



We are pleased you are interested in the Standards and Guidelines developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). This CAS member association has permission to post a link to this standard on their website. Standards are developed through a consensus model of member associations and other experts, including the association on whose page this link is found. You are invited to use the attached CAS statement in the design and assessment of your programs and for your staff training and development. *This statement may not be duplicated for other purposes without permission from CAS.*

This standard 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 and in the standards book) in the design and assessment of your programs.

This standard has a 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 CAS standard 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 THIRTY 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 achievement 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 45 functional areas, consistent with institutional missions. Individuals and institutions from more than 40 CAS member organizations comprise a professional constituency of over 100,000 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.

Direct your questions to the CAS Executive Office, P.O. Box 1369, Fort Collins, CO 80522-1369, 202-862-1400, or email Marybeth Drechsler Sharp, Executive Director (executive_director@cas.edu)

LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

CAS Contextual Statement

Learning assistance has been essential to student success and retention since the opening of the first U.S. colleges (Arendale, 2010; Maxwell, 1997). The reading clinics, intensive writing, and study methods laboratories of the 1930s and 1940s and self-help programs, learning modules, and programmed instruction of the 1950s and 1960s formed part of the historical foundation for learning assistance programs (Arendale, 2004, 2010; Carino, 1995; Enright, 1975; Lissner, 1990; Sullivan, 1980). In the U.S., more holistic learning assistance grew out of demographic shifts in student populations in the 1970s, spearheaded in colleges and universities on the West Coast (Christ, 1980; Walker, 1980) and in the Midwest, coupled with a growing national sense of college as a necessary part of a complete education.

In this open-university revolution, which broadened admissions to students who had not traditionally sought or been admitted to academically-oriented postsecondary institutions, learning assistance centers expanded their missions to prevent the open door to college from becoming a revolving door. The growth of academic success programs across the U.S. and Canada into and through the 1980s was consistent with traditional American ideals of democratic education and equal opportunity. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, the last decade of the 20th century saw comprehensive academic support become a standard part of the postsecondary landscape. In the early 21st century, learning assistance has continued to evolve, as the 2008 ADAAA (ADA Amendments Act), rapid demographic shifts, global recruitment of students, and developments in cognitive science have resulted in new and unique challenges in designing appropriate postsecondary learning environments (Anderson, 2014). Learning assistance programs help students align their prior educational experiences and assumptions with college expectations and practices in order to enhance students' academic engagement.

Contemporary learning assistance programs (LAP) facilitate student learning, development, and academic success (Ryan & Glenn, 2004; Stone & Jacobs, 2008) by assisting students in developing appropriate strategies and behaviors to increase learning efficiency (Dansereau, 1985). Students' particular cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and non-cognitive needs may be addressed through a carefully-designed combination of student support programs, tutoring, and developmental courses in reading, writing, mathematics, and study strategies (Armstrong, Stahl, & Boylan, 2014; Flippo & Caverly, 2009; Hodges, Simpson, & Stahl, 2009). Participation in learning assistance programs and services can also improve student retention (Beal, 1980; Grillo & Leist, 2014; Ryan & Glenn, 2004) and academic engagement, providing the kinds of rewarding interactions that foster student intellectual and social growth and are key to most postsecondary institutional missions (Tinto, 1987, 2004). While LAP may serve targeted populations from first-year to graduate and professional students, comprehensive learning assistance programs serve all students at the institution as well as faculty, staff, administrators, and students in the community (Kerstiens, 1995). LAP- uniquely complement classroom and online instruction by encouraging communities of learning on campus, making learning accessible to students, and helping students make the most of their intellectual opportunities (Dvorak & Roessger, 2012). Thus, the mission statements of all LAP should include who is served and how LAP are structured.

Learning assistance programs (LAP) usually provide individualized instruction; including tutoring, mentoring, academic coaching, and counseling (Truschel & Reedy, 2009), that accommodates students' learning preferences, learning goals, and current development. Learning centers may also provide course-based learning assistance (e.g., Supplemental Instruction [SI], Structured Learning Assistance [SLA], Peer Led Team Learning [PLTL]) to help students master content and learn how to learn. Sometimes LAP provide or partner with credit bearing courses (e.g., developmental education, first-year seminars) and non-credit bearing courses and workshops (e.g., tutor and mentor training, general and disciplinary learning strategy workshops). LAP support students in bridge programs and learning communities; in emporium, companion, co-requisite, and workshop environments; and in accelerated and just-in-time support situations. These programs, and the backgrounds of the individuals who work within them, are intentionally diverse because they are designed and implemented to be consistent with institutional missions as well as educational best practices. Ideally, LAP operate "at the crossroads of academic affairs, student affairs, and enrollment management" (Arendale, 2010, p. 3).

