



AACRAO

Professional Competencies and Proficiencies

The AACRAO Professional Competencies and Proficiencies help members design professional development pathways for career advancement.

The **Competencies** consist of the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are necessary for all AACRAO professionals irrespective of their role at their institutions, while the **Proficiencies** describe the specific knowledge and skills required to excel in the professions of **Admissions, Enrollment Management, and Records & Academic Services**.

The proficiencies were grouped in a way that reflects a majority of U.S. academic institutions. The placement of a few proficiencies varied more widely, and were therefore grouped into a fourth category called **Cross-Functional Proficiencies**. The Cross-Functional Proficiencies reside in different AACRAO professional areas dependent upon institutional structure. The Competencies & Proficiencies have been designed to be used in a variety of ways, including:

- Crafting professional development plans for individuals or teams;
- Self-assessment and benchmarking individual professional development;
- Drafting position descriptions and evaluating office functions

We envision the AACRAO Competencies and Proficiencies to be a living resource that will continue to evolve parallel to the demands of our professions in a dynamic higher education environment.

A self-assessment tool and detailed descriptions of each competency and proficiency, including the content knowledge, skill and ethical requirements are available on the website (aacrao.org/competencies).

If you would like to make a suggestion for a future version, contact us at competencies@aacrao.org.

For more information visit aacrao.org/competencies

Core Competencies

These core competencies apply to all of the AACRAO professions.



Change Management

Ability to identify, design, and implement change within an enrollment management organization or campus and anchor this change within the unit's as well as the campus's culture and operations.



Collaborative Decision-Making and Consensus-Building

Ability to facilitate the processes needed to facilitate stakeholders' involvement, through the stages of collective and affective solutions, leading to a collaborative and collegial work environment



Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are integral to all aspects of admissions, registrar, and enrollment management, and this proficiency focuses on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to fully integrate such principles in all aspects of personal and professional practice.



Holistic and Systemic Thinking

Employs the ability to view the institutional culture and operations, holistically and systemically. Has a working knowledge and understanding of the applications of systemic thinking principles to the academic and service mission, goals and values of the institution.



Interpretation and Application of Institutional and External Data

Understanding of institutional and external data in the context of what impact the data has on the long-term Strategic Enrollment goals of the institution and to monitor short-term operations. To be able to interpret and apply the data for the purposes of short term and long-range planning and strategizing. Uses data to support decision-making and creates a culture of evidence for achievement of short and long-term objectives.



Leadership and Management

Ability to identify the functions and business processes necessary to operate an office, develop an operating budget, and build a professional staff to conduct the activities of the office. Ability to identify utilization and operationalize customer and student services best practices.



Problem Solving

Employs an analytical and creative approach to address problems, while drawing on individual & collective skills, knowledge & experience.



Professional Integrity

Ability to carry out professional activities in an honest, professional and ethical manner. To engender a climate of trust and fairness in all dealings with students and colleagues within and outside the institution.



Communication

Ability to interact positively and work effectively with others.



Technological Knowledge

The ability to possess the appropriate technological knowledge and skills to function as a successful Academic and Enrollment Services professional.



Professional Development and Contributions to the Field

Support personal and peer professional development, contribute to the profession through presentations at state, regional, or national conferences; contributing towards professional association and academic journals; serving on professional association committees and leadership teams; and collaborating with colleagues to advance sound practices in academic and enrollment services. Engage with appropriate activities to maintain professional competency and innovation; ensure compliance with appropriate laws, policies, and regulations; and remain attuned to issues affecting higher education.

Admissions Core Proficiencies



Creating a Communications Plan

Create a communications plan that provides prospective students with appropriate messages at specific points in the admissions decision cycle.

Collaborate with other departments and academic units to insure a consistent flow of communications from the point of inquiry through the start of the first enrollment term.



Developing Speeches and Presentations

Develop speeches and presentations that highlight your institution and encourage students to enroll.

These should include a variety of formats that can be delivered to students, parents, counselors, and others, from individual and small group settings to large assemblies.



Evaluating Emerging Technologies

Research and evaluate emerging technologies in the admissions field and, in collaboration with other enrollment units and IT, develop strategies

to implement and deploy solutions that improve business processes and student satisfaction.



Market Analysis

Developing marketing materials to promote the institution and its programs. This could include general search pieces, viewbooks, program and department information in both hard copy and web formats.

