

International Baccalaureate  
CAS Handbook  
Creativity – Activity – Service  
[Class of 2017 and beyond]

George Washington High School  
655 S. Monaco Parkway  
Denver, Colorado 80224

**Disclaimer:**

**This is not a stand-alone document.  
It is intended to summarize certain aspects of the CAS program  
and  
to supplement each student's work with GW's CAS Coordinator.**

**IB Coordinator:**

Melanie Bryant  
Phone: 720-423-8884  
melanie\_bryant@dpsk12.org

**CAS Coordinator:**

Marjorie Lane  
Phone: 720-423-8829  
marjorie\_lane@dpsk12.org

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

Class of: \_\_\_\_\_

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**GPA, test scores, what high school teachers [thought] of me all mattered up to when I was accepted into college. But once in college, what matters is not high school test scores, or how much I remember from my HL classes, what matters and still has an impact on me . . . today is the CAS program.**

**-Suzanna Steele, GWIB, Class of 2014  
American University, School of Public Affairs, Class of 2018**

## Introduction

# Welcome to the new CAS!

Welcome to the CAS component of your IB experience! The International Baccalaureate (“IB”) designed CAS -- which stands for Creativity, Activity, and Service – to ensure that all IB students are involved in new and meaningful extracurricular experiences, as well as their IB academics. While CAS is an IB requirement, you can do far more with CAS than simply check off another diploma requirement. IB’s goal is to pull each of you out of your comfort zone to try new skills, have new experiences, and learn how to set personal goals.

“The aim of all IB program[ ]s is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.” IB Learner Profile. Consider for a moment that IB students all over the world are about to plan their own CAS projects and experiences in the context of their own lives, countries, and cultures. Does the thought of CAS’ global reach help you feel its expansive potential for you? We hope so.

As you approach CAS, remember that IB learners<sup>1</sup> strive to be:

**Inquirers** who develop natural curiosity, show independence in learning, acquire skills needed to conduct inquiry and research, and have a love of learning throughout their lives.

**Knowledgeable** individuals who explore ideas and issues of local and global significance, thereby acquiring in-depth knowledge and understanding of a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

**Thinkers** who show initiative by applying thinking skills critically and creatively to identify and address complex problems through reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators** who willingly and effectively collaborate with others, and understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and mode of communication.

**Principled** individuals who act with integrity, honesty and a strong sense of fairness and justice, respect the dignity of others, and take responsibility for their own actions.

**Open-minded** individuals who understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, while respecting the perspectives, values, and traditions of other individuals and communities.

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<sup>1</sup> What follows is a condensed version of the IB Learner Profile.

**Caring** individuals who show empathy, compassion and respect for others, are committed to service, and actively make a positive difference in the lives of others and the environment.

**Risk-takers** who explore new roles, ideas and strategies with independent spirits, approach the unfamiliar and uncertain with courage and forethought, and defend their beliefs bravely and articulately.

**Balanced** individuals who understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve and maintain personal well-being.

**Reflective** individuals who support their learning and personal development with thoughtful consideration of their experience and an understanding of their strengths and limitations.

**Although CAS is a long-standing IB component, the program has changed in significant ways.** In this Handbook, we attempt to outline certain aspects of the CAS program as it is today; this is not a complete “how-to-do-CAS” manual. CAS requires consultation with your CAS Coordinator. We also encourage you to review IB’s more detailed materials at [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org).

**Remember** -- CAS is NOT optional. It is prerequisite to receiving an IB diploma. In other words, if you don’t do CAS, you don’t get an IB diploma.

- ✓ CAS is a “class,” called “Leadership Study Advancement,” that will be on each student’s transcript for the Junior and Senior years.
- ✓ CAS is an 18-month program, beginning at the start of Junior Year; even so, students should begin to focus on CAS during the summer before Junior Year.
- ✓ Students who do not meet published deadlines are subject to academic probation.
- ✓ Students earn a Pass or Fail grade.
- ✓ This “class” is not calculated into the student’s GPA.
- ✓ However, there is no “grey area.” Each student either fulfills the CAS requirement and passes – or fails.
- ✓ **Students who fail CAS will NOT receive an IB Diploma.**
- ✓ **The P/F grade will be on each student’s final transcript.**

CAS is also not the term paper you think you can write the night before it is due. CAS requires thought and planning. Don’t endanger your IB Diploma or short-change yourself by ignoring CAS.

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# I. IDENTIFYING CAS:

## WHAT IS CAS?

CAS is organized around three elements -- Creativity, Activity, and Service.

CAS requirements and deadlines are spread through the Junior and Senior years, as shown on pp. 9-10. While the seven CAS Learning Outcomes (see p. 30) and the quality of CAS experiences and projects are of utmost importance, IB defines the three CAS elements (Creativity, Activity, and Service) vaguely so they can be interpreted as imaginatively as possible. As a result, a wide array of experiences and projects qualify for CAS. Also, you may “double-dip” in CAS, meaning that your CAS experiences and projects may also meet other obligations or involvements in your life. For example, an Eagle Project for Boy Scouts may also be a CAS Project.

**Creativity** is exploring and extending ideas that lead to an original or interpretive product, activity or performance.