High-quality learning assistance programs (LAP) are characterized by a focus on processes and strategies of learning, intellectual development, and effective assessment of academic performance. These programs respect students' cultures while acquainting them with the conventions, discourses, and expectations of higher education. LAP also engage faculty, staff, students, and administrators in broader conversations about academic success. To augment professional expertise, LAP professionals often train student and paraprofessional staff to provide services (e.g., peer tutoring and mentoring, study groups, SI, SLA, PLTL). The learning and development of student staff, as well as of student clients, thus become important parts of the mission and create rich, layered learning communities.

Learning assistance programs (LAP) have increasingly embraced the need for summative and formative assessment of effectiveness, ranging from the measurement of individual student outcomes to pioneering research in learning and teaching (Nortson & Agee, 2014). Programs and learning assistance professionals also enjoy growing partnerships with other institutional departments and external organizations who promote data-informed decision-making processes coupled with research in learning and teaching.

CAS Standards provided the impetus for certification and professional development programs in learning assistance. In 1989, the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) initiated International Tutor Training Program Certification to ensure minimum standards for tutor training. Nine years later CRLA developed International Mentor Training Program Certification. The *CRLA Handbook for Training Peer Tutors and Mentors* (Agee & Hodges, 2012) provides examples of best practices that meet certification standards. The National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) developed the *NADE Self-Evaluation Guides* (Clark-Thayer & Putnam Cole, 2009), which provide for a self-study process relevant for developmental coursework programs, tutoring services programs, course-based learning assistance programs, and teaching and learning processes. Firmly grounded in the self-study process from the *Guides*, NADE accreditation requires programs to incorporate rigorous data analyses in their decision-making processes. All three programs as well as programs certifying tutors and tutor trainers (ATP, 2015), learning center leadership (NCLCA, 2015), and learning centers of excellence (NCLCA, 2016), are endorsed by the Council of Learning Assistance and Developmental Education Associations (CLADEA), which continues to examine and approve certifications in the field.

The reader is encouraged to recognize that the CAS Learning Assistance Programs standards complement and support other CAS standards. Among others, the CAS standards for TRIO and other educational opportunity programs, Disabilities Service Programs, Academic Advising Programs, Counseling, Orientation Programs, and the upcoming standards for Placement and Testing Services Programs that include components supportive of comprehensive internship offerings in higher education.

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LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

CAS Standards and Guidelines

Part 1. MISSION

The mission of Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must be to provide students with resources and opportunities to develop the learning skills and strategies needed for academic success.

LAP must support student retention and persistence to completion or graduation.

LAP must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their missions, which must be consistent with the mission of the institution and with applicable professional standards. The mission must be appropriate for the institution's students and other constituents. Mission statements must reference student learning and development.

LAP may exist to serve all institutional stakeholders, all students, or specific populations within its jurisdiction.

LAP must establish goals that

- are guided by the standards and guidelines in this document regardless of where the LAP is structured within the institution
- ensure students are the central focus of the program
- assist students in achieving their personal potential for learning
- help students develop positive attitudes toward learning and confidence in their ability to learn
- foster students' personal responsibility and accountability for their own learning
- provide a variety of instructional approaches appropriate to the skill levels and learning styles of students
- introduce students to the academic expectations of the institution, the faculty members, and the culture of higher education
- assist students in applying newly learned skills and strategies to their academic work
- support the academic standards and requirements of the institution

Part 2. PROGRAM

To achieve their mission, Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must contribute to

- students' formal education, which includes both the curriculum and the co-curriculum
- student progression and timely completion of educational goals
- preparation of students for their careers, citizenship, and lives
- student learning and development

To contribute to student learning and development, LAP must

- identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes
- articulate how the student learning and development outcomes align with the six CAS student learning and development domains and related dimensions
- 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 not specifically assessed
- use evidence gathered to create strategies for improvement of programs and services

STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT DOMAINS AND DIMENSIONS

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

[LD Outcomes: See *The Council for the Advancement of Standards Learning and Development Outcomes* statement for examples of outcomes related to these domains and dimensions.]

