



Professional Standards Related to Assessment

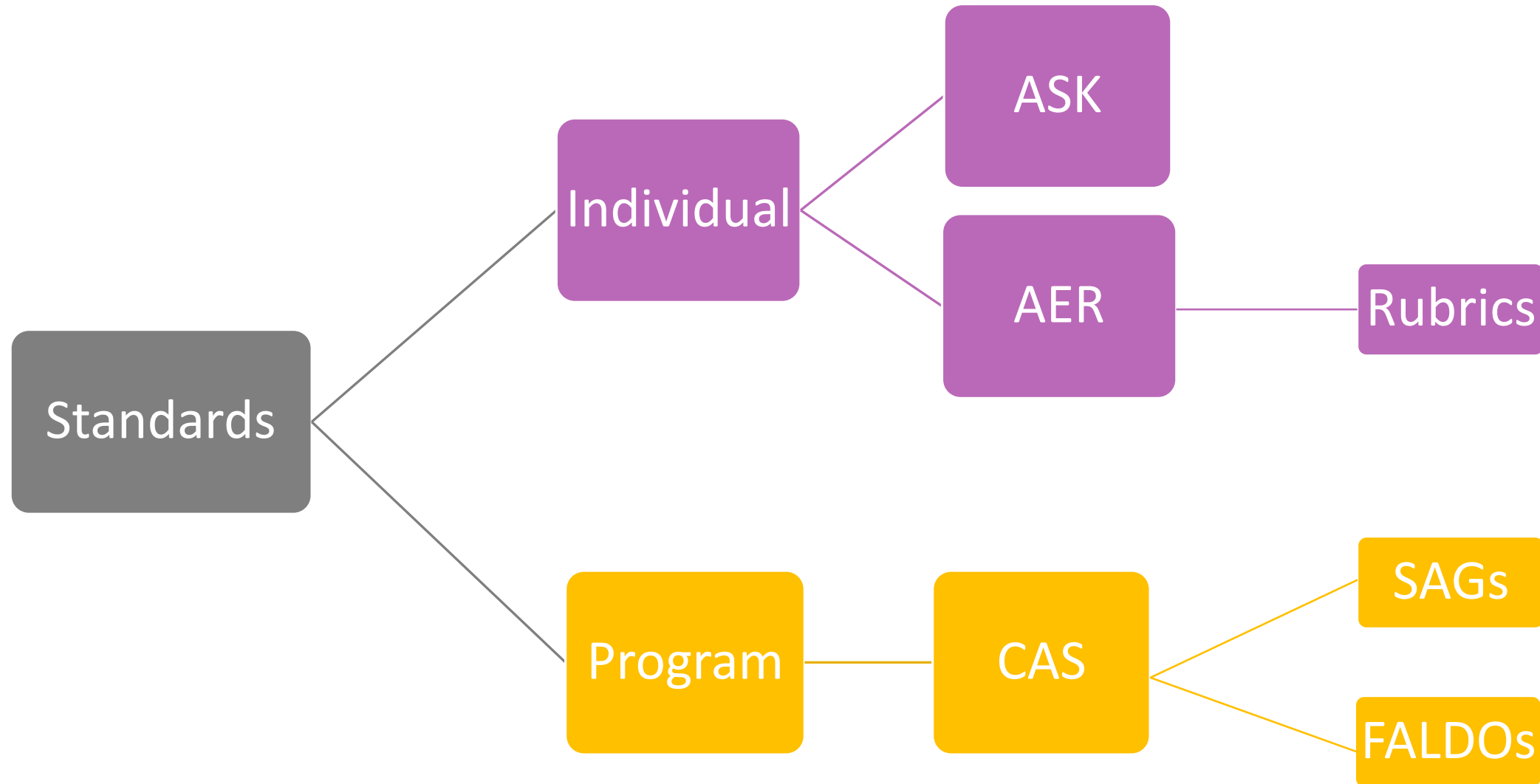
-CAS, ASK, AER

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ASSESSMENT 101

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Individual Standards/Competencies vs. Program Standards



Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Professional Standards

What is your level of experience with CAS standards?

1. I am learning about CAS for the first time during Assessment 101
2. I have read or attended a presentation about CAS standards
3. I have used the CAS Standards to develop a program but not to evaluate a program
4. I have evaluated programming using CAS standards
5. I am a CAS expert & have used CAS materials extensively

CAS Professional Standards

“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 standards fulfill a three-fold purpose:

-to foster and enhance student learning and development;

-to recognize and promote fundamental and indispensable standards of practice and the assessment of related programmatic and student outcomes;

-to provide a foundation to develop, guide, assess, and improve programs and services.”

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=E868395C-F784-2293-129ED7842334B22A>

- Measure program effectiveness
 - Respond to accountability demands
 - Enhance program reviews
 - Prepare for accreditation
 - Engage in empirically-based program improvement
- Develop learning & development outcomes
- Design new programs & services
- Prepare staff development materials
- Guide strategic planning

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)

“Leading the way for 38 years, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) promotes intra-campus collaboration and reflects good practices agreed upon by the profession-at-large through the CAS Standards. Comprised of 42 collaborating professional associations representing over 115,000 professionals in higher education, CAS has developed 45 sets of standards and guidelines within diverse areas of the college student experiences.”

