

TRIO and OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS CAS STANDARDS and GUIDELINES

Part 1. MISSION

The mission of TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs is to encourage and assist people who are traditionally under-represented in post-secondary education because of income, family educational background, disability, or other relevant federal, state, provincial or institutional criteria, in the preparation for, entry to, and completion of a post-secondary education.

To accomplish this mission, TRIO and OEO programs must:

- serve as advocate for access to higher education
- provide services to assist individuals to achieve their educational goals
- facilitate the educational development of individuals served
- provide an environment that recognizes the diversity of backgrounds and learning styles of the individuals served
- develop collaborative relationships with institutions, organizations, and communities to promote an environment conducive to the completion of a post-secondary education

TRIO and OEO programs must incorporate student learning and student development in its mission. TRIO and OEO programs must enhance overall educational experiences. TRIO and OEO programs must develop, record, disseminate, implement and regularly review its mission and goals. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission and goals of the institution and with the standards in this document. TRIO and OEO programs must operate as an integral part of the institution's overall mission.

TRIO and OEO programs should address the developmental needs of the individuals served. Programs and services should enable the individual to acquire the necessary skills and attributes to complete a post-secondary education.

Part 2. PROGRAM

The formal education of students consists of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, and must promote student learning and development that is purposeful and holistic. TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes.

Relevant and desirable outcomes include: intellectual growth, effective communication, realistic self-appraisal, enhanced self-esteem, clarified values, career choices, leadership development, healthy behaviors, meaningful interpersonal relationships, independence, collaboration, social responsibility, satisfying and productive lifestyles, appreciation of diversity, spiritual awareness, and achievement of personal and educational goals.

TRIO and OEO programs must provide evidence of its impact on the achievement of student learning and development outcomes.

The table below offers examples of evidence of achievement of student learning and development.

Desirable Student Learning and Development Outcomes:	Examples of Achievement
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Intellectual growth	Produces personal and educational goal statements; Employs critical thinking in problem solving; Uses complex information from a variety of sources including personal experience and observation to form a decision or opinion; Obtains a degree; Applies previously understood information and concepts to a new situation or setting; Expresses appreciation for literature, the fine arts, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences
Effective communication	Writes and speaks coherently and effectively; Writes and speaks after reflection; Able to influence others through writing, speaking or artistic expression; Effectively articulates abstract ideas; Uses appropriate syntax; Makes presentations or gives performances
Enhanced self-esteem	Shows self-respect and respect for others; Initiates actions toward achievement of goals; Takes reasonable risks; Demonstrates assertive behavior; Functions without need for constant reassurance from others
Realistic self-appraisal	Articulates personal skills and abilities; Makes decisions and acts in congruence with personal values; Acknowledges personal strengths and weaknesses; Articulates rationale for personal behavior; Seeks feedback from others; Learns from past experiences
Clarified values	Articulates personal values; Acts in congruence with personal values; Makes decisions that reflect personal values; Demonstrates willingness to scrutinize personal beliefs and values; Identifies personal, work and lifestyle values and explains how they influence decision-making
Career choices	Articulates career choices based on assessment of interests, values, skills and abilities; Documents knowledge, skills and accomplishments resulting from formal education, work experience, community service and volunteer experiences; Makes the connections between classroom and out-of-classroom learning; Can construct a resume with clear job objectives and evidence of related knowledge, skills and accomplishments; Articulates the characteristics of a preferred work environment; Comprehends the world of work; Takes steps to initiate a job search or seek advanced education
Leadership development	Articulates leadership philosophy or style; Serves in a leadership position in a student organization; Comprehends the dynamics of a group; Exhibits democratic principles as a leader; Exhibits ability to visualize a group purpose and desired outcomes
Healthy behavior	Chooses behaviors and environments that promote health and reduce risk; Articulate the relationship between health and wellness and accomplishing life long goals; Exhibits behaviors that advance a healthy community.
Meaningful interpersonal relationships	Develops and maintains satisfying interpersonal relationships; Establishes mutually rewarding relationships with friends and colleagues; Listens to and considers others' points of view; Treats others with respect
Independence	Exhibits self-reliant behaviors; Functions autonomously; Exhibits ability to function interdependently; Accepts supervision as needed; Manages time effectively
Collaboration	Works cooperatively with others; Seeks the involvement of others; Seeks feedback from others; Contributes to achievement of a group goal; Exhibits effective listening skills
Social responsibility	Understands and participates in relevant governance systems; Understands, abides by, and participates in the development, maintenance, and/or orderly change of community, social, and legal standards or norms; Appropriately challenges the unfair, unjust, or uncivil behavior of other individuals or groups; Participates in service/volunteer activities
Satisfying and productive lifestyles	Achieves balance between education, work and leisure time; Articulates and meets goals for work, leisure and education; Overcomes obstacles that hamper goal achievement; Functions on the basis of personal identity, ethical, spiritual and moral values; Articulates long-term goals and objectives
Appreciating diversity	Understands ones own identity and culture. Seeks involvement with people different from oneself; Seeks involvement in diverse interests; Articulates the advantages and challenges of a diverse society; Challenges appropriately abusive use of stereotypes by others; Understands the impact of diversity on one's own society
Spiritual awareness	Develops and articulates personal belief system; Understands roles of spirituality in personal and group values and behaviors
Personal and educational goals	Sets, articulates, and pursues individual goals; Articulates personal and educational goals and objectives; Uses personal and educational goals to guide decisions; Understands the effect of one's personal and education goals on others