LAP must be

- intentionally designed
- guided by theories and knowledge of learning and development
- integrated into the life of the institution
- reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population
- responsive to needs of individuals, populations with distinct needs, and relevant constituencies
- delivered using multiple formats, strategies, and contexts
- designed to provide universal access

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

LAP must provide holistic instruction and services that address the cognitive, metacognitive, affective, non-cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions of learning.

LAP must deliver services using formats appropriate to the range of diverse student learning needs.

LAP services may include individual and group instruction and/or tutoring, cooperative learning, peer assisted learning, and accelerated learning.

LAP may offer subject-matter tutoring, course-based instructional programs (e.g., Supplemental Instruction), time management programs, college success courses, first-year student seminars, and preparation for graduate and professional school admissions tests and for professional certification requirements.

LAP instruction and services may include stress management, test anxiety reduction, assertiveness, time management, concentration, and motivation.

LAP instructional content, materials, and activities should provide opportunities to increase awareness and appreciation of the individual and cultural differences of students, personnel, and faculty members.

LAP may use a variety of instructional media such as print, electronic, and skills laboratories.

LAP instruction and programs may be delivered on campus, online, or in blended formats.

LAP may provide diagnostic and placement screening of students.

LAP should conduct individual assessment for the purposes of identifying the learning needs of students and guiding them to appropriate programs and services.

LAP must share the individual student's assessment results with the student to formulate an academic success plan.

LAP must communicate assessment results to students confidentially, honestly, and sensitively.

Where students establish learning goals, LAP should provide feedback concerning progress in reaching those goals.

LAP should orient students to the practices, resources, responsibilities, and behaviors that contribute to academic success

LAP must have access to student information relevant to its work.

LAP must collaborate with faculty members, personnel, and administrators in addressing students' learning needs, academic performance, and persistence to completion.

LAP must refer students to appropriate campus and community resources for assistance with personal concerns, learning disabilities, financial difficulties, and other areas of need that may be outside the purview or beyond the expertise of the program.

LAP should support faculty and personnel development through resources that enhance and support student learning and instruction.

LAP must promote campus-wide understanding of how their services support the learning needs of the student population.

Strategies to promote this understanding may include

- establishing advisory boards consisting of members from key segments of the campus community
- holding periodic informational meetings and consulting with personnel, faculty members, and administrators
- participating in personnel and faculty development and in-service programs on curriculum and instructional approaches that address the development of learning skills, attitudes and behaviors, and the assessment of student learning outcomes
- encouraging the use of program resources, materials, instruction, and services as integral or supplemental classroom activities
- conducting workshops that demonstrate the application of learning strategies to course content
- disseminating information that describes programs and services, hours of operation, and procedures for registering or scheduling appointments
- training and supervising individuals to work in such capacities as tutors, peer mentors, and group leaders (e.g., Supplemental Instruction leaders)
- providing jobs, practica, courses, internships, mentoring, and assistantships for students interested in learning assistance and related careers
- collaborating with other community groups and educational institutions to provide college preparation assistance
- creating a web portal presence to connect/direct students to resources on and off campus

Part 3. ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

To achieve program and student learning and development outcomes, Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must be purposefully structured for effectiveness. LAP must have clearly stated and current

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

Leaders must model ethical behavior and institutional citizenship.

Leaders with organizational authority for LAP must provide strategic planning, management and supervision, and program advancement.

