs and services must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional protocols.

Part 12. TECHNOLOGY

Programs and services must have adequate technology to support their mission. The technology and its use must comply with institutional policies and procedures and be

evaluated for compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements.

Programs and services must maintain policies and procedures that address the security and back up of data.

When technology is used to facilitate student learning and development, programs and services must select technology that reflects current best pedagogical practices.

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

When programs and services provide student access to technology, they must provide:
- access to policies that are clear, easy to understand, and available to all students
- access to instruction or training on how to use the technology
- access to information 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 13. FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT

Programs and services must have adequate, accessible, suitably located facilities and equipment to support their mission and goals. If acquiring capital equipment as defined by the institution, programs and services must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and life cycle costs. Facilities and equipment must be evaluated regularly, including consideration of sustainability, and be in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

Staff members must have work space 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.

Staff members who share work space must have the ability to secure their work adequately.

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

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

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

Part 14. ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION

Programs and services must establish systematic plans and processes to meet internal and external accountability expectations with regard to program as well as student learning and development outcomes. Programs and services must conduct regular assessment and evaluations. Assessments must include qualitative and quantitative methodologies as appropriate, to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission, goals, and student learning and development outcomes are being met. The process must employ sufficient and sound measures to ensure comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other affected constituencies.

Programs and services must evaluate regularly how well they complement and enhance the institution's stated mission and educational effectiveness.

Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving programs and services, identifying needs and interests in shaping directions of program and service design, and recognizing staff performance.

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