As you have learned more and more about the NACS Foundation Standards Project since it was unveiled at CAMEX in 2020, you have no doubt seen a number of references to the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS: www.cas.edu) and that organization’s role in this process.

The mission of CAS is to promote student success. It accomplishes this by working with higher education associations to develop and promote operational standards that are specific to most of the nonacademic components of higher education institutions.

Ray Plaza, director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Santa Clara University in Santa Clara, CA, leads the CAS Standards Management Committee. He notes that CAS has been developing and promoting higher education standards since 1979.

Originally, this process involved a group of about 40 people meeting in person to wordsmith the standards. As you might expect, this ultimately proved to be an unwieldy process. Plaza shared that eventually CAS involved subject experts who are brought in by the individual higher education professional associations. These individuals are the folks who are doing related work on campus and they apply their real-life experience to the standards development and approval process.

Ralph Johnson, vice president of the Center for Student Life at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, MD, is the current CAS president. When he first got involved in CAS in 2006, he thought of the organization as solely focused on creating rules. He says that, over the years, the organization has become much more strategic in focus.

Johnson describes CAS as an organization that brings together higher education associations from across the campus to identify and promote best practices that help practitioners meet their student success goals. When speaking to the evolution of their work, he cites current efforts designed to address student hunger and homelessness as well as student financial insecurity.

One of the goals of the NACS Foundation project is to raise the profile of the college store across campus and to reinforce its value to the institution’s administration. This is reflected in comments from Shaun Crisler, associate provost for student development at LeMoyne College in Syracuse, NY.

He serves as the CAS Standards Management Committee liaison to the CAS Review Committee for Campus Store Standards. He notes that when the campus store standards project first surfaced at CAS, he initially thought of the stores as a segment of campus that was simply straightforward without the need for standards.

Crisler thought back to his time as a student when he was appreciative that his college store knew exactly what he needed for his classes. Still, he thought of the store as simply a place that “sells things.” Through his involvement in the campus store standards process at CAS, his perspective on the college store has definitely evolved. He now sees the store as a complicated, sophisticated operation that has a role to play in various core aspects of campus life including service, tradition,
and institutional branding. In fact, he has subsequently worked at his own institution to include his college store as a strategic partner in campus projects in which they previously would not have been involved.

It is particularly gratifying to note Johnson’s perspective on the work that NACS staff and its volunteers have invested in the standards project. He is impressed by their valuable perspectives and what he sees as their enviable levels of commitment and enjoyment. To sum it up, he enthusiastically states that “You all get an A!” and he notes that other nonacademic functional areas of the campus may want to follow the college stores’ lead in perceiving themselves to be engaged directly in student education.

We know that industry operational standards will directly benefit the college store. The ability for stores to have tools to measure their performance and benchmark against industry colleagues will prove invaluable.

However, it is also important to recognize the potential impact that the standards and the related processes can have on your administration. Once the standards are approved and published, you can look for additional resources and tools from NACS Education that will assist you in reinforcing to your administration your store’s value to your campus community.

Stephen Hochheiser is a past president of the NACS Foundation and is retired after a 40-year career in publishing and bookstore management.

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ensures students do not lose out on any AOTC benefits.

OVERTIME REGULATIONS

On May 25, NACS signed a Partnership to Protect Workplace Opportunity (PPWO) coalition letter (http://protectingopportunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PPWO_Overtime-NPRM-Letter_May-2023_FINAL.pdf) urging the Secretary of Labor to abandon or at least postpone issuance of its announced rulemaking altering the overtime regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

The department’s fall 2022 regulatory agenda targeted this May for release of a proposed rule, while the new spring 2023 regulatory agenda now indicates August 2023 for the release of the NPRM. Unlike ED, Labor’s proposal would go straight to a NPRM comment period.

SWIPE FEES


NACS and several other college store associations signed a letter (https://merchantspaymentscoalition.com/nearly-2000-companies-and-270-trade-associations-call-for-passage-of-credit-card-competition-act/) to Congress expressing support for the reintroduction of the Credit Card Competition Act. NACS, the American Booksellers Association, and several other associations endorsed the Freedom to Read Statement to reaffirm its timeless message and was joined by additional organizations to bring attention to the negative impact that banning books would have on society.

With the recent resurgence of attacks on the freedom to read in various state legislation this year, the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers reconvened on the 70th Anniversary of the Freedom to Read statement to reaffirm its timeless message and was joined by additional associations, companies and authors. Together, we recommitted to the proposition that the freedom to read is essential to our democracy and the birthright of all persons regardless of their beliefs or political persuasion.

As always, if you have any questions, need more information, or help, or have intelligence to share, please do not hesitate to contact me at govrelations@nacs.org.

Richard Hershman is vice president of government relations at NACS. He works out of NACS’ Washington, D.C., office.

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