Strategic Planning

- **articulate 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**
- **facilitate continuous development, implementation, and assessment of program effectiveness and goal attainment congruent with institutional mission and strategic plans**
- **promote environments that provide opportunities for student learning, development, and engagement**
- **develop, adapt, and improve programs and services in response to the changing needs of populations served and evolving institutional priorities**
- **include diverse perspectives to inform decision making**

Management and Supervision

- **plan, allocate, and monitor the use of fiscal, physical, human, intellectual, and technological resources**

- **manage human resource processes including recruitment, selection, professional development, supervision, performance planning, succession planning, evaluation, recognition, and reward**
- **influence others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the unit**
- **empower professional, support, and student personnel to become effective leaders**
- **encourage and support collaboration with colleagues and departments across the institution**
- **encourage and support scholarly contributions to the profession**
- **identify and address individual, organizational, and environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement**
- **use current and valid evidence to inform decisions**
- **incorporate sustainability practices in the management and design of programs, services, and facilities**
- **understand appropriate technologies and integrate them into programs and services**
- **be knowledgeable about codes and laws relevant to programs and services and ensure that programs and services meet those requirements**
- **assess and take action to mitigate potential risks**

Program Advancement

- **advocate for and actively promote the mission and goals of the programs and services**
- **inform stakeholders about issues affecting practice**
- **facilitate processes to reach consensus where wide support is needed**
- **advocate for representation in strategic planning initiatives at divisional and institutional levels**

The mission and goals of LAP, the needs and demographics of their clients, and their institutional role should determine where the unit is located in the organizational structure of the institution. LAP are frequently organized as units in the academic affairs or student affairs division.

Regardless of where LAP is positioned within the organizational structure, it must communicate and collaborate with a network of key units across the institution to ensure coordination of related functions, programs, services, policies and procedures, and to expedite student referrals.

The scope, roles, and responsibilities of LAP in relation to allied academic and student affairs departments should be clearly defined.

LAP leaders must be knowledgeable about issues, trends, theories, research, and methodologies related to student learning and retention.

LAP leaders should

- **participate in institutional planning, policy, procedural, and fiscal decisions that affect learning assistance for students**
- **seek opportunities for additional funding, resources, and facilities, as needed**
- **represent the program on institutional committees**
- **collaborate with leaders of academic departments and support services in addressing the learning needs and retention of students**
- **be involved in research, publication, presentations, consultation, and activities of professional organizations**
- **communicate with professional colleagues in the learning assistance field and related professions**
- **promote and advertise their programs and services**
- **demonstrate the ability to plan, prepare, and oversee budgets that sustain and advance the mission, goals and objectives of the program**

Part 4. HUMAN RESOURCES

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish mission and goals.

Personnel may include full-time and/or part-time faculty, professional staff, student employees, interns, graduate assistants, and volunteers.

Administrative and technical personnel should be knowledgeable about current programs, services, policies, and procedures in order to expedite smooth and efficient assistance to students.

LAP personnel salaries and fringe benefits should be based upon experience and responsibilities and be commensurate with similar positions.

LAP must have access to technical and support personnel adequate to accomplish their mission.

Within institutional guidelines, LAP must

- **establish procedures for personnel recruitment and selection, training, performance planning, and evaluation**
- **set expectations for supervision and performance**
- **provide personnel access to continuing and advanced education and appropriate professional development opportunities to improve their competence, skills, and leadership capacity**
- **consider work/life options available to personnel (e.g., compressed work schedules, flextime, job sharing, remote work, or telework) to promote recruitment and retention of personnel**

Personnel who hold a joint appointment in LAP and in another department or program must possess the necessary expertise for assigned responsibilities and be committed to the mission, philosophy, goals, and priorities of the program.

Administrators of LAP must

- **ensure that all personnel have updated position descriptions**
- **implement recruitment and selection/hiring strategies that produce a workforce inclusive of under-represented populations**
- **develop promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and non-discriminatory**

Personnel responsible for delivery of LAP must have written performance goals, objectives, and outcomes for each year's 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 programs and services.

LAP personnel, when hired and throughout their employment, must receive appropriate and thorough training.

LAP personnel, including student employees and volunteers, must have access to resources or receive specific training on

- **institutional policies pertaining to functions or activities they support**

- **privacy and confidentiality policies**
- **laws regarding access to student records**
- **policies and procedures for dealing with sensitive institutional information**
- **policies and procedures related to technology used to store or access student records and institutional data**
- **how and when to refer those in need of additional assistance to qualified personnel and have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments**
- **systems and technologies necessary to perform their assigned responsibilities**
- **ethical and legal uses of technology**

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

Administrators of LAP must ensure that personnel are knowledgeable about and trained in safety, emergency procedures, and crisis prevention and response. Risk management efforts must address identification of threatening conduct or behavior and must incorporate a system for responding to and reporting such behaviors.

