

Thank you for your interest in the Standards and Guidelines developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). Standards are developed through a consensus model of member associations and industry experts. You are invited to use the attached materials in the design and assessment of your programs and for your staff training and development. ***These materials may not be duplicated or redistributed for other purposes without permission from CAS.***

These standards and all other standards are available along with information on self-assessment procedures in the most recent edition of the ***CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education*** book. You are particularly encouraged to examine the learning and developmental outcomes (see www.cas.edu/learningoutcomes) in the design and assessment of your programs.

This set of standards has an accompanying Self-Assessment Guide (SAG) available for purchase from www.cas.edu for use in program evaluation

CAS MISSION STATEMENT

CAS, a consortium of professional associations in higher education, promotes the use of its professional standards for the development, assessment, and improvement of quality student learning, programs, and services.

CAS STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Each set of CAS standards contains 12 common criteria categories (referred to as “general standards”) that have relevance for each and every functional area, no matter what its primary focus. In addition to the general standards, all functional area standards are comprised of both specialty standards and guidelines. All standards use the auxiliary verbs “**must**” and “**shall**” and appear in **bold print** so that users can quickly identify them. Guidelines are designed to provide suggestions and illustrations that can assist in establishing programs and services that more fully address the needs of students than those mandated by a standard. CAS guidelines appear in regular font and use the auxiliary verbs “should” and “may.”

OVER FORTY YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has been the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs since its inception in 1979. For the ultimate purpose of fostering and enhancing student learning, development, and success and in general to promote good citizenship, CAS continues to create and deliver a dynamic and credible book of professional standards and guidelines and Self-Assessment Guides that are designed to lead to a host of quality-controlled programs and services. These standards respond to real-time student needs, the requirements of sound pedagogy, and the effective management of over 45 functional areas, consistent with institutional missions. Individuals and institutions from more than 40 CAS member organizations comprise a professional constituency of over 115,000 professionals.

DISCLAIMER

The standards and guidelines published in *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education* by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and referred to in each of the CAS Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs) are developed through the voluntary efforts of leaders of professional associations in higher education. The purpose of the standards and guidelines is to identify criteria and principles by which institutions may choose to assess and enhance various areas of their academic, administrative, or student affairs programs and services. CAS specifically disclaims any liability or responsibility for any perceived or actual shortcomings inherent in the text or application of the standards. Further, CAS does not certify individuals nor accredit programs. No institution, whether it has met some or all of the CAS standards, is authorized to indicate that it is “approved, endorsed, certified, or otherwise sanctioned by CAS.” Institutions that have conducted a self-assessment of one or more functional areas addressed by CAS Standards and Guidelines using the appropriate CAS Self-Assessment Guide (SAG) may, where that self-assessment provides evidence that an institution meets these standards, make accurate representations to the effect that the designated program or service meets the CAS Standards.

Please direct your questions to the CAS Executive Director (executive_director@cas.edu or 202-862-1400).

COUNSELING SERVICES

CAS Contextual Statement

In order to understand the context of Counseling Services at an institution of higher education, one must first define *College Counseling*. The definition is deceptively simple: "...the delivery of counseling services by trained counseling professionals in a postsecondary setting" (Spooner, 2000, p. 4). Yet the execution of this task "delivery of counseling services" has become exceedingly more complex as the lists of duties assigned to college counseling centers has changed along with the needs of the student body. Where once counseling services sought to provide students with character development, moral and vocational guidance, and to promote good mental health hygiene, (Zhang & McCoy, 2016), it now includes consultation, case management, teaching, training, supervision, assessments, outreach and prevention services, career planning, crisis and emergency services, and more depending on the needs of the institution (Francis, 2018). The level of these services is often dictated by the size of the center's budget, the amount of staff in the center, the type and size of the institution (e.g., vocational/technical college, community college, 4-year university, etc.), as well as institutional priorities. For example, counseling services at the community college level may only include a combination of academic advising and career counseling along with short-term psychotherapy. Counseling services at a large, comprehensive university may include long term psychotherapy, psychiatric services, and psychological assessments for emotional and learning disabilities (Francis, 2018). Added to this list of services at all institutions is the increased use of counseling services staff on standing committees that receive, evaluate, and act on reports of student behaviors that cause concern to faculty, staff, and administrators (Van Brunt, 2012). Therefore the context of counseling services at an institution of higher education is exceedingly complex in the face of a simple definition.

Contributing to this complexity are the changing needs and demographics of the student body. It now includes students who openly identify as LGBTQ+, various racial and ethnic minorities, first generation, veterans, non-traditional, high achieving, international students, and the "traditional" 18-25 year old (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). While the increasing presence of a diverse student population on today's college campus enhances learning, it also brings new demands to existing counseling services that were not present a few decades ago (Hardy, Weatherford, Locke, DePalma, & D'Iuso, 2011; Twenge, 2006). This requires counseling services staff to have a broader range of knowledge in student development theory, culturally appropriate counseling and assessment interventions, and diverse resources for students who may be referred to outside services. Therefore, support for the continuing education for counseling services staff is of utmost importance, but often dictated by budget limitations of the counseling center.

