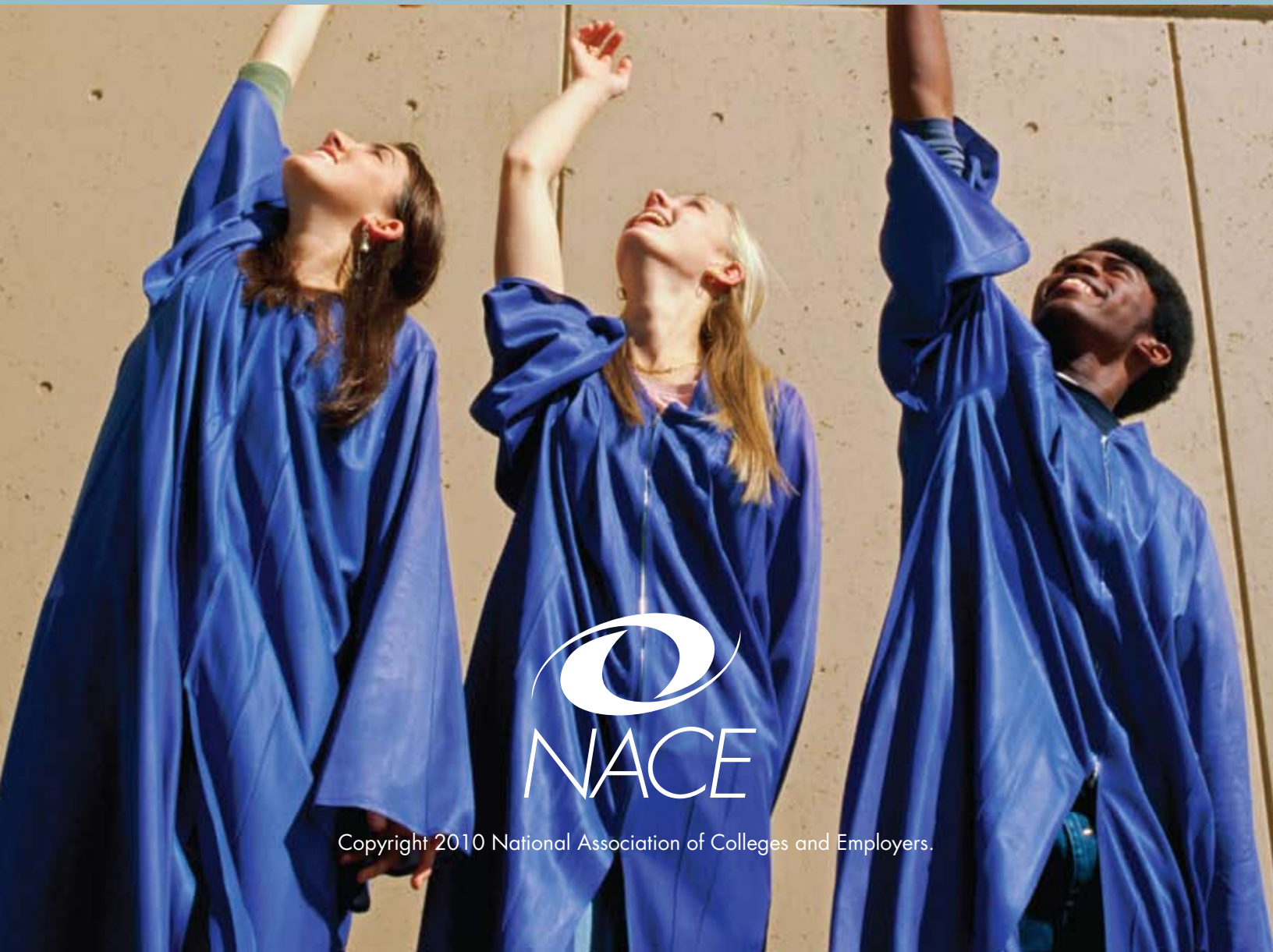


National Association of Colleges and Employers



Professional Standards

FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES 2009



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Professional Standards for College and University Career Services

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INTRODUCTION

In 2008, a NACE College and University Standards and Assessment Committee was appointed and one of the charges was to review and propose revisions to the 2006 edition of *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services* and the *Professional Standards Evaluation Workbook*. The work of that group is reflected in this publication.

Members of the committee included:

Sam Ratcliffe, chair, Virginia Military Institute; Kelley Bishop, Michigan State University; Mike Cahill, Syracuse University; Mark Case, College of William and Mary; Deb Chereck, University of Oregon; Joan Gamble, Terra Community College; Alan Goodman, Catholic University of America; Marcia Harris, University of North Carolina; Mary Kordys, BP; Ken Rogers, Dominion Enterprises; Marv Roth, University of Pittsburgh; Carol Trigg, University of California – Los Angeles; and Mimi Collins, National Association of Colleges and Employers.

The 2009 edition of *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services* was approved by the NACE Board of Directors in July 2009.