LAP personnel must be knowledgeable of and trained in safety and emergency procedures for securing and vacating facilities.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

LAP 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.

LAP professional personnel must be competent in the content areas in which they teach, conduct labs, and/or provide assistance.

LAP professional personnel should be competent and experienced in

- learning theory, instruction and assessment, and the theory and professional standards of practice for their areas of specialization and responsibility
- understanding the unique characteristics and needs of the populations they assist and teach
- demonstrating the ability to adjust pedagogical approaches according to the learning needs and styles of their students, the nature of the learning task, and the content of academic disciplines across the curriculum
- working with college students with different learning styles and abilities
- writing and communicating at a professional level
- working in culturally and academically diverse environments
- consulting, collaborating, and negotiating with personnel, faculty members, and administrators of academic and student affairs units
- designing, implementing, and utilizing instructional strategies, materials, and technologies
- training, supervising, and mentoring paraprofessionals and pre-professionals
- identifying and establishing lines of communication for student referral to other institutional and student support units

Faculty members assigned to LAP must be informed about the implications for tenure and promotion.

INTERNS OR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Degree- or credential-seeking interns or graduate assistants must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and relevant experience. These students must be trained and supervised by professional personnel who possess applicable educational credentials and work experience and have supervisory experience. Supervisors must be cognizant of the dual roles interns and graduate assistants have as both student and employee.

Supervisors must

- adhere to parameters of students' job descriptions
- articulate intended learning outcomes in student job descriptions
- adhere to agreed-upon work hours and schedules
- offer flexible scheduling when circumstances necessitate

Supervisors and students must both agree to suitable compensation if circumstances necessitate additional hours.

LAP professionals must be knowledgeable of the policies and procedures to be followed for internships and practica as required by students' academic departments.

STUDENT EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. Students must have access to a supervisor. Student employees and volunteers must be provided clear job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing development.

Part 5. ETHICS

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must

- review applicable professional ethical standards and must adopt or develop and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice
- publish and adhere to statements of ethical practice and ensure their periodic review
- orient new personnel to relevant ethical standards and statements of ethical practice and related institutional policies

LAP must train all program personnel about matters of confidentiality and the security of records. Clear statements must be distributed and reviewed with personnel regarding what information is appropriate for them to access or communicate.

Statements of ethical standards must

- specify that LAP personnel respect privacy and maintain confidentiality in communications and records as delineated by privacy laws
- specify limits on disclosure of information contained in students' records as well as requirements to disclose to appropriate authorities
- address conflicts of interest, or appearance thereof, by personnel in the performance of their work
- reflect the responsibility of personnel to be fair, objective, and impartial in their interactions with others
- reference management of institutional funds

- reference appropriate behavior regarding research and assessment with human participants, confidentiality of research and assessment data, and students' rights and responsibilities
- include the expectation that personnel confront and hold accountable other personnel who exhibit unethical behavior
- address issues surrounding scholarly integrity

LAP personnel must

- employ ethical decision making in the performance of their duties
- inform users of programs and services of ethical obligations and limitations emanating from codes and laws or from licensure requirements
- recognize and avoid conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their judgment or objectivity and, when unavoidable, recuse themselves from the situation
- perform their duties within the scope of their position, training, expertise, and competence
- make referrals when issues presented exceed the scope of the position

LAP personnel must utilize appropriate means for reporting issues related to academic integrity, plagiarism, code of student conduct, students' rights and responsibilities, and other similar policies.

LAP must confirm that statements or claims made about outcomes that can be achieved from participating in programs and services are accurate.

LAP funds acquired through grants and other non-institutional resources must be managed according to the regulations and guidelines of the funding source and the institution.

Part 6. LAW, POLICY, AND GOVERNANCE

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must be in compliance with laws, regulations, and policies that relate to their respective responsibilities and that pose legal obligations, limitations, risks, and liabilities for the institution as a whole. Examples include constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; relevant law and orders emanating from codes and laws; and the institution's policies.

LAP must have access to legal advice needed for personnel to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

LAP must inform personnel, appropriate officials, and users of programs and services about existing and changing legal obligations, risks and liabilities, and limitations.

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

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

LAP must regularly review policies. The revision and creation of policies must be informed by best practices, available evidence, and policy issues in higher education.

