COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF STANDARDS (CAS) BASICS

Revised February 2016

Learning Goals

- Identify approaches to quality assurance and the use of professional standards in higher education

- Describe CAS and the CAS standards

- Articulate how the CAS standards can be used for program self-assessment

Council for the
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Standards in Higher Education

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

- Founded in 1979
- Consortium of 42 member organizations
- CAS Board of Directors comprised of representatives from member associations
- Consensus-oriented, collaborative approach
- 45 standards and self-assessment guides (SAGs)
- Standards are designed to be achievable by any program or service, at any institution type
  o Threshold, not aspirational; standards, not goals
  o Guidelines are added to indicate what good practice beyond the threshold looks like

3

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Criteria for Professionalism

- Established philosophy is in place
- Professional preparation exists with a body of knowledge
- Research is underway developing theories and analyzing practice
- Professionals are employed full-time
- Professional organizations are in place
- Professional standards are established

CAS Vision and Mission

- ## CAS Vision
  - Setting the standard for quality in higher education.

- ## CAS Mission
  - 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, 2015).

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Principles Underlying All CAS Standards

Students & Their Environments The whole student is shaped by environments that provide learning opportunities reflective of society and diversity, with students having ultimate responsibility for learning	**Diversity & Multiculturalism** Institutions embracing diversity and eliminating barriers with justice and respect for differences, binding individuals to community
Organization, Leadership, & Human Resources Quality of leaders possessing sound preparation is essential, with success directly correlated to clarity of mission	**Health Engendering Environments** Education prospers in benevolent environments that provide students with appropriate challenge and necessary support
Ethical Considerations Educators exhibit impeccable ethical behavior in professional and personal life	

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Applications for CAS Standards
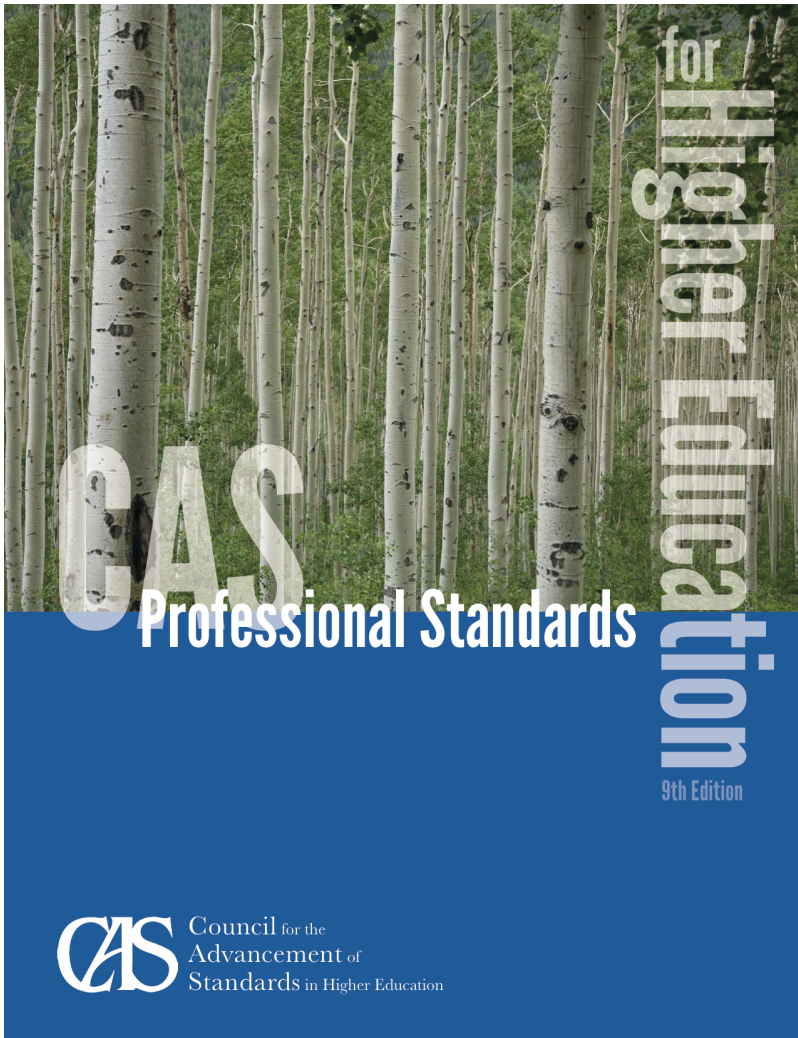
- Design new programs and services
- Focus time, energy, and resources
- Devise staff development
- Guide strategic planning
- Develop learning and development outcomes
- Measure program and service effectiveness

