



National Association of Colleges and Employers

Professional Standards

FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES 2014



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INTRODUCTION

For FY 2012-13, the NACE College and University Standards Team was appointed to review and propose revisions to the *The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services* and its companion workbook. The work of that group is reflected in this publication.

Members of the team included:

Denise Dwight Smith, chair, University of North Carolina – Charlotte; Sam Ratcliffe, Board adviser, Virginia Military Institute; Patricia Carretta, George Mason University; Mary Feduccia, Louisiana State University; Kevin Gaw, Georgia State University; Leslie Stevenson, University of Richmond; Joseph Testani, University of Richmond; and Mimi Collins, National Association of Colleges and Employers.

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 units. 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.
- demonstrate external and internal accountability.

The Professional Standards for College and University Career Services was 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 units 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."

I. MISSION

Career services must advance the mission of the institution as well as support academic and experiential learning programs 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, regardless of model (centralized or decentralized, or hybrid), must consider the needs of all students when designing the programs 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

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 should provide information on programs and services through institutional print and electronic media, 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, online/distance resources, 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 learning programs.
- maintain appropriate records for future work with the students.
- assist students to assess their skills, values, and interests and understand how these relate to academic and co-curricular options and career opportunities.
- help students develop and apply job-search competencies and decision-making skills.
- educate students about fraudulent employment practices.
- help students understand the potential benefits and pitfalls of social media and the importance of a positive Internet “footprint.”

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, volunteerism, service learning, and/or other career-related activities.

In alignment with the NACE Diversity & Inclusion Statement, career services should assist students with career issues relevant to the individual.

Online and Distance Career Services

Career services must provide current, valid, and reliable online resources that help students pursue their career goals.

Career services’ technology (software and hardware) should be regularly updated so as to offer students and designated clients appropriate and accessible online and distance resources.

Career services' online resources should include tools for career exploration, preparation, opportunities, and transition into the workplace.

Career services should regularly review and benchmark online career resources to determine what to maintain, what to add, and what to discard, ensuring up-to-date resources for students.

Career services must provide online and/or distance career services to students who are not able to access services traditionally provided on campus.

Career services should provide training and continued professional development to all practitioners who offer and provide such online and distance career services.

Career services should provide online and distance career services in a manner that maintains student and data integrity and meets institutional policy needs, state licensing regulations, and professional guidelines.

Career services should develop policies and procedures that ensure best practices for such services.

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 (local, regional, national, global);
- graduate/professional schools;
- employment/job search;
- resources and strategies for revising career plans;
- job, experiential learning, and internship listings;
- employer and industry information; and
- guidance on using specific current and emerging tools.

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, cultural differences, 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 services should update web links and web resources at least annually to ensure up-to-date information is available to students.

Career information should be conveniently available in a variety of media appropriate for students and designated clients representing different populations.

Career information resources (print and online) must be accessible, organized, and up to date 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 and workplace/community fit.**
- **preparing job-search competencies and tools to present themselves effectively as candidates for employment.**
- **obtaining information on employment opportunities and prospective employers and industries.**
- **using social media effectively and building an Internet presence with regard to the job search.**
- **connecting with employers through campus interviews, job listings, referrals, direct application, networking, job-search events, publications, and information technology.**
- **understanding various employment categories and how these might impact them, such as part-time employment, full-time employment, contract employment, independent contract employment, commission-based employment, work-from-home, virtual employment, and so forth.**
- **understanding the following employer types and how employment might impact them: third-party employers, home-based employers, contract employers, multi-level employers, and so forth.**
- **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 designated clients.

As career services engages with an increasingly global work environment, career services must consider different employment practices, laws, and regulations in other countries without prejudice.

When necessary, career services should seek out informed, valid, and up-to-date employment information of other countries so as to advise students and designated clients appropriately.

Graduate and Professional 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 Learning

Career services should provide or support experiential learning programs that include such areas as student employment and/or cooperative education, work-based learning, apprenticeships, internships, service learning, civic engagement, shadowing, and volunteering experiences.

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

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

Experiential learning 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.

Career services should monitor positions posted in their offices for their experiential learning programs to ensure consistency with the NACE definition and criteria for internships.

III. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT, AND LEADERSHIP

An institution must appoint, position, and empower a leader or leadership team to provide strategic direction for accomplishment of mission and goals, to manage career services, and to 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.

Such leadership is necessary to ensure adherence to institutional and unit missions and to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency. That leadership may come from members of the management team, including the director, associate directors, and assistant directors.

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

Career services must be organized and managed to develop positive relationships with students; academic (faculty, advising, and departments), administrative, and student affairs colleagues; employers; and alumni.