Creativity takes many forms. A wide range of arts require creative thought and effort, yet creativity is also essential to design and implement many Service or Activity experiences and projects. Use your imagination when planning how you will satisfy the Creativity requirement. For example, Creativity could involve your participation in dance, theater or another art, or could involve the design and implementation of a supervised tutoring program. Although the general rule is that you should be involved in group experiences (especially in new roles), Creativity can include a commitment as an individual (*e.g.*, learning how to paint), if that commitment complies with general CAS requirements -- that you set goals, reflect on your progress, and benefit others through this effort.

**Activity** is physical exertion that contributes to a healthy lifestyle.<sup>2</sup>

Activity may involve participation in sports or other activities requiring physical exertion – such as hiking expeditions, camping trips, individual and team sports, yoga, martial arts, and other physical activity outside IB’s curriculum. Try to get involved in group or team activities that are new for you. Creativity and Service projects may also include physical activity. Activity can include a commitment as an individual (*e.g.*, taking martial arts classes), if that commitment complies with general CAS requirements -- that you set goals, reflect on your progress, and benefit others through this experience or project.

**Service** is collaborative and reciprocal community engagement in response to an authentic need.

Service projects and experiences are often the most transforming element of CAS because of their potential to nurture and mold the local and global citizen. Service involves interacting with individuals and groups in a community and developing a real commitment to this relationship. Community may be a school, neighborhood, town or city, or may exist on national and international levels. Service is not just

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<sup>2</sup> Previously, this element was called “Action.” “Activity” clarifies its meaning.

doing things **for** others, but is also doing things **with** others. A Service relationship should honor the dignity and self-respect of others.

Creativity and Activity can be enhanced by incorporating the Service element. For example, if you are involved in arts and in physical activities, consider coaching underprivileged children, seniors in residential homes, homeless children, etc.

## CAS Experiences and CAS Projects

**A CAS Experience** is a specific event in which the student engages one or more of the three CAS strands. CAS experiences in the Junior Year should be an extended series of events with one or more goals and learning outcomes (*i.e.*, learning how to bake, paint, etc.). Example: I want to learn how to cook Italian meals for my family.

1. Conduct research on types of Italian food (determined by region)
2. Purchase an Italian cookbook (or create a cookbook from online recipes)
3. Plan a schedule for weekly meals.
4. Write out weekly shopping lists
5. Cook a different meal weekly
6. Reflect on personal learning outcomes

**A CAS Project** is a collaborative series of sequential CAS experiences lasting at least one month. CAS Projects, which occur in the latter part of the Junior Year and in the Senior Year, require some sort of leadership role and are collaborative with others.

## Guiding Questions for CAS Experiences and Projects:

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

## CAS Experiences and Projects Should Involve:

- Deep involvement (rather than a passive role).
- Real reflection (you can find meaning in what you accomplished).
- Service experiences or projects that have real value (for the student and other people).

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# EXAMPLES OF CAS

The following are examples of experiences and projects that likely qualify as CAS. Typically, a student's CAS program combines planned/unplanned singular and ongoing experiences. All are valuable and may lead to personal development. However, a meaningful CAS program must be more than unplanned/singular experiences. A series of planned CAS experiences are recommended for a more engaging CAS program. A CAS Project should involve more than one CAS element.

## **CREATIVITY** = Enrichment

- Participation in Band / Chorus / Orchestra / Theatre performances.
- Lessons in music, art, dance, theatre, photography, etc., and associated competitions, performances, shows, parades, and recitals.
- Special classes taken outside of school that benefit others, as well as yourself (*e.g.*, a sign language course, computer camp, etc.).
- Planning events and projects for school, community or other organizations to which you belong.
- Participation in GW's newspaper or yearbook.

## **ACTIVITY** = Healthy Lifestyle

- Sports teams.
- Recreational teams coached by an adult.
- Club activities that involve physically-active participation.
- Scouting activities.
- Learning to scuba dive.
- Joining a running club.
- Taking an aerobics/Pilates/yoga class, "working out" at a health club.
- Dance classes and recitals.

## **SERVICE** = Reaching Out to Others Locally and Globally

- Volunteering at a hospital, nursing home, public library, museum, animal shelter, etc.
- Participating in a summer or weekend community work project.
- Working with Habitat for Humanity or other similar groups and projects.
- Participating in service club projects at GW.
- Working on church or youth group outreach service projects that do not proselytize.

## **Examples that may involve more than one CAS Element:**

[C = Creativity; A = Action; and S = Service.]

- Teaching basic literacy (C, S).
- Establishing and coaching a sports team for disadvantaged children (C, A, S).
- Establishing and leading a musical ensemble for visually impaired people (C, S).
- Teaching the elderly how to use computers (C, S).

- Environmental restoration and protection (A, S).
- Teaching disadvantaged children to swim (A, S).
- Teaching guitar to underprivileged children (C, S).
- Writing for the school newspaper (C, S).
- Teaching English to newly arrived immigrant children (C, S).
- Writing life histories for elderly relatives or the residents of a retirement home (C, S).
- Leading or participating in a mountain expedition (A, S).
- Clearing a beach of oil pollution or litter (A, S).
- Organizing a walk-a-thon to raise money for guide dogs (C, A, S).
- Organizing student participation in and raising funds for the Model United Nations (C, S).
- Working to raise money for organizations such as Amnesty International/Greenpeace/World Wide Fund for Nature (C, S).
- Creating and maintaining a service-oriented website (C, S).
- Assisting victims of a natural disaster (C, A, S).