Historically there has been an impression that counseling services deal only with students with simple developmental issues (e.g., relationship concerns, homesickness, etc.) (Sharkin, 2012). Yet research has demonstrated more college students are accessing services with increasingly serious issues that impact their ability to be academically and socially successful (Francis & Horn, 2017; Hardy et al., 2011; Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). According to a survey of over 100,000 U.S. college students at 130 universities, 1 in 5 students report having experienced sexual assault, 1 in 10 have attempted suicide, 1 in 3 take psychiatric medication, 1 in 4 have self-injured and 1 in 3 have experienced a traumatic event (Center for Collegiate Mental Health, January, 2019). As the severity and complexity of clients' problems expand, it is increasingly important for college counseling professionals to be prepared to work with physicians, community mental health providers, other campus departments, and health care professionals to create an appropriate systemic response to student's needs. The two most prevalent issues are anxiety and depression (Beiter et al., 2015; CCMH, January, 2019). Additional issues include gender or sexual identity, suicide, suicidal ideation and self-injury, body image issues and eating disorders, as well as responding to the aftermath of campus violence, sexual assaults, mass shootings, or violent protests.

These issues challenge counseling service resources, staff time, and budgets (CCHM, January, 2019; Lipson & Sonnevile, 2017; Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008; Taub et al., 2013; Van Brunt, 2012).

With these challenges in mind, the works of Hodges, Shelton, and Lyn (2016) and Sharkin (2012) are very relevant. The authors stress a need for counseling services to (a) clearly define boundaries on the types of problems and degree of severity of those clients for whom the counseling services can provide services, and (b) to develop and identify extensive referral and outreach services to transition severe clients more effectively to appropriate community resources. At the same time, college counselors strive to maintain the therapeutic, developmental, preventive, and consultative services that are integral to their work. As Stone and Archer (1990) note, the concepts of working within limits and achieving a balance between demands and resources are significant for college counseling services. Francis and Horn (2017) recognize the importance of demonstrating to institutions the positive outcomes of helping students maintain psychological health and develop personally in ways that support retention.

The diversity of institutions, changing student body, and complexity of presenting issues are not the only variables that contribute to the context of counseling services in higher education. As previously noted, counseling services staff are being asked to consult with or contribute to Behavioral Intervention Teams (BIT) or Threat Assessment Teams (TAT) due to the psychological nature of many of the reports forwarded onto these groups. Participating in BITs or TATs goes beyond clinical work and focuses our mental health expertise on the safety needs of the community. Over 92% of these teams have counseling services staff as a standing committee member (Van Brunt, Reese, & Lewis, 2015). This valuable work demonstrates the increased time demands on counseling services staff that takes them away from direct services to the student body.

In addition to the work with BITs/TATs, the legal landscape as it relates to the college environment almost certainly impacts the context of counseling services. The Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II was reinterpreted and no longer allows a university or college to involuntarily remove a student from the institution for suicidal ideation or behavior (Lannon, 2014). This behavior is seen as a symptom of a mental health issue that requires an institution to provide reasonable accommodations to the identified student (U.S. Department of Justice, 1990). Where counseling services may once have been utilized to help the student transition out of college for a period of time to receive services, they are now involved in providing continuing services or case management and referrals for services while the student remains on campus.

Related to these legal issues is the ever-changing landscape of Title IX compliance. Counseling services staff are exempt from mandatory reporting, but may be tasked with providing therapeutic services to both the complainant and respondent and may be tasked with programming for sexual assault prevention (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017). Both of these legal changes directly affect how counseling services operate on campus and, more specifically, how providers collaborate with their student affairs colleagues.

College counselors offer preventive, crisis, outreach, and consultative services, depending on the nature of the campus and students served. A strong commitment to professional development, whether through conducting research, providing training and supervision, maintaining professional credentials, upholding ethical standards of practice, or actively participating in professional organizations or other scholarly activities, is the catalyst for competent responses to the changing social issues and complex developmental, psychosocial, and mental health concerns of students (Boyd et al., 2003).

The CAS Counseling Services Standards and Guidelines that follow provide college counselors with criteria to develop, enhance, evaluate, and judge the quality of campus counseling services.

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COUNSELING SERVICES

CAS Standards and Guidelines

Guiding Principle: Students and Their Environments

Part 1. MISSION

1.1 Programs and Services Mission

The primary mission of Counseling Services (CS) is to assist students in cultivating mental health and well-being to achieve educational and career success.

CS must develop and define its mission.

The CS mission must be consistent with the mission of the department, college, division, institution, and applicable professional standards.

The developmental mission of CS should be to help students enhance their personal growth.

To facilitate personal growth, CS must promote student growth in the areas of positive and realistic self-appraisal, intellectual development, appropriate personal and occupational choices, the ability to relate meaningfully and mutually with others, and the capacity to engage in a personally satisfying and effective lifestyle.

The clinical mission of CS should recognize that some students experience significant problems, ranging from serious adjustment issues to more severe psychological disorders that require immediate professional attention.

Within the clinical mission, CS should include assessment, treatment, and crisis response, as well as consideration of the effect on the campus community.

The preventive mission of CS should be to anticipate environmental conditions and developmental processes that may negatively influence students' well-being and initiate interventions that will promote personal adjustment, resilience, and growth.

CS may perform a wide variety of counseling, consultative, evaluative, and training functions as an expression of its institutional mission.

CS may emphasize different functions of its mission in its dedication of time to mental health counseling, academic counseling, career counseling, or student development services.

CS must develop, define, and disseminate its scope of services.

The CS mission must be appropriate for the institution's students, designated clients, and other constituents.

Whether centralized or decentralized in its administration, CS must advance its mission.