- Founded in 1979
- Promotion of program-level standards in higher education
- Promotion of program-assessment
- Consortium of 42 member organizations
 - General Organizations: e.g., ACPA, NASPA, National Council on Student Development (NCSD), National Ass of Colleges & Employers (NACE)
 - Areas Organizations: e.g., Association for Orientation (NODA), Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA), American College Health Association (ACHA), Association of College and University Housing Officers—International (ACUHO-I), American College Counseling Assoc (ACCA), Global Community for Academic Advising (NACADA), Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA)

Created:

- 1 set of General Standards
- 45 Functional Area (specific) Standards & Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)
 - Includes a set of master’s level academic program standards to guide the graduate education of student affairs entry-level administrators
- 1 set of Frameworks for Assessing Learning & Development Outcomes (FALDOs)

CAS General vs. Functional Area Standards

CAS General Standards

1 set of 12 General Program Standards

Set of core standards that apply across functional areas & appear verbatim in every set of functional area standards

SLOs included as part of 1 of the 12 General Standard (i.e., Program Standard)

FALDO's to create & assess SLOs

CAS Functional Area Standards

45 specific standards for functional areas (e.g., advising, residence life, orientation)

General Standards included as part of Specific Standards

45 SAGs to assess program effectiveness

CAS General Standards

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

“A number of characteristics are common to all functional areas, and these commonalities demand inclusion in all current and future CAS standards. As a result, General Standards were devised that CAS Board members unanimously agreed were relevant to all the functional areas within student support programs and services championed by CAS member associations.

The General Standards divide the **essential** components and characteristics of quality programs and services into 12 parts.

Although the CAS General Standards were *not* designed to stand alone, they illustrate commonalities that exist among the many student support programs and services throughout higher education. If you are seeking a starting point for assessing your programs and services, you might use the General Standards as a template.”

<http://www.cas.edu/generalstandards> **Let's take a look at these.**

CAS General Standards: SLOs

6 Student Learning & Development Outcome **Domains** are part of the “Program” General Standard

1. Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, & application
2. Cognitive Complexity
3. Intrapersonal Development
4. Interpersonal Competence
5. Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement
6. Practical Competence

Expectation stated in CAS General Standards: **ALL** functional area programs must place emphasis on identifying & assessing relevant student learning outcomes (SLOs)

“CAS directors recognize the potential impact that institutional programs and services can exert upon student learning and development.

Following the publication of *Learning Reconsidered* (NASPA & ACPA, 2004), CAS integrated a revised set of student learning outcomes within the General Standards to enhance efforts for promoting student learning and development.

Each domain is further defined or clarified by several learning outcome dimensions, which allow for more focused program development and assessment.

The 2008 revision of the General Standards required programs and services to include student learning and development in mission statements, identify relevant and desirable learning from the six domains, assess relevant and desirable learning, and articulate the ways the programs and services contribute to student learning and development.

By recognizing the centrality of student learning and development as well as requiring assessment of learning outcomes, CAS affirms and reinforces expectations of leaders in higher education and accrediting associations.”

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=E868395C-F784-2293-129ED7842334B22A>

CAS Student Learning Domains vs. Dimensions

Domains	Dimensions
1) Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, & application	understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, & experiences; constructing knowledge; & relating knowledge to daily life
2) Cognitive Complexity	critical thinking; reflective thinking; effective reasoning; & creativity
3) Intrapersonal Development	realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, & self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics & integrity; and spiritual awareness
4) Interpersonal Competence	meaningful relationships; interdependence; collaboration; & effective leadership
5) Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement	understanding & appreciation of cultural & human differences; social responsibility; global perspective; & sense of civic responsibility
6) Practical Competence	pursuing goals; communicating effectively; technical competence; managing personal affairs; managing career development; demonstrating professionalism; maintaining health & wellness; and living a purposeful & satisfying life

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=D87A29DC-D1D6-D014-83AA8667902C480B>

Learning Outcomes for Each Dimension

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Intrapersonal Dimension: realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, & self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics & integrity; and spiritual awareness

- **SELF:** Assesses, articulates, & acknowledges personal skills, abilities, & growth areas; uses self-knowledge to make decisions such as those related to career choices; articulates rationale for personal behavior; seeks & considers feedback from others; critiques & 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 & exhibits interdependence; recognizes & exhibits interdependence in accordance with cultural and personal values; identifies & commits to important aspects of self
- **INTEGRITY:** Incorporates ethical reasoning into action; explores & articulates the values & principles involved in personal decision-making; acts in congruence with personal values & beliefs; exemplifies dependability, honesty, & trustworthiness; accepts personal accountability
- **SPIRITUAL:** Develops & articulates personal belief system; understands roles of spirituality in personal & group values & behaviors; critiques, compares, & contrasts various belief systems; explores issues of purpose, meaning, & faith

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=D87A29DC-D1D6-D014-83AA8667902C480B>