**Tip: Review the seven CAS Learning Outcomes at pp. 30-32 and the ten questions in the CAS Closing Interview at p. 33. If your proposed CAS experience or project does not engage the IB Learning Outcomes or these reflective questions strongly, it may not be a worthy CAS endeavor.**

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## WHAT CAS IS NOT

**CAS** loses its purpose if it becomes an “hour counting exercise,” instead of a rewarding experience.

When in doubt if an experience or project qualifies for CAS, check with GWIB’s CAS Coordinator. Here are examples of what would NOT count as CAS:

- Any class, experience or project already part of the IB Program. (Non-IB classes may be a basis for CAS.)
- Any experience or project for which the student receives money, unless the money is passed on to a worthy cause.
- Doing simple, tedious and/or repetitive work (like shelving books or cans, or clerical tasks).
- Working in elder care facilities when, for example, the student:
  - Has no idea how the facility works.
  - Is just making sandwiches or some other nonspecific task.
  - Has no contact with the elderly.
  - Does no actual service for the elderly.
- A passive pursuit, such as a visit to a museum, art exhibit, vacation tour, concert or sports event.
- All forms of duty within a family.
- Religious devotion and any experience or project interpreted as proselytizing religious beliefs.
- Work experience that only benefits the student.
- Fund-raising with no clearly defined end in sight and/or fund-raising that omits awareness for a greater cause.
- Unsupervised tutoring or helping a friend with homework.
- Volunteer work with a business or other “for-profit” organization.
- Special classes that focus on self-benefit, like SAT preparation or Driver’s Education.

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## II. THE CAS PROCESS:

### The CAS Process in a Nutshell

The following outlines the basic steps involved in planning, implementing and reporting for CAS:

**Step 1:** During the summer before the start of Junior Year, students begin to plan their CAS experiences by identifying activities they are already involved in, such as athletics, band, and service and leadership clubs, and completing their GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form (pp. 19-20), to be turned in at the beginning of Junior Year.

**Step 2:** At the beginning of Junior Year, each student meets with the CAS Coordinator to review his completed GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form to ensure these initial plans meet CAS guidelines and to brainstorm how to fill any gaps.

**Step 3:** Students initiate CAS experiences at the beginning of Junior Year that focus separately on the three CAS elements. They write Reflections about their own growth throughout the process and collect evidence of their CAS experiences (photos, news articles, programs, etc.).

**Step 4:** In the middle of the second semester of Junior Year, students identify, investigate and implement one small CAS project (the “Mini-Project”).

**Step 5:** In the Senior Year, Students develop and implement at least one CAS Project that integrates two or more CAS elements and is of significant duration. Students should begin to plan this project at the end of Junior Year and over the summer before Senior Year.

**Step 6:** Seniors organize their CAS Project in a notebook with their initial plan, journals and evidence of their experience. Seniors present their Junior Year experiences and Mini-Project and Senior Year CAS Project at GW’s April CAS Fair.

**Step 7:** Final CAS Interview.

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# The CAS Timeline in the Junior and Senior Years

## Action and Documentation Deadlines:

*Specific Deadlines Will Be Identified Each Year.*

**NOTE: Diploma students who do not adhere to published deadlines are subject to academic probation.**

### Junior Year

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>CAS Documentation</b>
Summer before Junior Year Begins  Note: this period does not count toward the 18 month CAS requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Review the GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form.</li> <li>*Identify potential experiences for each of the three CAS elements.</li> <li>*Identify and contact organizations for potential volunteer opportunities and begin any application processes.</li> <li>*Identify skills and activities outside your comfort zone that you might try as part of CAS.</li> <li>*Work on a draft, but concrete plan on how you will fulfill your CAS requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Complete the GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form. (The form is at pp. 19-20 and is on-line at the GW-IB-CAS site.)</li> </ul>
August – September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Meet with the CAS Coordinator (Initial CAS Interview) to review your completed GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form.</li> <li>*This meeting will be during the week after Labor Day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Bring the completed GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form to this meeting.</li> <li>*Begin to document CAS experiences in ManageBac.</li> </ul>
September – December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Participate in experiences for at least two of the three CAS elements.</li> <li>*Each of these experiences may involve more than one CAS element, <b>but only one CAS element may be claimed for each experience.</b> (No overlap allowed at this point.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Log experiences into ManageBac.</li> <li>*Write a minimum of four Reflections – one in each of these four months.</li> </ul>
December, prior to the end of First Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Evaluate your CAS experiences from the first semester.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Continue to log experiences and reflect on those experiences in ManageBac.</li> </ul>
Winter Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Plan a CAS experience for the third CAS element, if you have not already done so.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Continue to log experiences and reflect on those experiences in ManageBac.</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Your CAS involvement continues and now involves all three elements – Creativity, Activity, AND Service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Continue to log experiences and reflect on those experiences in ManageBac.</li> </ul>
January – March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Your CAS experiences continue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Log experiences into ManageBac.</li> <li>*Continue reflecting in ManageBac at least once each month.</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Introduction of the CAS Mini-Project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Document investigation (aka research) results for CAS Mini-Project</li> </ul>

		in ManageBac.
March- April	*Perform and document CAS Mini-Project, using the 5 CAS Stages: Investigation; Preparation; Action; Reflection; and Demonstration. This includes collecting evidence. *Mandatory attendance at CAS Fair (in April).	*Document CAS Mini-Project on ManageBac. This includes documenting the 5 CAS Stages: Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Demonstration.
May	*Complete CAS Mini-Project. *End of the year CAS review and Senior planning meeting with CAS Coordinator.	*Complete CAS Mini-Project on ManageBac, with all evidence and final reflection.

