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These standards and all other standards are available along with information on self-assessment procedures in the most recent edition of the book CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education. You are particularly encouraged to examine the learning and developmental outcomes (see www.cas.edu/learningoutcomes) in the design and assessment of your programs.

This set of standards has an accompanying Self-Assessment Guide (SAG) available for purchase from www.cas.edu for use in program evaluation.

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OVER FORTY 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 success 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 over 45 functional areas, consistent with institutional missions. Individuals and institutions from more than 40 CAS member organizations comprise a professional constituency of over 115,000 professionals.

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Please direct your questions to the CAS Executive Director (executive_director@cas.edu or 202-862-1400).
WOMEN’S AND GENDER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
CAS Contextual Statement

Sexism persists in North American colleges and universities, revealing itself in institutional structures, policies, and practices, as well as campus cultures that privilege some and disadvantage others. For many generations, North American colleges and universities were open only to a discrete subset of men. This legacy of gender inequity continues to shape the college experience, despite women students now being the numerical majority on most campuses (Allen, Dean, & Bracken, 2008). As Vlasnik (2011) points out, “the quantity of women in higher education is a different discussion than the quality of their experience” (p. 24). Women and men experience college differently (Sax, 2008), and traditional gender socialization narrows access and opportunities on campuses in ways that reinforce stereotypes and disproportionately limit women and other campus constituents facing gender-based oppression. The term women is inclusive of all individuals who identify as women and the term men is inclusive of all individuals who identify as men, regardless of their biological sex or sex assigned at birth. The intersection of sexism with other forms of systematic oppression further impacts the collegiate experience for all. Addressing these and related issues by supporting women and individuals of all gender identities, educating the campus community about women's and gender issues, and advocating for gender equity at the institutional level are just some of the unique roles that Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) play in the academy.

Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) refer to campus offices that advance gender equity and support women and other campus constituents facing gender-based oppression. These offices include women's centers, centers for gender, offices for women, and other units in higher education settings that address gender-related issues and concerns. Such programs are housed within colleges and universities across the U.S., including public and private institutions, two-year and four-year schools, historically black colleges and universities, tribal institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, Asian American- and Pacific Islander-serving institutions, institutions serving deaf and hard of hearing students, and those serving blind and visually impaired students. Approximately 500 such programs exist in U.S. higher education (National Women's Studies Association, n.d., in Vlasnik, 2010); similar organizations also exist in higher education in other countries. The first women's center in the U.S. was established in 1960 at the University of Minnesota (Bonebright, Cottledge, & Lonnquist, 2012) at the cusp of an era of tremendous change in higher education. WGPS serve as catalysts and leaders of positive institutional change; women's centers, one form of WGPS, have been named the "very heart of feminist engagement with the academy" (Marine, 2011, p. 16).

WGPS are established on campuses as a result of concerns about gender equity raised by students, administrators, faculty, staff, alumnae/alumni, and community members. Informed by women's, African American, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer+, and sexual and gender minorities), and other civil rights movements, WGPS are developed to respond to individual and institutional needs to support women and other campus constituents facing gender-based oppression in achieving their educational goals. WGPS encourage engagement in broader fields of study and promotion into leadership positions, and advance issues of gender equity in higher education. In addition, WGPS have initiated important conversations about masculinities, men's roles as allies, and the specific needs of transgender women, transgender men, and other individuals facing gender-based oppression. Reporting lines for WGPS differ among institutions, with some embedded in the missions and services of divisions of student affairs and others with reporting lines reflecting other institutional organizational structures such as academic affairs or diversity/multicultural affairs (Goettsch, Linden, Vanzant, & Waugh, 2012).

In recent decades, scholars and practitioners have debated the use of the term women both in the field of women’s and gender studies as well as in naming campus centers, offices, and programs that address gender issues. Some prioritize the importance of directly naming the primary target of sexism and
gender discrimination by using the term *women* (as in women's center). Others assert that use of the term *women* reproduces an essentialist framework that privileges a monolithic category of women while the term *gender* (as in gender studies and gender equity center) is more inclusive of all individuals and their diverse experiences of gender, and of gender-based inequity and discrimination. For some, the term *gender* in program names also more explicitly draws attention to masculinities and services for men and gender diverse individuals, which women's centers have provided to varying degrees. Others have observed that replacing the term *women* with *gender* could erase the history of the struggle to put women's lives and experiences at the center of attention, opening the door to co-opting the goals of that movement and shifting resources, energy, and attention away from addressing the status of women (Berger & Radeloff, 2011). There is a similarly complex dialogue regarding the naming, configuration, and delivery of programs and services at the intersection of gender and sexuality.

In 2015, CAS chose to change the name of the functional area from “Women Student Programs and Services” to “Women's and Gender Programs and Services.” The addition of *gender* to the name acknowledges the above debate regarding the use of the terms *women* and *gender* in program names. The elimination of *student* acknowledges the broader focus of some programs to include faculty, staff, alumnae/alumni, and/or community members in their missions. The name change for this functional area does not compel campus-based programs or units to alter their names; institutions should name WGPS units to reflect the unique mission, needs, history, and culture of their institution.