- Academic Advising Programs**
- Adult Learner Programs & Services
- Alcohol & Other Drug Programs**
- Assessment Services
- Auxiliary Services Functional Areas
- Campus Activities Programs
- Campus Information & Visitor Services
- Campus Police & Security Programs
- Campus Religious & Spiritual Programs
- Career Services
- Civic Engagement & Service-Learning Programs**
- Clinical Health Services
- College Honor Society Programs**
- College Unions
- Commuter & Off-Campus Living Programs
- Conference & Event Programs
- Counseling Services
- Dining Service Programs
- Disability Resources & Services
- Education Abroad Programs & Services**
- Financial Aid Programs**
- Fraternity & Sorority Advising Programs
- Graduate & Professional Student Programs & Services
- Health Promotion Services
- Housing & Residential Life Programs**
- International Student Programs & Services
- Internship Programs*
- Learning Assistance Programs
- LGBT Programs & Services
- Master's Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs**
- Multicultural Student Programs & Services
- Orientation Programs**
- Parent & Family Programs
- Recreational Sports Programs
- Registrar Programs & Services
- Sexual Violence-Related Programs & Services**
- Student Conduct Programs**
- Student Leadership Programs
- Student Media Programs*
- Transfer Student Programs & Services
- TRIO & Other Educational Opportunity Programs
- Undergraduate Admissions Programs & Services*
- Undergraduate Research Programs
- Veterans & Military Programs & Services
- Women's and Gender Programs & Services**

* New or revised since the release of the 2015 edition of *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education*
** New or revised in the 2015 *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education*

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Twelve Parts of the General Standards

- 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
- Assessment and Evaluation

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Standards are Comprised of Two Types of Statements

General Standards

- Common across all functional areas
- Appear verbatim in every set of functional area standards

- *Programs & services must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their mission.*

Specialty Standards

- Address issues specific to the functional area

- *The primary mission of career services is to assist students and other designated clients through all phases of their career development.*

