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# Assessment of Counseling Services:

*How Does Counseling Fit Into The Mission Of Student Affairs?*

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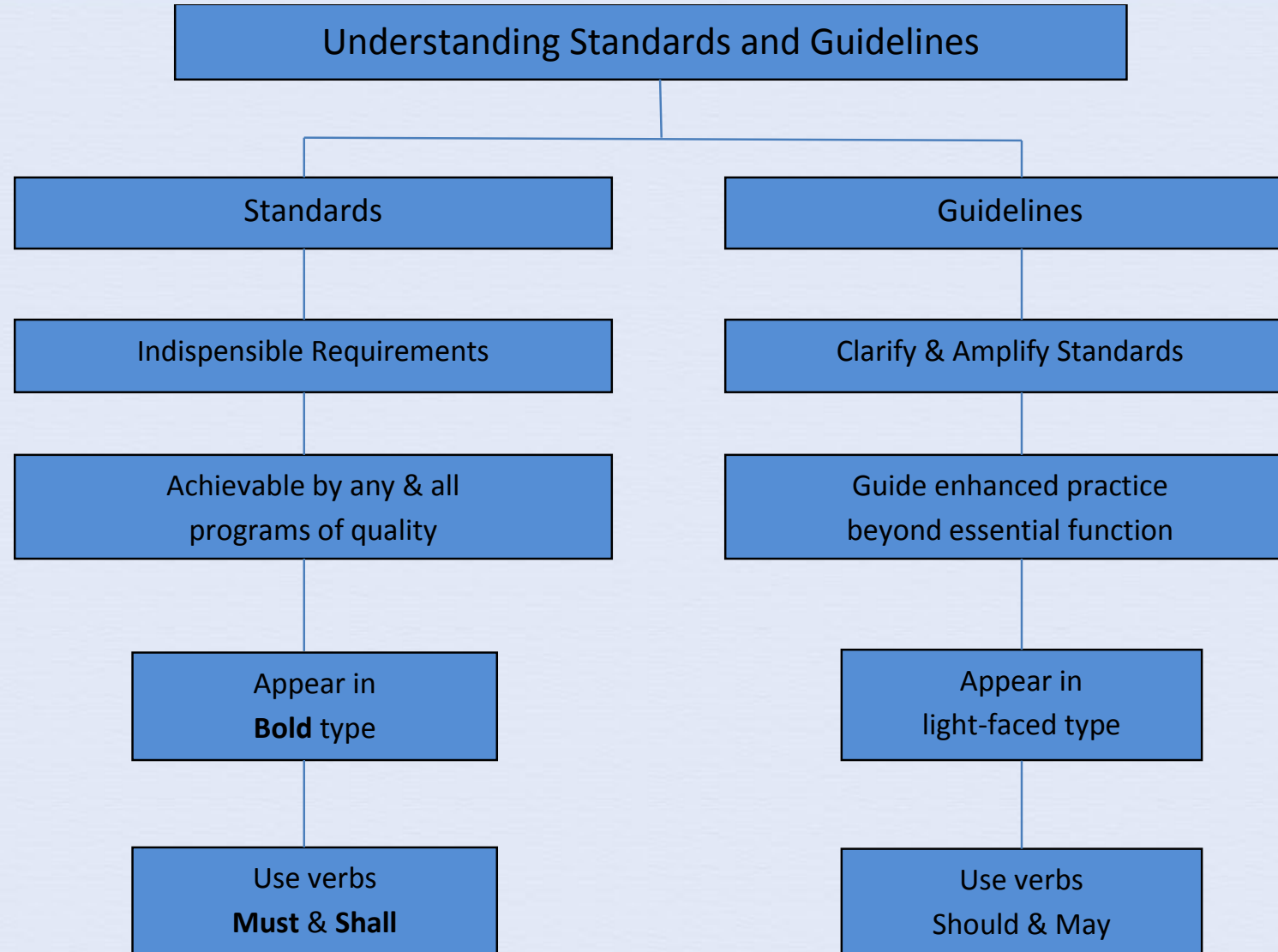
- Work in a counseling center?
- Work in another student affairs area?
- Work somewhere else at your institution?
- Have looked at the CAS Standards for at least one functional area?
- Have participated in a department/program review process using CAS standards?
- Have used CAS standards for other purposes?