WGPS have varied missions that express the unique cultures and goals of the institutions within which they reside. Most of them include in their mission the need to address equity, including institutional change; education, including equal access, affordability, recruitment, retention, and professional development; support and advocacy; personal safety; and the development of community (Kunkel, 1994, 2002). There is no single form for WGPS, yet there are many shared commitments, tenets, goals, and practices. In 2010, Ohio women’s centers created and published a shared philosophy statement that for the first time brought diverse centers and programs together to self-define their collective work. It reads in full:

> Women's centers reflect the unique needs of their institutions and communities, yet share a commitment to historically underserved individuals and groups. Additionally, women’s centers play a leadership role in understanding the changing workplace and preparing members of the university community to engage successfully with an increasingly complex world. Women’s centers are integral to transforming institutions into inclusive environments; through community-building, advocacy, education, support, and research, they encourage the full participation and success of women (Vlasnik, 2010, p. 5).

The statement points to the ongoing importance and impact of WGPS on their institutions and on individuals of all gender identities.

Supporting the success of women students and other campus constituents facing gender-based oppression involves working with individuals of all gender identities to raise awareness about and contribute to cultural change related to gender issues more broadly. In doing so, these programs focus on address concerns that affect all members of a campus community and beyond, including alumnae/alumni, community organizations, and the public at large. Additionally, the unique experiences of women and other constituents facing gender-based oppression require that WGPS—regardless of their reporting structures—engage with every element of campus life, including collaborating with academic, administrative, student affairs, and other co-curricular units, as well as student-based organizations. WGPS are informed by a broad range of academic disciplines and professions. It is important to note that WGPS draw on information from scholars and practitioners whose work is often interdisciplinary in nature; foregrounds an analysis of power and privilege; and recognizes the impact of intersectionality on research, teaching, and activism. In addition, WGPS serve as locations for exploring the connection between theory and practice. This exploration is also predicated on their connections to
a wide range of activist movements. Ultimately, WGPS are dedicated to advancing knowledge of how
historical and current imbalances of power among genders impact equity issues, both on campus and in
society, with the goal of helping all people to reach their full potential.

When WGPS were first founded, they tended to focus on access (i.e., assisting women in gaining entrance
into academic institutions, both as students and personnel), equity, and the tenets outlined by Kunkel
(1994, 2002). Addressing barriers to access and equity remain central to the missions of WGPS.
However, because the manifestations of these issues on contemporary campuses have changed, WGPS
have responded to address the following current issues and concerns:

- Supporting access for and the success of specific groups of women who remain
  underrepresented in higher education (e.g., Buford, 1988; Chuang, 2010; Keller & Rogers,
  1983);
- Fostering the full integration of women and other constituents facing gender-based
  oppression once they are on campus;
- Advocating for equity and critiquing and challenging social constructions of gender;
- Exploring and deepening their relationships with academic programs, particularly women’s
  and gender studies (e.g., Cook, 1998; Green, 2002; Parker & Freedman, 1999; Zaytoun
  Byrne, 2000);
- Educating about and exploring the fluidity and diversity of gender identities and
  expressions;
- Challenging the explicit and implicit biases and stereotypes that continue to hinder women's
  academic and career progress in higher education leadership and male-dominated fields
  such as science, technology, engineering and math (Hill, Corbett, & St. Rose, 2010);
- Responding to the expanding participation in the discourse around masculinities, and
  cultivating partnerships in which men self-define and act as allies for gender equity and
  social justice;
- Exploring leadership, internationalization, and technology in their programs and services
  (Davie, 2002; see Bonebright et al., 2012);
- Building the field of WGPS work by focusing on the professional development, preparation,
  and experiences of WGPS staff (e.g., Marine, 2011; Vlasnik & DeButz, 2013);
- Continuing to identify and explore emerging issues and concerns related to women, gender,
  and gender equity on college and university campuses; and
- Advocating for environmental changes within the campus community such as lactation
  rooms, gender neutral bathrooms, and gender-inclusive housing.

While WGPS work to address the above issues, they do so with their historical context and roots in social
justice, community activism, and social change efforts, as well as in student development theory and
administrative leadership practice.

Acknowledging the immense potential of higher education to improve the lives of people of all gender
identities and gender expressions, WGPS translate the richness of feminist and womanist community
organization- and movement-based work to college and university settings, demonstrating the
relevance of women and their many contributions to all aspects of higher education. Through support,
advocacy, and education, WGPS address sexual assault and other forms of power-based personal
violence, sexual harassment, gender discrimination, sexism, cisgenderism, reproductive justice, and
other barriers to student academic achievement that disproportionately impact the success of women
and other students facing gender-based oppression. With a commitment to the continuous examination
of power, privilege, interlocking oppressions, and the intersection of gender with other identities, WGPS
seek to support and advocate for the positive educational experiences of all members of college and
university communities while simultaneously maintaining a specific focus on gender and women. As a
result of this intersectional framework, traditionally under-served, underrepresented, and marginalized
populations across gender identities engage in and benefit from WGPS. Individuals, whose salient identity may not be gender, often gravitate towards the educational and activist activities and/or seek support and advocacy provided by WGPS in order to succeed on campus.

Obtaining and sustaining funding and resources sufficient to fully actualize the missions of Women’s and Gender Programs and Services remains one of the most significant challenges facing these programs. This is a particular concern in light of women comprising the majority of students enrolled in colleges and universities in the U.S., but the minority of faculty in the senior ranks and individuals in academic and administrative leadership positions. Coalition work, which is both integral to WGPS and a method for addressing limited resources, strategically engages partners in WGPS work to dismantle intersecting oppression, deepen the quality and impact of their work, and advance shared priorities and projects that serve their constituents and institutions. WGPS assume leadership roles in advocating for campus climate assessments and policy change at the institutional level and in forming collaborations to accelerate institutional changes so that campuses are inclusive of all their members.

