

APPENDIX G

COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF STANDARDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM REVIEW RESOURCES

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) promotes self-regulation as the most viable approach to program accountability and learning assessment. CAS encourages program review, learning assessment, and evaluation on a continuing basis using the CAS standards. To assist Student Affairs departments with their efforts to design and implement self-assessment activities informed by CAS functional area standards and guidelines, the following CAS Program Review resources are available from SAIRO:

CAS Standards and Guidelines

CAS functional area 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. Further, standards reflect a level of good program practice generally agreed upon by the profession at large. In addition to the standards, guidelines have been included for each functional area to amplify and explain the standards and to guide enhanced practice. The general standards address 12 different organizational components: mission; program; organization and leadership; human resources; ethics; law, policy and governance; diversity, equity and access; institutional and external relations; financial resources; technology; facilities and equipment; and assessment and evaluation.

CAS Self-Assessment Guides

CAS has created and published Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs), documents intended to show a step-by-step process for conducting a program self-assessment to determine its effectiveness. CAS Self-Assessment Guides are available for the following functional areas:

- Academic Advising Programs
- Adult Learner Programs and Services
- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Programs
- Assessment Services
- Auxiliary Services Functional Areas
- Campus Activities Programs
- Campus Information and Visitor Services
- Campus Police and Security Programs
- Campus Religious and Spiritual Programs
- Career Services
- Clinical Health Services
- College Honor Societies
- College Unions
- Commuter and Off-Campus Living Programs
- Conference and Event Programs
- Counseling Services
- Dining Services
- Disability Resources and Services
- Education Abroad Programs
- Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs
- Graduate and Professional Student Programs and Services
- Health Promotion Services
- Housing and Residential Life Programs
- International Student Programs and Services

- Internship Programs
- Learning Assistance Programs
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and Services
- Masters-Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs
- Multicultural Student Programs and Services
- Orientation Programs
- Parent and Family Programs
- Recreational Sports Programs
- Registrar Programs and Services
- Service-Learning Programs
- Sexual Assault and Relational Violence Programs
- Student Conduct Programs
- Student Leadership Programs
- Transfer Student Programs and Services
- TRIO and other Educational Opportunity Programs
- Undergraduate Admissions Programs and Services
- Undergraduate Research Programs
- Veterans and Military Programs and Services
- Women Student Programs and Services

Sample CAS Self-Assessment Outline

Below is a brief, general overview of the CAS Self-Assessment process excerpted from the CAS Standards. SAIRO can provide copies of specific functional area Self-Assessment Guides upon request.

I. Purpose and Organization of the Guides

The *Self-Assessment Guides* (SAG) translate functional area *CAS Standards and Guidelines* into a format enabling self-assessment. The *Introduction* outlines the self-assessment process, describes how to put it into operation, and is organized into four sections. These include I. Purpose and Organization, II. Self-Assessment Process, III. Rating Examples, and IV. Formulating an Action Plan. The introduction is followed by the *Self-Assessment Worksheet*, which presents the *CAS Standards and Guidelines* for the functional area and incorporates a series of criterion measures for rating purposes.

SAG Worksheet Format. CAS standards and guidelines are organized into twelve components.

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

A rating scale designed for assessment purposes is displayed following the standards and guidelines, along with a series of criterion measures to be rated. Making performance judgments by applying the rating scale to individual items (criterion measures) is the first step in assessing the program.

II. The Self-Assessment Process

CAS self-assessment procedures involve several steps, including:

- A. Establishing the self-study process and review team
- B. Understanding the CAS Standards and Guidelines and the Self-Assessment Guide
- C. Compiling and reviewing documentary evidence
- D. Judging performance
- E. Completing the assessment process

Step A: Establish and Prepare the Self-Assessment Review Team

As a group, the review team should examine the standards carefully before implementing the study. It may be desirable for the team, in collaboration with the full staff, to discuss the meaning of each standard. Through this method, differing interpretations can be examined and agreement generally reached about how the standard will be interpreted for purposes of the self-assessment. Whatever procedures are used to arrive at judgments, deliberate discussions should occur about how to initiate the rating process and select the optimal rating strategy. In such discussions, it is expected that disagreements among team members will occur, and that resulting clarifications will inform all participants. It is important that the team achieve consensual resolution of such differences before proceeding with individual ratings.