- To list and describe the CAS Standards & Guidelines for use in analysis of College Counseling services.
- To analyze CAS Standards and functional areas (College Counseling) for use in creating plans for improvement, expansion, or demonstrating efficacy of services.
- To use CAS standards to design tools for data collection to discuss and explain impact of services on student body.
- To create or develop assessment tools aligned with CAS Standards to create outcome studies for development of strategic goals.

- The mission of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is to promote the improvement of programs and services to enhance the quality of student learning and development.
- CAS is a consortium of professional associations who work collaboratively to develop and promulgate standards and guidelines and to encourage self-assessment.

- Based in philosophy of self-assessment
- 41 member associations
- 43 sets of functional area standards
  - Developing standards that are cross functional (have two or more departments)
- Standards of practice informed by wide range of professionals and approved by consensus
- Self-assessment guides (SAGs) for program self-study
- 30+ years of history; span across higher education

- Credibility, Accountability, Improvement
  - Program & service improvement
  - Measures of quality and effectiveness
  - Measures of impact on learning and development
  - Design of new programs & services
  - Institutional self-studies
  - Preparation for accreditation or program review
- Staff development
- Academic preparation



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



## General Standards

- Common across all functional areas
- *For Example:*
  - *Programs & services must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their mission.*

## Specialty Standards

- Address issues specific to the functional area
- *For Example:*
  - *The primary mission of career services is to assist students and other designated clients through all phases of their career development.*

- Programs and services must:
  - Assess relevant and desirable student learning and development
  - Provide evidence of impact on outcomes
  - Articulate contributions to or support of student learning and development in the domains specifically assessed
  - Articulate contributions to or support of student persistence and success
  - Use evidence gathered through this process to create strategies for improvement of programs and services

- Knowledge Acquisition, Construction, Integration, and Application
- Cognitive Complexity
- Intrapersonal Development
- Interpersonal Competence
- Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement
- Practical Competence

### Dimensions

- Realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect
- Identity development
- Commitment to ethics and integrity
- Spiritual awareness

### Examples of Learning Outcomes

- **SELF**: Assesses, articulates, and acknowledges personal skills, abilities, and growth areas; uses self-knowledge to make decisions such as those related to career choices; articulates rationale for personal behavior; seeks and considers feedback from others; critiques and subsequently learns from past experiences; employs self-reflection to gain insight; functions without need for constant reassurance from others; balances needs of self with needs of others
- **IDENTITY**: Integrates multiple aspects of identity into a coherent whole; recognizes and exhibits interdependence; recognizes and exhibits interdependence in accordance with cultural and personal values; identifies and commits to important aspects of self
- **INTEGRITY**: Incorporates ethical reasoning into action; explores and articulates the values and principles involved in personal decision-making; acts in congruence with personal values and beliefs; exemplifies dependability, honesty, and trustworthiness; accepts personal accountability
- **SPIRITUAL**: Develops and articulates personal belief system; understands roles of spirituality in personal and group values and behaviors; critiques, compares, and contrasts various belief systems; explores issues of purpose, meaning, and faith

- Standards serve a purpose in leading toward intentional outcomes
- CAS identifies 6 learning and developmental outcome domains
- Each functional area either directly influences, contributes to, or makes outcome possible
- Some outcomes may be more salient to a program/service than others, but all should be on radar
- Critically important to think first of desired outcomes & then design programs that will achieve the outcome
- Standards, outcomes, assessment lead us to accountability

- With 2-3 other people...
  - What are your experiences with using CAS?
  - What are the benefits?
  - What are the challenges?
  - What are your questions?
- Report out...