1.2 Mission Statement

CS must implement, disseminate, regularly review, and update its mission statement.

Mission statements must reference student learning, development, and success.

Part 2. PROGRAM AND SERVICES

2.1 Program and Services Goals

Counseling Services (CS) must be guided by a set of written goals and objectives that are directly related to the stated mission.

The CS goals must be aligned with institutional priorities and expectations of the functional area.

CS must regularly develop, review, evaluate, and revise its goals.

CS must communicate goals and progress toward achievement to appropriate constituents.

CS should provide programming in alignment with its mission, focused on the developmental needs of students to maximize their potential to benefit from the academic environment and experience. Such programming may focus on students' academic, career, and overall health and well-being goals.

2.2 Program Information and Services

CS must provide relevant information, services, and resources consistent with its mission and goals.

CS must provide services to students who may be experiencing psychological, behavioral, or learning difficulties. CS must provide

- **individual counseling in areas of personal, educational, career development, interpersonal relationships, family, social, and psychological issues**
- **group interventions, as resources allow (e.g., counseling, psychotherapy, support), to help students establish satisfying personal relationships and to become more effective in areas such as interpersonal processes, communication skills, decision-making concerning personal relationships and educational or career matters, and the establishment of personal values**

CS must offer assessment services to identify and address student needs.

CS should provide psychological testing and other assessment techniques to foster student self-understanding and decision-making.

CS must provide or offer referral to psychiatric consultation, evaluation, and support services for students needing maintenance or monitoring of psychotropic medications.

CS must provide consulting services to the institution to help foster an environment supportive of the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical development of students.

CS must provide crisis intervention, risk assessment, and management.

CS should provide professional development programs to staff and faculty that support the healthy development of students.

CS must develop and implement strategies for outreach and promotion.

CS must provide programs to address developmental needs and concerns of students in collaboration with other departments on campus or as a service of the center.

CS must provide referrals for services outside of its scope of resources, or when requested by students.

2.3 Program Structure and Framework

CS must have clearly stated, current, relevant, and documented

- **goals and outcomes**
- **policies and procedures**
- **responsibilities and performance expectations for personnel**
- **organizational charts demonstrating clear channels of authority**

CS must be purposefully structured and resourced to balance efficiency and effectiveness and to achieve programmatic and student learning and development outcomes.

CS should advocate for placement within the organizational structure that facilitates significant interaction with unit heads in academic affairs, student affairs, and other relevant areas.

CS should be organized based on institutional characteristics, priorities, and organizational structures. Accordingly, CS may be organized such that not all functions exist within the same administrative unit.

CS should work to create a cohesive system of support for students when counseling functions exist in separate administrative units.

CS should not be directly responsible for making decisions concerning students' official matriculation status, such as student conduct, academic probation, and admissions or re-admissions actions.

Regardless of organizational structures, CS must work in close consultation and collaboration with others with expertise and resources to meet the needs and interests of students and designated clients.

The CS director should have the ability to interact effectively with administrators, faculty and staff members, students, colleagues, and community members.

CS must collaborate with colleagues and departments across the institution to promote student learning, development, and success.

2.4 Program Design

CS must be intentionally designed to

- **achieve predetermined student learning and development outcomes**
- **incorporate research and theories on student learning, development, and success**
- **respond to needs of individuals, constituents, and populations with distinct needs**
- **ensure access for students and designated clients**

CS must provide services directly, through referral, or in collaboration with internal or external agencies.

CS should interpret the educational and institutional structure to students and intervene either to improve the quality of the environment or facilitate the development of better interactions between students and their environment.

In accordance with task assignments and qualifications, CS personnel should allocate time to

- prepare interviews and reports
- update institutional information
- consult with faculty and staff
- participate in staff meetings
- conduct training and supervision
- engage in personal and professional development
- consult with other service providers
- conduct walk-in and emergency counseling interventions
- participate in divisional and institutional committees

CS personnel may also engage in teaching, administration, research, and other such responsibilities while working to manage any potential conflicts of interest that may place students at risk.

Part 3. STUDENT LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUCCESS

3.1 Program Contribution to Student Learning, Development, and Success

Counseling Services (CS) must contribute to students' educational development, which includes both curricular and co-curricular experiences.

CS should help students identify and access services to overcome specific learning issues in educational preparation or skills.

CS must contribute to students' progression and timely completion of educational goals.

CS must help students and designated clients prepare for their careers and meaningful contributions to society.

CS must work with the institution to identify relevant and desirable student success outcomes.

CS should help identify and advocate for the removal of barriers to student retention.

CS should work closely with senior administrators to ensure that institutional goals and objectives are met.

CS must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes.

CS must implement strategies and tactics to achieve these outcomes.

3.2 Student Learning and Development Domains and Dimensions

CS must align predetermined student learning and development outcomes with the CAS learning outcomes model or other recognized student learning and development models.

CS must align predetermined student learning and development outcomes with the institutional framework for student outcomes.

The CAS student learning and development outcomes model includes six broad categories (called domains), meant to identify the aspects of learning experienced by students through engaging with programs, disciplines, or other learning opportunities. The domains are further clarified through dimensions. The dimensions of student learning and development allow for a more focused assessment approach and opportunities for alignment with institutional mission and priorities.