LAP must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for responding to threats, emergencies, and crisis situations. Systems and procedures must be in place to disseminate timely and accurate information to students, other members of the institutional community, and appropriate external organizations during emergency situations.

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

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

LAP must inform personnel about internal and external governance organizations that affect programs and services.

LAP should provide development programs to educate personnel of changing legal obligations and resulting policy and procedural changes.

LAP must maintain the security of all confidential records, including digital records.

Part 7. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND ACCESS

Within the context of each institution's mission and in accordance with institutional policies and applicable codes and laws, Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must create and maintain educational and work environments that are welcoming, accessible, inclusive, equitable, and free from harassment.

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

LAP must

- advocate for sensitivity to multicultural and social justice concerns by the institution and its personnel
- ensure physical, program, and resource access for all constituents
- modify or remove policies, practices, systems, technologies, facilities, and structures that create barriers or produce inequities
- ensure that when facilities and structures cannot be modified, they do not impede access to programs, services, and resources
- establish goals for diversity, equity, and access
- foster communication and practices that enhance understanding of identity, culture, self-expression, and heritage
- promote respect for commonalities and differences among people within their historical and cultural contexts
- address the characteristics and needs of diverse constituents when establishing and implementing culturally relevant and inclusive programs, services, policies, procedures, and practices
- provide personnel with diversity, equity, and access training and hold personnel accountable for applying the training to their work
- respond to the needs of all constituents served when establishing hours of operation and developing methods of delivering programs, services, and resources
- recognize the needs of distance and online learning students by directly providing or assisting them to gain access to comparable services and resources

LAP should facilitate student understanding and appreciation of the diverse academic and social cultures of the institution and community.

Part 8. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must reach out to individuals, groups, communities, and organizations internal and external to the institution to

- **establish, maintain, and promote understanding and effective relations with those that have a significant interest in or potential effect on the students or other constituents served by the programs and services**
- **garner support and resources for programs and services as defined by the mission**
- **collaborate in offering or improving programs and services to meet the needs of students and other constituents and to achieve program and student outcomes**
- **engage diverse individuals, groups, communities, and organizations to enrich the educational environment and experiences of students and other constituents**
- **disseminate information about the programs and services**

Promotional and descriptive information must be accurate and free of deception and misrepresentation.

LAP must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for

- **communicating with the media**
- **distributing information through print, broadcast, and online sources**
- **contracting with external organizations for delivery of programs and services**
- **cultivating, soliciting, and managing gifts**
- **applying to and managing funds from grants**

LAP should

- be integrated into the academic program of the institution
- establish and maintain communication throughout the institution to promote the exchange of knowledge and expertise regarding the program
- disseminate information about program outcomes to the institutional community
- collaborate with appropriate members of academic and student affairs departments when providing learning assistance, instruction, and services
- serve as a resource and provide consultation within institutional guidelines
- expedite student referrals to and from the program
- have representation on institutional committees relevant to program mission and goals

LAP may

- solicit, train, and utilize volunteers from the local community to contribute their skills and talents to the services of the program, consistent with program mission and goals
- provide training and consultation to volunteers and community-based organizations (e.g., literacy associations, corporate training, local school districts)

Part 9. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must have funding to accomplish the mission and goals.

LAP should have adequate funding for budget categories (e.g., personnel salaries, general office functions, student assessment and instructional activities, data management and program evaluation processes, training

and professional development activities, instructional materials and media, and instructional and office technologies and supplies).

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

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

LAP may pursue opportunities for supplemental funding; however, these sources should not be expected to supplant the institutional funding needed to accomplish program mission and goals.

LAP must use the budget as a planning tool to reflect commitment to the mission and goals of the programs and services and of the institution.

LAP must administer funds in accordance with established institutional accounting procedures.

LAP must demonstrate efficient and effective use and responsible stewardship of fiscal resources consistent with institutional protocols.

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.

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 10. TECHNOLOGY

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must have technology to support the achievement of their mission and goals. The technology and its use must comply with institutional policies and procedures and with relevant codes and laws.

LAP must use technologies to

- **provide updated information regarding mission, location, staffing, programs, services, and official contacts to students and other constituents in accessible formats**
- **provide an avenue for students and other constituents to communicate sensitive information in a secure format**
- **enhance the delivery of programs and services for all students**

LAP must ensure that systems for scheduling, record keeping, and the delivery of services are secure.

