

Statement on Student Affairs Preparation Program Quality

A Faculty Affirmation of the

ACPA Commission for Professional Preparation and the NASPA Faculty Council

Quality in masters level preparation programs is assessed through standards and competencies developed and recently refined by student affairs experts. Two documents are valuable for assessing quality: the CAS Standards (for preparation programs) and the Professional Competencies (for preparation program students and graduates). As faculty leaders of the two international student affairs associations, we offer the following statements of affirmation.

We affirm the value of quality in graduate preparation as outlined by the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS).

We affirm the competencies for individual student affairs practitioners as outlined by the ACPA-NASPA Professional Competencies for Student Affairs Practitioners.

We believe in assessing preparation programs and student affairs professionals in ways that will benefit programs, students, employers and the profession.

We believe our professional associations have a role in communicating standards for graduation preparation and competencies for professionals; the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) has a role in writing program standards; and the joint task force for Professional Competencies has a role in defining competency areas for individual student affairs practitioners.

We believe as faculty leaders it is our responsibility to communicate this statement on program quality, for our profession, for graduate students and for the student affairs professionals who hire them.

This Statement was approved at the ACPA and NASPA 2014 Annual Conferences by the following faculty groups:

ACPA Commission for Professional Preparation

NASPA Faculty Fellows

NASPA Faculty Council

Attached: A brief summary of CAS standards for Professional Preparation Programs, and ACPA-NASPA Professional Competencies, for ease of access and review.

CAS Standards Excerpts from Master's-Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs

Excerpts include the first statement in each of 9 parts, with additional excerpts from Part 3, Curriculum Policies, and Part 5, The Curriculum.

Part 1. MISSION and OBJECTIVES

The mission of professional preparation programs must be to prepare persons through graduate education for professional positions in student affairs practice in higher education.

Part 2. RECRUITMENT and ADMISSION

Accurate descriptions of the graduate program, including the qualifications of its faculty and records of students' persistence, degree completion, and subsequent study and employment, must be made readily available for review by both current and prospective students.

Part 3. CURRICULUM POLICIES

The preparation program must specify its curriculum and graduation requirements in writing and distribute them to prospective students.

Successful completion of the program must be based on achievement of clearly articulated learning goals and outcomes.

Programs must demonstrate that the full curriculum, as outlined in Part 5 of these standards and guidelines, is covered and that graduates have mastered relevant competencies.

An essential feature of the preparation program must be to foster an appreciation of intellectual inquiry in faculty members and students, as evidenced by active involvement in producing and using research, evaluation, and assessment information in student affairs.

Part 4. PEDAGOGY

Each program and all faculty members must indicate their pedagogical philosophy and strategies in the appropriate program media. Faculty members must accommodate multiple student learning styles. Teaching approaches must be employed that lead to the accomplishment of course objectives, achievement of student learning outcomes, and evaluation by academic peers for the purpose of program improvement.

Part 5. THE CURRICULUM

All programs of study must include (a) foundational studies, (b) professional studies, and (c) supervised practice. Demonstration of necessary knowledge and skill in each area is required of all program graduates.

Part 5a: Foundational Studies

Must include: Study in the historical, philosophical, ethical, cultural, and research foundations of higher education that informs student affairs practice.

Part 5b: Professional Studies

Must include: (a) student learning and development theories; (b) student characteristics and effects of college on students; (c) individual and group strategies; (d) organization and administration of student affairs; and (e) assessment, evaluation, and research.

Part 5c: Supervised Practice

Must include: A minimum of 300 hours of supervised practice, consisting of at least two distinct experiences, must be required.

Part 6. EQUITY AND ACCESS

A graduate program must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity in all activities. The program must foster an inclusive community in which diversity is viewed as an ethical responsibility.

Part 7. ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Institutions must provide sufficient faculty and staff members, resource materials, advising, career services, student financial support, facilities, technology, and funding resources for the program.

Part 8. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty members must comply with institutional policies and ethical principles and standards of ACPA – College Student Educators International, NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, American Association of University Professors, and the CAS Statement of Shared Ethical Principles.

Ethical expectations of graduate students must be disseminated in writing on a regular basis to all students.

Part 9. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Planned procedures for continuing evaluation of the program must be established and implemented, and the evaluation information must be used for appropriate program enhancements.

Revision Date: 2012

Council for Advancement of Standards: Masters-Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs. Retrieved from:

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=E86DA70D-0C19-89ED-0FBA230F8F2F3F41>

Excerpts from the ACPA-NASPA Professional Competencies for Student Affairs Practitioners

Excerpts include each competency area followed by the competency description.

Advising and Helping

Advising and Helping competency area addresses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to providing counseling and advising support, direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance to individuals and groups.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

The Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency area (AER) focuses on the ability to use, design, conduct, and critique qualitative and quantitative AER analyses; to manage organizations using AER processes and the results obtained from them; and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses on campus.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) competency area includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to create learning environments that are enriched with diverse views and people. It is also designed to create an institutional ethos that accepts and celebrates differences among people, helping to free them of any misconceptions and prejudices.

Ethical Professional Practice

The Ethical Professional Practice competency area pertains to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to understand and apply ethical standards to one's work. While ethics is an integral component of all the competency areas, this competency area focuses specifically on the integration of ethics into all aspects of self and professional practice.

History, Philosophy, and Values

The History, Philosophy, and Values competency area involves knowledge, skills, and attitudes that connect the history, philosophy, and values of the profession to one's current professional practice. This competency area embodies the foundations of the profession from which current and future research and practice will grow. The commitment to demonstrating this competency area ensures that our present and future practices are informed by an understanding of our history, philosophy, and values.

Human and Organizational Resources

The Human and Organizational Resources competency area includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes used in the selection, supervision, motivation, and formal evaluation of staff; conflict resolution; management of the politics of organizational discourse; and the effective application of strategies and techniques associated with financial resources, facilities management, fundraising, technology use, crisis management, risk management, and sustainable resources.

Law, Policy, and Governance

The Law, Policy, and Governance competency area includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes relating to policy development processes used in various contexts, the application of legal constructs, and the understanding of governance structures and their impact on one's professional practice.

Leadership

The Leadership competency area addresses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of a leader, whether it be a positional leader or a member of the staff, in both an individual capacity and within a process of how individuals work together effectively to envision, plan, effect change in organizations, and respond to internal and external constituencies and issues.

Personal Foundations

The Personal Foundations competency area involves the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to maintain emotional, physical, social, environmental, relational, spiritual, and intellectual wellness; be self-directed and self-reflective; maintain excellence and integrity in work; be comfortable with ambiguity; be aware of one's own areas of strength and growth; have a passion for work; and remain curious.

Student Learning and Development

The Student Learning and Development competency area addresses the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs practice, as well as understanding teaching and training theory and practice.

ACPA-NASPA Professional Competencies for Student Affairs Practitioners. Retrieved from:

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B6fIoINT5uh1YTQ0ODA0NWYtOTIxOC00NTVILWIyNDQtZjcyMGVhMmJhYzQ0/edit?hl=en&pli=1>