Areas for consideration in determining structure and management of career services should include:

- size, nature, and mission of the institution.
- needs of students and designated clients.
- number and scope of academic-related programs and services.
- scope and intent of recruiting services.
- philosophy and delivery systems for services.
- varied delivery methods (e.g. direct contact, technology).
- nature of the collaborative relationships and roles in and out of the career services home division.

Career services should be coordinated with and complementary to career advising/counseling, internship administration, employment-related, and/or other designated services provided by other institutional units.

Organization

To ensure student learning and development, career services must be purposefully structured to achieve stated goals and outcomes.

Evidence of purposeful and appropriate structure must include:

- **clearly stated goals.**
- **defined service standards.**
- **current and accessible policies and procedures.**
- **written job descriptions, performance expectations, and regular reviews for employees.**
- **clearly stated roles and areas of accountability.**
- **functional work flow or organizational charts demonstrating clear channels of authority.**
- **facilities appropriate for career services functions.**

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

Reporting lines of career services within the institution should provide optimal visibility and support. The unit to which career services reports should allow for efficient and effective delivery of career services.

Management

Career services must be managed effectively to achieve stated goals and outcomes.

Evidence of effective management must include:

- **strategic and operational planning processes.**
- **clearly defined areas of responsibility.**
- **effective communication practices.**
- **decision-making and conflict resolution procedures.**
- **assessment and accountability systems.**
- **proof of continuous improvement.**

- **sound fiscal management practices.**
- **clearly defined and regularly occurring review processes for policies, procedures, and budgetary issues.**

Leadership

Leaders in career services units must provide strategic planning, supervision, and management; advance the organization; and maintain integrity through the following functions:

Strategic Planning:

- **articulate a vision for the organization.**
- **set goals and objectives based on the needs of the population served and desired student learning or development and program outcomes.**
- **coordinate efforts with others in the institution to integrate career services into the broader educational mission.**
- **facilitate continuous development, implementation, and assessment of goals and outcomes congruent with institutional mission and strategic plans.**
- **promote environments that result in opportunities for student learning, development, and engagement.**
- **conduct program evaluations to improve operations and to adjust to the changing needs of clients, evolving institutional priorities, and changes in the work force and employment/recruiting conditions.**
- **intentionally include diverse perspectives to inform decision making.**

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.

Supervising:

- **manage human resources processes, including recruitment, selection, development, supervision, performance planning, evaluation, recognition, and reward.**
- **influence others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the unit.**
- **empower professional, support, and student staff to accept leadership opportunities.**
- **offer appropriate feedback to colleagues and students on skills needed to become effective leaders.**

- **encourage and support professional development, collaboration with colleagues and departments across the institution, and scholarly contribution to the profession.**

Managing:

- **identify and find means to address individual, organizational, and environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement.**
- **plan, allocate, and monitor the use of fiscal, physical, human, intellectual, and technological resources.**
- **use current and valid evidence to inform decisions.**
- **incorporate sustainability practices in the management and design of programs, services, and facilities.**
- **understand appropriate technologies and integrate them into career services.**
- **be knowledgeable about codes and laws relevant to career services and ensure that staff members understand their responsibilities through appropriate training.**
- **assess potential risks and take action to mitigate them.**

Advancing the Organization:

- **communicate effectively in writing, speaking, and electronic venues.**
- **annually review, update, and communicate goals and objectives to appropriate constituencies.**
- **advocate for career services.**
- **advocate for career services' participation in divisional and institutional planning, and decisions related to career services' objectives, policies, practices, and designation of students and others served.**
- **initiate collaborative interactions with internal and external individuals and agencies that possess legitimate concerns and interests in career services (i.e., may include all phases of career development, planning, and employment).**
- **facilitate processes to reach consensus where wide support is needed.**
- **inform other areas within the institution about issues affecting practice.**

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

Maintaining Integrity:

- **model ethical behavior and institutional citizenship.**
- **share data used to inform key decisions in transparent and accessible ways.**
- **monitor media used for distributing information about career services to ensure content is current, accurate, appropriately referenced, and accessible.**

IV. 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 nondiscriminatory.

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 knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform primary program functions effectively.

Career services must develop and maintain job descriptions for all staff members.

Career services must provide regular staff performance appraisals.

Career services must provide access to professional development opportunities, including in-service training programs and professional conferences/workshops.

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

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

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

Career Services Leadership

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.

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, providing strategic direction, and aligning career services with the mission of the institution and the needs of the constituencies served.

Career services leaders must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal skills and competencies, relevant professional credentials, and their 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.

Career Services Professionals

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.