REFERENCES


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WOMEN'S AND GENDER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
CAS Standards and Guidelines

Guiding Principle: Students and Their Environments

PART 1. MISSION

1.1 Programs and Services Mission

The purpose of Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must be to advance gender equity, educate the campus community about women's and gender issues, and promote a supportive and safe environment for women and all campus constituents facing gender-based oppression.

WGPS must develop and define its mission.

The WGPS mission must be consistent with the mission of the department, college, division, institution, and applicable professional standards.

The WGPS mission must be appropriate for the institution's students, designated clients, and other constituents.

The term women is inclusive of all individuals who identify as women and the term men is inclusive of all individuals who identify as men, regardless of their biological sex or sex assigned at birth. Because college and university campuses also have youth visitors/participants, and some WGPS personnel work directly with youth, the term women is also inclusive of girls, when relevant.

Education, advocacy, and support should serve as the guiding framework for WGPS service delivery, partnerships and priorities.

Whether centralized or decentralized in its administration, WGPS must advance its mission.

1.2 Mission Statement

WGPS must implement, disseminate, regularly review, and update its mission statement.

Mission statements must reference student learning, development, and success.

PART 2. PROGRAM AND SERVICES

2.1 Program and Services Goals

Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must be guided by a set of written goals and objectives that are directly related to the stated mission.

The WGPS goals must be aligned with institutional priorities and expectations of the functional area.

WGPS must regularly develop, review, evaluate, and revise its goals.

WGPS must communicate goals and progress toward achievement to appropriate constituents.
2.2 Program Information and Services

WGPS must provide relevant information, services, and resources consistent with its mission and goals.

WGPS must develop and implement strategies for outreach and promotion.

WGPS must emphasize the needs of women and all constituents facing gender-based oppression including transgender women, transgender men, and gender diverse individuals.

WGPS must collaborate with colleagues and departments across the institution to promote an inclusive campus climate free of discrimination, harassment, and other barriers to success.

WGPS should play a principal role in creating and implementing gender-related institutional policies and structures.

WGPS should help constituents to understand the complexities of higher education institutions, including any limitations on the activist activities of WGPS personnel, while still empowering constituents to critically develop, implement and evaluate their own activist agendas.

WGPS must incorporate dimensions of identity beyond gender identity and expression, such as race; ethnicity; nationality; religious affiliation; sexual orientation; disability; age; and relationship, social, economic, or veteran status into programs and services.

WGPS must actively work to eliminate problems of power and privilege within WGPS work.

WGPS must promote unrestricted access for full involvement of women and all constituents facing gender-based oppression.

WGPS must provide information about the availability of adequate, accessible, affordable, and flexible child and family care.

WGPS must provide programs and services that actualize the core tenets of the WGPS mission to address gender equity through education, advocacy, and support.

Education

WGPS must provide educational programs, offer experiential opportunities, and engage in informal education that

- promotes awareness of the ways gender is culturally constructed and how this shapes society and the individual experience
- increases understanding of systems of social privilege and oppression and the interrelationship between sexism and the systems of power and privilege associated with other marginalized social identities and experiences
- empowers participants to create strategies for success within existing social structures
- elevates participants’ capacity to confront and transform individual and institutionalized inequality and discrimination
- helps campus constituencies identify and create equitable practices
- empowers students and other constituents served by the WGPS mission to engage in gender-related activist causes
facilitates attitudinal and behavioral change

WGPS should provide gender-related expertise, critique, and perspective on legal issues, institutional policy and applicable laws related to women and gender, such as those associated with gender discrimination including sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, sexual harassment, pregnancy, and work life accommodations, including but not exclusive to, in the US, Title IX, Title VII, FMLA, and the Clery Act (the Campus Security Act), as well as serve as an institutional resource on how other laws and policies may have a disparate impact based on gender.

WGPS should support scholarship and research on women and gender including individual projects and work pursued in collaboration with relevant academic departments and other entities.

WGPS should collaborate on the provision of service learning and internship opportunities aligned with the mission to promote gender equity.

Advocacy

WGPS must provide opportunities for individuals within the institution to collectively transform institutional culture related to improving the lives of women and all people facing gender-based oppression.

WGPS must advocate for opportunities and advancement within the institution for their mission-defined constituents and integrate an understanding of power and privilege as influences on these constituents’ access to advancement.

To address the institutional environment, WGPS must

- advocate for a campus culture that eliminates barriers, prejudice, and bigotry, and creates a hospitable climate for women and all constituents facing gender-based oppression
- advocate for institutional accountability for assessing and monitoring campus climate in areas of gender bias and discrimination
- collaborate with on- and off-campus partners to create institutional policies, procedures, and programs to work toward the elimination of gender bias and discrimination
- advocate for the elimination of institutional policies and practices that result in an inequitable impact on students or employees based on their gender identity and/or gender expression
- advocate for curricular change to consistently and comprehensively include the concerns and contributions to society of women and all people facing gender-based oppression

WGPS should provide gender-related expertise, critique, and perspective on legal issues, institutional policy, and applicable laws related to women and gender, such as those associated with gender discrimination including sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, sexual harassment, pregnancy, and work life accommodations. In addition, WGPS should serve as an institutional resource on how laws and policies may have a disparate impact based on gender.