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10
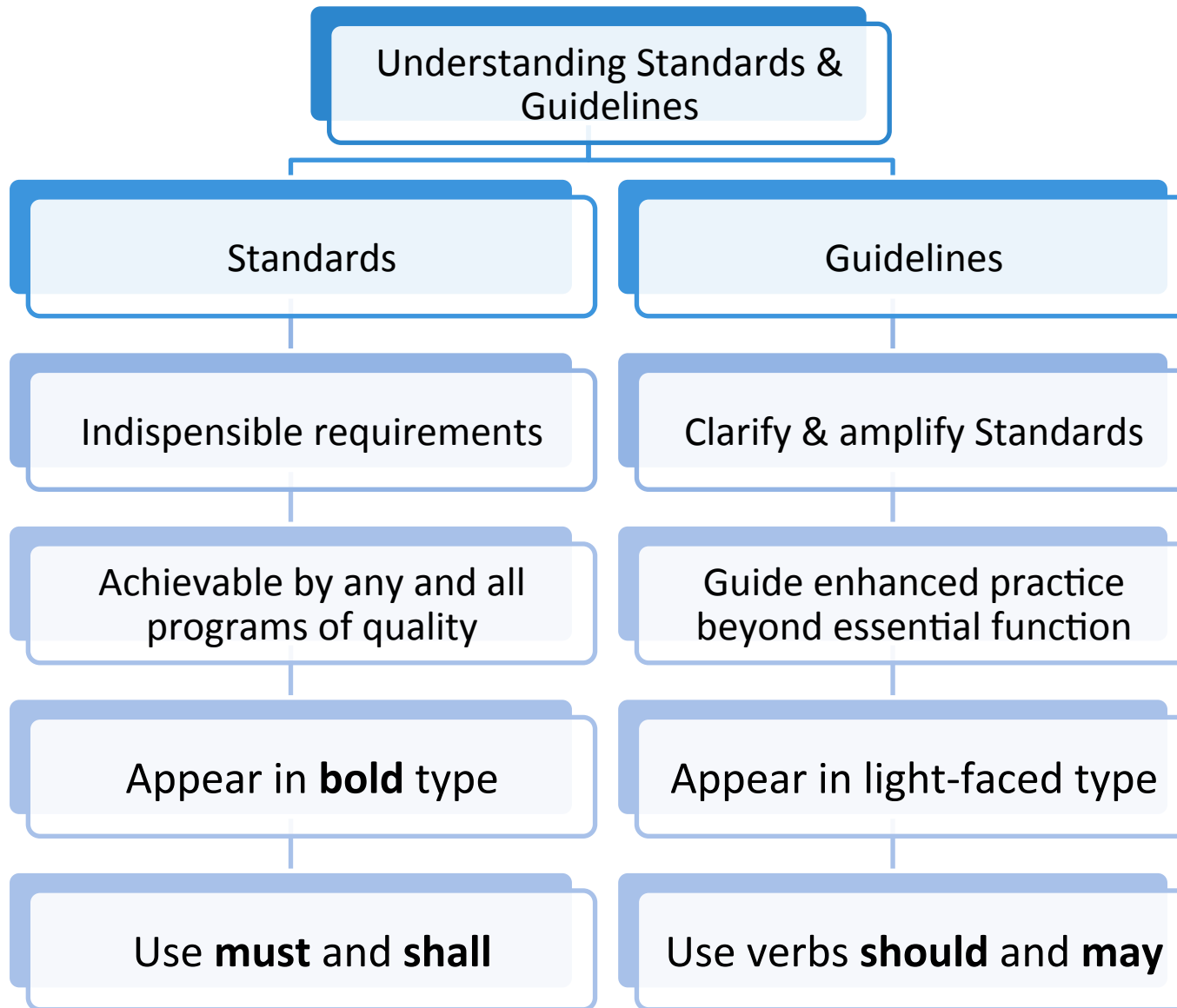
CAS Learning and Development Outcomes

Learning and Development Outcome Domains and Dimensions

- Six Student Learning & Development Outcome Domains are a part of the CAS General Standards

- Stated expectation in the CAS General Standards that all functional area programs must place emphasis on identifying relevant learning outcomes and assessing their achievement by students

Student Learning and Development:
One Element of the Program Section

- Programs and services…
  - Must promote student learning and development outcomes
  - Must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes
  - Must assess outcomes
  - Must provide evidence of their impact on student learning and development
  - Must articulate how they contribute to or support student learning and development

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CAS Learning and Development Outcome Domains & Dimensions

- 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

- Cognitive complexity
  - Dimensions: critical thinking; reflective thinking; effective reasoning; and creativity

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

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15

CAS Learning and Development Outcome Domains & Dimensions

- Interpersonal competence
  - Dimensions: meaningful relationships; interdependence; collaboration; and effective leadership

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

- 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

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LEAP [AAC&U] (2007)	Learning Reconsidered (2004)	Council for the Advancement of Standards [CAS] (2008)	Degree Qualifications Profile [DQP] (2011)	Disciplines (2011)
Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural World	Knowledge Acquisition, Integration, & Application	Knowledge Acquisition, Construction, Integration, & Application	Specialized Knowledge; Broad & Integrative Knowledge	Knowledge Bases
Intellectual & Practical Skills	Cognitive Complexity	Cognitive Complexity	Intellectual Skills	Critical Thinking
Personal & Social Responsibility	Interpersonal & Intrapersonal Competence Humanitarianism Civic Engagement	Intrapersonal Development Interpersonal Competence Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement	Civic and Global Learning	Intrapersonal Attributes & Competencies Interpersonal Relations with Diverse Others Ethics Management & Collaborative Leadership
Integrative & Applied Learning	Practical Competence Persistence & Academic Achievement	Practical Competence	Applied & Collaborative Learning	Professional Skills Life-long Learning