Constituency groups may include students, alumni, faculty, administrators, community members, and employers. Specialized functions may include career and employment counseling, cooperative education, internships, work-study/on-campus employment, graduate and professional school advising, integration of technologies, and marketing/branding.

Requisite competencies should include these threads evident among most functional areas:

- Legal and ethical.
- Diversity and inclusion.
- Global issues.
- Interpersonal.

Career services should promote the development of these professional competencies. Competency definitions follow; they also are further delineated in *NACE Professional Competencies for College and University Career Services Practitioners*.

Functions	Core Competencies
<p>Career Coaching, Advising, And Counseling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing needs assessments and developing action plans • Intervention, design, and implementation • Test administration and interpretation • Counseling • Working with individuals and groups • Use of career, occupational, and employment information
<p>Brokering, Connecting, And Linking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing information, logistics, people, and processes toward desired outcomes • Consulting • Consulting - students and alumni • Consulting - employers • Consulting - faculty/campus community • Consulting - external community • Consulting - parents/families • Building and managing advisory boards • Interpersonal skills • Job and experiential learning opportunity development • Sourcing and planning for experiential learning • Civic and community engagement • Fostering global and diverse connections
<p>Information Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization and dissemination; storage and retrieval • Computing systems and applications - standard software and equipment • Computing systems and applications - career planning and information resources • Computing systems and applications - career services management systems • Data entry and analysis • Acquisition of appropriate career resources • Web/social media design and management

Functions	Core Competencies
Marketing, Promoting, and Performing Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing principles and strategies • Needs assessment and goal setting • Development/fundraising strategies • Sales and closing techniques • Relationship development and management • Written and interpersonal communication • Public speaking • Effective use of print, web, and personal presentation methods
Program and Event Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting • Program planning • Program planning - needs assessments • Program planning - program/event marketing • Program implementation • Program evaluation • Budgets and budgeting • Time management • Problem solving
Research, Assessment, and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical framework • Learning outcomes • Outcome-oriented programming • Evidence-based decision making • Needs assessment • Utilization assessment • Satisfaction assessment • Measurement and analysis • Outcomes-based assessment • Use of technology • Research • Evaluation

Functions	Core Competencies
Teaching, Training, and Educating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs assessment • Program/workshop design and delivery • Researching, evaluating, and integrating information • Effective teaching strategies • Coaching • Mentoring • Working with individuals and groups • Working with diverse populations • Use of technology for delivery of content
Management and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Synthesis, interpretation, and reporting of current and longitudinal information

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

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.

Student employees and volunteers 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.

V. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

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

Career services must demonstrate financial stewardship and strategy, fiscal responsibility, and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional policies and procedures, as well as local, state, and federal regulations.

Career services offices should develop and maintain a budget strategy that includes return on current budgetary investments and projections to prepare for potential budget variations.

In establishing funding priorities, a comprehensive analysis of institutional resources should be conducted to determine the following elements and develop a compelling case for internal resources: unmet needs of the unit, relevant expenditures, current internal resources, and impact on students and the institution.

Career services should develop a funding strategy that includes cultivation of sources of funding outside of the institution for special projects, scholarships, and programs that help fulfill the unit's mission. These sources, or sponsorships, may include but are not limited to employers, alumni, members of the community, grant agencies, and professional associations. This funding strategy should also include sufficient data detailing anticipated benefits and outcomes of additional funding to support unmet needs and priorities. 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. Requests for external funding should be undertaken in collaboration with the institution's development office.

VI. FACILITIES

Career services must have adequate, accessible, and suitably located facilities appropriate for constituents served, to support the unit's mission and goals.

If acquiring capital equipment as defined by the institution, career services must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and life-cycle costs. Facilities and equipment must be evaluated on an established cycle, including consideration of sustainability, and be in compliance with codes and laws to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

Career services staff members must have workspace that is well equipped, adequate in size, and designed to support their work and responsibilities. For activities and interactions requiring privacy, staff members must have private space that is appropriately furnished and proximate.

Career services should provide professional staff with private offices for advising, counseling, or other confidential work; work space for support and student staff; a reception and/or student waiting area; a career resource center relevant to populations served by the unit; and sufficient storage space.

Equipment and facilities must be secured to protect the confidentiality and safety of records. All staff members must be provided with a location to secure their own work.

Career services must provide the facilities and technology for students and employers to interact and conduct private interviews consistent with the unit's mission and goals. The number of employment interview rooms and technology should 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.

The facility should provide visitors with access to wireless services and other technology. Consistent with the unit's goals and mission, the career services facility should provide resources to connect virtually with students, employers, and other constituents.

Facilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities and comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (US) and other appropriate laws. 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.

Career services should regularly evaluate constituents' needs regarding hours of service and usage.

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

VII. TECHNOLOGY

Career services staff must be well-informed about current trends and uses of technology and be able to anticipate emerging technologies for use in career services.

Career services offices must implement appropriate technology (non-hardware) relevant to institutional and unit mission and goals for career services 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 technology.

In light of the rapidity of change associated with technology, career services must develop a strategic technology plan for the selection, replacement, updating, and/or integration of new technically based or supported career programs or services.

Career services must establish a vetting process to review resources and vendors.

Career services should:

- use benchmarking and a network of professionals.
- explore methods of collaboratively funding resources on campus and/or with other institutions.
- provide feedback to vendors on integrity, need, and use of products to push development of new products.
- use campus resources (funding, technology, staffing) to develop products and services or implement products or services.
- ensure that technology within career services, including websites, is consistent with and integrated within the college or university technology infrastructure.

Specific technology for career services that must be considered include:

- **career services websites that provide up-to-date information regarding mission, location, staffing, contact information, programs, and services available to students and other designated clients.** The website 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 and are ADA compliant.**
- **computer-based and/or online recruiting and employment systems that support the career services mission for part-time, full-time, and internship employment, and, as relevant, for co-op and/or other forms of experiential learning opportunities. These systems include online opportunity listings and student resume databases.**

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

Career services must make informed decisions based upon the unit's mission, budget, and staffing regarding the use of additional technology resources. Examples include student registration systems; student contact, record, and tracking systems; career portfolios; graduating student surveys; career fair and program management systems; office intranet sites; e-mail-based career advising/ counseling; and online/distance learning support.

Computer access and/or work stations (ADA compliant) must be available to staff, students, and other designated clients.

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

Technology used by 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 legal and technology privacy policies.

Adequate funds should be available or cultivated through various means (grants, university funding, partnerships, consortiums, and so forth) to support the hardware and software associated with the use of any technology for career services.

VIII. INSTITUTIONAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Career services must develop and maintain productive relationships with relevant institutional stakeholders and external key stakeholders and audiences.

In order to achieve this, career services should:

- develop institutional support for career development, transition, and employment services for students and other designated clients.
- 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.
- strive toward strategic long-term partnership development, tracking, and evaluation.
- participate in campus activities such as faculty organizations, committees, student orientation programs, classroom presentations, academic courses in career planning, and student organization programs.
- 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.
- create and effectively use advisory groups that may include employers, alumni, and students.
- 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.

When addressing areas of communication and information sharing, career services should:

- inform and educate units that are responsible for communicating with external stakeholders and audiences on career-related information, topics, and programs.
- inform and educate the administration and faculty on topics concerning employment requirements, labor market trends, specific jobs, and employment that may be related to academic planning and curriculum development.
- provide outcomes 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/professional 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.
- 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 and in accordance with institutional policies.
- work with appropriate institutional offices to market the unit, its services, and the impact of its services.

Career services should have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for:

- communicating with the media.
- contracting with external organizations for delivery of programs and services.
- cultivating, soliciting, and managing gifts.
- applying to and managing funds from grants.

IX. 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 unit 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 and optimal opportunities for students and other designated clients as determined by career services.**
- **develop, maintain, and enhance relationships with employers that may provide career development and employment opportunities for students and other designated clients as determined by career services.**
- **enhance customer service and foster continuous improvement in customer service 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 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.**
- **provide employment market and trend data to faculty, administration, and students to help inform understanding of the economy and its impact on graduates in the marketplace.**
- **educate employers on appropriate policies and procedures related to recruitment and institutional relations and engagement with student populations.**

In addition, career services should:

- **develop and implement marketing strategies to cultivate employment opportunities for students.**
- **optimize opportunities for employers to engage 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.
- perform research on industry and employment market trends.
- encourage employer involvement in academic and program development.
- involve employers in student development and training/preparation of students.

Employers must be treated uniformly and consistently. Career services must ensure equity of access to students, maintain the integrity of that access, and not give preferential treatment to any employer.

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, and 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, internships, and other experiential learning.
- provide information and services to assist recruiters to communicate effectively 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 and contract organizations. This may include requiring recruiters to disclose the identities of organizations they represent and agreeing to abide by the ethical guidelines documented in the *NACE Principles for Professional Practice*.

When institutions have established learning outcomes for student engagement or experiential learning, career services should provide information to, direct, or educate employers to ensure understanding and adherence of learning outcomes processes and procedures.