Application of professional standards in career services

The use of professional standards in career services is intended to facilitate excellence in the creation, maintenance, and delivery of programs and services. Professionally derived standards, representing the perspectives of diverse practitioners and promulgated under the aegis of a professional association, provide an exceptional opportunity for practitioners to engage in processes of self-assessment and self-regulation that are internally motivated and directed.

The philosophical position of the committee was that good methodologies:

- promote self-assessment and self-regulation initiatives using professional standards as key factors in fostering improvement in programs, services, and processes;
- honor institutional uniqueness and recognize that information is not always comparable across institutions because of differences in location and local economic conditions; student characteristics, abilities, and preparation; variety and quality of academic programs; and missions of the institutions and their career services offices. Any analysis of data must include explanations of such qualifiers;

- include qualitative as well as quantitative approaches;
- lead to internal improvement;
- encourage methodical, meticulous, and reliable collection and presentation of information that will provide evidence of quality, and promote analysis and synthesis of information; and
- demonstrate external and internal accountability.

The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services were written broadly to reflect variations in career services provided by individual colleges and universities. Some standards may apply to several functional areas within career services; overlap does exist. Not every standard will apply to every career services office or school. Therefore, their use should be interpreted according to the circumstances of the individual institution.

The standards were written to reflect an institution's responsibilities for career services. Some program components may be provided by the institution in a department other than career services. Individual career services offices may not have responsibility for certain programs or services identified as career services within these professional standards, however, the institution does bear final responsibility for delivery of career services, in whatever fashion they are administered within the institution. Evaluators may be required to collect and evaluate data from several different offices at an institution in order to conduct a thorough evaluation.

The standards pertain to programs, not staff members. They reflect dimensions of career services that affect program performance and quality. To localize the standards, individual institutions and career service offices should provide examples of how they are meeting or not meeting each applicable standard.

A companion workbook, the NACE Professional Standards Evaluation Workbook, is available for those who wish to evaluate their career services offices against the standards.

A history of the use of professional standards is included as Appendix A.

Please note: References to "students" throughout this document should be interpreted to mean "students and other designated clients."

PREAMBLE

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Professional Standards Committee is pleased to present the revised Professional Standards for college career services practitioners.

This revised edition places emphasis on two distinct categories with respect to the organization of campus career services offices: (1) Services deemed essential to be included in every career services office are indicated in **boldface** and contain the

designation “**must**” in the text. (2) Services that are important for practitioners to consider including, for greater enhancement of the office’s internal/external value to stakeholders, receive the designation “should.”

It is intended that this emphasis on essential and important services and activities for inclusion will more clearly help practitioners to prioritize their organizations’ focus and direction in the years to come.

I. MISSION

Career services must support the mission, academic and experiential programs, and advancement of the institution to promote student learning and student development. Within this context, the primary purpose of career services is to assist students and other designated clients in developing, evaluating, and/or implementing career, education, and employment decisions and plans.

Specifically, career services should help students and other designated clients to:

- develop self-knowledge related to career choice and work performance by identifying, assessing, and understanding their competencies, interests, values, and personal characteristics.
- obtain educational and occupational information to aid their career and educational planning and to develop their understanding of the world of work.
- select personally suitable academic programs and experiential opportunities that optimize future educational and employment options.
- take responsibility for developing career decisions, graduate/professional school plans, employment plans, and/or job-search competencies.
- prepare to find suitable employment by developing job-search skills, effective candidate presentation skills, and an understanding of the fit between their competencies and both occupational and job requirements.
- gain experience through student activities, community service, student employment, research projects, cooperative education, internships, and other opportunities.

- link with alumni, employers, professional organizations, and others who will provide opportunities to develop professional interests and competencies, integrate academic learning with work, and explore future career possibilities.
- use technology to enhance the career development process.
- seek a desired employment opportunity or entry into an appropriate educational, graduate, or professional program.
- prepare to manage their careers after graduation.

Career services must consider the needs of all students of the institution when designing the program and delivering services.

As career issues are addressed by different units within the institution, career services should provide leadership to the institution on career development concerns and linkages and/or coordination among career-related programs and services where appropriate.

Career services must incorporate student learning and student development in its mission.

Career services must develop, record, disseminate, implement, and regularly review its mission and goals.

Career services should develop positive relationships with employers and other external constituencies.

Career services should support the institutional outcomes assessment and other relevant research endeavors.

II. PROGRAM COMPONENTS

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The key program components of the career services function must be clearly defined, designed, and implemented in alignment with:

- **the career development perspectives and needs and the academic and occupational interests of students and other designated clients.**
- **current research, theories, and knowledge of career development and learning**
- **contemporary career services practices.**
- **the needs of external constituents, economic trends, opportunities, and/or constraints.**
- **institutional priorities.**
- **technological advancements.**
- **resources.**

Career services must work collaboratively with academic divisions, departments, individual faculty members, student services, employers, and other relevant constituencies of the institution to enhance students' career development.

Career services should promote career development for students as integral to the mission of the institution.

Career services staff should provide information on programs and services through institutional print and electronic media, campus publications, presentations, outreach, and orientation programs.

Career services should provide information on career and employment topics and the ethical obligations of students, faculty, employers, and others involved in the employment process.