Domain: knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application

- Dimensions: understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences; constructing knowledge; and relating knowledge to daily life

Domain: cognitive complexity

- Dimensions: critical thinking, reflective thinking, effective reasoning, and creativity

Domain: intrapersonal development

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

Domain: interpersonal competence

- Dimensions: meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, and effective leadership

Domain: humanitarianism and civic engagement

- Dimensions: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences, social responsibility, global perspective, and sense of civic responsibility

Domain: practical competence

- 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

[Learning and Development Outcomes: See the Council for the Advancement of Standards Student Learning and Development Outcomes (www.cas.edu/learningoutcomes) for examples of outcomes related to these domains and dimensions.]

3.3 Assessment of Student Learning and Development

CS must assess the student learning and development outcome domains and dimensions relevant to the functional area.

CS must provide evidence of the extent to which student learning and development outcomes are achieved.

CS must provide evidence of the extent to which student success outcomes are achieved.

CS must use evidence to create strategies for improving student learning, development, and success.

Part 4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 Establishing a Culture of Assessment

Counseling Services (CS) must develop assessment plans and processes that document progress toward achievement of mission, goals, outcomes, and objectives.

CS must design assessment plans that incorporate an ongoing cycle of assessment activities.

CS must have fiscal, human, professional development, and technological resources to develop and implement assessment plans.

4.2 Program Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives

CS must identify goals, outcomes, and objectives to guide its work.

CS should engage in assessment that contributes to knowledge of student characteristics and needs.

CS should engage in evaluation of student outcomes in its programs and services.

CS must identify assessment methods that will allow for the collection of relevant data on its goals, outcomes, and objectives.

When collaborating with other departments on assessment activities, these activities must be consistent with the CS mission and assessment plan.

4.3 Assessment Plan and Process

CS must structure assessment initiatives using the steps of the assessment cycle:

- **set program goals, outcomes, and objectives**
- **develop and implement assessment plan**
- **review and interpret findings**
- **develop a plan for data use, continuous improvement, and reassessment**
- **implement an improvement plan**
- **review and monitor changes that have been made**

CS must implement the assessment process with methods that reflect universal design principles.

CS must employ ethical practices in the assessment process.

CS must implement assessment processes in a way that is culturally responsive, inclusive, and equitable.

CS must engage students, faculty, staff, administrators, and other relevant constituents in assessment activities.

4.4 Gathering Evidence

CS must identify priorities for assessment, including both formative and summative approaches.

CS must employ multiple methods and measures of data collection.

CS must develop manageable processes for gathering, interpreting, and evaluating data.

CS must adhere to institutional policies related to data access and management.

CS must ensure measures and methods are rigorous and reflect characteristics of validity, reliability, and trustworthiness.

4.5 Review and Interpret Findings

CS must use methods to analyze and interpret data that correspond with objectives and questions considered within overall assessment goals.

CS must disaggregate data to address the objectives and questions considered in the assessment project.

4.6 Reporting Results and Implementing Improvement

CS must use assessment results to demonstrate student learning, development, and success.

CS must use assessment results to demonstrate effectiveness and continuous improvement.

CS must use evidence from assessment activities to inform decision-making and planning for continuous improvement.

CS must monitor improvements implemented based on assessment results.

CS must apply results for future planning.

CS must inform constituents of assessment results and how data have been used for continuous improvement.

CS should participate in local, regional, and/or national benchmarking projects that provide comparative data for counseling services.

Guiding Principle: Advocating for Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities

Part 5. ACCESS, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

5.1 Inclusive and Equitable Educational and Work Environments

Within the context of each institution's mission and in accordance with institutional policies and applicable codes and laws, Counseling Services (CS) must create and maintain educational and work environments for students, faculty, staff, administrators, designated clients, and other

constituents that are welcoming, accessible, inclusive, equitable, and free from bias or harassment.

CS must not discriminate on the basis of race; color; national origin; sex; disability; age; cultural identity; ethnicity; nationality; citizenship; family educational history (e.g., first generation to attend college); political affiliation; religious affiliation; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; marital, family, social, economic, place of residence, or veteran status; or any other basis included in codes, laws, and institutional policies.

5.2 Organizational Aspects of Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

CS must provide equitable access to facilities and resources for all constituents.

CS must respond to the needs of all constituents when establishing hours of operation and developing methods for delivering programs, services, and resources.

CS must identify and address actions, policies, and structures within its operation that perpetuate systems of privilege and oppression.

5.3 Advocating for Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

CS must advocate for accessible facilities and resources, and address issues that impede access.

CS must advocate for inclusion, multiculturalism, and social justice within the institution.

CS must enact culturally responsive, inclusive, respectful, and equitable practices in the provision of services.

CS must develop plans for ongoing professional development on cultural competence and workplace inclusion.

5.4 Implementing Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

CS must establish goals for access, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

CS must conduct outreach activities with attention to the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and marginalized populations.

CS must address the characteristics and needs of diverse constituents when establishing and implementing culturally relevant and inclusive programs, services, policies, procedures, and practices.

CS must ensure that personnel are trained in diversity, equity, access, and inclusion and are held accountable for applying the training to its work.

CS must have an established protocol for, and foster expectation of, bias incident reporting.

Personnel within CS must cultivate understanding of identity, culture, self-expression, and heritage.

Personnel within CS must promote respect for commonalities and differences among people within their historical and cultural contexts.

When educational and/or workplace accommodations are requested, CS must provide individuals with an interactive process to determine reasonable accommodations.