X. LEGAL, POLICY, AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Career services must comply with laws, regulations, and policies that relate to their respective responsibilities and professional practices and that pose legal obligations, limitations, risks, and liabilities for the institution as a whole. Examples include constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; relevant laws and orders emanating from codes and laws; the institution's policies; and any contractual commitments.

The particular laws, regulations, and policies that career services must take steps to be sufficiently informed and seek advice about from legal counsel when questions arise include, but are not limited to:

- **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (US) or other laws regarding disclosure of student information contained in education records.**
- **privacy and maintenance of data and records, including those maintained in electronic form by the career services 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 unit and others employed by the institution that refer students for employment.**
- **affirmative action regulations and laws regarding special programs for special student populations.**
- **regulations and laws regarding disabilities and accessibility.**
- **labor standards and liability issues pertaining to experiential learning programs, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act (US) and other related laws and regulations.**
- **work authorization practices in countries other than where the student holds citizenship.**
- **laws regarding eligibility to work in the United States.**
- **other applicable employment or student-related statutes, codes, and laws and institutional policies.**
- **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 and policies regarding grant applications.**

Career services staff members must exercise due diligence and use reasonable and informed practices to protect students and designated clients and limit the risk and liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. In this regard, the institution must provide access to risk management resources and legal advice for staff as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

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

Staff members must be informed about the institution's risk and liability insurance coverage, personal liability coverage, and related insurance coverage options and must be referred to external sources if the institution does not provide coverage.

Career services must have written policies and procedures on all relevant operations, transactions, or tasks that have legal and institutional policy implications. These policies and procedures must be approved through appropriate institution processes and published in appropriate documents accessible to those affected by the policy and procedure.

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

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

Career services staff must neither participate in nor condone any form of harassment or activity that demeans people or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Career services must obtain permission to use copyrighted materials and instruments. Career services must purchase the materials and instruments from legally compliant sources or seek alternative permission from the publisher or owner. References to copyrighted materials and instruments must include appropriate citations.

Career services staff must be knowledgeable about internal and external governance systems that affect programs and services.

Contracts with outside vendors must include adherence to ethics, confidentiality, security, and institutional policies, and reflect support of career services programs, goals, and standards.

XI. ACCESS, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY

Career services must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis and consistent with laws and institutional policy.

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, services, facilities, and resources, including technology, must be accessible to all students.

Career services must consult with institutional technology experts and others as required to ensure accessibility by all students.

Career services' hours of operation, customer service systems, and online operations must 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 must have protocols and procedures in place, including consultation with the institutional legal counsel and equity office, to respond to concerns about discrimination and inequity by employers using the services.

Career services staff must 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 must 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 must 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.

XII. 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 actively 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 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, ensuring adherence to related institutional policies.

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 applicable laws, regulations, 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.

Career services staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others, e.g., employers, parents, and alumni.

Career services staff must recognize and avoid conflicts of interest in serving clients and recuse them themselves whenever necessary.

Career services staff must perform only those duties that conform to the scope of their education, position, competence, and experience.

Career services staff must be educated on how, when, and to whom to refer individuals in need of further assistance.

XIII. 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. Thorough analysis must be conducted and applied to programmatic decisions that lead to improvement of services.

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.
- program-specific learning outcomes assessment.
- a clearly articulated assessment plan.

Additional assessment and research should include:

- graduating student (first destination) and alumni surveys.
- benchmarking-comparative surveys.
- empirically based outcome research.
- career services' contribution to or impact on retention and degree completion.

Every five to seven years, using the NACE *Professional Standards*, career services should conduct both an internal (self-study) and external review.

Career services must conduct regular evaluations to improve programs and services, 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.
- reports and satisfaction surveys from students and other constituencies interacting with career services, including employers, faculty, and staff.

Career services must develop a student learning outcome assessment plan using relevant career-related student learning and development outcomes.

Career services should use NACE and other relevant resources (e.g., CAS) to develop student learning and development outcomes that address career development, career search, and career-readiness issues as well as institutional strategic plans and accreditation standards.

Career services should use the outcome data to improve/adopt best practices to ensure student learning.

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 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 and participate in 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 to appropriate constituents annual reports and special program evaluation reports that address 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; its 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 its companion workbook. The 2006 edition of the standards and workbook were approved by the NACE Board of Directors in 2006. At that time, the NACE Board also decided to formalize the review and revision process to provide for regular reviews on an every two-to-three year cycle. Consequently, the NACE standards and workbook were reviewed and updated again in 2008 (published 2009).

This most recent review and revision was undertaken in fall 2012 by the College and University Professional Standards Team, approved by the NACE Board in 2013, and published, along with a companion workbook, in 2014. The work of that committee is reflected in this publication.



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