LAP systems should be integrated with institutional systems. Appropriate personnel (e.g., instructional designers and computer technology support personnel) should be available to assist in maintaining up-to-date systems for instruction, record-keeping, and assessment.

LAP must

- back up data on a regular basis
- adhere to institutional policies regarding ethical and legal use of technology
- articulate policies and procedures for protecting the confidentiality and security of information
- implement a replacement plan and cycle for all technology with attention to sustainability
- incorporate accessibility features into technology-based programs and services

When providing student access to technology, LAP must

- have policies on the use of technology that are clear, easy to understand, and available to all students
- provide information or referral to support services for those needing assistance in accessing or using technology
- provide instruction or training on how to use the technology
- inform students of implications of misuse of technologies

Part 11. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Learning Assistance Programs' (LAP) facilities must be intentionally designed and located in suitable, accessible, and safe spaces that demonstrate universal design and support the program's mission and goals.

Facilities must be designed to engage various constituents and promote learning.

LAP functions should be housed in well-lit, heated, cooled, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate acoustics.

LAP facilities and equipment should support the instructional, service, and office functions of the program. Adequate quiet areas should be provided for activities that support learning (e.g., testing, where applicable, and other activities requiring concentration). Facilities should include flexible space to accommodate different delivery modes and student needs.

LAP must provide adequate and secure storage for equipment, supplies, instructional and testing materials, and confidential records.

Personnel must have workspaces that are suitably located and accessible, well equipped, adequate in size, and designed to support their work and responsibilities.

The design of the facilities must guarantee the security and privacy of records and ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information and conversations. Personnel must be able to secure their work.

LAP must incorporate sustainable practices in use of facilities and purchase of equipment. Facilities and equipment must be evaluated on an established cycle and be in compliance with codes, laws, and accepted practices for access, health, safety, and security.

When acquiring capital equipment, LAP must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and lifecycle costs.

Part 12. ASSESSMENT

Learning Assistance Programs (LAP) must develop assessment plans and processes.

Assessment plans must articulate an ongoing cycle of assessment activities.

LAP must identify and assess the student learning and development outcome domains and dimensions relevant to participation in the program.

LAP must

- **specify programmatic goals and intended outcomes**
- **identify student learning and development outcomes**
- **employ multiple measures and methods**
- **develop manageable processes for gathering, interpreting, and evaluating data**
- **document progress toward achievement of goals and outcomes**
- **interpret and use assessment results to demonstrate accountability**
- **report aggregated results to respondent groups and stakeholders**
- **use assessment results to inform planning and decision-making**
- **assess effectiveness of implemented changes**
- **provide evidence of improvement of programs and services**

Assessment practices in LAP are both formal and informal. Established schedules must be developed for formal assessment.

LAP assessment practices should provide evidence of performance of the program over time, including trend data, to inform ongoing contributions to the goals of the program.

Qualitative methods may include evaluation forms, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations, or case studies, with input solicited from faculty members, personnel, and students.

Quantitative methods may include participant and nonparticipant comparison, follow-up studies on students' grades in targeted courses, pre and post gain scores, grade point averages, graduation, re-enrollment, and retention figures.

Quantitative program measures may include data on the size of the user population, numbers utilizing particular services and number of contact hours, sources of student referrals to the program, or numbers of students who may be on a waiting list or who have requested services not provided by the learning assistance program.

LAP must have the ability to collect and analyze data and have access to appropriate institutional data.

Periodic evaluations of LAP may be performed by on-campus experts and outside consultants. Evaluations should be disseminated to appropriate administrators and constituencies.

LAP should conduct periodic self-assessments, utilizing self-study processes endorsed by professional organizations. The assessments should examine the quality of services provided as well as the potential impact on student learning over time. Additionally, outcomes associated with LAP should reflect improved student learning and performance as a result of LAP interventions.

LAP should periodically review and revise its services based on the results of program assessment and evaluation outcomes. Data that reveal trends or changes in student demographics, characteristics, needs, and outcomes should be utilized for LAP short- and long-term planning.

LAP must employ ethical practices in the assessment process.

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

General Standards revised in 2014;

LAP content developed/revised in 1986, 1996, 2007, & 2016