Career Advising/Counseling

The institution must provide career advising/counseling to assist students and other designated clients at any stage of their career development.

Career services should offer career advising/counseling services that:

- encourage students to take advantage of career services as early as possible in their academic programs.
- provide career advising/counseling through scheduled appointments and drop-ins with individuals, group programs, career planning courses, outreach opportunities, special events, information technology and/or any other available resources.
- refer students to other counseling and resource agencies if assistance is needed beyond the scope of career advising/counseling.
- help students explore careers through part-time employment and experiential education programs.
- maintain appropriate records for future work with the students.
- assist students to assess their skills, values, and interests and understand how they relate to academic and co-curricular options and career opportunities.
- help students develop and apply job search competencies and decision-making skills.

Career services must help students and other designated clients make career choices based on accurate self-knowledge and information about the world of work.

Career services should recognize that career decision making is inextricably linked to additional psycho-social, personal, developmental, and cultural issues and beliefs.

Career services should help students obtain, evaluate, and apply occupational, educational, and employment information.

Career services should help students establish short-term and long-term career goals.

Career services should help students explore career options through internships, shadowing experiences, summer and part-time jobs, cooperative education, and/or other career-related activities.

Career services should assist students with career issues relevant to the individual, e.g., dual careers, sexual orientation, disabilities, and so forth.

Career Information

Career services must make current and comprehensive career information accessible to students and other designated clients as they explore and make career decisions.

Career information should include the following categories:

- self-assessment and career planning;
- occupational and job market information;
- graduate/professional schools;
- employment/job search;
- job, experiential education, and internship listings; and
- employer information.

Career services must provide resources to help students and other designated clients assess and relate their interests, competencies, needs, expectations, education, experience, personal background, and desired lifestyle to the employment market.

Career services should provide information on current and projected employment opportunities and employers to ensure that candidates have the widest possible choices of employment.

Career services should provide information on graduate and professional academic programs and other continuing education programs.

Career services should use information technology to give students, staff, and other designated clients access to the Internet and other computer resources.

Career information should be conveniently available in a variety of media appropriate for different learning styles and special needs.

Career information resources must be accessible and organized with an appropriate system that is user-friendly, flexible, and adaptable to change.

Career information facilities should be staffed with persons who have the appropriate counseling, advising,

and information technology competencies to assist students in accessing and using career information.

Employment Services

Career services must assist students and other designated clients in:

- **exploring a full range of career and work possibilities that match their career goals.**
- **preparing job-search competencies and tools to present themselves effectively as candidates for employment.**
- **obtaining information on employment opportunities and prospective employers.**
- **connecting with employers through campus interviews, job listings, referrals, direct application, networking, job-search events, publications, and information technology.**
- **making informed choices among a variety of options.**

Career services should develop and maintain relationships with employers, alumni, and other entities that provide career development and employment opportunities for students and other clients.

Graduate School Planning

Career services must assist students and other designated clients in:

- **identifying graduate or professional school programs that match their career goals.**
- **effectively presenting themselves as graduate/professional candidates for further study.**
- **obtaining information on graduate/professional school programs through a variety of sources.**
- **connecting with graduate/professional schools through campus interviews, referrals, direct application, events, publications, and information technology.**

Experiential Education

The institution must provide experiential education programs that include student employment and/or cooperative education, work-based learning, apprenticeships, internships, volunteer jobs, service learning, and shadowing experiences.

Career services should provide, or work closely with other departments that provide, experiential education opportunities.

Career services should help students develop strategies for finding and pursuing financial resources to support experiential education options.

Experiential education programs should help students obtain career-related experiences with organizations that provide adequate supervision and opportunities for students to reflect upon their learning and career development.

III. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

An institution must appoint, position, and empower a leader or leadership team to manage career services and align career services with the mission of the institution and the needs of the constituencies served. If career services are offered by several units, the institution must designate a leader or leadership team that will be responsible for coordinating the institution's programs and services for students. Such leadership is necessary to ensure adherence to institutional and unit missions and to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency.

Programs and services must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals.

Evidence of appropriate structure should include current and accessible policies and procedures; written job descriptions and regular performance reviews for all employees; functional workflow or organizational charts; facilities appropriate for career services functions; and defined service standards.

Evidence of effective management should include strategic and operational planning processes; clearly defined areas of responsibility; effective communication practices; decision-making and conflict resolution procedures; accountability systems; sound fiscal management practices; and proof of continuous improvement.

Review processes for policies, procedures, and budgetary issues must be defined and occur on a regular basis.

Career services leaders should coordinate efforts with other career services providers in the institution to integrate career services into the broader educational mission. Key constituencies of career services should be identified and their needs reflected in the mission and goals of the unit. Priorities for services should be defined.

Career services leaders must be advocates for the advancement of career services within the institution.

IV. ORGANIZATION

The external and internal organization of career services, including its place within the institution, must support its mission.

To help ensure student learning and development, career services must be purposefully structured to achieve stated goals. Such structure must include current policies and procedures, organizational charts, clearly stated expectations for services delivery, and written performance expectations for all employees.