TRIO and OEO programs must be (a) intentional, (b) coherent, (c) based on theories and knowledge of learning and human development, (d) reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population, and (e) responsive to needs of individuals, special populations, and communities.

All TRIO and OEO programs must support the retention and graduation of their students.

Activities and services must address the specific objectives of each TRIO and OEO programs.

Programs, services, and activities for students involved in specific TRIO and OEO programs should include academic support services such as academic instruction; tutoring; English as a Second Language (ESL) activities; collaborative learning opportunities; supplemental instruction; development of oral and written communication skills; assessment of academic needs, skills and individual plans to provide appropriate interventions; monitoring of academic progress; preparation for proficiency and entrance exams; academic advising; opportunities for national and international study exchange; research internships; and opportunities to present and publish research.

Programming should also include a variety of mentoring experiences; career development and work internship activities; activities to assist with college admissions and financial aid; activities to prepare students for matriculation into graduate education; coordination with clubs and school activities; academic and cultural field trips; social activities; activities to encourage appreciation of cultural and ethnic diversity; athletic and physical development; leadership development; and other activities that promote matriculation into post-secondary or graduate schools, and support retention, persistence, and graduation.

TRIO and OEO programs should also implement programming with their own institution or agency, and with schools, community, and student families to accomplish their mission.

Part 3. LEADERSHIP

Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint, position, and empower TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) program leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated missions. TRIO and OEO program leaders at various levels must 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. Institutions must determine expectations of accountability for leaders and fairly assess their performance.

TRIO and OEO program leaders must exercise authority over resources for which they are responsible to achieve their respective missions.

TRIO and OEO program 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**

TRIO and OEO program leaders must identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement.

TRIO and OEO program leaders must promote campus environments that result in multiple opportunities for student learning and development.

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

Part 4. ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT

Guided by an overarching intent to ensure student learning and development, TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated service delivery expectations.

Evidence of effective management must include use of comprehensive and accurate information for decisions, clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, decision-making and conflict resolution procedures, responsiveness to changing conditions, accountability and evaluation systems, and recognition and reward processes. TRIO and OEO programs must provide channels within the organization for regular review of administrative policies and procedures.

TRIO and OEO programs must be placed in the institution's organizational structure to promote cooperative interaction with appropriate campus or community entities and to develop the support of senior administrators.

TRIO and OEO programs should be positioned to assure appropriate recognition and visibility.

Part 5. HUMAN RESOURCES

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. Within established guidelines of the institution, programs and services must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision, and provide appropriate professional development opportunities. TRIO and OEO programs must strive to improve the professional competence and skills of all personnel it employs.

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

Degree or credential-seeking interns must 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 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 must be provided clear and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing staff development.

TRIO and OEO programs must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish its mission. Staff members must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions, be knowledgeable of ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training. The level of staffing and workloads must be adequate and appropriate for program and service demands.

Salary levels and fringe benefits for all TRIO and OEO program staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

TRIO and OEO programs must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. TRIO and OEO programs must employ a diverse staff to provide readily identifiable role models for students and to enrich the campus community.

TRIO and OEO programs must create and maintain position descriptions for all staff members and provide regular performance planning and appraisals.

TRIO and OEO programs must have a system for regular staff evaluation and must provide access to continuing education and professional development opportunities, including in-service training programs and participation in professional conferences and workshops.

Hiring and promotion practices must ensure diverse staffing profiles.

TRIO and OEO programs professionals must possess a combination of knowledge and experience in working with individuals who are traditionally under-represented in post-secondary education.

Professional staff members should possess:

- effective oral and written communication skills
- an understanding of the culture, heritage, and learning styles of the persons served by the program
- leadership, management, organizational, and human relations skills

Student employees and volunteers from groups traditionally under-represented in higher education should be used and assigned responsibilities that are within the scope of their competencies.

