

Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs

Standards and Guidelines

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General Standards

The Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs (CAS) developed and adopted standards and interpretive guidelines for specific functional areas of student services/development programs within post-secondary educational institutions.

There are important General Standards that govern the activities of all student services/development programs. These General Standards are integral to each functional area. Thus, each functional area standards and guidelines must be interpreted and applied in conjunction with the General Standards below.

Since institutions vary in size, character, location, and type of students, the organization and nature of student services/development programs will vary. Accordingly, each specific standard and its related guidelines must be read and interpreted in the context of the unique characteristics of the institution. Nonetheless, all standards are intended to apply regardless of organizational differences.

General Standards for Student Services/Development Programs

Mission

Each institution and each functional area must develop, review, and disseminate regularly its own specific goals for student services/development, which must be consistent with the nature and goals of the institution and with the standards in this document.

Program

The overall student services/development program must be (a) purposeful, (b) coherent, (c) based upon or related to theories and knowledge of human development and learning characteristics, and (d) reflective of the demographic and developmental profiles of the student body. Such programs and services must (a) promote student development by encouraging such things as positive and realistic self-appraisal, **intellectual development**, appropriate personal and occupational choices, clarification of values, **physical fitness**, the ability to relate meaningfully with others, the capacity to engage in a personally satisfying and effective style of living, the capacity to appreciate cultural and aesthetic differences, and the capacity to work independently and interdependently; (b) assist students in overcoming specific personal, physical, or educational problems or skill deficiencies; and (c) identify environmental conditions that may negatively influence welfare and propose interventions that may neutralize such conditions. The educational experience of students consists of both academic efforts in the classroom and developmental opportunities through student services and development programs. Institutions must define the relative importance of these processes.

Leadership and Management

The institution must appoint a chief student services/development officer or designate an individual to fulfill that role. This leader must be

positioned in the organization so that the needs of the students and the functional areas are well represented at the highest administrative level of the institution. This leader must be an experienced and effective manager, must have substantial work experience in one or more of the student **services/development** functional areas, and either be an acknowledged leader on the campus or have obvious background and experience to command such respect. The specific title and reporting relationship of this individual may vary among institutions. The individual must be selected on the basis of personal characteristics and formal training.

The officer must create an effective system to manage the **services/programs**. The officer must plan, organize, staff, lead, and assess programs on a continuing basis. The result should be an integrated system of student services and development activities for the institution, funded and otherwise supported at a level that permits the effective delivery of these programs.

The officer must be able to develop, to advocate, and to use a statement of mission, goals, and objectives for student services/development on the campus. The officer must attract and select qualified staff members who make effective decisions about policies, procedures, personnel, budgets, facilities, and equipment. The officer must assume responsibilities for program and personnel development, assessment, and improvement of the services and development activities of the organization.

Organization and Administration

Each functional area must have its own set of policies and procedures that include a detailed description of the administrative process of the office and an organizational chart showing the job functions and reporting relationships within and beyond the functional area.

Human Resources

Each functional area must have adequate and qualified professional staff to fulfill the mission of that service and to implement all aspects of the program. To be qualified, professional staff members must have a graduate degree in a field of study relevant to the particular job in question or must have an appropriate combination of education and experience. In any functional area in which there is a full-time director, that

director must possess levels of education **and/or** professional experience beyond that of the staff to be supervised.

Preprofessional or support staff members employed in a functional area must be qualified by relevant education and experience. Degree requirements, including both degree levels and subject matter, must be germane to the particular job responsibilities. Such staff members must be trained appropriately and supervised adequately by professional staff.

Paraprofessionals must be carefully selected, trained with respect to helping skills and institutional services and procedures, closely supervised, and evaluated regularly. Their compensation must be fair and any voluntary services must be recognized adequately. Paraprofessionals must recognize the limitations of their knowledge and skills and must refer students to appropriate professionals when the problems encountered warrant.

To ensure that professional staff members devote adequate time to professional duties, each functional area must have sufficient clerical and technical support staff. Such support must be of sufficient quantity and quality to accomplish the following kinds of activities: typing, filing, telephone and other receptionist duties, bookkeeping, maintaining student records, organizing resource materials, receiving students and making appointments, and handling routine correspondence.

Salary level and fringe benefits for staff must be commensurate with those for similar professional, paraprofessional, and clerical positions at the institution and in the geographic area.

To ensure the existence of suitable and readily identifiable role models within the campus teaching and administrative ranks, staff employment profiles must reflect representation of categories of persons who comprise the student population. However, where student bodies are predominantly nondisabled, of one race, sex or religion, a diverse staffing pattern will enrich the **teaching/administrative** ranks and will demonstrate institutional commitment to fair employment practices.