Career services should be structured to ensure effective functioning of student services.

Staff titles, roles, and reporting lines should support the efficient and effective delivery of career services and programs.

Career services must be organized to develop positive relationships with students; academic, administrative, and student affairs colleagues; employers; and alumni.

The external organization e.g., reporting lines of career services within the college/university should provide optimal visibility and institutional support. The unit to which career services reports should allow for efficient and effective delivery of career services within the institution.

The internal and external reporting relationship of career services should support related student outcomes that are reflected in the departmental mission statement.

V. HUMAN RESOURCES

Career services must have an adequate number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill its mission and functions. Career services must embrace fair employment practices and must be proactive in attracting and retaining a diverse staff. Career services must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory.

Programs and services should employ a diverse staff to provide readily identifiable role models for students and to enrich the campus community.

Career services must be staffed by persons who, in combination, provide the core competencies to perform primary program functions effectively. Primary program functions and their related core competencies and knowledge domains are defined below.

Functions	Core Competencies	Knowledge
Management and administration	Needs assessment and satisfaction measures; program design, implementation, and evaluation; strategic and operational planning; program integration and integrity; staffing; staff development and supervision; budget planning and administration; political sensitivity and negotiation skills; synthesization, interpretation, and reporting of current and longitudinal information.	Systems theory; organizational development; research design; statistics; accounting and budgeting procedures; revenue generation; principles; purchasing; staff selection; supervision; performance appraisals; information systems management; customer service; marketing.
Program and event administration	Needs assessment; goal setting; program planning, implementation, and evaluation; budget allocation; time management; problem solving; attention to detail.	Systems, logistics, and procedures; project management; customer service.
Research and student learning/development outcomes	Identification of relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes; outcome-oriented programming; research-based evidence of program impact on student learning and development outcomes.	Student and adult development theory; research/assessment procedures; evidence-based decision making; statistical procedures.
Career advising/counseling and consultation	Needs assessment and diagnosis; intervention design and implementation; test administration and interpretation; counseling; feedback; evaluation; advising; empathy, and interpersonal sensitivity; work with individuals and groups; use of career, occupational, and employment information.	Career development theories; adult development theory and unique issues for special populations; statistics; counseling processes; evaluation of person-job fit; job analysis; career decision making; behavior management; job search, interviews, and resumes.
Teaching/training/educating	Needs assessment; program/workshop design and delivery; researching, evaluating, and integrating information; effective teaching strategies; career coaching; career mentoring; work with individuals and groups; work with diverse populations; use of technology for delivery of content.	Setting learning objectives; designing curricula and learning resources for specific content areas; experiential learning; career development and job-search process; learning styles.
Marketing/promoting/outreach	Needs assessment and goal setting; written and interpersonal communication; public speaking; domestic and international job and experiential learning opportunity development; relationship development and management; effective use of print, web, and personal presentation methods; sales and closing techniques; development/fundraising strategies; marketing principles/strategies.	Customer service; knowledge of institution and its academic programs; career services; employer, alumni, and faculty needs and expectations; recruiting and staffing methods and trends.
Brokering/connecting/linking	Organizing information, logistics, people, and processes toward desired outcomes; consulting; building and managing advisory boards; interpersonal skills.	Systems and procedures; candidate/resume referral; recruiting and experiential learning operations; human resource selection practices.
Information management	Organization and dissemination; storage and retrieval; computing systems and applications; data entry and analysis; acquisition of appropriate career resources; web design and management.	Library/resources center organization; computer systems and applications; specific electronic management information systems.

Professional staff members must have the requisite qualifications and competencies to perform effectively in their defined roles with career services constituency groups and other specialized functions.

Career services must develop and maintain job descriptions for all staff members and must provide regular performance appraisals.

Career services must have a regular system of staff evaluation and must provide access to professional development opportunities, including in-service training programs and professional conferences/workshops.

Salaries and benefits for staff must be commensurate with similar positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

All staff members must be trained in legal, confidential, and ethical issues related to career services.

Career services professionals must engage in continuing professional development activities to keep abreast of the research, theories, legislation, policies, and developments that affect career services.

Staff training and development should be ongoing to promote knowledge and skill development across program components.

Leadership by Career Services Managers:

Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. In career services, that leadership comes from members of the management team, including the director, associate directors, and assistant directors.

The institution must appoint, position, and empower career services leaders at various levels within the administrative structure to accomplish the stated mission and goals.

Career services leaders at various levels should be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal skills and competencies, relevant professional credentials, as well as potential for promoting learning and development in students, applying effective practices to educational processes, and enhancing institutional effectiveness.

The institution must determine expectations of accountability for leaders and fairly assess their performance.

Leaders in the career services unit must exercise authority over resources for which they are responsible to achieve their respective missions.