### Senior Year

Summer before Senior Year Begins	*Finish any "Catch-up" from Junior Year. *Identify the Senior Year CAS Project. *Begin to investigate (aka research) this project.	
September	*Shift to using CAS Project Notebook. *CAS classes on how to develop a longer range CAS project and how do a write-up of the project.	*Document summer CAS experiences in ManageBac. *Document investigation (aka research) for Senior Year Project in ManageBac and print out for CAS Project Notebook.
End of First Quarter	*Investigation and Preparation stages of CAS Project.	*Written investigation (aka research) and preparation for CAS Project.
End of October	*Continue to review the 5 Stages. *Focus is on Action stage of the CAS Project. *Prepare first draft of CAS Project in the CAS Project Notebook.	*First draft of CAS Project in CAS Project Notebook. *On-going reflections in ManageBac and print out for CAS Project Notebook. *CAS Project Notebook check.
Beginning of December	*Focus continues on Action stage.	*On-going reflection in ManageBac and print out for CAS Project Notebook. *2 <sup>nd</sup> CAS Project Notebook check
End of February		*Final Documentation. *Coordinator Review. *Candidate Revision.
April	*Prepare CAS three-part poster for CAS Fair. *Ensure that CAS Notebook is ready for CAS Fair. *CAS Fair.	*CAS Closing Interviews. *Presentations at CAS Fair.

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# George Washington IB CAS Long-Range Planning Form

IB Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class of: \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Each student should complete this form during the summer **before** the beginning of **Junior Year**. We recommend that the student discuss this form with an adult and complete it with the adult's review.
  - ✓ **Bring this completed form to your** Initial CAS Interview, which will occur the week following Labor Day. The completed form is **due at that time**.
  - ✓ **This form is also available on-line through the GW-IB website. Do not limit yourself to the available space on the Handbook version of this form.**
1. List all activities/clubs/sports/groups/ classes in which you participate (both in and out of school).
  2. What do you enjoy doing?
  3. In which of the three CAS elements do you tend to participate more – Creativity, Activity, or Service?
  4. Which of the three CAS elements is most challenging for you? Why?
  5. What skill(s) or talent(s) would you like to improve?
  6. What have you thought about trying, but haven't yet?
  7. What issues concern you or make you feel passionate?
  8. What would you like to learn more about?

9. Junior Year: Begin to list your ideas for CAS experiences for Junior Year (these don't have to be binding or specific; this is just a chance to start listing options that appeal to you). Put a star next to ideas that would be new experiences for you. Do not limit your ideas to just the boxes on this form. **Use the on-line form for ease of use and to add more boxes.**

Creativity	Activity	Service

10. What questions or concerns do you have about CAS?

11. Would you be able to explain the seven IB Learning Outcomes (see pp. 30-32 of the CAS Handbook)? Do any of them still confuse you?

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# How Can a Student's Family Help?

## Preparing GWIB Students for CAS

Many students need adult guidance as they begin CAS. This is an important time when parents and other family members can help. As your student implements CAS during the Junior and Senior years, you may provide occasional guidance, but should avoid active involvement in your student's CAS experiences and projects to help your student get the maximum benefit from CAS.

### The Summer Before Junior Year:

Although a student's experiences during the summer BEFORE Junior Year do NOT count toward the 18 month CAS requirement, your rising Junior should review the CAS requirements and begin to plan potential CAS experiences, so that she is ready to begin CAS when the school year starts.

1. Review the "GWIB CAS Long Range Planning Form" with your student and help him identify potential experiences for each of the three CAS elements (Creativity, Activity, Service). Review the completed form with your student.
2. Encourage your student to identify and contact organizations for volunteer opportunities in her areas of interest. Although the Internet holds relevant information, encourage your student to go beyond the Internet and initiate personal contact with potential resources to determine their needs (*i.e.*, "How can I help?"). The ability to talk to strangers in a mature manner is an important skill for students to develop. Your student should begin any necessary application processes during the summer. Remind your student that it may be necessary to apply to more than one organization. (Planning means not putting all of your eggs in one basket.)
3. Help your student imagine potential experiences that would present him with new skills and experiences. Challenge your student to try experiences outside her comfort zone. For example, if your student is not artistic, you might suggest she take an art class at a local recreation center.
4. While CAS is a formal and mandatory requirement of the IB Diploma program, it is also a chance for students to expand their worlds. Most adults appreciate the value of being able to move out of their comfort zones without repercussions. Help your student appreciate that CAS can be more than an IB requirement.
5. Focus your student on CAS during the summer so that he returns to school for Junior Year with a draft, but concrete plan to fulfill his CAS requirements.
6. Your student must complete and hand in the completed "GWIB CAS Long-Range Planning Form," at the student's Initial CAS Interview, which should occur the week following Labor Day.

## The Summer Before Senior Year:

Students must complete one CAS Project during Senior Year. At the end of Junior Year, the CAS Coordinator will meet with students about formulating Senior Year CAS Projects. Because Senior Year is extremely busy, particularly the first semester, we **strongly urge** students to begin the investigation (aka research) component of their Senior CAS Project over the summer. Families can help focus Seniors on this effort so that students can prepare a tentative outline of their project **before** Senior Year starts.