CAS 45 Functional Area Standards

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Academic Advising Programs** | 24. Graduate and Professional Student Programs and Services |
| 2. Adult Learner Programs and Services | 25. Health Promotion Services+ |
| 3. Alcohol and Other Drug Programs** | 26. Housing and Residential Life Programs** |
| 4. Assessment Services | 27. International Student Programs and Services |
| 5. Auxiliary Services Functional Areas | 28. Internship Programs+ |
| 6. Campus Activities Programs | 29. Learning Assistance Programs+ |
| 7. Campus Information and Visitor Services | 30. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and Services |
| 8. Campus Police and Security Programs | 31. Master's Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs |
| 9. Campus Religious, Secular, and Spiritual Programs+ | 32. Multicultural Student Programs and Services+ |
| 10. Career Services | 33. Orientation Programs** |
| 11. Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Programs** | 34. Parent and Family Programs |
| 12. Clinical Health Services+ | 35. Registrar Programs and Services |
| 13. College Honor Society Programs** | 36. Sexual Violence-Related Programs and Services** |
| 14. College Unions | 37. Student Conduct Programs** |
| 15. Collegiate Recreation Programs+ | 38. Student Leadership Programs |
| 16. Commuter and Off-Campus Living Programs | 39. Student Media Programs+ |
| 17. Conference and Event Programs | 40. Transfer Student Programs and Services |
| 18. Counseling Services | 41. TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity Programs |
| 19. Dining Service Programs+ | 42. Undergraduate Admissions Programs and Services |
| 20. Disability Resources and Services** | 43. Undergraduate Research Programs+ |
| 21. Education Abroad Programs and Services** | 44. Veterans and Military Programs and Services |
| 22. Financial Aid Programs** | 45. Women's and Gender Programs and Services** |
| 23. Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs | |

“When used for self-assessment and program review, each functional area standard (with the embedded General Standards) provides criteria by which leaders in an institution and functional area can judge the quality and effectiveness of current educational efforts.

In functional areas with no standards, stakeholders can employ the General Standards as the starting place to create new programs and services and to design assessment of current ones.

In settings where multiple areas are using CAS, the General Standards provide a common language and common expectations, enhancing communication and understanding among areas.”

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=E868395C-F784-2293-129ED7842334B22A>

Let's look at one!

CAS 45 Functional Area Standards

“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.’

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. ”

<http://standards.cas.edu/getpdf.cfm?PDF=E868395C-F784-2293-129ED7842334B22A>

JMU has electronic access to all 45 Functional Area Standards via Carrier Library. **Let’s compare one to the General Standards.**

Individual Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)

For use in program reviews, there is a CAS Self-Assessment Guide (SAG) for each set of individual functional area standards. These downloadable assessment workbooks include the standards and guidelines along with a series of “criterion measure” statements used to judge the level of program compliance with the standard. Each electronic SAG file includes a contextual statement, giving historical and functional perspective to the area; instructions for conducting self-assessment using the SAG; self-assessment instrument; and evaluation forms for compiling team assessment and planning improvements.

Each self-assessment guide (SAG) has a similar structure. For the 9th edition version of CAS materials, the SAGs have been revised. Each subsection of the SAGs includes a list of suggested evidence and documentation at the outset to encourage review teams to collect important materials before rating criterion measures. Another revision from previous SAG editions is that criterion measures have been clustered into categories for rating; this reduces the number of ratings needed and shifts the emphasis to more critical evaluation and reflection of concepts. Program review teams need to document their reasoning and evidence for the rating assigned to each subsection in the space provided for Rationale.

Although not pictured, program review teams also must discuss and respond to the Overview Questions that immediately follow the each rating section. Answers to the Overview Questions, which are designed to stimulate summary thinking about overarching issues, can be used to facilitate interpretation of the ratings and development of the self-study report.

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.

Self-Assessment Guides (SAGS): a tool to evaluate if programs and services are meeting CAS standards & can be ordered: http://www.cas.edu/store_category.asp?id=6

There are 45 for each functional area.

CAS created & published Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs) to show a step-by-step process for conducting a program evaluation

Each SAG presents the standards & classifies the standards into “criterion measure” statements reflecting every aspect of the standards, making a ready-to-use evaluation tool.

SAGs also provide practitioners with a rating scale for each “criterion measure” statement.

Narrative guidance also is given about how to use the evaluation findings to create an action plan for each program area.

Thus, SAGs may be quite helpful to educators carrying out evaluation activities.

Part 12. ASSESSMENT

Suggested Evidence and Documentation:

1. Program goals, key indicators, outcomes, and related assessment data
2. Program student learning and development outcomes and related assessment data
3. Description of assessment cycle
4. Assessment plans and annual assessment reports
5. Minutes of meetings at which assessment activities and results discussed
6. Professional development activities to improve assessment competence

Criterion Measures:

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

12.1 Assessment Plan and Practice

- The program develops an ongoing cycle of assessment plans, processes, and activities.
- The program identifies programmatic goals and intended program outcomes as well as outcomes for student learning and development.
- The program documents progress toward achievement of goals and outcomes.
- The program employs multiple measures, methods, and manageable processes for gathering, interpreting, and evaluating data.
- The program employs ethical practices in the assessment process.
- The program has access to adequate fiscal, human, professional development, and technological resources to develop and implement assessment plans.

Rationale:

12.2 Reporting and Implementing Results

- The program interprets and uses assessment results to demonstrate accountability and inform planning and decision-making.
- The program reports aggregated results to respondent groups and stakeholders.
- The program assesses effectiveness of implemented changes and provides evidence of improvement of programs and services.

Rationale:

Overview Questions:

1. What is the comprehensive assessment strategy for the program?
2. What are priorities of the assessment program, and how are those developed?
3. How does the program integrate assessment and evaluation into all aspects of daily operations (e.g., advising, event planning)?
4. How are tangible, measurable learning and program outcomes determined to ensure program achievement of mission and goals?
5. How effective is the assessment strategy in demonstrating goal achievement and student learning?
6. How does the program use assessment results to inform program improvement?
7. How does the program share assessment results with relevant constituencies?
8. How does the program support ongoing development of assessment competencies for personnel?