Career services leaders must:

- **articulate a vision for their organization.**
- **set goals and objectives based on the needs and capabilities of the population served.**
- **promote student learning and development.**
- **prescribe and practice ethical behavior.**
- **recruit, select, supervise, and develop others in the organization.**
- **manage financial resources.**
- **coordinate human resources.**
- **plan, budget for, and evaluate personnel and programs.**
- **apply effective practices to educational and administrative processes.**
- **communicate effectively.**
- **initiate collaborative interaction between individuals and agencies that possess legitimate concerns and interests in the functional area.**

Career services leaders should identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement.

Career services leaders should promote campus environments that result in multiple opportunities for student learning and development.

Career services leaders must continuously improve programs and services in response to changing needs of students and other constituents, and evolving institutional priorities.

If career components are offered through multiple units, the institution should designate a leader or leadership team to provide strategic direction and align career services with the mission of the institution and the needs of the constituencies served.

Career services leaders should coordinate efforts with other units in the institution providing career components to integrate career services into the broader educational mission. Key constituencies served by each unit are clearly identified and reflected in the mission and goals of the unit.

Careers services leaders must be advocates for the advancement of career services within the institution.

Career services leaders must participate in institutional decisions about career services objectives and policies.

Career services leaders must participate in institutional decisions related to the identification and designation of students and others served.

Decisions about students served should include type and scope of services offered and the fees, if any, that are charged.

Professional Positions (career counselors and advisers, employer relations coordinators, consultants):

Career services professional staff members must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position they hold or possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.

Professional staff members must have the requisite qualifications and competencies to perform effectively in their defined roles with students, alumni, faculty, administrators, and employers, as well as in highly specialized functions, such as career and employment counseling, employment opportunities, cooperative education, internships, work-study, graduate school advising, computer technology, and so forth.

Pre-professional Positions:

Paraprofessionals, interns, and graduate assistants must be carefully selected, trained in helping skills and institutional procedures, closely supervised, and evaluated regularly.

Degree or credential-seeking interns should be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and by relevant experience.

These individuals must be trained and supervised adequately by professional staff members holding educational credentials and related work experience appropriate for supervision.

Student Employee and/or Volunteer Positions:

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. They must be trained on how and when to refer those in need of assistance to qualified staff members and have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments.

Student employees and volunteers should be provided with clear and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing educational development. Training should include customer service, program procedures, and information and resource use.

Support Staff and Technical Positions:

Each organizational unit must have administrative and technical staff adequate to accomplish its mission.

Such staff must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their duties, knowledgeable of ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training.

The level of staffing and workloads should be adequate and appropriate for program and service demands.

A technical support person or support service should be available to maintain computer and information technology systems for career services.

VI. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Career services offices **must** have dependable sources and adequate funding to ensure achievement of its mission and goals.

Career services **must** demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional policies and procedures.

Career services should cultivate outside sources of funding for special projects, scholarships, and programs that help fulfill the office's mission. These sources, or sponsorships, may include but are not

limited to employers, alumni, members of the community, grant agencies, and professional associations. Such external funding should not be used as a replacement for institutional funds, but can be used to supplement existing budgetary funds in a limited and reasonable manner.

Each career services office should have a funding strategy that outlines projects, programs, and related activity that can be further enhanced with additional outside funding sources. This should be undertaken in collaboration with the institution's development office.

VII. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Career services must have adequate facilities and equipment to fulfill its mission and to perform its functions effectively.

Career services professional staff must have private offices, allowing them to perform career advising/counseling and/or other confidential work. In addition, there must be support staff work areas; a reception and student waiting area; career resource center; storage space sufficient to accommodate supplies and equipment; and necessary office equipment, including computers for staff and student use.

Career services must provide students and employers with private interview facilities and adequate conditions and equipment to function professionally. The number of employment interview rooms must be adequate to meet employer and student needs. An employer lounge or an accessible lunch area should be made available.

The career services facility must have Internet connectivity and access to conference rooms and

large group meeting rooms that have an appropriate level of technology to support service delivery. Information technology specific to enhancing awareness of employment opportunities and networking must be available for students and staff to support career services functions. Equipment and facilities must be secured to protect the confidentiality and safety of records.

Facilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities and comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Accommodations for students with special needs must be provided by career services or in conjunction with the department that serves this population.

Career services must provide office hours at times appropriate for its constituencies.

The career services office should be located conveniently on campus and project a welcoming, professional atmosphere for students, employers, alumni, parents, and the community. Parking for visitors should be adequate and convenient.

VIII. TECHNOLOGY

Career services staff must be well-informed about the array of career-based technological applications that are in current use.

Based upon program design, mission, budget, and staffing considerations, career services offices must implement appropriate technological applications for career programs and ensure that appropriate technology is used to deliver services.

Career services offices must ensure that adequate hardware, software, and staff are available to support existing technological applications.

In light of the rapidity of change associated with technology, career services offices must develop plans for the replacement/updating of existing hardware and software as well as plan for the integration of new technically based or supported career programs.

Technological applications to career services, including web sites, should be consistent with and integrated within the college or university technology infrastructure.