The investigation stage of a CAS Project is the most difficult – and often neglected -- step to develop a CAS Project. Advise your student to begin by narrowing her area(s) of interest to an issue for which she feels passion, such as the elderly, animals, the environment, poverty, domestic violence, homelessness, literacy, or other political or social issue.

Once your student has focused on an area of interest, he can begin to investigate (aka research) organizations, groups, and individuals working in this field, in a manner similar to what he did in Junior Year (see Junior Year, para. 2, above).

You can also help your student develop realistic project goals/measurable objectives for the Senior CAS Project. Students often show unbridled enthusiasm during the initial stages of developing a CAS Project. While student enthusiasm is to be encouraged, students must remember that CAS is only one piece of their very busy lives. On the other hand, students can exhibit complete denial of CAS, perhaps planning on “knocking off” this requirement a week or so before the completion date. Obviously, this is not a good idea, negates the CAS experience, and endangers your student’s IB Diploma. Both extremes call for adult guidance. CAS experiences and projects should enhance IB and not create unnecessary stress.

## Ways for Families to Help the CAS Program:

1. Your constructive feedback on this Handbook and the CAS program will always be appreciated.
2. The Resources page of this Handbook directs students to an on-line file at <http://gwhs.dpsk12.org/ib> Please send us additional resources and any corrections.
3. Mentors for Juniors: Please e-mail the CAS Coordinator if you are interested in mentoring up to five Juniors (not including your student). Mentoring will involve emailing, texting and/or meeting with them to help them stay on track to complete their CAS requirements.

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### III. HOW TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A CAS PROJECT:

## RESOURCES

GWIB will maintain an on-line list of community resources and ideas for CAS experiences and CAS Projects at: <http://gwhs.dpsk12.org/ib>

For general information on the IB CAS program, see: [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org).

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## The Five CAS Stages

The Five CAS Stages<sup>3</sup> provide a framework and process for you to consider, plan, carry out, and reflect on your CAS projects.<sup>4</sup> You may find that the process and sequence presented in these stages is a reliable, yet flexible, structure you can apply to future situations with confidence.

### Stage One: Investigation<sup>5</sup>

1. Identify your interests, skills, and talents:
  - *What issues concern you or make you feel most passionate?*  
*or*
  - *What would you like to learn more about?*
2. Choose a topic or issue.
3. Gather information about a community need related to this cause.
4. Identify a local, regional, national or international organization working on behalf of this topic or issue.
5. Communicate with them to identify needed services.

Here are 4 possible ways to explore your chosen topic or issue:

- **Media:** Research through television, radio, Internet, newspapers, brochures, and websites of organizations that work in that area.
- **Interview:** Arrange to meet (in person or through long-distance communication) with an expert on this topic to ask a set of questions that you prepared (even so, don't just read scripted questions -- be open to raising other questions in the context of the interview).
- **Survey:** Prepare questions and survey a chosen group to gain a better understanding of the topic or issue or for a general public opinion.
- **Observation/experience:** Visit an organization or community group where a need is apparent; you may also draw upon prior experience.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Cathryn Berger Kaye's "The Five Stages of Service Learning" (2010).

<sup>4</sup> They are also helpful in the same way with CAS experiences, but MUST be used in CAS Projects.

<sup>5</sup> This kind of investigation can also be described as research. Note that research in Stage One differs from research as discussed in Stage Two.

## Stage Two: Preparation

1. Determine which type of service is most appropriate:
  - a. **DIRECT:** engages students in person-to-person contact with those in need. (*E.g.*, Cook/serve/deliver food for the homebound or homeless; Staff a health clinic; Teach English as a second language; Tutor, mentor, or coach youth; Visit elders in a long term care facility; Volunteer in a shelter for the homeless.)
  - b. **INDIRECT:** meets a clear need but also benefits the larger community. (*E.g.*, Plan drug, violence, or disease prevention programs; Volunteer for disaster services; Assist with an environmental project; Participate in urban renewal projects such as mural or house painting; Build low-income housing; Fundraise with direct interaction with a nonprofit beneficiary; Create brochures, flyers, posters, or annual reports for a nonprofit organization.)
  - c. **RESEARCH:** collecting information for the public welfare or interest. Research must be done with a direct connection to a community-based organization. (*E.g.*, Work in a laboratory that meets a community need; Conduct energy audits in public buildings; Test water to assist with restoration efforts; Conduct research to protect endangered species; Conduct research for a community organization.)
  - d. **ADVOCACY:** Lending student voices, writing ability, and other talents to an issue in the public interest. (*E.g.*, Conduct information campaigns; Draft legislation that helps or protects the community; Lobby on behalf of a community issue; Conduct nonpartisan voter registration drives; Organize a nonpartisan letter writing campaign on a social issue.)
2. Determine what you will do and verify, with an expert in the field (or with the GWIB CAS Coordinator), that your actions are appropriate.
3. Prepare a short proposal that articulates the idea or plan and identifies goals and measurable objectives.
4. Develop a timeline to implement this idea or plan.

## Stage Three: Action

1. Students implement their idea or plan. This will usually require decision-making and problem-solving. Students work individually, with partners, or in groups
2. Timelines may need to be adjusted.

## Stage Four: Reflection

1. Making an explicit connection between their growth, accomplishments, and the learning outcomes for personal awareness.
2. Reflection may lead to new action and/or changes in the original plan.

## Stage Five: Demonstration:

1. Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished.
2. Documentation through ManageBac (the computer program used by students and CAS coordinator to keep track of CAS activities and learning <https://gwib.managebac.com>) and the CAS Project Notebook is completed.