Guiding Principle: Organization, Leadership, and Human Resources

Part 6. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND SUPERVISION

6.1 Leadership

Counseling Services (CS) leaders must model ethical behavior and demonstrate alignment with institutional mission, goals, and ethical practices.

Leaders with organizational authority for CS must provide management and supervision as well as lead strategic planning and program advancement.

CS leaders must

- **create a vision for the functional area**
- **communicate goals**
- **model and expect commitment**
- **build teams, coalitions, and alliances**
- **influence others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the unit**
- **advance diversity, equity, access, and inclusion goals in the workplace**
- **incorporate data and information in decision making**
- **develop a risk management plan for the organization**
- **incorporate sustainable practices in the design of programs, services, and facilities**
- **develop and empower new leaders from within the organization**
- **collaborate with colleagues and departments across the institution**
- **adhere to organizational constraints**

CS should partner in campus efforts to promote a healthy and diverse learning community.

CS leaders must advance the functional area by

- **advocating for and actively promoting the functional area's mission and goals**
- **communicating with constituents about current issues affecting the profession**
- **identifying and addressing individual, organizational, and environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement**
- **facilitating discussion and decisions regarding program advancement**
- **advocating for representation in strategic planning processes at departmental, divisional, and institutional levels**

CS leaders must articulate the ways in which CS is essential to the overall mission of an institution.

CS leaders should provide consultation/leadership in campus-wide and internal policy formation and program development.

CS must play an active role in interpreting and, when appropriate, advocating for the needs of students to faculty, staff, and administrators of the institution.

CS leaders should provide institutional leaders with a perspective that reflects an appropriate balance between administrative requirements and the needs and interests of students.

CS leaders should provide information on CS services and resources to students, faculty, staff and, in accordance with CS and institutional mission, to the community.

CS leaders should educate the campus community regarding legal issues in mental health, medicine, and higher education, as well as those governing the delivery of CS.

6.2 Management

CS managers must

- **be empowered to demonstrate effective management**
- **plan, allocate, and monitor the use of fiscal, physical, human, intellectual, and technological resources**
- **develop plans for scholarship, leadership, and service to the institution and the profession**
- **engage diverse perspectives from within and outside the unit to inform decision making**

6.3 Supervision

CS supervisors must

- **incorporate institutional policies and procedures in the development of strategies for recruitment, selection, professional development, supervision, performance planning, succession planning, evaluation, recognition, and reward of personnel**
- **consult with institutional HR personnel to access and receive education and training that influence successful performance of personnel**
- **provide feedback on personnel performance**
- **identify and resolve workplace conflict**
- **follow institutional policies for addressing complaints**
- **provide reports and activity updates to management**
- **work with personnel to develop plans for scholarship, leadership, and service to the profession and institution**
- **provide supervision and support so that personnel may complete assigned tasks**

CS must place a high value on the training and supervision of paraprofessionals, practicum students, and interns when present within its program.

6.4 Strategic Planning

CS leaders, managers, and supervisors must facilitate ongoing strategic planning processes that

- **facilitate continuous development, implementation, assessment, and evaluation of program effectiveness and goal attainment congruent with institutional mission and ongoing planning efforts**
- **support ongoing assessment activities that improve student learning, development, and success**
- **utilize philosophies, principles, and values that guide the work of the functional area**
- **promote environments that provide opportunities for student learning, development, and success**

- **develop, adapt, and improve programs and services in response to the needs of changing environments, populations served, and evolving institutional priorities**
- **engage many diverse constituents and perspectives from within and outside the unit to inform the development and implementation of the planning process**
- **result in a vision and mission that drive short- and long-term planning**
- **set goals and objectives based on the needs of the populations served, intended student learning and development outcomes, and program outcomes**

Part 7. HUMAN RESOURCES

7.1 Staffing and Support

Counseling Services (CS) must identify the level of staffing and resources necessary to achieve its mission and goals.

CS staffing must be reviewed regularly with regard to service demands, enrollment, user surveys, diversity of services offered, institutional resources, and other mental health and student services that may be available on the campus and in the local community.

CS staffing levels and workloads must be adequate and appropriate for program and service demands.

The student to counselor ratio should be determined in light of institutional size and type, student demographics, roles and responsibilities of professional staff, scope of services provided, accreditation standards if applicable, and unique features of CS.

CS must be staffed by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. Personnel include full-time and/or part-time faculty, staff, administrators, and paraprofessionals (e.g., student employees, interns, graduate assistants, and volunteers).

CS staffing should place priority on hiring staff with identities that reasonably reflect the visible and invisible diversity of students at the institution.

CS must have access to technical and support personnel to accomplish its mission.

CS support personnel who interface directly with students should be carefully selected and mindful of

- the important role they play in the students' impressions of CS
- the fact that they often must make some preliminary client-related decisions
- their access to confidential information

CS professional personnel either must hold an earned graduate or professional degree in a field relevant to their position or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.

CS clinical counseling functions must be performed by mental health professionals with appropriate training, credentials, and supervised experience.

CS leaders should create a diverse work environment inclusive of various professional credentials and preparation.

The minimum qualification for CS professional personnel serving in a clinical role must be a master's degree from an accredited institution in a relevant discipline.

CS professional personnel should have completed a supervised practicum/internship at the graduate level, preferably in the counseling of students within a higher education setting, or should be appropriately supervised until they can transfer their skills to this setting.

CS clinical personnel should hold, or be eligible for licensure or certification in their chosen discipline (e.g., counseling, psychology, social work) where such exists.

