

Desert Mountain High School
International Baccalaureate
CAS Program

Creativity
Action
Service



Due Dates:

Seniors: April 1, 2009

Juniors: April 15, 2009

Name: _____

Why do we have to do CAS hours?

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Program. It is one of the three essential elements in every student's Diploma Program experience. It involves students in a range of activities alongside their academic studies throughout the Diploma Program.

Students are required to do a total of 150 hours, 75 hours junior year and 75 hours senior year. The CAS requirement takes seriously the importance of life outside the world of scholarship, providing a refreshing counterbalance to the academic self-absorption some may feel within a demanding school environment.

The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows.

Creativity: arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.

Action: physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the Diploma Program.

Service: an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

Although there are three elements to CAS, it is important not to consider them as mutually exclusive. CAS is about the education of the whole person, and the three elements are therefore interwoven. Together, they enable a student to recognize that there are many opportunities in life, away from formal academic study, to grow in knowledge of life, self and others.

CAS enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development through experiential learning. At the same time, it provides an important counterbalance to the academic pressures of the rest of the Diploma Program. A good CAS program should be both challenging and enjoyable, a personal journey of self discovery. Each individual student has a different starting point, and therefore different goals and needs, but for many their CAS activities include experiences that are profound and life changing.

For student development to occur, CAS should involve:

- real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- personal challenge—tasks must extend the student and be achievable in scope
- thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, reporting

- reflection on outcomes and personal learning.

All proposed *CAS* activities need to meet these four criteria. Concurrency of learning is important in the Diploma Program. Therefore, *CAS* activities should continue on a regular basis for as long as possible throughout the program, and certainly for at least 18 months.

The creative, physical and social development of human beings can be shaped by their own experiences. Participation in *CAS* encourages students to share their energies and special talents while developing awareness, concern and the ability to work cooperatively with others. The IBO's goal of educating the whole person and fostering more caring and socially responsible attitudes comes alive in an immediate way when students reach beyond themselves and their books. The educational benefits of *CAS* apply in the school community, and in the local, national and international communities. *CAS* should extend the students. It should challenge them to develop a value system by which they enhance their personal growth. It should develop a spirit of open-mindedness, lifelong learning,

It should encourage the development of new skills on many levels: for example, creative skills, physical skills and social skills. It should inspire a sense of responsibility towards all members of the community. It should also encourage the development of attitudes and traits that will be respected by others, such as determination and commitment, initiative and empathy.

Goals of the *CAS* Program:

The IB goal of educating the whole person and fostering a more compassionate and active citizenry comes alive in an immediate way when students reach beyond themselves and their books. The *CAS* requirement encourages students to share their energy and special talents with others: students may, for example, participate in theatre or musical productions, and sports and community service activities. Students should, through these activities, develop greater awareness of themselves and concern for others, as well as the ability to work cooperatively with other people.

Creativity, action, service (*CAS*) is a framework for experiential learning and reflection about that learning. This process of application and reflection provides an opportunity to extend what is learned in the classroom and, in turn, for the *CAS* experience to have an impact on classroom learning. *CAS* is intended to provide

experiences for students to develop self-confidence and empathy, and a willingness to help others. They may directly confront or indirectly engage in work on global problems, or work directly with other people at a local level, developing their capacity to function collaboratively and effectively with others.

Within the Diploma Program, CAS provides the main opportunity to develop many of the attributes described in the IB learner profile. For this reason, the aims of CAS have been written in a form that highlights their connections with the IB learner profile. The CAS program aims to develop students who are:

- reflective thinkers—they understand their own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth
- willing to accept new challenges and new roles
- aware of themselves as members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment
- active participants in sustained, collaborative projects
- balanced—they enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences.

As a result of their CAS experience as a whole, including their reflections, there should be evidence that students have:

- **increased their awareness of their own strengths and areas for growth**

They are able to see themselves as individuals with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that they can make choices about how they wish to move forward.

- **undertaken new challenges**

A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.