WGPS should advance gender justice through opportunities for involvement in local, regional, national, and global action initiatives related to improving the lives of women and all people facing gender-based oppression.

Support
WGPS must provide advocacy for/with individuals as a form of direct support.

WGPS personnel should clearly articulate within the institution the expectations of the advocacy framework under which they and their units operate. The advocacy framework includes the potential that a constituent’s choices may result in outcomes that meet the constituent’s needs but which may be antithetical to the expectations of other individuals or the institutional structure.

WGPS should be a confidential reporting option as relates to gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence.

When engaging in advocacy work, WGPS personnel must empower individuals and support them in making their own decisions.

WGPS must provide opportunities that create support systems and communication networks for women and all constituents facing gender-based oppression.

WGPS must provide culturally appropriate and relevant information, resources, and referrals for promoting the success, health and holistic well-being of all constituents served by the WGPS mission including those from under-represented or under-served communities.

WGPS must address the provision of culturally appropriate and relevant support services including crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy, resources, accommodation, referrals and information about related institutional practices and policies to individuals who experience gender equity, bias, discrimination or hostile climate concerns in institutional learning, working and living environments, and to constituents who experience sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, sexual harassment, and pregnancy discrimination.

2.3 Program Structure and Framework

WGPS must have clearly stated, current, relevant, and documented
- goals and outcomes
- policies and procedures
- responsibilities and performance expectations for personnel
- organizational charts demonstrating clear channels of authority

WGPS must be purposefully structured and resourced to balance efficiency and effectiveness and to achieve programmatic and student learning and development outcomes.

WGPS should function as discrete operational units with their own identities.

WGPS must be organized and integrated within the institution in order to serve multiple constituencies effectively and in ways that demonstrate an institutional commitment to promoting gender equity and women’s success.

In the case of student-run WGPS, student leaders should have access to policy and decision makers of the institution.

Regardless of organizational structures, WGPS must work in close consultation and collaboration with others with expertise and resources to meet the needs and interests of students and designated clients.
WGPs must collaborate with colleagues and departments across the institution to promote student learning, development, and success.

2.4 Program Design

WGPs must be intentionally designed to
• achieve predetermined student learning and development outcomes
• incorporate research and theories on student learning, development, and success
• respond to needs of individuals, constituents, and populations with distinct needs
• ensure access for students and designated clients

Recognizing that WGPs operate within institutional hierarchies, WGPs must incorporate feminist (e.g., non-hierarchical and collaborative) approaches to leadership and organizational structures, the value of consensus building, and the importance of multiple and diverse voices in decision making into their operations.

PART 3. STUDENT LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUCCESS

3.1 Program Contribution to Student Learning, Development, and Success

Women’s and Gender Programs and Services (WGPs) must contribute to students’ formal education, which includes both curricular and co-curricular experiences.

WGPs must contribute to students’ progression and timely completion of educational goals.

WGPs must help students and designated clients prepare for their careers and meaningful contributions to society.

WGPs must work with the institution to identify relevant and desirable student success outcomes.

WGPs must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes.

WGPs must implement strategies and tactics to achieve these outcomes.

3.2 Student Learning and Development Domains and Dimensions

WGPs must align predetermined student learning and development outcomes with the CAS learning outcomes model or other recognized student learning and development models.

WGPs must align predetermined student learning and development outcomes with the institutional framework for student outcomes.

The CAS student learning and development outcomes model includes six broad categories (called domains), meant to identify the aspects of learning experienced by students through engaging with programs, disciplines, or other learning opportunities. The domains are further clarified through dimensions. The dimensions of student learning and development allow for a more focused assessment approach and opportunities for alignment with institutional mission and priorities.

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

[Learning and Development Outcomes: See the Council for the Advancement of Standards Student Learning and Development Outcomes (www.cas.edu/learningoutcomes) for examples of outcomes related to these domains and dimensions.]

### 3.3 Assessment of Student Learning and Development

WGPS must assess the student learning and development outcome domains and dimensions relevant to the functional area.

WGPS must provide evidence of the extent to which student learning and development outcomes are achieved.

WGPS must provide evidence of the extent to which student success outcomes are achieved.

WGPS must use evidence to create strategies for improving student learning, development, and success.

**PART 4. ASSESSMENT**

#### 4.1 Establishing a Culture of Assessment
Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must develop assessment plans and processes that document progress toward achievement of mission, goals, outcomes, and objectives.

WGPS must design assessment plans that incorporate an ongoing cycle of assessment activities.

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

4.2 Program Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives

WGPS must identify goals, outcomes, and objectives to guide its work.

WGPS should undertake periodic reviews of gender-related campus needs in order to determine the needs of key constituencies across the organization and beyond, for example, students, faculty and staff, alumnae/i, community, and others. Such reviews will may WGPS adjust their missions, priorities, and activities.

WGPS should engage in campus climate assessment initiatives, independently or collaboratively, with particular attention to eliciting information about gender-related disparities and concerns.

WGPS must identify assessment methods that will allow for the collection of relevant data on its goals, outcomes, and objectives.

When collaborating with other departments on assessment activities, these activities must be consistent with the WGPS mission and assessment plan.