CS clinical personnel should have appropriate coursework and training in

- psychological assessment
- theories of counseling, cognitive development, personality, abnormal psychology, psychopathology
- treatment planning
- group counseling
- crisis intervention and management
- substance abuse and dependence
- career development
- multicultural counseling
- legal and ethical issues in counseling
- learning styles

CS professional personnel should demonstrate knowledge of technology, leadership, organizational development, consultation, and relevant federal, regional, and state/provincial statutes.

CS professional personnel responsible for supervising colleagues or graduate interns should have terminal degrees in their profession, hold degrees commensurate with those being supervised, or meet professional and governmental standards for providing clinical supervision, including licensure or certification as a supervisor.

The CS director must have an appropriate combination of graduate course work, formal training, and supervised experience.

The CS director or the designated clinical supervisor must hold, be eligible for, or pursue licensure or certification.

The CS director should

- have a terminal degree in a mental health profession (e.g. counseling psychology, clinical psychology, counselor education, medicine with completed specialty training in psychiatry, or other related discipline) from an accredited institution
- have a minimum of three years of related experience as a staff member or administrator of CS at an institution of higher education
- have received supervision (either pre- or post-doctorate) in counseling within higher education

7.2 Employment Practices

CS must establish procedures and expectations for personnel recruitment, selection, training, supervision, performance, and evaluation.

CS leaders must

- ensure that all personnel have written position descriptions
- regularly review position descriptions
- maintain copies of up-to-date resumes/curriculum vitae for all currently employed personnel
- implement recruitment and selection/hiring strategies that demonstrate a deliberate effort to diversify the workforce
- develop promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and non-discriminatory

CS leaders must establish, in partnership with personnel and aligned with institutional policies, work arrangements (e.g., schedules, remote work) that achieve department objectives.

Personnel within CS must have written performance goals, objectives, and outcomes for each performance cycle to be used to plan, review, and evaluate work and performance. The performance plan must be updated regularly to reflect changes during the performance cycle.

Results of individual personnel evaluations must be used to recognize personnel performance, address performance issues, implement individual and/or collective personnel development and training programs, and inform the assessment of CS.

7.3 Personnel Training and Development

CS personnel must receive training when hired and professional development throughout their employment.

CS personnel must engage in continuing professional development activities to keep abreast of the research, theories, legislation, policies, and advancements that affect its programs and services.

CS personnel should remain abreast of research on outcomes of clinical interventions.

CS must provide personnel with appropriate professional development opportunities or resources that facilitate individual professional development goals and improve competence, skills, and leadership capacity.

CS professional personnel should have the financial support to participate in appropriate professional organizations.

CS professional personnel should be encouraged to participate in community activities related to their profession.

CS should maintain an in-service and staff development program that includes supervision, case presentations, research reports, and discussion of relevant professional issues.

CS personnel must have access to resources and receive specific training on policies, procedures, and laws related to

- the programs and services they support
- privacy and confidentiality
- student records and sensitive institutional information
- systems and technologies necessary to perform their assigned responsibilities
- sexual misconduct, harassment, and workplace violence

CS personnel must be trained on how to recognize and address systems of oppression in the workplace and facilitate a welcoming, inclusive work environment.

CS personnel must be trained on how and when to refer those in need of additional assistance to qualified personnel, and must have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments.

CS leaders must ensure that personnel are knowledgeable about and trained in safety, emergency procedures, identifying threatening conduct or behavior, crisis prevention, response, and reporting.

7.4 Paraprofessional Personnel

Paraprofessionals working in CS must be enrolled in an appropriate field of study and/or have relevant experience.

Paraprofessionals working in CS must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated by personnel who possess applicable educational credentials, work experience, and have supervisory experience.

Practicum students and interns, as well as paraprofessional assistants, may perform, under supervision, such CS functions as are appropriate to their preparation and experience.

CS leaders must accommodate the dual roles paraprofessionals may have as both student and employee.

CS leaders must

- **adhere to parameters of paraprofessionals' job descriptions**
- **articulate intended student learning and development outcomes in student employee job descriptions**
- **adhere to agreed-upon work hours and schedules**
- **offer flexible scheduling options as needed by the student employee**
- **work with paraprofessionals to determine suitable compensation if circumstances necessitate additional hours**

CS leaders must educate paraprofessionals on the use of confidential information.

CS leaders must supervise paraprofessionals' access to confidential records.

Part 8. COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

8.1 Collaboration

Counseling Services (CS) personnel must collaborate and consult with institutional leaders, faculty, individuals, and departments essential to the success of the program.

CS must collaborate with individuals, groups, communities, and organizations to

- **establish, maintain, and promote understanding and effective relations**
- **garner support and resources**
- **meet the needs of students, designated clients, and other constituents**
- **achieve program and student outcomes**

- **engage diverse populations to enrich the educational environment**
- **disseminate information about programs and services**
- **solve problems pertinent to the student population, designated clients, or the organization**

CS must advocate for membership on critical institutional committees, especially those related to crisis response, students at-risk, and threat assessment.

CS must work with campus partners to provide disaster preparedness and response plans.

CS should work closely with all other segments of the institution whose goal is the promotion of psychological and emotional well-being, and career development.

CS should develop close cooperation with institutional referral sources and with potential consumers of CS consultations.

CS should establish close cooperation with key functional areas as defined by the institution and institutional makeup.