- **planned and initiated activities**

Planning and initiation will often be in collaboration with others. It can be shown in activities that are part of larger projects, for example, ongoing school activities in the local community, as well as in small student led activities.

- **worked collaboratively with others**

Collaboration can be shown in many different activities, such as team sports, playing music in a band, or helping in a kindergarten. At least one project, involving collaboration and the integration of at least two of creativity, action and service, is required.

- **shown perseverance and commitment in their activities**

At a minimum, this implies attending regularly and accepting a share of the responsibility for dealing with problems that arise in the course of activities.

- **engaged with issues of global importance**

Students may be involved in international projects but there are many global issues that can be acted upon locally or nationally (for example, environmental concerns, caring for the elderly).

- **considered the ethical implications of their actions**

Ethical decisions arise in almost any CAS activity (for example, on the sports field, in musical composition, in relationships with others involved in service activities). Evidence of thinking about ethical issues can be shown in various ways, including journal entries and conversations with CAS advisers.

- **developed new skills**

As with new challenges, new skills may be shown in activities that the student has not previously undertaken, or in increased expertise in an established area.

All eight outcomes must be present for a student to complete the CAS requirement. Some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities, but completion requires only that there is **some** evidence for every outcome.

Responsibilities of the student

Students should have opportunities to choose their own CAS activities and to undertake activities in a local and international context as appropriate. This means that, as far as possible, students should "own" their personal CAS programs. With guidance from their mentors/advisers, students should choose activities for themselves, initiating new ones where appropriate. Students are **required** to:

- self-review at the beginning of their CAS experience and set personal goals for what they hope to achieve through their CAS program
- plan, do and reflect (plan activities, carry them out and reflect on what they have learned)
- undertake at least one interim review and a final review with their CAS adviser
- take part in a range of activities, including at least one project, some of which they have initiated themselves
- keep records of their activities and achievements, including a list of the principal activities undertaken
- show evidence of achievement of the eight CAS learning outcomes.

What is CAS?

CAS is a framework for experiential learning, designed to involve students in new roles. The emphasis is on learning by doing real tasks that have real consequences and then reflecting on these experiences over time. This process of doing and

reflecting on the doing provides an excellent opportunity to extend what is learned in the classroom to a form of service, such as applying science (from, for example, biology or environmental systems) to the environment, or applying technology (from, for example, design technology) to the design of devices to help people who are disabled or to improve living conditions in a home or town or refugee camp.

The most meaningful CAS experience comes from spending time with others to build relationships and develop the self-worth of both server and served.

Appropriate activities might include:

- physical assistance to the elderly
- a structured series of visits to a home for orphans
- helping with rehabilitation at the local hospital
- teaching basic literacy
- establishing and coaching a sports team for disadvantaged youngsters
- establishing and leading a musical ensemble for visually impaired people
- involvement in a theatrical production to which refugee children are invited
- teaching the use of computers
- environmental restoration and protection.

What is not CAS?

What is, or what is not, CAS is a question which coordinators are frequently asked. The asking of the question may show an inappropriate attitude. If CAS becomes a points-scoring exercise, rather than an interesting variety of activities that the student finds intrinsically worthwhile and rewarding, and which is mutually beneficial to the student and to his or her community, then its purpose is lost. It is important that the **spirit** of CAS be considered at all times.

Generally, CAS is not taking place when the student is in a passive rather than an active role. There should be interaction. If the student is passive, nothing of real value, either for the student or for other people, results from what the student is doing, and no real reflection is possible. In such circumstances the student will be able to meet the objectives of CAS only to a very limited extent. Examples of activities which are inappropriate.

- Any class, activity or project which is already part of the student's Diploma Program.
- An activity for which a student is personally rewarded either financially or with some other benefit (unless this benefit is passed on in full to a worthy cause).