All functional areas must have a regular system of staff selection and evaluation and must provide continuing professional development opportunities for staff, including in-service training programs, and participation in professional conferences, workshops, and other continuing education activities.

Funding

Each functional area must have funding sufficient to carry out its mission and to support the following, where applicable: staff salaries; purchase and maintenance of office furnishings, supplies, materials, and equipment, including current technology; phone and postage costs; printing and media costs; institutional memberships in appropriate professional organizations; relevant subscriptions and necessary library resources; attendance at professional association meetings, conferences, and workshops; and other professional development activities. In addition to institutional funding commitment through general funds, other funding sources may be considered, including: state appropriations, student fees, user fees, donations and contributions, fines, concession and store sales, rentals, and dues.

Facilities

Each functional area must be provided adequate facilities to fulfill its mission. As applicable, the facilities for each functional area must include, or the function must have access to, the following: private offices or private spaces for counseling, interviewing, or other meetings of a confidential nature; office reception and storage space sufficient to accommodate assigned staff, supplies, equipment, library resources, and machinery; and conference room or meeting space. All facilities must be accessible to disabled persons and must be in compliance with relevant federal, state, and local health and safety requirements.

Legal Responsibilities

Staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to relevant civil and criminal laws and must be responsible for ensuring that the institution fulfills its legal obligations. Staff members in all functional areas must be well versed in those obligations and limitations imposed on the operation of the institution, particularly in their functional area, by federal, state, and local constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and common law and by institutional policy. They must utilize appropriate policies and practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. The institution must provide access to legal advice to professional staff as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action

Each functional area must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws in all activities. Each area must ensure that its services and facilities are accessible to and provide hours of operation that respond to the needs of special student populations, including cultural and special needs subgroups, evening, part-time, and commuter students.

Personnel policies shall not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, age, national origin, and/or handicap. In hiring and promotion policies, student services professionals must take affirmative action that strives to remedy significant staffing imbalances, particularly when resulting from past discriminatory practices. Each functional area must seek to identify, prevent, and/or remedy other discriminatory practices.

Campus and Community Relations

Each functional area must maintain good relations with relevant campus offices and external agencies, which necessarily requires regular identification of the offices with which such relationships are critical.

Multicultural Programs and Services

The institution must provide to members of its majority and minority cultures educational efforts that focus on awareness of cultural differences, self-assessment of possible prejudices, and desirable behavioral changes. The institution also must provide educational programs for minority students that identify their unique needs, prioritize those needs, and respond to the priorities to the degree that numbers of students, facilities, and resources permit. In addition, the institution must orient minority students to the culture of the institution and promote and deepen their understanding of their own culture and heritage.

Ethics

All persons involved in the provision of services to students must maintain the highest standards of ethical behavior. Staff members of each functional area must develop or adopt standards of ethical practice addressing the unique problems that face personnel in that area. The standards must be published and reviewed by all

concerned. In the formulation of those standards, ethical standards statements previously adopted by the profession at large or relevant professional associations may be of assistance and must be considered.

Certain ethical obligations apply to all individuals employed in student services/development programs, for example:

All staff members must ensure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all communications and records considered confidential. Unless written permission is given by the student, information disclosed in individual counseling sessions must remain confidential. In addition, all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) must be complied with and information contained in student's educational records must not be disclosed to third parties without appropriate consent, unless one of the relevant statutory exceptions applies. A similar dedication to privacy and confidentiality must be applied to research data concerning individuals.

All staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's human subjects policy and in any other institutional policy addressing ethical practices.

All staff members must ensure that students are provided access to services on a fair and equitable basis.

All staff members must avoid any personal conflict of interest so they can deal objectively and impartially with persons within and outside the institution. In many instances, the appearance of a conflict of interest can be as damaging as an actual conflict.

Whenever handling funds, all staff members must ensure that such funds are handled in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures.

Staff members must not participate in any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined to include sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, as well as other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature if (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic progress, or any other outcome of an official nature, (2) . . . is used as the basis for such decisions or outcomes . . . , (3) . . . has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or

creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. (29 Code of Federal Regulations, C.F.R., Section 1604.11 (a).)

All staff members must recognize the limits of their training, expertise, and competence and must refer students in need of further expertise to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

Evaluation

There must be systematic and regular research and evaluation of the overall institutional student services/development program and each functional area to determine whether the educational goals and the needs of students are being met. Although methods of evaluation may vary, they must utilize both quantitative and qualitative measures. Data collected must include responses from students and other significant constituencies. Results of these regular evaluations must be used in revising and improving the program goals and implementation.

Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising

Part I: Mission

The institution and its academic advising programs must develop, review, and disseminate regularly their own specific goals for student services/development, which must be consistent with the nature and goals of the institution and with the standards in this document.

The primary purpose of the academic advising program is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals.

The institution must have a clearly written statement of philosophy pertaining to academic advising, which must include program goals and set forth expectations of advisors and advisees.

Academic advising should be viewed as a continuous process of clarification and evaluation.

The ultimate responsibility for making decisions about life goals and educational plans rests with the individual student. The academic advisor assists by helping to identify and assess alternatives and the consequences of decisions.

Institutional goals for academic advising may include;

- clarification of life and career goals;

- development of suitable educational plans;
- selection of appropriate courses and other educational experiences;
- interpretation of institutional requirements;
- increasing student awareness of educational resources available;
- evaluation of student progress toward established goals;
- development of decision-making skills;
- reinforcement of student self-direction;
- referral to and use of other institutional and community support services, where appropriate; and
- collecting and distributing student data regarding student needs, preferences, and performance for use in institutional policymaking.

Part 2: Program

The academic advising program must be (a) purposeful, (b) coherent, (c) based on or related to theories and knowledge of human development and learning characteristics, and (d) reflective of the demographic and developmental profiles of the student body.

The academic advising program must promote student development by encouraging such things as positive and realistic self-appraisal, intellectual development, appropriate personal and occupational choices, clarification of values, physical fitness, the ability to relate meaningfully with others, the capacity to engage in a personally satisfying and effective style of living, the capacity to appreciate cultural and aesthetic differences, and the capacity to work independently and interdependently.

The academic advising program must assist students in overcoming specific personal, physical, or educational problems or skill deficiencies.

The academic advising program must identify environmental conditions that may negatively influence welfare and propose interventions that may neutralize such conditions.

The educational experience of students consists of both academic efforts in the classroom and developmental opportunities through student services and development programs. Institutions must define the relative importance of these processes.

Individual academic advising conferences must be available to students each academic

term. The academic advisor must review and utilize any available data about student academic and educational needs, performance, aspirations, and problems and must collaborate in collection of such data.

Individual conferences with an academic advisor are intended to provide assistance to the student in refining goals and objectives, understanding what choices are available, and assessing the consequences of alternative courses of action. Course selection; understanding and meeting institutional requirements; and providing clear and accurate information regarding institutional policies, procedures, resources, and programs; may be carried out individually or in groups. Supplemental systems for the delivery of advising information such as on-line computer programs may be utilized. Referrals should be made to appropriate institutional or community support services as needed.

Research pertinent to students, the advising program, and perceptions of the institution should be reported and interpreted to academic advisors and units of the institution which can utilize the results effectively. Confidentiality of individual student records should be maintained.

Part 3: Leadership and Management

[Institution Level Only, See General Standards]

Part 4: Organization and Administration

The academic advising program must develop its own set of policies and procedures that include a detailed description of the administrative process and an organizational chart showing the job functions and reporting relationships within and beyond the advising program.

The design of the academic advising program must be compatible with the institutional organizational structure and student needs. Specific advisor responsibilities must be clearly delineated, published, and disseminated to both advisors and students.

In some institutions, academic advising is a centralized function, while in others, it is decentralized, with a variety of people throughout the institution assuming responsibilities. Whatever system is used, students, faculty, and staff members should be aware of their respective responsibilities.

Part 5: Human Resources

The academic advising program must have adequate and qualified professional staff to fulfill the mission of that service and to implement all aspects of the program. To be qualified, professional staff members must have a graduate degree in a field of study relevant to the particular job in question or must have an appropriate combination of education and experience. In any functional area in which there is a full-time director, that director must possess levels of education and/or professional experience beyond that of the staff to be supervised.

Preprofessional or support staff members employed in the academic advising program must be qualified by relevant education and experience. Degree requirements, including both degree levels and subject matter, must be germane to the particular job responsibilities. Such staff members must be trained appropriately and supervised adequately by professional staff.

Paraprofessionals must be carefully selected, trained with respect to helping skills and institutional services and procedures, closely supervised, and evaluated regularly. Their compensation must be fair and any voluntary services must be recognized adequately. Paraprofessionals must recognize the limitations of their knowledge and skills and must refer students to appropriate professionals when the problems encountered warrant.