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# Documentation Requirements

CAS requires that you “reflect” on and collect “evidence” of your CAS experiences and projects:

- ✓ **ManageBac:** ManageBac is a computer website built for IB students, teachers and coordinators. Students use ManageBac to track their CAS status, submit reflections on their experiences, personal learning and growth, document evidence, and communicate with the CAS Coordinator. The CAS Coordinator uses ManageBac to communicate with the students. See p. 27 for additional information.
- ✓ **Reflections and the Reflection Process:** The Reflection Process is a key component of CAS. As students complete their CAS work, they reflect on and write about the experience and their growth. Students submit their Junior Year Reflections on ManageBac. Reflective Writing is discussed on pp. 23-24 and ManageBac is discussed on p. 27.
- ✓ **“Evidence” of the CAS Experience:** “Evidence” for CAS means such things as photographs, news articles, emails, programs, etc., that show the student’s involvement in a CAS experience. Some of the kinds of CAS-worthy “evidence” are discussed on pp. 25-26.
- ✓ **The CAS Project Notebook:** At the beginning of the Senior Year and in addition to using ManageBac, each student organizes a notebook for her Senior CAS Project, as described on p. 27.

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## 1. Using Managebac:

ManageBac is a computer website built for IB students, teachers and coordinators. Students use ManageBac to track their CAS status, submit reflections on their experiences, personal learning and growth, document evidence, and communicate with the CAS Coordinator. The CAS Coordinator uses ManageBac to communicate with the students.

- ✓ GW IB students can access ManageBac at <https://gwib.managebac.com/login>
- ✓ Incoming Juniors will receive an email that instructs them to go to ManageBac at <https://gwib.managebac.com/login> and set up their individual accounts.
- ✓ Juniors and Seniors must look for – **and read** -- emails from ManageBac; these emails are from the GW CAS Coordinator.
- ✓ Students also need to check that these emails are not going to their Spam folders.
- ✓ Students who forget their password can reset the password themselves by clicking “forgot password.”

- ✓ At various times, students will see a red flag, no flag or a green flag on their individual accounts. This will change constantly, based on CAS requirements and due dates. If a student sees a red flag or no flag on her account, she must communicate with the CAS Coordinator immediately.
- ✓ Parents can also get a ManageBac account, although this is only recommended in certain instances. If your student struggles with deadlines or you see that your student is earning an F in CAS, you might want to email the CAS Coordinator for an account.

## 2. Reflective Writing:

Reflective writing allows you, as a writer, to articulate your thinking and reactions to an experience -- on paper. This process requires you to make a deliberate effort to assess the experience. By taking the necessary time to process and reflect on an experience, you should be able to make sense of what you did and why, as well as identify lessons that **you** learned from the experience.

Unlike objective writing, in which the writer conveys basic information about an event, reflective writing expresses the writer's personal response to the event. (Both are important skills for you to understand and use.) When your written reflections on an experience are the product of studied and careful reflection, the experience and personal lessons learned will be a source for your future reference.

### What is a Reflection?

- A personal response to experiences, situations, events or new information.
- A "processing" phase in which thinking and learning take place.

### What is Reflective Writing?

#### Reflective writing IS:

- Your response to experiences, opinions, events or new information.
- Your response to thoughts and feelings.
- A way of thinking to explore what you have learned.
- An opportunity for self-knowledge.
- A way to achieve clarity and a better understanding of what you have learned.
- A chance to develop and reinforce writing skills.
- A way to identify the meaning of your experience.

#### Reflective Writing is NOT:

- Simply conveying information, instruction or argument.
- Pure description, although reflective writing often contains descriptive elements.
- Pronouncing a straightforward decision or judgment (*e.g.*, that something is right or wrong, good or bad).
- Simple problem-solving.
- A summary of your experience/project.
- A standard essay.

## How Do I Write Reflectively?

### What Can I Discuss?

- Your **perceptions** of the experience.
- **Observations** about yourself.
- **What was confusing, inspiring, difficult, or interesting** to you about your experience and **why**.
- **Questions** that your experience raised for you.
- **How** you:
  - Solved a **problem**;
  - Reached a **conclusion**;
  - Found an **answer**;
  - Reached a point of **understanding**.
- **Possibilities, speculations, hypotheses or solutions** that the experience raised for you.
- **Alternative interpretations or different perspectives** that your experience may have raised.
- **Comparisons and connections** between what you learned from your experience and your prior knowledge, experience, assumptions and preconceptions.
- How new information or ideas raised by this experience **challenge** what you already know.
- **What thoughts and actions do you believe you should explore next?**

**TIP:** Review --- Review the seven IB Learning Outcomes (at pp. 30-32) and the ten potential questions for the CAS Closing Interview (at p. 33) to help you with Reflections.

### 3. Posting “Evidence” for CAS:

In addition to Reflections, students post other “evidence” on ManageBac. Each student must clearly attribute all evidence submitted, by name or image. Evidence should be clearly recognizable and easily accessed. Each piece of evidence should support one or more of the seven CAS Learning Outcomes (see p.p. 30-32). Some of the forms of “evidence” that you can use follow:

#### 1. JOURNALS:

- Your entries should happen while you are participating in the CAS experience or immediately afterwards. Record the date of each entry. Entries should be timely to be reflective.
- There should be at least three entries for each activity. One entry should represent the beginning, the next the mid-point, and finally the end of the activity. In each entry, the applicable CAS Learning Outcome(s) should be discussed, specifically referring to the language of the outcome. For example, “I experienced a new challenge when....”