4.3 Assessment Plan and Process

WGPS must structure assessment initiatives using the steps of the assessment cycle:

- set program goals, outcomes, and objectives
- develop and implement assessment plan
- review and interpret findings
- develop a plan for data use, continuous improvement, and reassessment
- implement an improvement plan
- review and monitor changes that have been made

WGPS must implement the assessment process with methods that reflect universal design principles.

WGPS must employ ethical practices in the assessment process.

WGPS must implement assessment processes in a way that is culturally responsive, inclusive, and equitable.

WGPS must engage students, faculty, staff, administrators, and other relevant constituents in assessment activities.

4.4 Gathering Evidence
WGPS must identify priorities for assessment, including both formative and summative approaches.

WGPS must employ multiple methods and measures of data collection.

WGPS must develop manageable processes for gathering, interpreting, and evaluating data.

WGPS must adhere to institutional policies related to data access and management.

WGPS must ensure measures and methods are rigorous and reflect characteristics of validity, reliability, and trustworthiness.

4.5 Review and Interpret Findings

WGPS must use methods to analyze and interpret data that correspond with objectives and questions considered within overall assessment goals.

WGPS must disaggregate data to address the objectives and questions considered in the assessment project.

4.6 Reporting Results and Implementing Improvement

WGPS must use assessment results to demonstrate student learning, development, and success.

WGPS must use assessment results to demonstrate effectiveness and continuous improvement.

WGPS must use evidence from assessment activities to inform decision-making and planning for continuous improvement.

WGPS should analyze institutional data to identify gender-related disparities and issues and use this data to inform decision-making about WGPS priorities.

WGPS must monitor improvements implemented based on assessment results.

WGPS must apply results for future planning.

WGPS must inform constituents of assessment results and how data have been used for continuous improvement.

Guiding Principle: Advocating for Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities

PART 5. ACCESS, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

5.1 Inclusive and Equitable Educational and Work Environments

Within the context of each institution’s mission and in accordance with institutional policies and applicable codes and laws, Women’s and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must create and maintain educational and work environments for students, faculty, staff, administrators, designated clients, and other constituents that are welcoming, accessible, inclusive, equitable, and free from bias or harassment.
WGPS must not discriminate on the basis of race; color; national origin; sex; disability; age; cultural identity; ethnicity; nationality; citizenship; family educational history (e.g., first generation to attend college); political affiliation; religious affiliation; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; marital, family, social, economic, place of residence, or veteran status; or any other basis included in codes, laws, and institutional policies.

5.2 Organizational Aspects of Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

WGPS must provide equitable access to facilities and resources for all constituents.

WGPS must respond to the needs of all constituents when establishing hours of operation and developing methods for delivering programs, services, and resources.

WGPS must identify and address actions, policies, and structures within its operation that perpetuate systems of privilege and oppression.

5.3 Advocating for Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

WGPS must advocate for accessible facilities and resources, and address issues that impede access.

WGPS must advocate for inclusion, multiculturalism, and social justice within the institution.

WGPS must provide gender-related expertise, critique, and perspective on issues of access, equity, diversity, and inclusion and how these issues are addressed in institutional policies and practices.

WGPS should provide expert assistance with the implementation and development of systems of accountability regarding access, equity, diversity, and inclusion across all functional areas.

WGPS must enact culturally responsive, inclusive, respectful, and equitable practices in the provision of services.

WGPS must develop plans for ongoing professional development on cultural competence and workplace inclusion.

5.4 Implementing Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

WGPS must establish goals for access, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

WGPS must address the characteristics and needs of diverse constituents when establishing and implementing culturally relevant and inclusive programs, services, policies, procedures, and practices.

WGPS must be intentional about addressing intersecting identities in WGPS educational programs and services as well as in institutional policies and practices.

WGPS must ensure that personnel are trained in diversity, equity, access, and inclusion and are held accountable for applying the training to its work.
WGPS personnel must demonstrate a commitment to the equity and inclusion practices upon which WGPS work is modeled.

WGPS must have an established protocol for, and foster expectation of, bias incident reporting.

Personnel within WGPS must cultivate understanding of identity, culture, self-expression, and heritage.

Personnel within WGPS must promote respect for commonalities and differences among people within their historical and cultural contexts.

When educational and/or workplace accommodations are requested, WGPS must provide individuals with an interactive process to determine reasonable accommodations.

*Guiding Principle: Organization, Leadership, and Human Resources*

**PART 6. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND SUPERVISION**

**6.1 Leadership**

Women’s and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) leaders must model ethical behavior and demonstrate alignment with institutional mission, goals, and ethical practices.

Leaders with organizational authority for WGPS must provide management and supervision as well as lead strategic planning and program advancement.