The size, scope, and role of the program staff depend on the mission of TRIO and OEO programs and the populations served. Staffing should be based on the needs of the students or participants and the resources available. When possible, the staff should reflect the characteristics of the population being served.

TRIO and OEO programs should provide continuing professional development opportunities for staff such as in-service training programs, TRIO professional training seminars, participation in professional conferences, workshops, or other continuing education activities.

TRIO and OEO programs staff should contribute to the knowledge and practice of the profession through research and publications.

Part 6. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Funding priorities must be determined within the context of the stated mission, goals, objectives and comprehensive analysis of the needs and capabilities of students and the availability of internal or external resources.

TRIO and OEO programs must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional protocols.

Part 7. FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, and EQUIPMENT

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must have adequate, suitably located facilities, adequate technology, and equipment to support its mission and goals efficiently and effectively. Facilities, technology, and equipment must be evaluated regularly and be in compliance with relevant federal, state, provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

As applicable, the facilities must include, or the staff must have access to, private offices or spaces for counseling, advising, tutoring, interviewing, or meetings of a confidential nature. Facilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities.

TRIO and OEO programs facilities should be physically located to promote visibility of the programs and to ensure coordination with other campus programs and services.

TRIO and OEO programs should have equal access to the institution's technological resources.

TRIO and OEO programs should advocate for and facilitate access to technology for their students and families. Technology should be employed to promote TRIO and OEO programs, to provide academic and other student services, and to communicate with students including those at outreach locations. Programs should intentionally model for their students the use of technology.

Part 8. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities. Staff members must inform users of programs and services and officials, as appropriate, of legal obligations and limitations including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial and local governments; and the institution's policies.

TRIO and OEO programs staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. Staff members must be informed about institutional policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options.

The institution must provide access to legal advice for TRIO and OEO programs staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

The institution must inform TRIO and OEO programs staff and students in a timely and systematic fashion about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

Part 9. EQUITY and ACCESS

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs staff members must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis. Facilities, programs, and services must be accessible. Hours of operation and delivery of and access to programs and services must be responsive to the needs of all students and other constituents. TRIO and OEO programs must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws.

Policies and practices of TRIO and OEO programs must not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, sex, national origin, race, religious creed, sexual identity, and/or

veteran status. Exceptions are appropriate only where provided by relevant law and institutional policy.

Consistent with their mission and goals, TRIO and OEO programs 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 offered on campus. Institutions must provide appropriate services in ways that are accessible to distance learners and assist them in identifying and gaining access to other appropriate services in their geographic region.

Part 10. CAMPUS and EXTERNAL RELATIONS

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must establish, maintain, and promote collaborative relations with relevant individuals, campus offices, external agencies, project area schools, community organizations, and students' families.

TRIO and OEO programs must include a public relations component to regularly inform the institutions, communities, agencies, and schools about their mission and services.

Part 11. DIVERSITY

Within the context of each institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must nurture environments where commonalities and differences among people are recognized and honored.

TRIO and OEO programs must promote educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication that deepens understanding of one's own identity, culture, and heritage, and that of others. TRIO and OEO programs must educate and promote respect about commonalities and differences in their historical and cultural contexts.

TRIO and OEO programs must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

Part 12. ETHICS

All persons involved in the delivery of TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. TRIO and OEO programs must develop or adopt and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice. TRIO and OEO programs must publish these statements and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

TRIO and OEO programs 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. TRIO and OEO programs staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved, or when otherwise required by institutional policy or relevant law.

All TRIO and OEO programs staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's human subjects research policy and in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

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

TRIO and OEO programs staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal. Staff members must not participate in nor condone any form of harassment that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.

When handling institutional funds, all TRIO and OEO programs staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

TRIO and OEO programs staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

TRIO and OEO programs staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

TRIO and OEO programs staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.

Part 13. ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION

TRIO and Other Educational Opportunity (TRIO and OEO) Programs must conduct regular assessment and evaluations. TRIO and OEO programs must employ effective qualitative and quantitative methodologies as appropriate, to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission, goals, and student learning and development outcomes are being met. The process must employ sufficient and sound assessment measures to ensure comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other affected constituencies.

TRIO and OEO programs must evaluate periodically how well they complement and enhance the institution's stated mission and educational effectiveness.

Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving programs and services and in recognizing staff performance.

Annual program performance reports must be conducted in accordance with federal project guidelines.

Annual evaluation reports should be made available, when appropriate, to the program's various stakeholders, such as relevant campus offices, external agencies, area schools, and community organizations.