To ensure that professional staff members devote adequate time to professional duties, the academic advising program must have sufficient clerical and technical support staff. Such support must be of sufficient quantity and quality to accomplish the following kinds of activities: typing, filing, telephone and other receptionist duties, bookkeeping, maintaining student records, organizing resource materials, receiving students and making appointments, and handling routine correspondence.

Salary level and fringe benefits for staff must be commensurate with those for similar professional, preprofessional, and clerical positions at the institution and in the geographic area.

To ensure the existence of suitable and readily identifiable role models within the campus teaching and administrative ranks, advising staff employment profiles must reflect representation of categories of persons who comprise the student population. However, where student bodies are predominantly nondisabled, of one race, sex, or religion, a diverse staffing pattern

will enrich the teaching/administration ranks and will demonstrate institutional commitment to fair employment practices.

The academic advising program must have a regular system of staff selection and evaluation and must provide continuing professional development opportunities for staff, including in-service training programs, participation in professional conferences, workshops, and other continuing education activities.

Adequate staff should be available to meet student needs without unreasonable delay. Advisors should allow an appropriate amount of time for students to discuss plans, programs, courses, academic progress, and other subjects related to their educational programs.

Whether centralized or decentralized organization structure is used, a specific individual must be designated by the institution to direct or coordinate the academic advising program.

The position of director or coordinator should ensure the integration of both academic and student support services within the institution; be responsible for providing leadership, supervision, and direction to the advising program; oversee the development and maintenance of a staff structure that implements institutional goals for the advising program; and be charged with developing and carrying out selection and training procedures for all academic advisors.

A variety of staffing arrangements may be used. Advisors may be full-time or part-time professionals who have advising as their primary function within the institution or may be full-time professionals who have other responsibilities, such as teaching faculty. Paraprofessionals (i.e., graduate students in practica, internships, or assistantships) or peer advisors (i.e., trained undergraduate students) may also assist advisors.

The director/coordinator must possess either an earned graduate degree(s) or equivalent combination of academic and educational experience, previous experience as an academic advisor, knowledge of student development, and thorough institutional knowledge.

The director or coordinator should be skilled in fiscal management, staff selection and training, conceptualization, planning, and evaluation tasks.

Professional academic advisors should have, in addition to a graduate degree, an understanding of student development; a comprehensive knowledge of the institution and its pro-

grams, academic requirements, majors, minors, and student services; a demonstrated interest in working with and assisting students; a willingness to participate in preservice and in-service training and other professional activities; and demonstrated interpersonal skills.

Paraprofessionals and peer advisors involved in academic advising should:

- relate well to undergraduates;
- be willing and able to assist in the performance of professional advisors;
- be of above average academic achievement;
- be carefully prepared for their role and made aware of the limitations of their authority; and
- be adequately supervised by professional staff.

Where available, the secretarial and clerical staff should maintain student records, organize resource materials, receive students, make appointments, and handle correspondence and other operational needs. Technical staff may be used in research, data collection, systems development, and special projects.

Technical, secretarial, and clerical staff should be selected, trained, and supervised to work compatibly with staff and students. They should enable the professional staff to minimize routine tasks and functions.

Part 6: Funding

The academic advising program must have funding sufficient to carry out its mission and to support the following, where applicable: staff salaries; purchase and maintenance of office furnishings, supplies, materials, and equipment, including current technology; phone and postage costs; printing and media costs; institutional memberships in appropriate professional organizations; relevant subscriptions and necessary library resources; attendance at professional association meetings, conferences, and workshops; and other professional development activities. In addition to institutional funding commitment through general funds, other funding sources may be considered, including: state appropriations, student fees, user fees, donations and contributions, fines, concession and store sales, rentals, and dues.

Printing and media monies should be sufficient to provide quality printed and nonprint information for students, training materials for

staff, including handbooks and newsletters, and to support routine clerical functions. There should also be sufficient resources to publicize the program.

Special consideration should be given to providing funding for in-service training of advisors, particularly those for whom the advisory function is a part-time and/or secondary assignment.

Part 7: Facilities

The academic advising program must be provided adequate facilities to fulfill its mission. As applicable, the facilities for the program must include, or the function must have access to, the following: private offices or private spaces for counseling, interviewing, or other meetings of a confidential nature; office, reception, and storage space sufficient to accommodate assigned staff, supplies, equipment, library resources, and machinery; and conference room or meeting space. All facilities must be accessible to disabled persons and must be in compliance with relevant federal, state, and local health and safety requirements.

Facilities should provide privacy, freedom from visual and auditory distractions, adequate space, and an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness.