WGPS leaders must

- create a vision for the functional area
- communicate goals
- model and expect commitment
- build teams, coalitions, and alliances
- influence others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the unit
- advance diversity, equity, access and inclusion goals in the workplace
- incorporate data and information in decision making
- develop a risk management plan for the organization
- incorporate sustainable practices in the design of programs, services, and facilities
- develop and empower new leaders from within the organization
- collaborate with colleagues and departments across the institution
- adhere to organizational constraints

WGPS leaders must advance the functional area by

- advocating for and actively promoting the functional area’s mission and goals
- communicating with constituents about current issues affecting the profession
- identifying and addressing individual, organizational, and environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement
- facilitating discussion and decisions regarding program advancement
- advocating for representation in strategic planning processes at departmental, divisional, and institutional levels

**6.2 Management**
WGPS managers must
- be empowered to demonstrate effective management
- plan, allocate, and monitor the use of fiscal, physical, human, intellectual, and technological resources
- develop plans for scholarship, leadership, and service to the institution and the profession
- engage diverse perspectives from within and outside the unit to inform decision making

6.3 Supervision

WGPS supervisors must
- incorporate institutional policies and procedures in the development of strategies for recruitment, selection, professional development, supervision, performance planning, succession planning, evaluation, recognition, and reward of personnel
- consult with institutional HR personnel to access and receive education and training that influence successful performance of personnel
- provide feedback on personnel performance
- identify and resolve workplace conflict
- follow institutional policies for addressing complaints
- provide reports and activity updates to management
- work with personnel to develop plans for scholarship, leadership, and service to the profession and institution
- provide supervision and support so that personnel may complete assigned tasks

6.4 Strategic Planning

WGPS leaders, managers, and supervisors must facilitate ongoing strategic planning processes that
- facilitate continuous development, implementation, assessment, and evaluation of program effectiveness and goal attainment congruent with institutional mission and ongoing planning efforts
- support ongoing assessment activities that improve student learning, development, and success
- utilize philosophies, principles, and values that guide the work of the functional area
- promote environments that provide opportunities for student learning, development, and success
- develop, adapt, and improve programs and services in response to the needs of changing environments, populations served, and evolving institutional priorities
- engage many diverse constituents and perspectives from within and outside the unit to inform the development and implementation of the planning process
- result in 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

All WGPS personnel, as vital members of the team, should be encouraged to share their viewpoints, contribute to planning, and fulfill their duties in a way that acknowledges their agency, regardless of their status and position.

PART 7. HUMAN RESOURCES
7.1 Staffing and Support

Women’s and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must identify the level of staffing necessary to achieve its mission and goals.

WGPS must be staffed by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. Personnel include full-time and/or part-time faculty, staff, administrators, and paraprofessionals (e.g., student employees, interns, graduate assistants, and volunteers).

WGPS must have access to technical and support personnel to accomplish its mission.

WGPS 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.

WGPS personnel must have the experience, skills, knowledge base and understanding of the philosophy and needs inherent in WGPS work to support and advance the work of the unit.

WGPS professional personnel must have demonstrated commitment to advocacy on gender equity issues.

WGPS professional personnel should be knowledgeable about the field’s historical context and roots in social justice, community activism, and social change efforts.

In the selection and training of personnel, special emphasis should be placed on skills and competencies in the areas of diversity, customer service, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment, confidentiality, problem identification, crisis response and management, public relations, information dissemination, problem identification, and referral. A thorough knowledge of the institution, its various offices, and relevant community resources should also be sought out and cultivated.

7.2 Employment Practices

WGPS must establish procedures and expectations for personnel recruitment, selection, training, supervision, performance, and evaluation.

WGPS leaders must

- ensure that all personnel have written position descriptions
- regularly review position descriptions
- maintain copies of up-to-date resumes/curriculum vitae for all currently employed personnel
- implement recruitment and selection/hiring strategies that demonstrate a deliberate effort to diversify the workforce
- develop promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and non-discriminatory

WGPS personnel positions must be classified and compensated adequately and on a level commensurate with equivalent positions in other units.

WGPS leaders must establish, in partnership with personnel and aligned with institutional policies, work arrangements (e.g., schedules, remote work) that achieve department objectives.
Personnel within WGPS must have written performance goals, objectives, and outcomes for each 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 WGPS.

7.3 Personnel Training and Development

WGPS personnel must receive training when hired and professional development throughout their employment.

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

WGPS must provide personnel with appropriate professional development opportunities or resources that facilitate individual professional development goals and improve competence, skills, and leadership capacity.

WGPS personnel must have access to resources and receive specific training on policies, procedures, and laws related to
  • the programs and services they support
  • privacy and confidentiality
  • student records and sensitive institutional information
  • systems and technologies necessary to perform their assigned responsibilities
  • sexual misconduct, harassment, and workplace violence

WGPS personnel must be trained on how to recognize and address systems of oppression in the workplace and facilitate a welcoming, inclusive work environment.

WGPS personnel must be trained on how and when to refer those in need of additional assistance to qualified personnel, and must have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments.

WGPS leaders must ensure that personnel are knowledgeable about and trained in safety, emergency procedures, identifying threatening conduct or behavior, crisis prevention, response, and reporting.

7.4 Paraprofessional Personnel

Paraprofessionals working in WGPS must be enrolled in an appropriate field of study and/or have relevant experience.

Paraprofessionals working in WGPS must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated by personnel who possess applicable educational credentials, work experience, and have supervisory experience.

WGPS leaders must accommodate the dual roles paraprofessionals may have as both student and employee.
WGPS leaders must
- adhere to parameters of paraprofessionals' job descriptions
- articulate intended student learning and development outcomes in student employee job descriptions
- adhere to agreed-upon work hours and schedules
- offer flexible scheduling options as needed by the student employee
- work with paraprofessionals to determine suitable compensation if circumstances necessitate additional hours

PART 8. COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

8.1 Collaboration

Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) personnel must collaborate and consult with institutional leaders, faculty, individuals, and departments essential to the success of the program.