CS must refer students, designated clients, and other constituents to appropriate resources when assistance is needed beyond the functional area's scope.

Where adequate mental health resources are not available on campus, CS must establish and maintain close working relationships with community mental health resources.

8.2 Communication

CS must provide relevant information, services, and resources that explain its mission and goals.

CS must develop and implement strategies for outreach and promotion.

CS promotional and descriptive information must be accurate and free of deception and misrepresentation.

8.3 Procedures and Guidelines

CS must have and follow procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for

- **communicating with the media**
- **distributing information through print, broadcast, and online sources**
- **the use of social media**
- **contracting with external organizations for delivery of programs and services**
- **developing relationships with donors**
- **dissemination of relevant information in a timely manner to all constituents**

Guiding Principle: Ethical Considerations

Part 9. ETHICS, LAW, AND POLICY

9.1 Ethical Statements

Counseling Services (CS) must review and adopt appropriate standards of ethical practice including those of applicable professional associations.

CS must have clearly defined and documented ethical statements addressing

- **conflicts of interest, or appearance thereof, by personnel in the performance of their work**
- **management of institutional funds**
- **acceptance, in gratis, of cash or merchandise in accordance with institutional advancement reporting policies**
- **solicitation of gifts, in accordance with institutional advancement reporting policies**
- **research and assessment with human participants or animal subjects**
- **confidentiality of research and assessment data**
- **personnel, student, and other designated clients' rights and responsibilities**
- **disclosure of information in student, personnel, and other designated clients' records**

9.2 Ethical Practice

CS personnel must employ ethical decision making in the performance of their duties.

CS personnel must be familiar with and adhere to relevant ethical standards in the field, including those professional procedures for initial assessment, treatment, and clinical documentation as well as the preparation, use, and distribution of psychological tests.

CS personnel must recognize and avoid conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their judgment or objectivity and, when unavoidable, recuse themselves from the situation.

CS personnel must be honest, objective, and impartial in their interactions.

CS must demonstrate responsibility for sound and ethical assessment, research, evaluation, and program review.

CS must encourage and provide a forum for personnel to address and report unethical behavior.

CS must address issues surrounding scholarly integrity.

CS personnel must perform duties within the scope of their position, training, expertise, and competence.

CS personnel must make referrals when issues presented exceed the scope of their position.

In cases where specialized and needed expertise is not available within CS, personnel must refer students to resources within the institution and/or the local community.

CS must maintain client status and information disclosed in counseling sessions as confidential unless written permission to divulge the information is given by the client.

When the condition of a client is indicative of serious and foreseeable harm to the client or to others, CS personnel must take reasonable action that may involve informing responsible authorities and, when possible, consulting with other professionals. In such cases, CS personnel must be cognizant of pertinent ethical principles, state/provincial or federal statutes, and local

mental health guidelines that stipulate the limits of confidentiality and these limits must be expressly communicated to the client.

Client information should be released by CS personnel only at the written request or concurrence of a client who has full knowledge of the nature of the information that is being released and of the parties to whom it is released.

The decision by CS personnel to release information without consent must occur only after careful consideration and under the conditions described above

9.3 Legal Obligations and Responsibilities

CS must comply with laws, regulations, policies, and procedures that relate to its respective responsibilities and that pose legal obligations, limitations, risks, and liabilities for the institution as a whole.

CS personnel must conform to relevant laws and statutes that govern the delivery of counseling and psychological services.

CS personnel must comply with applicable laws related to privacy and confidentiality.

CS must maintain records in a confidential and secure manner while specifying procedures to monitor access, use, and maintenance of the records.

In accordance with governmental laws, institutional policy, and standards of good professional practice, CS personnel who are concerned about students' well-being must ensure that they are referred to appropriate resources.

CS must have a process for accessing legal advice needed for personnel to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

CS should establish effective relationships with the institutional legal counsel and the legal staff of relevant professional organizations in order to effectively respond to pertinent legal issues and precedents that underlie the delivery components of CS.

CS must not discriminate based upon institutional policies, codes, or governmental laws.

CS must purchase or obtain permission to use copyrighted materials and instruments. References to copyrighted materials and instruments must include appropriate citations.

9.4 Policies and Procedures

CS must have written policies and procedures on operations, transactions, or tasks that have legal implications.

CS must have and follow a timeline for reviewing policies and procedures. The creation and revision of policies and procedures must be informed by available evidence, and policies and procedures that inform the management of higher education.

CS must have policies and procedures consistent with institutional policy for responding to threats, emergencies, and crisis situations.

9.5 Communication of Ethical and Legal Obligations

CS must educate new personnel to relevant ethical standards, statements of ethical practice, and related institutional policies and procedures.

CS must inform its users of ethical and legal obligations and limitations emanating from codes and laws or from licensure requirements.

CS personnel must provide students, designated clients, and constituents with information about student privacy rights and personnel's disclosure obligations.

CS personnel must ensure that clients are made aware of issues such as the limits to confidentiality during intake or early in the counseling process so they can participate from a position of informed consent.

Consultation regarding individual students, as requested or needed, with faculty and other institutional personnel may be offered in the context of preserving the student's confidential relationship with CS. Consultation with parents, partners, and public and private agencies that bear some responsibility for particular students may occur within the bounds of a confidential counseling relationship.

CS personnel must ensure that instances of limited confidentiality are clearly articulated, reviewed with the client, and acknowledged by signature.

CS must create ongoing opportunities to explore and examine basic ethical beliefs important to the functional area.