When the advising program includes an advising center, the facility should be in reasonable proximity to related campus agencies, such as the counseling center, career planning and placement, admissions, records, registration, and other services to which students are frequently referred.

Part 8: Legal Responsibilities

Advising staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to relevant civil and criminal laws and must be responsible for ensuring that the institution fulfills its legal obligations. Academic advisors must be well versed in those obligations and limitations imposed on the operation of the institution, particularly in their functional area, by local, state, and federal constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and common law and by institutional policy. They must utilize appropriate policies and practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution and its officers, employees, and agents. The institution must provide access to legal advice to professional staff as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

Part 9: Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action

The academic advising program must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws in all activities. The program must ensure that its services and facilities are accessible to and provide hours of operation that respond to the needs of special student populations, including traditionally underrepresented, evening, part-time, and commuter students.

Personnel policies shall not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, age, national origin, and/or handicap. In hiring and promotion policies, student services professionals must take affirmative action that strives to remedy significant staffing imbalances, particularly when resulting from past discriminatory practices. The advising program must seek to identify, prevent, and/or remedy other discriminatory practices.

Part 10: Campus and Community Relations

The academic advising program must maintain good relations with relevant campus offices and external agencies, which necessarily requires regular identification of the offices with whom such relationships are critical.

Academic advising is an extension of the educational process, which is highly dependent on a one-to-one relationship. Advising effectiveness is also dependent upon close working relationships with other institutional agencies, the faculty, and the administration.

The academic advising system should be fully integrated into other processes of the institution. There should be functional and effective relationships with other campus services, the teaching faculty, administrators, and other professionals in student services. There should be coordinated relationships with related areas such as admissions, records, registration, counseling, and career planning and placement.

Part 11: Multicultural Programs and Services

The institution must provide to members of its majority and minority cultures educational efforts that focus on awareness of cultural differences, self-assessment of possible prejudices, and desirable behavioral changes.

The institution must provide educational programs that help minority students identify their unique needs, prioritize those needs, and

to the degree that numbers of students, facilities, and resources permit.

The institution must orient minority students to the culture of the institution and promote and deepen their understanding of their own culture and heritage.

Part 12: Ethics

All persons involved in the provision of advising services to students must maintain the highest standards of ethical behavior. Academic advisors must develop and adopt standards of ethical practice addressing the unique problems that face personnel in that area. The standards must be published and reviewed by all concerned. In the formulation of those standards, ethical standards statements previously adopted by the profession at large or relevant professional associations may be of assistance and must be considered.

Certain ethical obligations apply to all individuals employed in the academic advising program, for example: All advisors must ensure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all communications and records considered confidential. Unless written permission is given by the student, information disclosed in individual counseling sessions must remain confidential. In addition, all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) must be complied with and information contained in students' educational records must not be disclosed to third parties without appropriate consent, unless one of the relevant statutory exceptions applies. A similar dedication to privacy and confidentiality must be applied to research data concerning individuals.

All advisors must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's human subjects policy and in any other institutional policy addressing ethical practice.

All academic advisors must ensure that students are provided access to services on a fair and equitable basis. Advisors must avoid any personal conflict of interest so they can deal objectively and impartially with persons within and outside the institution. In many instances, the appearance of a conflict of interest can be as damaging as an actual conflict. Whenever handling funds, all staff must ensure that such funds are handled in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures.

Academic advisors must not participate in any form of sexual harassment. Sexual harass-

ment is defined to include sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, as well as other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature if (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic progress, or any other outcome of an official nature, (2) . . . is used as the basis for such decisions or outcomes . . . , (3) . . . has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. (29 Code of Federal Regulations, C.F.R., Section 1604.11 (a).)

All academic advisors must recognize the limits of their training, expertise, and competence and must refer students in need of further expertise to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

Advisors must recognize the limits of their competence and perform only those functions for which they are qualified.

Advisors must insure the accurate presentation of information to the public, students, parents, colleagues, and subordinates. Brochures, student handbooks, and other materials prepared for open distribution must accurately rep-

resent the institution's goals, services, programs, and policies.

Advisors must not counsel or aid students in circumventing institutional policies or regulations. When confronted with situations in which students have violated or circumvented established policy or norms, the advisor is obliged to address the issue and refer students to the appropriate agency accordingly.

Part 13: Evaluation

There must be systematic and regular research on and evaluation of the overall institutional student services/development program and the academic advising program to determine whether the educational goals and the needs of students are being met. Although methods of evaluation may vary, they must utilize both quantitative and qualitative measures. Data collected must include responses from students and other significant constituencies. Results of these regular evaluations must be used in revising and improving the program goals and implementation.

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