- Doing simple, tedious and repetitive work, like returning school library books to the shelves.
- Working in a retirement or children's home when the student:
 - has no idea of how the home operates
 - is just making sandwiches
 - has no contact at all with the residents or children
 - actually does no service for other people.
 (The above example can be applied to many other activities purporting to be CAS.)
- A passive pursuit, such as a visit to a museum, the theatre, art exhibition, concert or sports event, unless it clearly inspires work in a related activity in which a student is already engaged.
- All forms of duty within the family.
- Religious devotion and any activity which can be interpreted as proselytizing.
- Work experience which only benefits the student.
- Fund-raising with no clearly defined end in sight.
- An activity where there is no leader or responsible adult on site to evaluate and confirm student performance.
- Activities which cause division amongst different groups in the community.

What are the 3 components of CAS?

Creative activities should have a definite goal or outcome. They should be planned and evaluated like all CAS activities. This can present something of a challenge where, for example, a student is a dedicated instrumental musician. It would be artificial to rule that something that is both a pleasure and a passion for the student could not be considered part of their CAS experience. How, though, can it help to fulfill CAS learning outcomes? Tasks must extend the student and be achievable in scope. Perhaps the instrumental musician can learn a particularly difficult piece, or a different style of playing, in order to perform for an audience. The context might be a fund-raising activity, or the student might give a talk to younger children about the instrument, with musical illustrations. Appropriate CAS activities are not merely "more of the same"—more practice, more concerts with the school band, and so on. This excludes, for example, routine practice performed by IB music or dance students (as noted earlier), but does **not** exclude music, dance or art activities that these students are involved with outside the Diploma Program subject coursework.

Similar considerations apply in **Action**. An outstanding athlete will not stop training and practicing in order to engage in some arbitrary, invented CAS physical activity. However, modern approaches to sports coaching emphasize the notion of the reflective practitioner, so it is possible for the athletics coach to incorporate relevant CAS principles and practice into training schedules for the benefit of the student. Setting goals, and planning and reflecting on their achievement, is vital. "Extending" the student may go further, for example, to asking them to pass on some of their skills and knowledge to others. If their chosen sport is entirely individual, perhaps they should try a team game, in order to experience the different pleasures and rewards on offer. Some excellent "action" activities are not sporting or competitive but involve physical challenge by demanding endurance (such as long-distance trekking) or the conquest of personal fears (for example, rock climbing). It is important that schools carefully assess the risks involved in such activities. Alternatively, a student's "action" may be physical exertion as part of a service activity.

It is essential that **service** activities have learning benefits for the student. Otherwise, they are not experiential learning (hence not CAS) and have no particular claim on students' time. This rules out mundane, repetitive activities, as well as "service" without real responsibility. A learning benefit that enriches the student personally is in no way inconsistent with the requirement that service be unpaid and voluntary. The general principle, sketched out in the section "The nature of creativity, action, service", that the "rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved [in service activities] are respected", means, among other things, that the identification of needs, towards which a service activity will be directed, has to involve prior communication and full consultation with the community or individual concerned. This approach based on a collaborative exchange, maximizes both the potential benefits to the recipients and the learning opportunities for the students. Ideally, such prior communication and consultation will be face to face and will involve the students themselves.

A system of self-evaluation encourages students to reflect on the benefits of CAS participation to themselves and to others, and to evaluate the understanding and insights acquired.

Guiding Questions

The following questions may help students determine whether or not an intended activity qualifies as CAS.

- Is the activity a new role for me?
- Is it a real task that I am going to undertake?
- Does it have real consequences for other people and for me?
- What do I hope to learn from getting involved?
- How can this activity benefit other people?
- What can I reflect on during this activity?

It is not too much to suggest (indeed many students have confirmed it) that CAS can assist in discovering the true meaning of life, and in finding one's own place in the world by transcending cultural and socio-economic barriers. This "own place in the world" has a number of dimensions including:

- within oneself
- through interaction with others
- within a community
- within a period of history.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Good practice in CAS should involve a new role for the student, a real task for him or her to do, real consequences and opportunities for inward reflection. A new role will often be a new activity, but may also be the student taking a fresh approach towards, or setting different goals in, an activity which he or she has already experienced.