Identifying Outcomes

- What should be the result of our work?
  - Program outcomes (e.g., percentage of students reached)
  - Operational outcomes (e.g., reduced wait-list time to appointment)
  - Student learning and development outcomes (e.g., intrapersonal development/integrity/ethical decision-making)
- Important to balance focus on student learning and development outcomes with focus on program outcomes
  - Are our programs and services organized and run effectively to achieve the intended outcomes?
  - Are the intended outcomes achieved?

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Identifying Strategies

- What will we do intentionally to try to achieve these learning and development outcomes?
  - Programming (active and passive)
  - Individual and group interventions
  - Policies and procedures
  - Environmental factors
  - Short term and long term

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How Can We Know What Students Learn?

- Choose the specific outcomes that you will measure in a year/cycle

- Design intended outcomes and objectives to be assessed so that they are measurable

- Decide how to measure them as you are designing the intervention

- Carry out your plan and use the results to improve the next cycle

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Fundamental Questions of an Assessment

Student Learning and Development Outcomes

- What is the effect of our work on students?
- How are they different as a result of interacting with our programs and services?
- How do we know?
- How do we demonstrate their learning?
- What and how do we measure?

Program Evaluation

- Is the program or service functioning effectively to achieve its mission?
- What evidence is available to support the determination?
  - Learning and development outcomes are part of this evidence
- How is evidence used to make program decisions?

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Seeking a Balanced Assessment

- Important to know about program and learning outcomes
  - Are our programs and services organized and run effectively to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
  - Are the intended learning outcomes achieved?
- What if we just focused on outcomes?
  - If we always achieve the intended outcomes, there's no problem, so we keep doing what we're doing
  - If we don't achieve the intended outcomes, and all we have assessed is those outcomes, how would we decide what to do differently?
- If we assess both programs/services and the actual outcomes, we can make more informed determinations about what needs to be changed or improved

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Conducting Self-Assessment using CAS Standards

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CAS Fundamental Elements about Self-Assessment

- Internally driven
- Systematic and regular
- Effective in terms of time, cost, etc.
- Provides reasonably accurate, useful information
- Supports staff development
- Provides recognition and rewards at a local level
- Charts quality program development and professionalism using widely agreed-upon quality indicators
- Develops a shared vision among constituents
- Relies on honesty with meticulous evaluation
- Assembles results into an action plan for improvement

CAS Evaluation Steps

1. Plan the Process

Map out steps for process, develop timeline, build buy-in with all stakeholders, and explicitly identify desired outcomes of the self-study

2. Assemble and Educate Team

3-5 (program) to 8-10 (division) comprised of stakeholders including students; train team on self-assessment concepts & principles

3. Identify, Collect, and Review Evidence

Define what constitutes evidence; then gather, collect, manage, and review evidence

4. Conduct and Interpret Ratings using Evaluative Evidence

Clarify team's rating criteria; employ a process for rating [small group, individual, staff]; negotiate rating differences; and manage group ratings

5. Develop an Action Plan

Identify discrepancies, corrective action, and recommended steps (e.g., identify strengths, weaknesses, benchmarks, resources, timeframe)

6. Prepare a Report

Identify audience for report(s); describe self-study, evidence gathering, rating process, evaluations, strengths, weaknesses, and action plan; draft executive summary

7. Close the Loop

Put action plans into practice; navigate politics and secure resources; identify barriers; and build buy-in to the program review results

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Self-Assessment Guides (SAG)

- Provides an effective workbook/format for evaluation, self-assessment, and institutional reviews
- Translates standards into multiple criterion statements which can be measured
- Clusters of criterion measures focus on subsections of the standards, allowing raters to express detailed and targeted judgments
- Informs on program strengths and weaknesses
- Leads to an action plan to enhance programs and services that benefit student learning and development