Specific technological applications for career services that must be considered include:

- career services web sites that provide updated information regarding mission, location, staffing, programs, and services available to students and other designated clients, as well as contact information. The web site should be integrated within the college/university technological infrastructure and include links to appropriate sites both within and external to the institution.
- computer-based assessment and computer-assisted career guidance systems that support the mission of career services.
- computer-based and/or online recruiting and employment systems that support the career

services mission for part-time employment, cooperative education, internship, and professional employment. These systems include online opportunity listings and student resume data bases.

Career services offices must make informed choices regarding the use of available technological applications to career programs, including systems developed internally by the college/university, systems available through professional associations, or private vendor-based systems.

Career services offices must make informed decisions based upon the office's mission, budget, and staffing regarding the use of additional technologically based applications to career services. Such applications include student registration systems; student contact, record, and tracking systems; career portfolios; graduating student surveys; career fair management systems; resume writing software; office intranet sites; e-mail-based career advising/ counseling; and video-based technology.

Computer access and/or work stations must be available to staff, students, and other designated clients in support of technological applications for career services.

Adequate staff support must be available to maintain and update the use of any technological applications for career services.

Technological applications for career services must ensure student confidentiality and be consistent with legal and ethical standards. Data security and privacy of student records must adhere to the institutional privacy policy.

Adequate funds should be available to support the hardware and software associated with the use of any technological applications for career services.

IX. CAMPUS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

As an integral function within the institution, career services must develop and maintain productive relationships with relevant campus offices and key stakeholders at the institution and externally.

In order to achieve this, career services should:

- develop institutional support for career development and employment services for students and other designated clients.
- involve the academic administration and faculty in career planning and employment programs .
- raise issues and concerns with the institution's legal counsel regarding compliance with employment laws as they pertain to recruitment and hiring of students and alumni.

In addition, career services should:

- participate in campus activities such as faculty organizations, committees, student orientation programs, classroom presentations, academic courses in career planning, and student organization programs.
- exchange information with the academic administration and faculty concerning employment requirements, labor market trends, specific jobs, and employment that may be related to academic planning and curriculum development.
- arrange appropriate programs that use alumni experience and expertise.
- establish cooperative relationships with other offices and services to support mutual referrals,

exchange of information, sharing of resources, and other program functions.

- provide information and reports to the academic administration, faculty, and key offices of the institution regarding career services for students, employers, and alumni.
- provide feedback to faculty, administrators, and students on the preparation of graduates for employment and graduate school to aid curriculum development and individual career planning.
- encourage dialogue among employers, faculty members, and administrators concerning career issues and trends for students and graduates
- create and effectively utilize advisory groups that may include employers, alumni, and students.
- provide parents with information and relevant data on career education programs and services and key results related to employment and graduate study outcomes for recent graduates.
- serve as an institutional resource for the media and provide key information and data related to career development, labor market trends, and employment outcomes as appropriate.
- encourage staff participation in professional associations and community activities related to career and employment issues; (e.g. chambers of commerce, work force development functions, employer open houses, workshops, federally mandated one-stop centers, school-to-work efforts).
- participate in professional staff development activities.

X. EMPLOYER RELATIONS AND RECRUITMENT SERVICES

Employers are both vital partners in the educational process and primary customers for college/university career services. Each career services office must develop policies and practices to ensure the highest quality employer relations and services.

Within the context of these principles, career services must:

- **develop strategic objectives for employer relations/services and job development that yield maximum opportunities for the institution's students and other designated clients.**
- **develop, maintain, and enhance relationships with employers who may provide career development and employment opportunities for students and other designated clients.**
- **enhance customer service and foster continuous improvement by using feedback from employers on key performance indicators and measures of services.**
- **inform, educate, and consult with employers on the nature of services provided and student candidates' availability.**
- **actively involve employers in on-campus programs that meet career and employment needs of students and other designated clients.**
- **promote employer adherence to professional and ethical standards that serve as conduct models for students and other designated clients.**
- **provide employer feedback to faculty, administrators, and students on the students' preparation for jobs, the curricula, and the hiring process.**

In addition, career services should:

- develop and implement marketing strategies to cultivate employment opportunities for students.
- maximize opportunities for employers to consider candidates for employment.
- maximize students' exposure to employers while respecting appropriate academic and co-curricular standards.

- encourage dialogue among employers, faculty, and administrators concerning career and employment issues.
- facilitate employer involvement and communication with faculty, students, and administrators.
- use employers' experiences and expertise in support of institutional activities.

Career services must not give preferential treatment to specific employers. Employers must be treated uniformly and consistently.

Career services staff should understand the variety and diversity of needs and employment practices among small businesses, large corporations, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Career services should define the various types of employers it will serve and articulate policies that guide its working relationships with these employers.

Career services must offer a variety of services to employers that ultimately reflect the match between student interests and employer needs.

These should include, but not be limited to site visits; campus recruiting; resume referrals; pre-recruiting information sessions with students; meetings with faculty members; student access to timely employer information; posting and publishing of job and internship openings; career/job fairs; providing information on academic departments and students within legal and policy guidelines; assistance in identifying and recruiting student populations; experiential learning options that may include shadowing experiences, intern/externships, and/or cooperative education; long-distance electronic interviewing options; salary information; advertising and promotional vehicles; career center advisory board memberships; and individual employer recruiting and college relations consultations.