Utilize or create information sources from internal and external market studies to understand the needs of prospective students, their decision-making factors and the institutional strengths that most strongly resonate with them. Create and/or support the institutional brand and its relationship to promotional materials and content.



Reporting Progress Toward Enrollment Goals

Develop reports to help inform faculty and administration of progress toward achieving enrollment goals.



Strategic Staffing and Operations

Evaluate the staffing structure of the Admissions office and identify the optimal configuration to complete necessary tasks and meet the

enrollment goals of the institution.



Utilizing Social Media

Understand social media and develop strategies to integrate it into recruitment and communications plan.

Enrollment Management Core Proficiencies



SEM Assessment

Work collaboratively with institutional research and other campus partners to assess progress towards the institution's enrollment management

plan. Evaluate the institution's infrastructure, policies and procedures to determine the readiness to plan and implement strategic enrollment management plans.



Developing Enrollment Mix

Partner with academic affairs to determine optimum enrollment mix for institutional academic programs, branch campuses, and online

programs, as well as student enrollment based on demographics such as geographic diversity, socio-economic and racial/ethnic diversity, and, other factors. Provide leadership for the development and implementation of the institution's enrollment management plan to meet the institution's enrollment goals; strategies to include admissions responsibilities such as market research and segmentation, marketing, promotion and recruitment initiatives as well as persistence and progression activities to include orientation, advising, registration, financial aid, and other support services.



SEM Leadership

Develop, articulate and implement a comprehensive, data-informed strategic enrollment management plan, that includes a

focus on both recruitment and persistence, aligns with the institution's strategic initiatives and ensures a strong link between student need, institution-wide priorities, and financial planning. Provide high quality, innovative, student-oriented enrollment services by developing and implementing efficient, effective, and integrated policies, procedures and systems that improve student success across the student's educational lifecycle.



Staffing Leadership

Provide leadership to enrollment management personnel and departments to develop the skills, strategies, and systems needed to successfully

achieve enrollment management goals. Work with institutional leadership to envision and strengthen enrollment services processes that foster and value a culture of openness, diversity, and inclusion. Collaborate with institutional leadership to create cross-functional enrollment teams, including faculty, that plan, review and respond to enrollment trends in the institution.



Enrollment Technology

Employ technology to develop innovative, efficient, and quality enrollment management processes and services.

Records & Academic Services Core Proficiencies



Reporting & Institutional Research

Employment of knowledge and understanding of the use of data in the student system for a variety of internal and external constituencies. Possess the

knowledge of institutional student records data structure, data management, and data extraction capabilities.



Data Systems Management

Functional understanding of data systems and experience identifying and promoting optimized system use, linkages among client services, operational requirements, and information management systems.



Knowledge of Student Records Management Law, Policy, and Governance

Strong working knowledge of state, federal, accreditation and institutional student records compliance mandates and proven leadership, the training of staff, faculty, and administrators. Demonstrated professional achievement working with student records and academic policy enforcement.



Record-Keeping & Data Stewardship

Student record-keeping services with a pronounced emphasis on academic perspectives, practices, needs, and compliance.



Academic Policy and Curriculum Delivery

Knowledge of leading practices in catalog content and production, curriculum management, course scheduling, documentation of academic policy and academic program management.



Operations and Business Process Management

Evaluate the staffing and process structure and identify the optimal configuration to complete

necessary tasks and meet student service goals. This would include the ability to anticipate workloads, appropriately deploy staff, and evaluate business processes for efficiency and quality standards



Graduation, Commencement & Academic Events

Determining that students have met the requirements for degrees or certificates at their institution, and facilitating the awarding of degrees or certificates through the creation and distribution of diplomas and graduation or commencement programs.

Cross-Functional Proficiencies



Transfer & Articulation

Assessment and awarding of institutional credit for experiences which may include prior college-level coursework, work or life experiences

including military training and experience, national or institutional examinations, or alternative demonstration of college-level knowledge and competencies. Creation and management of articulation agreements with other postsecondary institutions and systems.



Assessing Prior International Education

Evaluation of non-US educational documentation for admissions, placement and transfer credit purposes.



International Recruitment & Marketing

The ability to identify, attract and enroll international students appropriate to your institutional mission and goals with targeted and effective marketing, recruitment and student support techniques.

For more information
visit aacrao.org/competencies



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