These questions can also be referred to during the activity and afterwards:

- What did I/we do and where did I/we do it?
- What did I/we hope to learn?
- How successful have I/we been?
- What difficulties were encountered and how did I/we overcome them?
- What did I learn about myself? What did I learn about other people?
- What abilities, attitudes and values have I developed?
- Did anyone help me? With whom have I interacted?
- How did this activity benefit other people or institutions?
- What would I change if I were to do this again?
- How can I apply what I have learned to other situations?

Activities that Fulfill CAS Requirements

Activities That Would Fulfill Creativity, Action or Service Requirements

You can participate in:

- Holiday Caroling with SHS
- Phoenix Symphony Guild
- Coffeehouse
- Rock Revelation
- Design a booth for International Day
- Creating a display for the science fair
- A music recital
- A play or musical
- Encore

Activities That Would Fulfill Action or Service Requirements

If you were a volunteer at the:

- ALS Walk
- Anasazi Fall Festival
- Climb to Conquer Cancer
- Library
- Habitat for Humanity
- Special Olympics
- SSBTR Walk
- Andre House
- Ronald McDonald House
- Wellesley's Walk
- Heartstrings Ball
- Holiday Lights
- Youth Corps
- Salvation Army
- Child Crisis Center
- P.F. Chang's Rock N' Roll Marathon water station worker
- Salvation Army- Thanksgiving/Christmas dinner server
- Cancer Walk
- St. Vincent DePaul
- St. Mary's Food Bank
- Hospital
- Homeless shelter
- Salvation Army's Christmas Angel Program
- Scottish Highland Games
- Sierra Point Retirement Home
- Scottsdale Healthcare Golf Tournament
- National Charity League Projects
- All-Star Kids Tutoring
- UNICEF Trick or Treating
- Arizona Human Society
- Phoenix Zoo
- SOMA triathlon
- Trick or Treat for Cans
- Race for the Cure

You can also earn action and service hours by volunteering to:

- Be a student ambassador
- Coach a youth team
- Work at an art festival
- Work at Physics Day
- Work at Horsense
- Host an exchange student
- Make pillows for women's shelter
- Pet Sit
- Clean a park
- Be a Girl Scout Leader/Camp Volunteer

Activities That Would Fulfill Creativity or Service Requirements

- Give music/dance/singing lessons
- Design a website for a company or club

Activities That Would Fulfill Action or Creativity Requirements

You can participate by:

- Receiving piano/voice lessons
- Performing in a cultural festival
- Taking Cooking Lessons
- Taking dance classes
- Learning a foreign language class outside of school
- Being a member of Marching Band (Time spent outside of school that is not mandatory for a grade)

Activities That Would Fulfill Action Requirements

Participating in:

- Yoga classes
- Karate lessons
- The track and field team
- Lacrosse
- Mock Trial
- The golf team
- A race or marathon
- Tennis

Activities That Would Fulfill Service Requirements

You can:

- Tutor
- Present to prospective IB students at informational nights
- Play bingo with senior citizens

Activities That Would Fulfill Creativity Requirements

- Planning activities for a club
- Being a member of Arizona Arts Chorale

What Doesn't Count

- Ushering for church service
- Church retreats
- Church Youth groups that involve faith based activities
- Teaching Sunday school at a church
- Playing an instrument at a church service
- Going on vacation to another country
- Listening to a guest speaker (unless you did an activity that directly resulted in your attendance from listening to the speaker)
- Going to see a play, museum, fair, exhibit, cultural event or movie (unless you did an activity that directly resulted from your attendance at the activity)

-Anything that you are missing class or a day of school to participate in

*NO STUDENTS SHOULD BE SIGNING OFF AS THE SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE, UNLESS PRIOR APPROVAL BY CAS COORDINATOR OR IB COORDINATOR HAS BEEN GIVEN.

*Each individual event done with NHS, Stugo, National Charity League (or similar organizations) must have a separate reflection sheet.

*Reflection sheets for activities are due by the end of the quarter that they were completed in order to receive credit.