Career services should:

- provide information to employers on the institution's operations, enrollment, curricula, interviewing logistics, e.g., policies, procedures, transportation, lodging, and so forth.
- encourage employer participation in career planning courses, career conferences, career and alumni fairs, cooperative education, and internships.

- provide information and services to assist recruiters to effectively communicate their opportunities to specific and targeted student populations.
- encourage employers to list job vacancies on a continuing basis and provide timely information to career services staff on their job offers, salaries, and hires.
- encourage employer support of the institution, which may include scholarships and related forms

of financial support, in collaboration with campus development office efforts.

- develop policies for working with third-party recruiting organizations, which may include requiring recruiters to disclosure of the identities of organizations they represent and agreeing to abide by the ethical guidelines documented in the *NACE Principles for Professional Practice*.

XI. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Career services professional staff members must be knowledgeable about accepted and current professional practices and must be responsive to those obligations and limitations imposed on the operation of their program areas by relevant civil and criminal laws, institutional policies, and any contractual commitments.

Career services must ensure that records are maintained following prevailing legal guidelines.

Career services staff members must use appropriate policies and practices to protect students and limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. In this regard, the institution must provide access to legal advice for professional staff as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

The particular areas of the law that career services must be aware of and seek advice about from legal counsel include, but are not limited to:

- **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, regarding disclosure of student information contained in education records;**
- **privacy of data maintained in electronic form by the career center or by another entity acting at its request;**
- **defamation law regarding references and recommendations on the behalf of students;**

- **equal employment opportunity laws regarding employment referral practices of the career services office and others employed by the institution that refer students for employment;**
- **affirmative action regulations and law, regarding special programs for special student populations;**
- **liability issues pertaining to experiential learning programs;**
- **work authorization practices in countries other than where the student holds citizenship;**
- **institutional policy regarding safety standards and practices for students traveling to work or participating in university-sponsored experiential activities;**
- **laws regarding contracts governing service provided by outside vendors;**
- **laws regarding grant applications;**
- **laws regarding eligibility to work in the United States; and**
- **any other state or federal employment or student-related statute.**

The institution must inform career services staff in a systematic and timely fashion about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

XII. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, ACCESS, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, AND DIVERSITY

Career services must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis.

Career services must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws in all activities.

Career services' operating policies and procedures must not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or veteran status. Exceptions are appropriate only where provided by relevant law and institutional policy.

Career services' programs and facilities must be accessible to all students.

Career services' hours of operation, customer service systems, and online operations should respond to the needs of all students.

Career services must seek to identify, prevent, and/or remedy any discriminatory practices associated with the delivery of its services.

Career services staff must provide advocacy by bringing the career related needs of all students to the attention of the institution's administration.

Career services should ensure that employers using services and programs adhere to the word and spirit of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.

Career services staff should educate faculty members about legal and ethical issues relating to student referrals and recommendations.

Career services must nurture environments where commonalities and differences among people are recognized.

Career services must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

Career services should work in conjunction with the institution's special services and related organizations to enhance student and employer awareness and appreciation of cultural and ethnic differences.

Career services must provide educational programs that help students from diverse backgrounds and individuals with special needs to identify and address their unique needs related to career development and employment.

Career services should initiate-partnerships and cooperative programming with other offices representing special populations to ensure appropriate service delivery.

Consistent with its goals and mission, career services must take affirmative action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

As the demographic profiles of campuses change and new instructional delivery methods are introduced, institutions must recognize the needs of students who participate in distance learning for access to programs and services on campus.

Institutions must provide appropriate services in ways that are accessible to distance learners and assist them in identifying and gaining access to appropriate services in their geographic region.

XIII. ETHICS

All persons involved in the delivery of career services to students must adhere to the highest standards of ethical behavior as set forth in the “Career Services Professionals” section of the National Association of Colleges and Employers’ *Principles for Professional Practice* as well as any additional professional standards and/or codes that may apply.

In addition to adherence to these standards, leaders/managers should proactively provide guidance and education on these standards to all persons involved in providing career services, including, but not limited to, entry-level professionals, support staff, student staff, interns, graduate assistants, faculty, and other administrators.

Guidance on ethical rights and responsibilities should also be provided to students and other designated clients.

All career services staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution’s human subject research policy and other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

When handling institutional funds and funds generated through career center activities, all

career services staff must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

Career services staff must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

Career services staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.

Career services staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others.

Career services staff members must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained with respect to all communications and records to the extent that such records are protected under the law and appropriate statements of ethical practice.

Information contained in students’ education records must not be disclosed without written consent except as allowed by relevant laws and institutional policies.

XIV. PROGRAM EVALUATION, ASSESSMENT, AND RESEARCH

Systematic and regular quantitative and qualitative program evaluations must be conducted in support of career services' mission, goals, and student learning and development outcomes. Although methods of assessment vary, a sufficient range of measures must be employed to maintain objectivity and comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students, employers, and other affected constituencies.