CS must inform personnel about internal and external governance organizations that affect the functional area.

CS must inform personnel about professional liability insurance options and refer them to external sources if the institution does not provide coverage.

9.6 Addressing Harassment and Hostile Environments

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

CS must adhere to institutional policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, harassment, and workplace violence.

Guiding Principle: Learning-Conducive Structures, Resources, and Systems

Part 10. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

10.1 Funding

Counseling Services (CS) must have the funding that is necessary to accomplish its mission and goals.

Wherever a fee-for-service model is employed, CS must understand students' health care insurance and work with students to utilize their coverage.

CS must determine with administrative leadership what funding is necessary.

10.2 Financial Planning

In establishing and prioritizing funding resources, CS must conduct comprehensive analyses to determine

- unmet needs of the unit
- relevant expenditures
- external and internal resources
- impact on students and the institution

CS must use the budget as a planning tool to reflect commitment to the mission and goals of the functional area and of the institution.

CS financial reports must provide an accurate financial overview of the organization and provide clear, understandable, and timely data upon which personnel can plan and make informed decisions.

10.3 Financial Management

CS must manage funds in accordance with established governmental laws and institutional policies, procedures, and guidelines.

CS must demonstrate responsible stewardship and use of fiscal resources.

CS must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for applying to and managing funds from external resources.

CS must be provided with the institutional and financial resources to assist with professional development of personnel.

CS procurement procedures must

- be consistent with institutional policies
- ensure that purchases comply with laws and codes for usability and access
- ensure that the institution receives value for the funds spent
- consider information available for comparing the ethical and environmental impact of products and services purchased

Part 11. TECHNOLOGY

11.1 Systems Management

Counseling Services (CS) must have current technology to support the achievement of its mission and goals.

CS must select technology that reflects current best pedagogical practices when it is used to facilitate student learning and development.

CS must incorporate accessibility features into technology-based programs and services.

CS must ensure that personnel and constituents have access to training and support for technology use.

CS must back up data on a cycle established in partnership with the institution's information technology department.

CS must implement a replacement plan and cycle for all technology with attention to sustainability.

11.2 User Engagement

CS must use technology to enhance the delivery of programs and services for all constituents.

CS should maintain equipment that is capable of providing modern technical approaches, such as biofeedback and secure video conferencing accessibility, to treatment and record keeping.

CS should have access to equipment for research and media presentations.

CS must ensure that technology addresses constituent needs.

CS must employ technologies that facilitate user interaction.

CS must provide secure remote access.

11.3 Compliance and Information Security

CS must have policies on the appropriate use of technology that are clear and easily accessible.

CS must comply with governmental codes and laws and with institutional technology policies and procedures.

CS must provide a secure platform when conducting financial transactions, in accordance with industry best practices.

11.4 Communication

CS must have updated websites that provide information to all constituents in accessible formats.

CS must use technology that allows users to communicate sensitive information in a secure format.

CS must maintain secure and ethical use in the application of technology for the provision of counseling services.

CS must evaluate relevant social media platforms and techniques for communication, and implement those that best meet constituent needs.

CS must evaluate multiple modes of communication including, but not limited to, phone, text, and web chat.

Part 12. FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

12.1 Design of Facilities

Counseling Services (CS) facilities must be located in suitable spaces designed to support the functional area's mission and goals.

CS should be physically separate from administrative offices, campus security, and student conduct units.

CS should provide a reception area that serves as a comfortable and private waiting area for clients.

CS should maintain or have ready access to group meeting space that provides a confidential setting.

CS with training components should have adequate facilities for recording and, where possible, for direct observations.

CS facilities must be intentionally designed to engage various constituents, promote learning, and provide accessible and safe spaces.

CS should provide an area suitable for individual and group testing procedures.

CS should maintain or have ready access to professional resource materials.

In instances where CS includes a career development unit, there should be a resource center for access to occupational and career information.

CS facilities must be designed to protect the security and privacy of records and ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information and conversations.

CS must maintain an environment that facilitates optimal functioning and ensures confidentiality.

CS must incorporate universal design principles.

CS facilities must be designed and constructed to be energy-efficient and sustainable.

12.2 Work Space

CS personnel must have equipped and well-maintained workspaces designed to support their work and responsibilities.

CS personnel should be provided with individual offices that are appropriately equipped and soundproofed. The offices should be designed to accommodate the functions performed by CS personnel.

CS personnel must be able to safeguard the privacy of their work.

12.3 Equipment Acquisition

When acquiring capital equipment, CS must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and life cycle costs.

CS must incorporate sustainable practices when purchasing equipment.

12.4 Facilities and Equipment Use

CS facilities and equipment must be inspected on an established cycle and be in compliance with codes, laws, and established practices for accessibility, health, safety, and security.

CS must promptly report broken, malfunctioning, defective, unusable, or faulty facilities and equipment to the entity responsible for maintenance.

CS must develop sustainable practices for facilities use.

CS must assess the effectiveness of its facilities to ensure they are meeting facilities and equipment goals.

CS personnel must advocate for appropriate, consistent, and fair assignment of facilities and equipment.

*General Standards revised in 2018;
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The CS Standards and Guidelines should be considered in conjunction with the CS Contextual Statement, CAS Glossary of Terms, and CAS Guiding Principles.

CAS would like to acknowledge and express appreciation to the following individuals for their significant contributions in the development of these standards:

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