#### 2. PHOTOGRAPHS: (individual and/or group images)

- If the activity/project is with a team or group, photographs should include you interacting with that team or group. A posed team or group photograph that represents the activity is also acceptable. You should be clearly recognizable in the photographs.
- If the activity/project is based on an individual commitment, photographs should show you engaged in the activity. Avoid posed photographs that are NOT in real time (*e.g.*, posing at home in a team logo tee shirt or studying at home for an enrichment course).

- These two types of photographs are acceptable evidence: individual and team/club/group.
- Photographs should be captioned. However, the caption cannot explain the Learning Outcome(s) indicated; the Outcome(s) should be obvious from the image.

3. **FILES:** (name indicated)

- All uploaded files should be easy to access, download, and WORK.
- If you scan a document as evidence (like a certificate of completion), it must be legible and provide clear evidence of your participation, using appropriate attribution (*e.g.*, your name, dates, official organization).

4. **POWERPOINTS:** (name indicated)

- PowerPoints are acceptable evidence as long as there is *bona fide* attribution to you and/or your photograph is appropriately included.

5. **WEBSITES:** (name and/or image indicated)

- Websites can be used to verify the purpose or goals of an organization with which you are involved.
- A website alone, however, does not provide clear evidence of your participation, unless the website includes a photograph of you or credits you in a manner that is easily identifiable and accessible.

6. **YOUTUBE and VIDEOS:** (images)

- YouTube can provide evidence and documentation for individual or group performances. You must be clearly visible in action in this video.
- Any video used as documentation must present you in a real time event representing the activity. You must be clearly visible in any video.

7. **BLOGS:** (images/authentic narration)

- Blogging is an easy way to complete real time journaling, reflecting, and photo captioning in a timely manner.

## 4. The CAS Project Notebook:

Seniors must assemble a CAS Project Notebook for their Senior Year CAS Project, as follows:

1. MUST be in a new or gently used 3-ring binder with a clear cover.
2. Front Cover – Title of project and first and last name of participants.
3. Typed Goals / Measurable Objectives.
4. Timeline (you may have a few drafts of the timeline).
5. Divider for each objective with evidence behind it.
6. Evidence includes a brief, typed description of what the evidence shows – how does it prove (or disprove) that the objective was met.

7. On-going Reflections. These are individual Reflections, kept in journal format. Make sure you include the date of each Reflection. You should plan on writing them often. Your Reflection can address:

- The timeline. Is it working? If not, why not? What do you need to do differently?
- The goals and objectives for the project. Are they realistic? Are they obtainable? If something is not working, why isn't it working? Do you need to "tweak" any of your goals or objectives? If so, why?
- What you are learning about yourself- strengths and areas of growth?
- Collaboration with others. Are you working with other people? If so, reflect on the collaboration. How is it going? Is everyone doing their share? Have any ethical issues come up? How were they handled?
- Status of fund-raising and collections. Are you fund-raising or collecting items? Are you reaching your goal? If not, what do you need to change to encourage more people to give?

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# The Final CAS Presentation Board or PowerPoint

(to be presented with your senior CAS Project at the CAS Fair)

**When is the CAS Fair?** April.

**Who MUST attend:**

- ✓ Current Sophomores and Juniors (who will be incoming Juniors and Seniors in the fall AND their parents.
- ✓ Current Seniors.

**What is the Purpose of the CAS Fair?**

**Current Sophomores and their parents will:**

- See examples of CAS experiences and projects.
- Be introduced to the seven CAS Learning Outcomes,
- Be introduced to CAS Reflections.
- Learn about CAS from current Seniors.

**Current Juniors and their parents will:**

- Learn how to develop the Senior Year CAS project.
- Hear Seniors describe what worked and what didn't work in their CAS projects.

**What should Seniors present at their CAS Fair?**

- CAS Project Notebook.
- Three-sided Presentation Board OR PowerPoint with information about your Junior year CAS activities.

**What should be on the Presentation Board or in the PowerPoint?**

- **It should include:**
  - Evidence of your reflective process.
  - Evidence of completion of the seven CAS Learning Outcomes. What specific activities can be linked to any of the seven Learning Outcomes?
  - A balance of CAS activities – Creativity, Action, Service
  - Highs and Lows
  - Challenges
  - This could be a cut and paste from your Managebac Reflections (with visuals). Don't use the entire Reflection; just use sections and/or phrases.
- **Make it:**
  - Clear and easy to read
  - Attractive
  - Look like you took some time putting it together.
  - Relevant to your audience- current sophomore, juniors, and their parents.

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## IV. EVALUATING CAS:

### The Seven CAS Learning Outcomes

The IB program views the following seven CAS Learning Outcomes<sup>6</sup> as evidence of the student's growth in the CAS program.

**How can you use them?** Reviewing these Learning Outcomes at the outset of the CAS program and at key times thereafter can:

1. Help you **choose your CAS experiences**.
2. Help you **choose your CAS Project**.
3. Help you **write Reflections** on CAS experiences and during your CAS Project.
4. Help you **prepare** for your Senior Year final interview.

One overall CAS requirement is that all of the following Learning Outcomes must be shown in some manner during the 18-month CAS period. Some of these Learning Outcomes may be demonstrated many times and in a variety of activities, but to complete CAS requires only that there is some evidence for every Outcome.