# The CAS Perspective

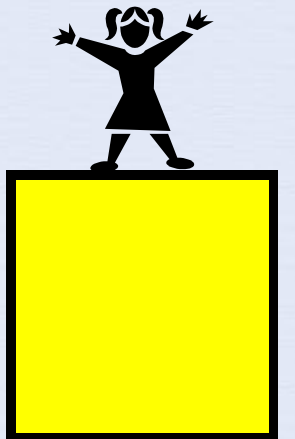


- Is the program or service functioning effectively to achieve its mission?
- What evidence is available to support the determination?
- How is evidence used to make program decisions?





- 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 or development?
- What and how do we measure?

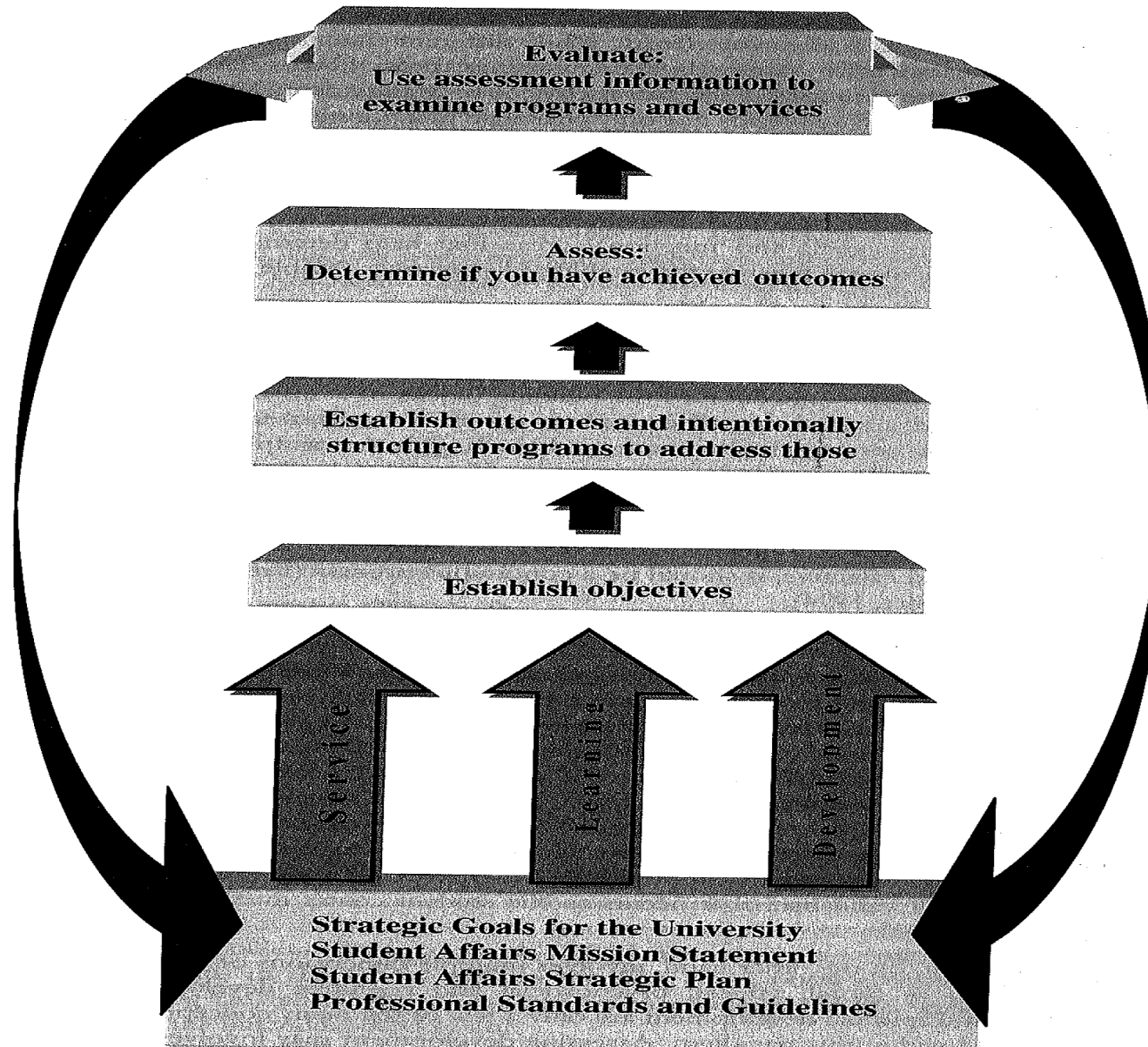


- Current attention focuses on outcomes
  - Shift from *industrial economy* focusing on inputs, consistency of product
  - Shift to the *information economy* focuses on outcomes, fit of product to consumer (Art Levine)
- Important to know both sides:
  - Are our programs & services organized and run effectively to achieve the intended outcomes?
  - Are the intended outcomes achieved?
  - In counseling, are we focused on outcomes for individuals or for our overall program/service?

- What if we just focused on outcomes?
  - If we always achieve the intended outcomes, there's no problem – we keep doing what we're doing.
  - If we don't achieve the intended outcomes, and all that 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.

- Depends on where you are already
- Start where you can
- Build to a full cycle over time

**You Don't Have  
To Do It All**



- Institution mission
- Institution/division strategic plan
- Division/department mission
- Professional standards

## *MAPPING*

*How do these connect to each other?*

- Barham & Scott (2006) suggest that we need to consider the nature of the unit:
  - Service
  - Learning
  - Development
- How does that inform our work?

- What should be the result of our work?
  - Program outcomes
    - e.g., % of students reached
  - Operational outcomes
    - e.g., reduced wait-list time to appointment
  - Student outcomes
    - e.g., intrapersonal development/integrity/ethical decision-making



- What will we do intentionally to try to achieve these outcomes?
  - Outreach/programming (active & passive)
  - Policies & procedures
  - Environmental factors
  - Short term & long term

