Once the college store standards are completed and then approved by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), the critical work of having the standards productively applied by stores will begin.

It is this real-world application of the standards that will provide stores with the tools and data they need to help demonstrate their value on campus, highlight successes, and identify opportunities. That process represents the real value of the NACS Foundation Standards Project.

At the request of Fred Hockenberry, executive director of auxiliaries, procurement, and special projects at Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD, NACS is currently conducting an assessment of the Frederick Community College Bookstore. This process involves the application of the college store standards and will not only provide the store with valuable information, but it will also provide real-world feedback on how best to use the standards to evaluate a store operation.

When asked about the value of applying the standards, Hockenberry replied, “Having a set of professionally vetted and published standards will help us to better tell our story. At times, it seems the perception of the college store is “just” the store—the sweatshirts, memorabilia, and snacks. Too often, the work that a store has done that contributes to student success is overlooked. Having these standards, using them, and then reporting on them out to the college will help with that.”

Communicating with the administration about a store’s performance relative to the standards is key. As Hockenberry stated, “Our campus administration will appreciate the analytic, evidentiary approach.”

Much has been made of the fact that administrations are familiar with and respect CAS which, once CAS approves the college store standards, provides the store with a receptive audience regarding communication of the application of the standards. As Hockenberry notes about CAS standards in general, “Student affairs areas treat the standards as their bible to guide and inform their area. Institutional research departments speak the CAS language as well to inform overall effectiveness of the college.”

While this initial store evaluation is a great starting point, Hockenberry noted that assessment using these tools needs to be an ongoing process. He stated, “The new CAS standards will be used as “mile markers” toward success, reported to the college on a biannual basis. These cannot be a one-
and-done project; they should be guiding and directing your operation and not collecting dust on a shelf.”

NACS recently completed the 2023 Standards Awareness survey to determine stores’ perception of the Standards Project and their current plans to use these resources in their operations.

NACS research analyst Lacey Wallace reports that an impressive 89% of college store staff who responded to the survey have positive perceptions of the standards. She also notes that the most common ways that respondents plan to use the standards are (in descending order) to compare their operation’s performance to the standards, to make changes to align the store to the standards, and for professional development.

Regarding the overall value of the standards to college stores, I think Fred Hockenberry has said it best: “CAS standards are used to set the stage for promoting student learning and development and having those standards formally applied to the college store elevates that which we already know: the vital role that stores play in both the long-term and short-term success of our students. It raises the independent store’s professional credibility at the institution that it serves and provides achievable goals to put in place to ensure success for years to come.”

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

“CAS standards raise the independent store’s professional credibility at the institution that it serves and provides achievable goals to put in place to ensure success for years to come.”
—Fred Hockenberry, Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD

ARE YOU GETTING YOUR DUE?

As part of your annual NACS membership fees, your store is entitled to receive one copy of The College Store magazine per $100 in dues. For $625 in service fees, your store qualifies for six copies of each issue.

Is your store receiving all the copies it can?

To make sure your key staffers receive The College Store, contact NACS Member Services at membership@nacs.org or call (800) 622-7498.

RESOURCE LINKS

DOJ FACT SHEET

DOJ PRESS RELEASE
https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-advances-proposed-rule-strengthen-web-and-mobile-app-access-people

NPRM
https://www.regulations.gov/document/DOJ-CRT-2023-0007-0001

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY

have discussions with vendors on what their plans are to address accessibility standards now and into the future.

Stores should also think about what additional information you should be considering in the adoption process and what efforts you can make, working with the disability support service office, to promote accessibility information and considerations for faculty as they weigh adopting course materials. The more accessibility can be addressed by publishers from the front end, the more it will reduce the burden on institutions and better ensure students with disabilities have timely access to content they can use by the first day of classes.

As always, if you have any input, questions, need more information, or help, 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.