Career services must evaluate periodically how well it complements and enhances the institution's stated mission and educational effectiveness.

Core program evaluation should include:

- annual review of goal completion.
- quantitative evaluation via user data for programs and services.
- career services-wide qualitative student satisfaction and feedback surveys.
- program-specific qualitative assessment via student satisfaction and feedback surveys.
- student needs-based surveys.

Additional assessment and research should include:

- graduating student (first destination) and alumni surveys.
- benchmarking-comparative surveys.
- empirically based outcome research.

Career services must conduct regular evaluations to improve programs and services, to adjust to changing client needs, and respond to environmental threats and opportunities.

Evaluations should include:

- review of the strategic plan, mission, human resources needs, diversity efforts, and other areas covered in this document;

- regular feedback from participants on events, programs, and services;
- systematic needs assessment to guide program development;
- first destination surveys at or following graduation;
- employer and student feedback regarding experiential learning programs;
- alumni follow-up surveys administered at specific times following graduation; and
- reports and satisfaction surveys from students and other constituencies interacting with career services, including employers and faculty.

Evaluation results must be used in revising and improving programs and services, and in recognizing staff performance.

In order for institutions to employ comparable methods for evaluation, professional association resources such as NACE benchmarking surveys, and peer institutional resources should be consulted. Career services offices should collaborate with institutional research units, state agencies, accrediting bodies, academic graduate programs, and other evaluative groups that generate and assess evaluation information.

Career services should promote institutional efforts to conduct relevant research on career development, institutional issues such as academic success and retention, student learning outcomes, employment trends, and career interests of students.

Career services should prepare and disseminate annual reports as well as special program evaluation reports addressing career services philosophy; mission, goals, and objectives; programs and services, activities/outcomes; and graduate follow-up information.

Career services should gather, participate in and/or conduct relevant research on career development; academic success; institutional issues such as admissions and retention; student learning outcomes; employment trends; and career interests.

Appendix A: HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR CAREER SERVICES

The National Association of College and Employers (NACE), then known as the College Placement Council (CPC), formulated a statement of ethical guidelines for recruiter organizations, college career services practitioners, and students as early as 1957, just a year after the establishment of the organization. (That publication has undergone a number of revisions and is today's *Principles for Professional Practice for Career Services & Employment Professionals*.) It was much later, however, that the question of standards was addressed. In *Career Counseling and Placement*, published by CPC in 1970, Everett W. Stephens argued for the establishment of national standards for the profession. Subsequently, a CPC Committee on Professional Standards crafted *Professional Standards for Career Counseling and Placement*, which was published in 1975.

Beginning in 1980, members of 22 professional associations in higher education student services and student development, under the aegis of the Council for the Advancement of Standards, began work on the development of standards. This resulted in the publication of the *CAS Standards and Guidelines for Student Services/Student Development* in 1986. That publication included general standards, applicable across all areas, as well as functional area standards, which included standards and guidelines for career planning and placement.

By the 1990s, career services practitioners recognized that the profession had evolved into one with many new dimensions that the CAS standards had not addressed. In 1992, the CPC Board of Governors appointed a task force to study the issues of standards

for measuring and reporting the quality of services offered by career services offices and to develop a method for self-assessment. The work of that task force culminated in the NACE *Sourcebook for Conducting Evaluations and Measurements of Career Services*, which was published in 1995.

Later in 1995, another task force was constituted to develop professional standards for career services and their work resulted in *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services*, which was approved by the NACE Board of Governors in 1998. Through the efforts of the NACE representatives to the CAS board, most of the 1998 NACE standards were incorporated into the 2001 and 2003 revisions of the CAS standards.

In 2004, a NACE task force was appointed to review and revise *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services and the Professional Standards Evaluation Workbook*. The 2006 edition of *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services* was approved by the NACE Board of Directors in 2006.

Because the NACE board decided to review and revise the professional standards on a regular and more frequent cycle, the NACE College and University Standards and Assessment Committee was formed in 2008 to review and propose revisions to the standards for the 2009 edition of *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services and the Professional Standards Evaluation Workbook*. The work of that committee is reflected in this publication.

Appendix B: FEEDBACK

The National Association of Colleges and Employers will update the Professional Standards periodically to ensure that they grow with the profession. You can assist in this process by providing feedback about the existing standards and suggestions/comments on additional areas that need consideration.

Please complete and return the form below to NACE, Attn: Professional Standards, by fax (610/868-0208) or by mail (62 Highland Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18017). Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Name: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

1. Overall, how useful are the *Professional Standards* in helping you understand your office's role and responsibilities? (Circle one.)

1 2 3 4 5

(1=Not at all useful; 2=Not useful; 3=Somewhat useful; 4=Very useful; 5=Extremely useful.)

2. In general, were you and your staff able to relate the *Professional Standards* to your office and operation?

___ Yes ___ No

If no, please explain. (Use a separate sheet if necessary.)

3. In your opinion, are there areas/topics that should be included in the *Professional Standards* that are not represented here? If so, what are they? Please explain. (Use a separate sheet if necessary.)

4. Additional comments/suggestions:



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