Self-Assessment Guides (SAGS)

Tools to evaluate programming in each of the 12 parts of the Standards.

Allows you to 1) identify strengths & deficiencies, 2) determine how to enhance programs & services that may benefit student learning/development, 3) gain an informed perspective to support staff development.

You don't have to use SAGs—they are one tool to help evaluate if standards are being met:

“Program review using the CAS standards

Because CAS believes in the importance of self-assessment, the standards and guidelines are offered as criteria that can be used in multiple ways toward the goal of assuring and enhancing quality practice. CAS does not prescribe or proscribe ways of using the standards; they are intended to be tools for practitioners to use to improve practice. The CAS [Self-Assessment Guides](#) (SAGs) and CAS [Program Review](#) module in the Campus Labs Platform are examples of possible program review tools.”

<http://www.cas.edu/programreview>

Frameworks for Assessing Learning & Development Outcomes (FALDOs)

Maybe helpful tool for addressing the 6 Learning Domains:

- CAS's attempt to create resources to assist in assessing SLOs
- Prompted by CAS Standard mandate that each program & service “provide evidence of its impact on the achievement of student learning and development outcomes” (CAS, 2006).
- Focus assessment on learning & development, *not* satisfaction or use
 - FALDOs create a bridge between professional standards & assessing learning
- Differ from SAGs—both are tools for CAS standards, but they serve different purposes
 - **SAGs** support evaluating if programs have addressed standards (does it have mission, does it have staffing, does it have an ethical statement it adheres to, does it engage in assessment, etc.). These help to **describe the program** but do *not* quantify the program student-level outcomes.
 - **FALDOs** support assessing **if students are learning & developing as a function of the program**. Student-level outcomes are the focus here, not a description of the program as described by alignment with CAS standards as accomplished by the SAGs.
- FALDOs not tied to specific functional areas, as outcomes relevant to multiple areas

FALDO Learning Domains

1. Intellectual growth
2. Effective communication
3. Enhanced self-esteem
4. Realistic self-appraisal
5. Clarified values
6. Career choices
7. Leadership development
8. Healthy behavior
9. Meaningful interpersonal relationships
10. Independence
11. Collaboration
12. Social responsibility
13. Satisfying & productive lifestyles
14. Appreciating diversity
15. Spiritual awareness
16. Personal & education goals

The renewed focus on student learning outcomes assessment was evident in the updated **2003** CAS standards, which included **16 student learning and development domains**.

In 2006, CAS published *The Frameworks for Assessing Learning and Development Outcomes (FALDOs)*, which served as a **practice-focused companion to the 2003 student learning outcomes**. **The FALDOs provide a resource enabling practitioners to conduct assessment focused on learning & development, rather than previous practices of simply reporting satisfaction with program services.**

FALDO's remain a significant resource & exemplar for student learning outcomes assessment, despite the fact that the specific learning domains became outdated in 2008 when CAS standards were revised in response to *Learning Reconsidered 2*.

In the 2008 CAS revision, the 16 student learning & development domains were reframed as 6 domains (knowledge acquisition, construction integration, and application; cognitive complexity; intrapersonal development; interpersonal competence; humanitarianism and civic engagement; and practical competence).

Sections of each of the 16 FALDOs

Introduction: provides a rationale for importance of each learning domain

Theoretical context: highlights the theoretical underpinnings related to each learning domain

Relevant variables & indicators: offers outcomes or specific knowledge, skills, behaviors & attitudes expected of college students; drawn from available research instruments & interview protocols or discovered from extant literature reviewed by editors & advisory committee

Assessment examples: identifies central research/assessment question(s), sample, appropriate tool(s), data collection, & analysis techniques; provides examples using both quantitative & qualitative methods

Assessment, evaluation & research tools: includes a list of tools with details (e.g., # of items, subscales, reliability); quality of assessment is proportional to quality of data collected via tool

Related websites: location of additional materials (realize this document is dated 2006)

References: sources for citations found in text of the FALDO (realize this doc is dated 2006)

Related materials & recommended readings: “All good readings end with more stuff to read”

I find the rationale sections of **Introduction** helpful for considering *why* we should worry about these outcomes, but I don't find the **Theoretical Context** helpful for creating a theoretically-based program that has clear logic. It is a review of theory & link to the outcome/learning domain (which is important), but no clear tie to *why* the program should impact the outcome. Also, *very limited theories are mentioned & important theories are missing* for learning domains

Introduction: provides rationale for importance of learning domain

Theoretical context: highlights theoretical underpinnings related to

Relevant variables & indicators: offers outcomes or specific knowledge of students; drawn from available instruments & interview protocols or

Assessment examples: identifies research/assessment question(s), sample, appropriate tool(s), data collection, & analysis techniques; provides examples using both quantitative & qualitative methods

Assessment, evaluation & research tools: includes a list of tools with details (e.g., # of items, subscales, reliability); quality of assessment