WGPS must build and maintain strong, mutually beneficial working relationships with co-curricular and academic departments across the institution as well as with community organizations.

WGPS's campus and community collaborative relationships should be ongoing, allowing strategic engagement to develop productive dialog, express common concerns and shared goals, and generate collective action. These relationships should be non-hierarchical, value differing perspectives, involve consensus-building, and facilitate increased visibility of the gender-related needs of WGPS constituents.

WGPS must collaborate with individuals, groups, communities, and organizations to
- establish, maintain, and promote understanding and effective relations
- garner support and resources
- meet the needs of students, designated clients, and other constituents
- achieve program and student outcomes
- engage diverse populations to enrich the educational environment
- disseminate information about programs and services
- solve problems pertinent to the student population, designated clients, or the organization

WGPS should provide expert assistance and capacity building to departments across the institution as well as community organizations in order to facilitate the integration of gender equity into their policies, structures and practices with the goal of further reinforcing the institutionalization of gender equity.

WGPS personnel must engage with the larger WGPS community in order to support each other, promote best practices, build the WGPS field, and maintain an awareness of current issues and concerns facing WGPS.

In keeping with their mission, priorities and available resources, WGPS should address concerns that affect members of the community beyond the institution, including alumnae/alumni, community organizations and the public at large.

WGPS must be open to receiving feedback to ensure the mutuality of relationships with other entities.
WGPS must refer students, designated clients, and other constituents to appropriate resources when assistance is needed beyond the functional area’s scope.

In line with its advocacy framework, when making referrals, WGPS should actively facilitate successful connections, engagement, and outcomes for the person referred.

8.2 Communication

WGPS must provide relevant information, services, and resources that explain its mission and goals.

WGPS must develop and implement strategies for outreach and promotion.

WGPS promotional and descriptive information must be accurate and free of deception and misrepresentation.

8.3 Procedures and Guidelines

WGPS must have and follow procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for

• communicating with the media
• distributing information through print, broadcast, and online sources
• the use of social media
• contracting with external organizations for delivery of programs and services
• developing relationships with donors
• dissemination of relevant information in a timely manner to all constituents

Guiding Principle: Ethical Considerations

PART 9. ETHICS, LAW, AND POLICY

9.1 Ethical Statements

Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must review and adopt appropriate standards of ethical practice including those of applicable professional associations.

WGPS must have clearly defined and documented ethical statements addressing

• conflicts of interest, or appearance thereof, by personnel in the performance of their work
• management of institutional funds
• acceptance, in gratis, of cash or merchandise in accordance with institutional advancement reporting policies
• solicitation of gifts, in accordance with institutional advancement reporting policies
• research and assessment with human participants or animal subjects
• confidentiality of research and assessment data
• personnel, student, and other designated clients’ rights and responsibilities
• disclosure of information in student, personnel, and other designated clients’ records

9.2 Ethical Practice
WGPS personnel must employ ethical decision making in the performance of their duties.

WGPS personnel must recognize and avoid conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their judgment or objectivity and, when unavoidable, recuse themselves from the situation.

WGPS personnel must be honest, objective, and impartial in their interactions.

WGPS must demonstrate responsibility for sound and ethical assessment, research, evaluation, and program review.

WGPS must encourage and provide a forum for personnel to address and report unethical behavior.

WGPS must address issues surrounding scholarly integrity.

WGPS personnel must perform duties within the scope of their position, training, expertise, and competence.

WGPS personnel must make referrals when issues presented exceed the scope of their position.

9.3 Legal Obligations and Responsibilities

WGPS must comply with laws, regulations, policies, and procedures that relate to its respective responsibilities and that pose legal obligations, limitations, risks, and liabilities for the institution as a whole.

In accordance with governmental laws, institutional policy, and standards of good professional practice, WGPS personnel who are concerned about students’ well-being must ensure that they are referred to appropriate resources.

WGPS must have a process for accessing legal advice needed for personnel to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

WGPS must not discriminate based upon institutional policies, codes, or governmental laws.

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

9.4 Policies and Procedures

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

WGPS must have and follow a timeline for reviewing policies and procedures. The creation and revision of policies and procedures must be informed by available evidence, and policies and procedures that inform the management of higher education.

WGPS must have policies and procedures consistent with institutional policy for responding to threats, emergencies, and crisis situations.

9.5 Communication of Ethical and Legal Obligations
WGPS must educate new personnel to relevant ethical standards, statements of ethical practice, and related institutional policies and procedures.

WGPS must inform its users of ethical and legal obligations and limitations emanating from codes and laws or from licensure requirements.

WGPS personnel must provide students, designated clients, and constituents with information about student privacy rights and personnel's disclosure obligations.

WGPS must create ongoing opportunities to explore and examine basic ethical beliefs important to the functional area.

WGPS must inform personnel about internal and external governance organizations that affect the functional area.

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

9.6 Addressing Harassment and Hostile Environments

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

WGPS must adhere to institutional policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, harassment, and workplace violence.

Guiding Principle: Learning-Conducive Structures, Resources, and Systems

PART 10. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

10.1 Funding

Women's and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must have the funding that is necessary to accomplish its mission and goals.

Permanent institutional funding should be allocated for the continuing operation and staffing of WGPS. WGPS must determine with administrative leadership what funding is necessary.