Step B: Understanding the CAS Standards and Guidelines

CAS *Standards* represent essential practices as formulated by representatives of multiple professional associations concerned with student learning and development in higher education. CAS *Guidelines*, on the other hand, are suggestions for practice and serve to elaborate and amplify standards through the use of suggestions, descriptions, and examples. Guidelines can often be employed to enhance program practice.

Step C: Compile and Review Documentary Evidence

Collecting and documenting evidence of program effectiveness is an important step in the assessment process. No self-assessment is complete without relevant data and related documentation being used. It is good practice for programs routinely to collect and file relevant data that can be used to document program effectiveness over time. Support documentation should be appended and referred to in the final self-assessment report.

Step D: Judging Performance

Assessment criterion measures are used to judge how well areas under review meet CAS Standards. These criterion measures are designed to be evaluated using a 5-point rating scale. In addition to the numerical rating options, *Does Not Apply* (ND) and *Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate* (0) ratings are provided. This rating scale is designed to estimate broadly the extent to which a given practice has been performed.

CAS CRITERION MEASURE RATING SCALE

ND	0	1	2	3	4	5
Does Not Apply	Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate	Does Not Meet	Partly Meets	Meets	Exceeds	Exemplary

Step E: Completing the Assessment Process

A two-tiered (individual and group) judgment approach for determining the extent to which the program meets the CAS Standard is suggested. First, the self-assessment team and, if desired, the functional area staff members individually should rate each criterion measure using separate copies of the *CAS Self-Assessment Guide*. This individualized rating procedure is then followed by a collective review and analysis of the individual ratings.

The individual ratings should be reviewed and translated into a collective rating; then the team is ready to move to the interpretation phase of the self-assessment. Interpretation typically incorporates considerable discussion among team members to assure that all aspects of the program were given fair and impartial consideration prior to a final collective judgment. At this point, persistent disagreements over performance ratings may call for additional data collection. After the team review is completed, a meeting with concerned administrators, staff members, and student leaders should be scheduled for a general review of the self-assessment results. The next step, including discussion of alternative approaches that might be used to strengthen and enhance the program, is to generate steps and activities to be incorporated into an action plan. The Work Forms will guide this process.

**UCLA Student Affairs Program Review
Suggested Self-Study Report Outline for
CAS Self-Assessment Protocol**

A. Introduction

B. Executive summary of self-study process

C. Introduction to department context

D. Synthesis/interpretation of ratings and discussion of self-study findings for 14 CAS self-assessment components.

1. Mission

2. Program

Specifically address the connection between departmental activities and the Student Affairs Strategic Plan. Possible prompt for this discussion: Explain how the department's programs and services address the goals of the current Student Affairs Strategic Priorities.

3. Leadership

4. Organization and management

5. Human resources

6. Financial resources

7. Facilities, technology, and equipment

8. Legal responsibilities

9. Equity and access

10. Campus and external relations

11. Diversity

12. Ethics

13. Assessment and evaluation

Additional information on writing the synthesis section of self-study report:

- Narrative should be informed by overview questions posed at the end of each CAS self-assessment section.
- Support assertions with evidence or specific examples drawn from organizational practice.
- Provide detailed organizational information so that readers are able to gain insight into scope of department (e.g., budget, staffing, utilization, etc).
- Ratings worksheets should not appear in the body of the self-study report but may be included in the appendix if the self-study team would like to share this information with others.

E. Summary

1. Highlight department strengths

2. Identify areas of improvement

F. External review issues statement