Related websites: location

References: sources for citation

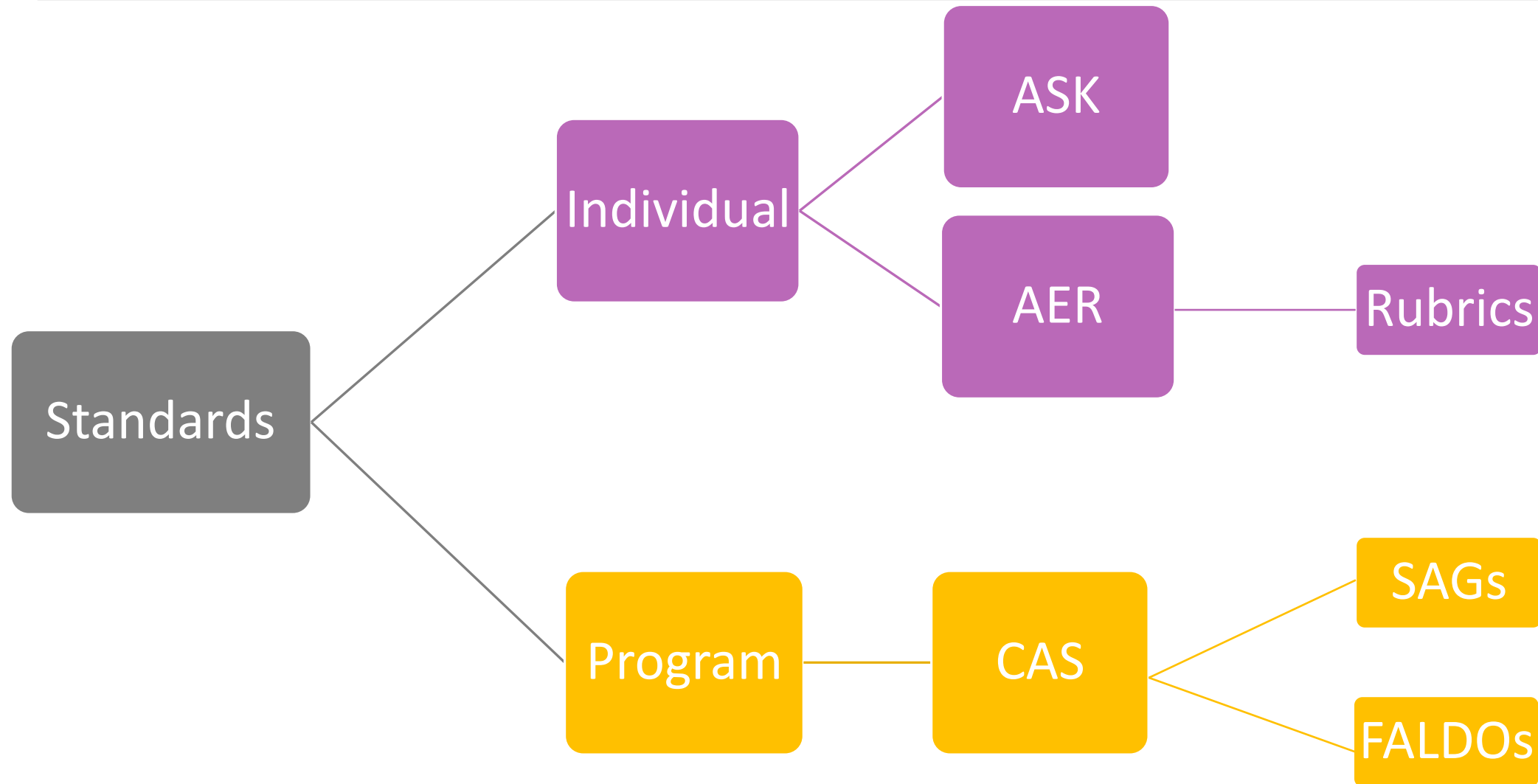
Related materials & recommended readings: "All good readings end with more stuff to read"

Let's look at one. Good way to get started on assessing SLO's

I find the listing of the specific outcomes in **Relevant Variables** very helpful. Can help when first articulating the intended learning & development outcomes. I find the **Tools** a good start, but many new instruments are *not* mentioned. Moreover, given the limited theories reviewed, many instruments linked to other theories aren't listed. Again, this can provide a start for searching for measures: one can find additional, potentially more appropriate measures, by looking for articles that use listed measures & tracking other measures authors are using.

The **Assessment Examples** vary in quality. Some of them are focused on answering research questions, not evaluating the SLOs associated with programming. I think this can be confusing for novices—for example, there is a BIG difference between conducting exploratory research to examine what variables are related retention versus assessing a program designed to increase retention. I find the following FALDOs the most aligned with Outcomes Assessment to evaluate program effectiveness (the logic presented in these examples can be generalized to your program): **Career Choices, Appreciating Diversity, Intellectual Growth, Leadership Skills, Self-Esteem, Spiritual Awareness.**

Individual Standards/Competencies vs. Program Standards



Assessment Skills & Knowledge (ASK) Standards

What is your level of experience with the ASK standards?