- Realize that not every outcome **needs** to be measured, not every outcome **can** be measured, & not every outcome **should** be measured
- Design intended outcomes & objectives to be assessed so that they are measurable
- Decide how to measure them as you are designing the intervention
- Carry out your plan & use the results to improve the next cycle

- Purpose & scope of study is defined (*do all or just some...*)
- Self-study team is identified & trained
- Evaluative evidence is collected and reviewed
- Self-study is conducted; ratings are compiled
- Discrepancies are identified
- Appropriate actions are determined
- Special actions for program enhancement are recommended
- Action plan is developed and communicated

- CAS is all about professionals coming together to promote...
- *Standards and guidelines* to design quality programs & services
- Targeted learning and developmental *outcomes*
- *Self-assessment* of both programs/services and student outcomes

- Institution/division context?
  - What is most relevant & important?
- Your unit
  - What is the primary purpose/overall objective?
  - What intended outcomes are in place?
  - What documentation do you have?
  - How do you use it? What have you changed?

- History
  - What kind of program review has been conducted?
- Context for Review
  - Is there an institutional expectation or system of program review?
- Timing
  - Where are you on the accreditation cycle?

- What is your area of greatest need?
  - Comprehensive assessment plan
  - Program evaluation
  - Establishment of intended outcomes
  - Intentional program development
  - Measuring actual outcomes
  - Use of assessment results
  - Other?

- Don't ignore the reality & usefulness of retrospective sense-making
- Even if you have not been engaged in assessment formally, you have probably been using the principles in your work
- Figure out how what you have been doing fits with what you want to be doing, and then fill in the rest of the plan
- Just start...





[www.cas.edu](http://www.cas.edu)

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