WGPS personnel should be an integral part of appropriate campus networks to participate effectively in the determination of institutional financial priorities and the allocation of funding resources.

Permanent institutional funding must be commensurate with other units/departments that have similar scope.

As human resources are the primary vehicle to accomplishing goals, WGPS should prioritize the maintenance of human resources, including student workers.

10.2 Financial Planning
In establishing and prioritizing funding resources, WGPS must conduct comprehensive analyses to determine

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

WGPS should provide gender-related expertise, critique, and perspective on financial policies and practices and the distribution of financial resources related to women and gender, including pay equity.

WGPS must use the budget as a planning tool to reflect commitment to the mission and goals of the functional area and of the institution.

WGPS should leverage institutional resources, including federally and other sponsored programs’ personnel, to create and execute diversified funding plans that utilize internal and external funding sources to result in financial stability for WGPS.

WGPS 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.

10.3 Financial Management

WGPS must manage funds in accordance with established governmental laws and institutional policies, procedures, and guidelines.

WGPS must demonstrate responsible stewardship and use of fiscal resources.

WGPS must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for applying to and managing funds from external resources.

WGPS must be provided with the institutional and financial resources to assist with professional development of personnel.

WGPS 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 11. TECHNOLOGY

11.1 Systems Management

Women’s and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) must have current technology to support the achievement of its mission and goals.

Technological resources must be allocated for the continuing operation of WGPS commensurate with other units/departments that have similar scope.
WGPS should proactively engage with institutional technology authorities to review emerging technologies for their potential opportunities and risks in order to promote positive usage.

**WGPS must incorporate accessibility features into technology-based programs and services.**

**WGPS must ensure that personnel and constituents have access to training and support for technology use.**

**WGPS must back up data on a cycle established in partnership with the institution's information technology department.**

**WGPS must implement a replacement plan and cycle for all technology with attention to sustainability.**

**11.2 User Engagement**

**WGPS must use technology to enhance the delivery of programs and services for all constituents.**

**WGPS must ensure that technology addresses constituent needs.**

**WGPS must employ technologies that facilitate user interaction.**

**WGPS must provide secure remote access.**

**11.3 Compliance and Information Security**

**WGPS must have policies on the appropriate use of technology that are clear and easily accessible.**

WGPS should advocate for policies and procedures that monitor institutional technological spaces in order to identify in a timely way potentially harmful technological issues, including hostile environments.

WGPS should provide expert consultation on the development and implementation of institutional policies and procedures that focus on responding to the negative effects of technology that may result in a disproportionately harmful impact for some users based on their actual or perceived gender identity and/or expression (e.g., electronic stalking, cyberbullying). WGPS should elevate institutional awareness about these policies and procedures.

WGPS should proactively engage with institutional technology authorities to ensure that there are resources available to respond quickly and effectively to any negative effects of technology.

**WGPS must comply with governmental codes and laws and with institutional technology policies and procedures.**

**WGPS must provide a secure platform when conducting financial transactions, in accordance with industry best practices.**

**11.4 Communication**
WGPS must have updated websites that provide information to all constituents in accessible formats.

WGPS must use technology that allows users to communicate sensitive information in a secure format.

WGPS must evaluate relevant social media platforms and techniques for communication, and implement those that best meet constituent needs.

WGPS must evaluate multiple modes of communication including, but not limited to, phone, text, and web chat.

PART 12. FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

12.1 Design of Facilities

Women’s and Gender Programs and Services (WGPS) facilities must be located in suitable spaces designed to support the functional area’s mission and goals.

WGPS facilities must be intentionally designed to engage various constituents, promote learning, and provide accessible and safe spaces.

WGPS facilities must include private meeting areas and a welcoming communal space.

WGPS should provide gender-related expertise, critique, and perspective on the location and design of facilities to ensure safe, inclusive, and welcoming environments such as appropriately equipped lactation spaces, gender inclusive restrooms and other gender-specific and family-friendly facilities.

WGPS facilities must be designed to protect the security and privacy of records and ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information and conversations.

WGPS must incorporate universal design principles.

WGPS facilities must be designed and constructed to be energy-efficient and sustainable.

12.2 Work Space

WGPS personnel must have equipped and well-maintained workspaces designed to support their work and responsibilities.

WGPS personnel must be able to safeguard the privacy of their work.

12.3 Equipment Acquisition

When acquiring capital equipment, WGPS must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and life cycle costs.

WGPS must incorporate sustainable practices when purchasing equipment.

12.4 Facilities and Equipment Use
WGPS facilities and equipment must be inspected on an established cycle and be in compliance with codes, laws, and established practices for accessibility, health, safety, and security.

WGPS must promptly report broken, malfunctioning, defective, unusable, or faulty facilities and equipment to the entity responsible for maintenance.

WGPS must develop sustainable practices for facilities use.

WGPS must assess the effectiveness of its facilities to ensure they are meeting facilities and equipment goals.

WGPS personnel must advocate for appropriate, consistent, and fair assignment of facilities and equipment.

General Standards revised in 2018;
WGPS (formerly Women Student Programs and Services) content developed/revised in 1992, 1997, 2005, & 2015

The WGPS Standards and Guidelines should be considered in conjunction with the WGPS Contextual Statement, CAS Glossary of Terms, and CAS Guiding Principles.