**Outcome #1:** The student is able to identify his strengths and develop areas of growth.

- Are you:
  - ✓ Aware of your strengths and weaknesses?
  - ✓ Open to improvement and growth opportunities?
  - ✓ Able to propose experiences according to your own interests and talents?
  - ✓ Willing to participate in different experiences?
  - ✓ Able to undertake a thoughtful self-evaluation?
  - ✓ Able to see yourself as an individual with various abilities and skills, some more developed than others?

**Outcome #2:** The student is able to demonstrate that she has undertaken challenges, developing new skills in the process.

- Are you:
  - ✓ Participating in an experience that demands an appropriate personal challenge of you (this could be with new or familiar experiences)?
  - ✓ Willing to become involved in unfamiliar environments and situations?
  - ✓ Acquiring new skills and abilities?
  - ✓ Increasing your expertise in an established area?
  - ✓ Showing newly acquired or developed skills or increased expertise in an established area?

**Outcome #3:** The student is able to demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience.

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<sup>6</sup> We have rephrased the Learning Outcomes to focus on your potential use of them. IB used to identify eight Learning Outcomes, but now identifies seven CAS Learning Outcomes.

- Can you:
  - ✓ Articulate and use the CAS stages, including investigation, preparation, action, reflection (ongoing) and demonstration, to move from conceiving an idea to carrying out a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences?
  - ✓ Demonstrate knowledge and awareness by building on a previous CAS experience?
  - ✓ Show initiative by launching a new idea or process?
  - ✓ Suggest creative ideas, proposals or solutions?
  - ✓ Integrate reflective thoughts in planning or taking initiative?
  - ✓ Show your awareness of roles and responsibilities when designing an individual or collective CAS experience?
  - ✓ Show a responsible attitude to CAS project planning?
  - ✓ Develop a coherent action plan?

**Outcome #4:** The student shows commitment to and perseverance in his CAS experiences.

- Can you:
  - ✓ Demonstrate your regular involvement and active engagement with CAS experiences and projects?
  - ✓ Foresee potential challenges to your initial plan and consider valid alternatives and contingencies?
  - ✓ Demonstrate adaptability to uncertainties and changes?
  - ✓ Get involved in long-term CAS experiences and projects?

**Outcome #5:** The student demonstrates the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively.

- Do you:
  - ✓ Share skills and knowledge?
  - ✓ Listen respectfully to proposals from peers?
  - ✓ Demonstrate a willing to take on different roles within a team?
  - ✓ Show respect for different points of view and ideas?
  - ✓ Make valuable contributions?
  - ✓ Participate in the group?
  - ✓ Readily assist others?
  - ✓ Have the ability to identify, demonstrate and discuss critically the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences?

**Outcome #6:** The student demonstrates engagement with issues of global significance.

- Do you:
  - ✓ Recognize the global implications of local issues?
  - ✓ Identify global issues in the local or national community?
  - ✓ Show awareness of issues of global importance and take concrete and appropriate actions in response to them, either locally, nationally or internationally?
  - ✓ Get involved in CAS projects addressing global issues in a local, national or international context?
  - ✓ Show that you have developed an awareness and responsibility towards a shared humanity?

**Outcome #7:** The student recognizes and considers the ethics of choices and actions.

- Can you:
  - ✓ Recognize ethical issues?
  - ✓ Explain social influences on one's ethical identity?
  - ✓ Take cultural context into account when making a plan or ethical decision?
  - ✓ Identify what you need to know in order to make an ethical decision?
  - ✓ Articulate ethical principles and approaches to ethical decisions?
  - ✓ Show accountability for your choices and actions?
  - ✓ Able to be aware of the consequences of choices and actions regarding self, others involved and the community?
  - ✓ Integrate the process of reflection when facing an ethical decision?
  - ✓ Show awareness of the potential and varied consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences?

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# CAS Closing Interview/Presentation Questions

IB Diploma Seniors will be interviewed at the end of the 18 month CAS experience. Applying the CAS guiding questions (see p. 4) and seven CAS Learning Outcomes (see pp. 30-32) to your activities can help you prepare for this interview. The following are examples of potential interview questions:

1. Focus on one CAS activity in which you participated for an extended duration of time. What abilities, attitudes, and values did you develop, change, or examine as a result of this activity?
2. Focus on one CAS activity. What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?
3. What types of knowledge did you gain through your CAS experiences? How have you, or will you, passed on that knowledge to others? How do you think this new knowledge will be useful to you?
4. Which of the seven CAS Learning Outcomes do you feel was the greatest challenge for you and why?
5. Ethics as an area of knowledge is primarily concerned with how we determine what actions are ethical, particularly in our relations and interactions with others. How and when did your CAS activities challenge your personal ethics?
6. CAS guidelines stress selection of activities that provide “service and benefit to others.” Is service to others, in whatever form, a moral obligation? If so, on what should the obligation be based? If not, why?
7. Discuss your Senior Year CAS project: in what way(s) was this project a new role for you?
8. Leadership is an integral part of the seven CAS Learning Outcomes. In which activity or activities did you demonstrate leadership, what was your role, and how would you evaluate your success?
9. How did your feelings or emotions affect your ability to perform, make decisions, or reason in any of your CAS activities?
10. In what ways did your CAS experiences clarify or change your sense of what is important?

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