1. I am learning about ASK for the first time during Assessment 101
2. I have read or attended a presentation about ASK standards
3. I have used the ASK Standards to guide my assessment training but have not evaluated my skills
4. I have evaluated my assessment skills using ASK standards
5. I am an ASK expert & have used ASK materials extensively (e.g., to evaluate others skills, to build training materials)

ASK Standards

Assessment Skill and Knowledge (ASK) Standards (ACPA, 2006) were the 1st set of standards developed to articulate the knowledge, skills, & dispositions necessary for student affairs professionals to measure student learning & development outcomes

- Prior to this document, there was no organized articulation of the specific skills student affairs professionals need to effectively assess student learning outcomes

ASK standards detail what **all** student affairs professionals should know & be able to do related to outcomes assessment ***regardless of functional area***

ASK Standards endorsed by accrediting bodies (e.g., North Central Association, Western Association of Schools and Colleges), & by AAC&U

ASK Standards

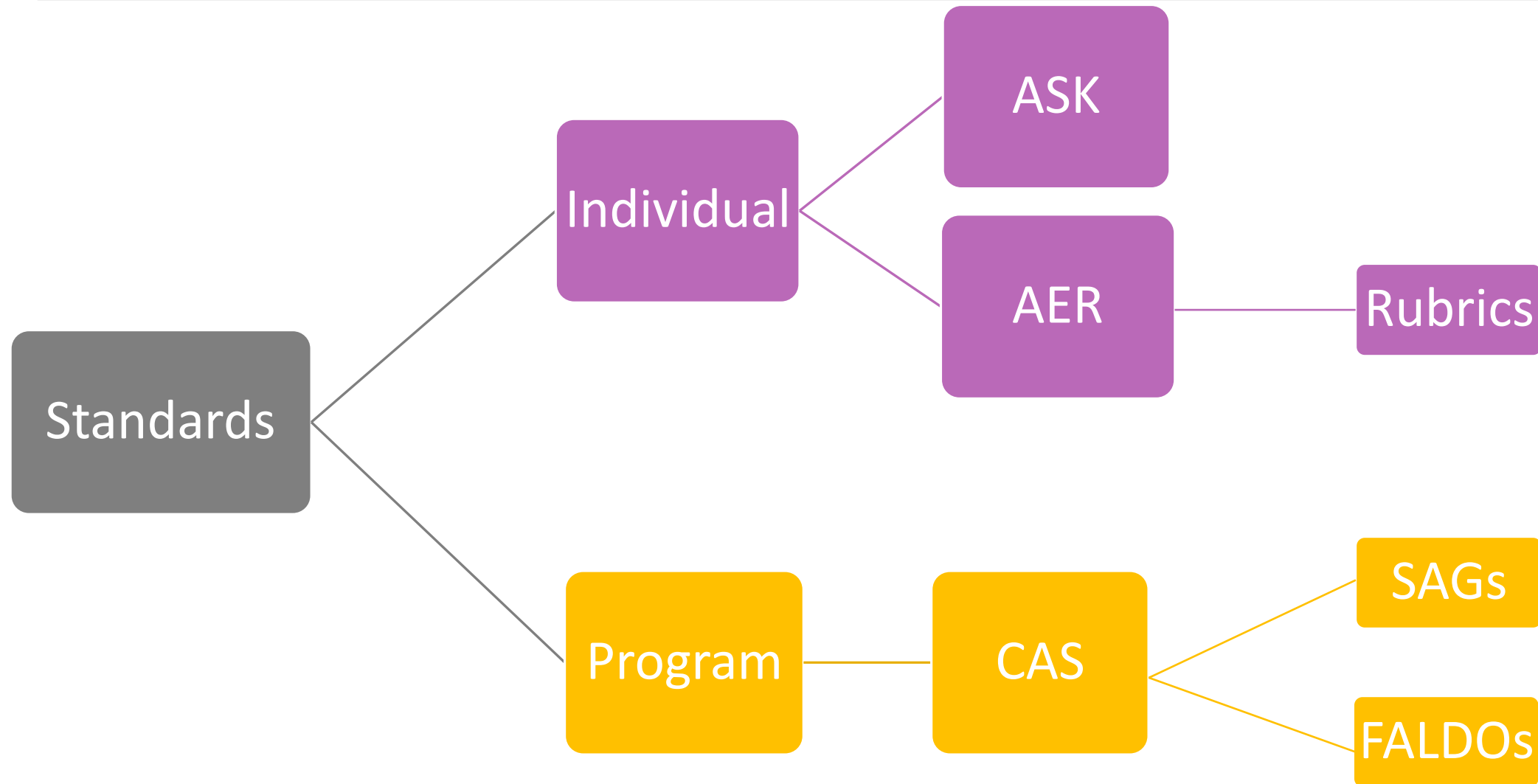
<https://sa.uncg.edu/assessment/wp-content/uploads/ACPA-ASK-Brochure.pdf>

Standards are divided into 13 areas:

1. Assessment design
2. Articulating learning & development outcomes
3. Selection of data collection & management method
4. Assessment instruments
5. Surveys used for assessment purposes
6. Interviews & focus groups used for assessment purposes
7. Analysis
8. Benchmarking
9. Program review & evaluation
10. Assessment ethics
11. Effective reporting & use of results
12. Politics of assessment
13. Assessment education

Each area has 2 to 9 statements describing competencies that professionals should possess to meet the content standard. **Let's look at these!**

Individual Standards/Competencies vs. Program Standards



Assessment, Evaluation & Research (AER) Standards

What is your level of experience with the AER standards?