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Part 5. ETHICS

Suggested Evidence and Documentation:
1. Program code or statement of ethics
2. Ethics statements from relevant functional area professional associations
3. Personnel policies, procedures and/or handbook
4. Student code of conduct
5. Operating policies and procedures related to human subjects research (Institutional Review Board, IRB)
6. Minutes from meetings during which staff reviewed and discussed ethics

Criterion Measures:

DNA	IE	0	1	2	3
Does Not Apply	Insufficient Evidence/ Unable to Rate	Does Not Meet	Partly Meets	Meets	Exceeds

☐ 5.1 Ethical Standards
- Programs and services review applicable professional ethical standards and adopt or develop and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice.
- Programs and services publish and adhere to statements of ethical practice, ensure their periodic review, and orient new personnel to relevant statements of ethical practice and related institutional policies.

Rationale:

☐ 5.2 Statement of Ethical Standards
- Statements of ethical standards specify that programs and services personnel respect privacy and maintain confidentiality in communications and records as delineated by privacy laws.

2.5

Program Collaboration
The Program explores possibilities for collaboration with faculty members and other colleagues

Rating
☐ Not Done   ☐ Not Met   ☐ Minimally Met   ☑ Well Met   ☐ Fully Met

Narrative
Over the course of the past year, the Multicultural Center has worked with faculty and staff from multiple departments to facilitate workshops and presentations on campus. A link to these workshops, presenters, and their campus department affiliation is attached as metrics comparing the efforts this year with those in the past.

Sources

🌐 Campus Presentation List

CAS has partnered with Campus Labs offer a CAS-based program review module through available through Compliance Assist

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28

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Sample Timeline

- By Feb. 15:   Team Selection
- By March 15:   Team Training
- Mar. 15-May 15: Compile and Review

  Documentary Evidence

- May 15-June 30: Judging Performance
- July 30:   Final Reports Due

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Assemble and Educate Team

- Identify an individual to coordinate self-assessment
  - Coordinator should not be the unit leader; ideally, appoint someone outside the unit
- Identify and invite members of the institutional community to participate
  - Internal and external composition could include:
    - 1 staff member from elsewhere in the division
    - 1 staff member from outside the division
    - 1 faculty member
    - 1 student
  - Recommended size of team
    - 3-5 members for a single functional area, comprised of stakeholders including students
    - 8-10 members for a diverse department or division, comprised of stakeholders including students

30

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Assemble and Educate Team

- Hold a training session
  - Establish team ground rules
  - Review standards and guidelines
  - Discuss meaning of each standard
  - Establish team's inter-rater reliability
    - Discuss, consider, and set criteria
    - Build a common language (i.e. ""partly meets," "meets," standards)
- Encourage team discussion, expect disagreements, and commit to consensus-based resolution
- Make sure the team has a big-picture understanding of the responsibilities of the area being reviewed (e.g., some stakeholders may only be aware of some of this work)
- Communicate expectations for the group's final product

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Identify, Collect, and Review Evidence

- Design process for compiling evidence and data
- Gather evidence and data
  - Use relevant data and related documentation
  - Routinely collect and file data that can be used to document program effectiveness over time
  - Needed evidence will vary depending on what's being evaluated
- Conduct rating
  - Should rate all standards, but sometimes a standard won't apply (rarely)
  - Employ 'evidence-based' evaluation
  - Team uses rating scale based on established criteria
  - Individuals rate each and every criterion measure and then gather consensus

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Documentary evidence to support evaluative judgments

- Student Recruitment and Marketing Materials
  - brochures/sources of information about the program, participation policies and procedures, reports about program results, and participant evaluations

- Program Documents
  - mission statements, catalogs, brochures, staff and student handbooks, policy and procedure manuals, evaluations and periodic reports, contracts, and staff memos

- Institutional Administrative Documents
  - statements about program purpose and philosophy, organizational charts, financial resource statements, student and staff profiles, and assessment reports

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Documentary evidence to support evaluative judgments

- Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Data
  - needs assessments, follow-up studies, program evaluations, outcome measures, and previous self-study reports
- Staff Activity Reports
  - annual reports; staff member vitae; service to departments, colleges, university, and other agencies; evidence of effectiveness; and scholarship activities
- Student Activity Reports
  - developmental transcripts, portfolios, and evidence of student contributions to the institution, community, and professional organizations; reports of student accomplishments; and reports on student employment experiences

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Conduct and Interpret Ratings using Evaluative Evidence

- A two-tiered judgment approach (individual and group) to determine the extent to which the program meets the CAS Standards is suggested

- Individual ratings should be reviewed and translated into a collective rating before the team moves to the interpretation phase of the self-assessment

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Conduct and Interpret Ratings using Evaluative Evidence

- Interpretation incorporates discussion among team members to ensure that all aspects of the program were given fair consideration prior to a final collective judgment

- After the team review is completed, meet with administrators, staff members, and student leaders to review self-assessment results

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Develop an Action Plan

- Respond to the Overview Questions at the end of each rating section
  - Designed to stimulate summary thinking about overarching issues
- Identify areas of program strength
  - Where excellent performance or accomplishment exceeds criterion and is viewed as excellent or exemplary
- Identify areas of program weakness
  - Program shortcomings that fail to meet criterion measures and/or rating discrepancies among raters of two point or more
  - Viewed as unsatisfactory by at least one rater
- Describe practices requiring follow-up
  - Note criterion measures deemed less than satisfactory and describe practice shortcomings that need to be strengthened

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Develop an Action Plan

Programmatic Action Plan

- Detail actions required for the program to meet all standards
- Identify areas that need follow-up because they are less than satisfactory
- List resources necessary for program enhancements
- Include a timeline and deadline
- Identify person/people responsible for completing the work

Strategic Action Plan

- Complete a full review of each program/service every 3-5 years
- Conduct mini-reviews of units between years
- Gather data and information about programs/services between larger-scale reviews
- Incorporate self-assessment tasks in ongoing projects
- Use CAS self-assessment findings and data to inform future strategic planning efforts

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Prepare a Report

- Determine with whom information needs to be shared and what format will be most effective