1. I am learning about AER for the first time during Assessment 101
2. I have read or attended a presentation about AER standards
3. I have used the AER Standards to guide my assessment training but have not evaluated my skills
4. I have evaluated my assessment skills using AER standards
5. I am an AER expert & have used AER materials extensively (e.g., to evaluate others skills, to build training materials)

Assessment, Evaluation & Research (AER) Competency

In 2010, ACPA & NASPA collaborated (i.e., Joint Task Force on Professional Competencies and Standards) to create a common set of ***Professional Competency Areas*** for student affairs educators

- Competencies were revised in 2015 & consist of 10 areas, of which AER is one
- Each of the 10 competency areas specify **knowledge, skills, & dispositions** expected of *all* professionals, regardless of functional area or specialization within the field
- Competencies can be used for position descriptions, professional development experiences, graduate preparation programs, content for conferences, & communicating student affairs professional work to others
- With respect to **AER**, professionals must have “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” (ACPA & NASPA, 2015; p. 8)

Assessment, Evaluation & Research (AER) vs. ASK

Professional Competency Areas elaborate on **ASK Standards** by describing assessment skills of competent professionals & categorizing the level of these skills as “foundational”, “intermediate”, or “advanced”

- Recall the ASK standards noted it avoided levels of proficiency: “Proficiency standards articulate the degree of expertise of the practitioner in a given area of content. Again phrased conversationally, proficiency standards describe “how well do you know it; how well can you do it.” The primary focus of this discussion paper is to identify the appropriate knowledge content areas all student affairs practitioners need in order to engage in meaningful and useful assessment. The identification of appropriate proficiency levels for each content area is outside the scope of this project. However, it follows that once content areas are established and generally agreed upon, a discussion of proficiency in each area will and should follow.”
- Otherwise, the basic content of the 2 documents is quite similar

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (AER) Competency

DESCRIPTION:

Focuses on the ability to design, conduct, critique, & use various AER methodologies & the results obtained from them, to utilize AER processes and their results to inform practice, and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses in higher education.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Professional growth in this competency area is broadly marked by shifts from understanding to application, and then from smaller scale applications focused on singular programs or studies to larger scale applications that cut across departments or divisions.

Many advanced level outcomes involve the leadership of AER efforts.

“Foundational” level of AER Competency

- Differentiate among assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research as well as the methods appropriate to each.
- Select AER methods, methodologies, designs, & tools that fit with research & evaluation questions and with assessment and review purposes.
- Facilitate appropriate data collection for system/department-wide assessment and evaluation efforts using current technology and methods.
- Effectively articulate, interpret, and apply results of AER reports and studies, including professional literature.
- Assess the legitimacy, trustworthiness, and/ or validity of studies of various methods and methodological designs (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative, theoretical perspective, epistemological approach).
- Consider rudimentary strengths and limitations of various methodological AER approaches in the application of findings to practice in diverse institutional settings and with diverse student populations.
- Explain the necessity to follow institutional and divisional procedures and policies (e.g., IRB approval, informed consent) with regard to ethical assessment, evaluation, and other research activities.
- Ensure all communications of AER results are accurate, responsible, and effective.
- Identify the political and educational sensitivity of raw and partially processed data and AER results, handling them with appropriate confidentiality and deference to organizational hierarchies.
- Design program and learning outcomes that are appropriately clear, specific, and measureable, that are informed by theoretical frameworks and that align with organizational outcomes, goals, and values.

Evaluating AER Competency via Rubrics

- With respect to evaluating skill & providing actionable feedback, the rubrics for assessing mastery of AER competencies are extremely valuable (ACPA & NASPA, 2016)
- The AER competencies & the ASK standards don't easily allow for self-assessment, whereas the AER rubrics were developed for that very purpose
- **AER rubrics** are intentionally aligned with professional competency areas
 - This alignment allows professionals to assess the **knowledge, skills, & dispositions** for the purposes of self-assessment, student feedback during graduate program completion, or staff feedback during annual performance reviews
 - Given the detailed nature of the rubric & the ability to identify the level of one's skills as **foundational, intermediate, & advanced**, the resulting information can identify areas of growth to target with specific professional development

Evaluating AER Competency via Rubrics

Each rubric presents the definition of 1 competency & distributes its outcomes in a table that lists multiple dimensions of the competency in rows & along a developmental scale in 3 columns

	Foundational	Intermediate	Advanced
<p>Terms and Concepts</p> <p><i>Know and be able to describe terms, concepts, and strategies, associated with assessment, program review, evaluation, planning and research. Disposition to view AER as an essential element for improvement at the unit, division, institutional, and professional levels.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to differentiate between assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use AER terminology consistently when participating with colleagues in assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and teach others assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research.
<p>Values/Ethics/Politics</p> <p><i>Know the value of assessment and the ethical principles associated with data collection, management, analysis, and reporting. Ability to use results towards continuous improvement; to follow institutional policies and procedures. Dispositions to navigate institutional politics effectively; to adhere to standards; and to sustain a culture of assessment.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain institutional and divisional AER procedures and policies with regard to ethical assessment, evaluation and other research activities. • Identify political and educational sensitivity of raw and partially processed data and AER results. • Handle data with appropriate confidentiality and deference to organizational hierarchies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute actively to the development of a culture of evidence at the department level by providing AER training, advocating for funding, and incorporating AER in practice. • Manage and/or adhere to the implementation of institutional and professional standards for ethical AER activities. • Use culturally relevant and appropriate terms and methods to conduct and report AER findings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a culture of evidence in which AER is central to practice and that training happens across the organization. • Ensure institutional, divisional, or unit compliance with professional ethical standards concerning AER activities. • Anticipate and respond to challenges related to individual and institutional politics, competing constituencies and interests, and divergent values.