- Explain the mission, purpose, and philosophy of department or unit

- Summarize the findings including strengths and areas for improvement

- Make recommendations for strengthening or improving the program

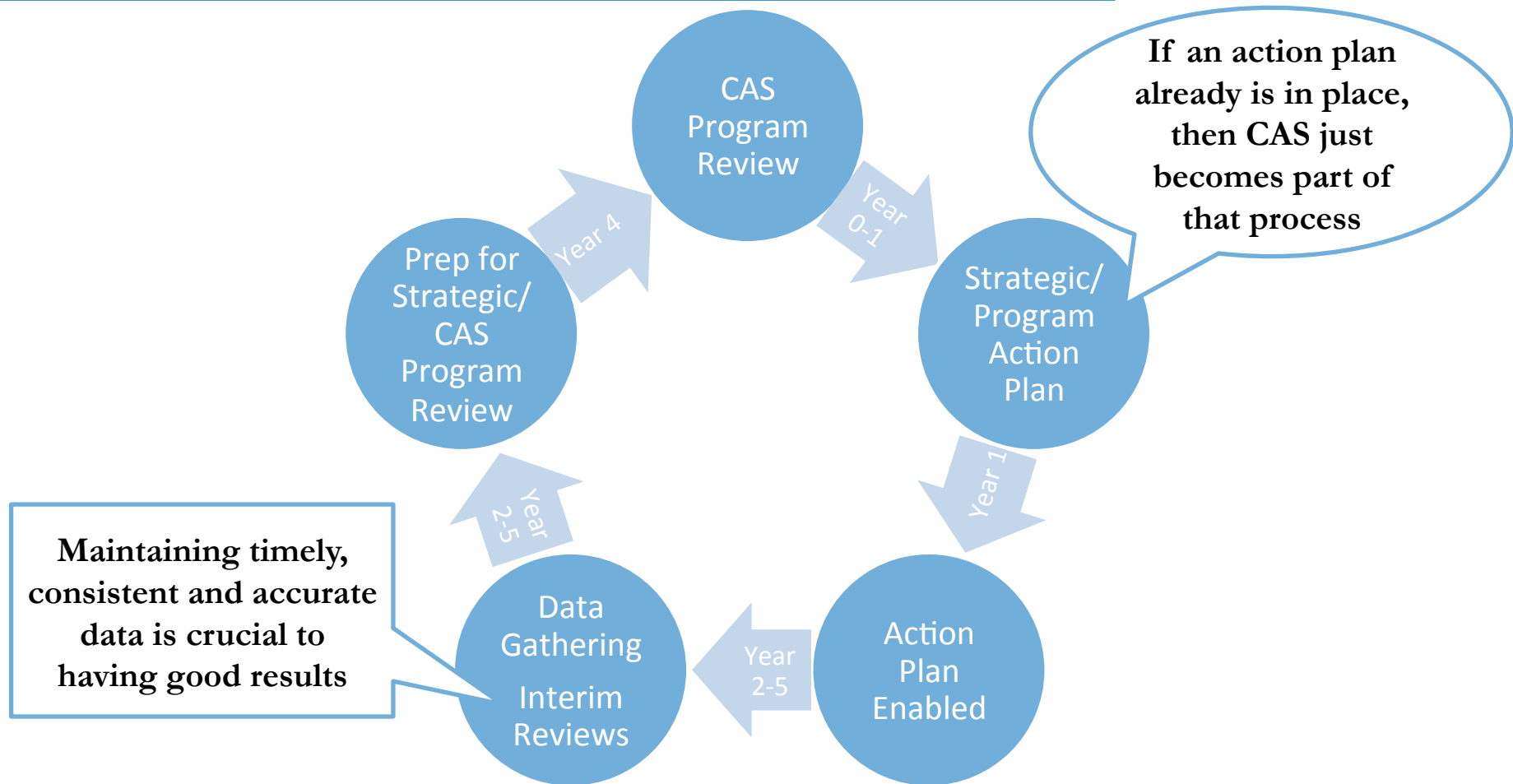Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

Close the Loop

- Department or unit should make a plan for incorporating recommendations of review
- Identify specific actions for program enhancement, including plans for action
- Include resources needed, dates for completion, and identify responsible persons
- Communicate action plans
- Align actions with strategic plans
- Request resources as needed
- Thank self-assessment team members for their hard work

Tips and Lessons from CAS Self-Assessment/Program Review Users

- CAS materials are flexible – use as needed
- Leadership is critical
- Plan for administrative support
- Be clear regarding work load expectations
- Detailed timelines will save your life
- Evidence/Data is key
  - Can shorten the self-study timeframe if data and evidence is gathered ahead of time
  - When compiling evidence, pull 'representative examples'
- Team members may be afraid to be honest when rating – help them understand how self-assessment enhances programs
- Allow staff to implement changes

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CAS as Part of an Ongoing Planning and Assessment Cycle

CAS Program Review

Year 0-1

Strategic/ Program Action Plan

If an action plan already is in place, then CAS just becomes part of that process

Year 1

Action Plan Enabled

Year 2-5

Data Gathering Interim Reviews

Maintaining timely, consistent and accurate data is crucial to having good results

Year 2-5

Prep for Strategic/ CAS Program Review

Year 4

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42

For More Information

- Visit www.cas.edu
- *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education* (9th edition)
- **Self-Assessment Guides**
  - Also available through CAS website
  - Available through Campus Labs Program Review
- **CAS Statements** (available on website)
  - Characteristics of Individual Excellence
  - CAS Statement of Shared Ethical Principles
- **CAS Resource Center** at http://www.cas.edu/resources.asp
- *Frameworks for Assessing Learning and Developmental Outcomes* (FALDOS) (2006)

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