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Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

	Foundational	Intermediate	Advanced
<p>AER Design</p> <p><i>Know theoretical frameworks that align with organizational outcomes, goals, and values. Ability to create learner-centered outcomes that align with divisional and institutional priorities; to design and lead a process-oriented strategy to address the assessment's purpose or research questions. Disposition to think critically and systematically about questions and problems of practice.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design program and learning outcomes that are clear, specific, and measurable; informed by theoretical frameworks and aligned with organizational outcomes, goals, and values. Utilize theoretical frameworks and organizational outcomes, goals, and values to design program and learning outcomes. Explain to students and colleagues the relationship of AER processes to learning outcomes and goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize program and learning outcomes with organization's goals and values. Utilize student learning and development theories and scholarly research to inform content and design of learning outcomes and assessment tools. Educate stakeholders about the relationship of departmental AER processes to learning outcomes and goals at the student, department, division, and institutional level. Discern appropriate design(s) based on critical questions, available data, and intended audience(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the conceptualization and design of ongoing, systematic, high-quality, data-based strategies at the institutional, divisional, and/or unit-wide level to evaluate and assess learning, programs, services, and personnel. Use assessment and evaluation results in determining institutional, divisional or unit accomplishments toward mission/goals, re-allocation of resources, and advocacy for more resources. Lead a comprehensive communication process to inform campus stakeholders about the relationship of AER processes to learning outcomes, and goals at the student, department, division, and institution level.

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Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

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	Foundational	Intermediate	Advanced
<p>Methodology, Data Collection, and Data Analysis</p> <p><i>Know strengths and limits of research methodologies. Ability to match methodology with purpose of assessment and guiding questions; to collect and analyze data. Dispositions to take a critical stance in collection and analysis of data; rigorous attention to detail; creative thinking.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate among methods for assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research. • Facilitate data collection for system/department-wide assessment and evaluation efforts using current technology and methods. • Assess trustworthiness, and/or validity of studies of various methods and methodological designs. • Consider strengths and limitations of methodological approaches when applying findings to practice in diverse institutional settings and with diverse student populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design data collection efforts that are ongoing, sustainable, rigorous, unobtrusive, and technologically current. • Demonstrate working knowledge of alternative methodological AER approaches and strategies for ensuring quality results. • Participate in the design of qualitative and quantitative AER projects, determining appropriate methods and analyses for each. • Articulate the limitations of findings imposed by differences in how quantitative and qualitative data are sampled, analyzed, and verified through validity, reliability, and/or trustworthiness techniques. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and integrate ongoing and periodic data collection efforts such that they are sustainable, rigorous, as unobtrusive as possible, and technologically current. • Lead, supervise, and/or collaborate with others to design and analyze assessment, program review, evaluation, and research activities that span multiple methodological approaches.

Evaluating AER Competency via Rubrics

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

	Foundational	Intermediate	Advanced
<p>Interpreting, Reporting, and Using Results</p> <p><i>Know how to interpret data in practical terms that are relevant to the institutional context. Ability to present results concisely in reports that are useful to a variety of audiences; to use findings to make informed decisions and to align resources.</i></p> <p><i>Dispositions to collaborate; to represent findings accurately and fairly; to share interpretations with stakeholders, including students.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate, interpret, and apply results of AER reports and studies, including professional literature. • Ensure all communications of AER results are accurate, responsible, and effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively manage, align, and guide the utilization of AER reports and studies. • Communicate and display data in a manner that is accurate, transparent about the strengths, limitations, and context of the data; and sensitive to political coalitions and realities associated with data as a scarce resource. • Effectively use assessment and evaluation results in determining the institution's, the division's, or the unit's accomplishment of its missions/goals, re-allocation of resources, and advocacy for more resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the design and writing of varied and diverse communications of assessment, program review, evaluation, and other research activities that include translation of data analyses into goals and action. • Write and disseminate results in a manner that critically considers the strengths and limitations of implications for practice, policy, theory, and/or future study in a sophisticated way. • Integrate the strategic use and prioritization of budgetary and personnel resources to support high-quality program evaluation, assessment efforts, research, and planning. • Facilitate the prioritization of decisions and resources to implement those decisions that are informed by AER activities.

CAS vs. ASK & AER

In contrast to **ASK & AER standards**, which articulate **professionals'** assessment competencies, the **CAS Standards** aid in creating & evaluating **programs** that contribute to student learning

Recall, **CAS Standards** articulate desired qualities of **the program** (e.g., program has student learning & development outcomes, program changes are informed by assessment results, program is associated with evidence-based improvements, program is associated with ongoing cycle of assessment, program has adequate resources)

With the program as the focus, the **CAS standards** can be used to inform & guide improvement to programming, in addition to serving as a powerful advertising mechanism if programs meet these standards. Thus, the **CAS Standards** serve a different purpose than the **ASK Standards & the Professional Competency Areas**.

With that said, **it is professionals with ASK & AER competencies** who can create **programming that meets assessment-related CAS standards**.

The Assessment Cycle

The Assessment Cycle isn't novel.

In fact, you can take each of the 3 Standards in Student Affairs & link them to the components in this cycle.

CAS Standards mention, in some form, each of these components of the assessment cycle (just look at "Part 12: Assessment" of the General CAS standards).

ASK & AER competencies align with conducting the work associated with each component of the cycle.

Thus, your standards of professional work & competency related to assessment can be reflected in this cycle.

