

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMME
JAMES S. RICKARDS HIGH SCHOOL CAS HANDBOOK

School year 2024-2025

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IB Mission Statement

“The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.”

What is CAS?

CAS stands for Creativity, Activity, and Service. It comprises 18 months of experiential learning activity that runs concurrently with the IB Diploma Program. IBO regulations require that students spend the equivalent of half a school day per week (approximately 3-4 hours) on CAS. The object of CAS is to produce balanced, reflective learners who care about their communities and the world around them. CAS should be a rewarding experience for the IB student.

General Requirements for the Student

- Concurrency of CAS with the IB Diploma Programme. CAS must be done consistently over the course of 18 months.
- At least one collaborative project of significant duration that ideally combines at least two categories of CAS. (Categories: creativity, activity, and service)
- A balance of all three categories of CAS within a student’s CAS program.
- Achievement of and growth over time in all seven learning outcomes.
- Evidence of planning prior to any CAS activity or project, demonstrated through project proposal.
- A consistent pattern of reflection during and after any CAS activity or project. Minimum of 1 reflection per month.
- Consistent use of ManageBac for recordkeeping and reflection over the course of 18 months. **At least one new reflection each month.**

- A final reflective essay of no fewer than 500 words summing up the CAS experience and describing how the student has learned and grown during the CAS process.
- Students must have an interview with their CAS Coordinator or Advisor each semester.

The Categories of CAS

Creativity:

Creativity involves any of the arts (music, drama, painting, photography, and creative writing.) It may also include learning something new (blacksmithing, salsa dancing, etc.) with a sharing/demonstration component. For an experience or project to count as Creativity, it must have either an end product or a performance. It needs to involve planning (such as lesson plans/coaching strategies) and then carrying out the plans. It should also have an element of problem-solving. NOTE: Just practicing something one already knows is not CAS. For example, routine practice with a musical instrument would not be CAS, but learning a more difficult piece or a new style of playing an instrument could be CAS.

Activity:

Activity is physical activity that contributes to healthy lifestyle. Simply playing a sport is not CAS, unless it involves reflection and learning. For example, an athlete should set goals, strive toward achieving them, and reflect on the learning process. Activity does not have to be fulfilled through team sports.

Service:

Service means an unpaid and voluntary meeting of a school/community need that has a learning benefit for the students. It must involve helping/working with people and/or animals, NOT THINGS. Creativity and activity should be blended with service activities.

A Note on ManageBac

All IB Diploma Program students at James S. Rickards High School are provided with accounts on ManageBac. ManageBac (<https://rickardshs.us.managebac.com>) is a web-based program that we will use to:

- Store all the information about your CAS experience, goals, evidence, supervisor reviews, and reflections.
- Help you to seek authorization and advice on your activities from the CAS Coordinator.
- Record the content and suggestions discussed during your CAS Coordinator interviews.

It is the expectation of the IB program at Rickards High School that students will upload reflections on ManageBac at least once every month.

Specific Requirements

IB juniors and seniors must complete 18 months of CAS between August of their junior year and May of their senior year. The student must complete a **minimum of one project or experience for each category of CAS, but should strive for an equal balance among the three categories.** Projects and experiences must meet the definitions of creativity, activity or service. Students should avoid brief, short-term projects/experiences (unless grouped with other similar experiences such as several health walks for awareness of health issues). The service component of CAS may also count toward the student's Bright Futures requirement, but students will need to document that on their own. **PRE-APPROVAL IS REQUIRED FOR ALL PROJECTS AND EXPERIENCES.**

All CAS projects, in order to be approved, must meet the four requirements stipulated by IBO (the following is quoted from page 3 of the IB CAS Handbook of 2008.) All projects must include

- “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.”

Completion of CAS depends upon achieving the seven IB learning outcomes. Not all learning outcomes have to be demonstrated in every CAS project, but the student must show some evidence for every outcome in either the reflection materials submitted in the CAS Portfolio or in conversation with the CAS Coordinator. The learning outcomes are listed below, quoted from pages 11-12 of the IBO CAS Handbook (2015):

1. “Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth

Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.

2. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process

A new challenge may be an unfamiliar experience or an extension of an existing one. The newly acquired or developed skills may be shown through experiences that the student has not previously undertaken or through increased expertise in an established area.

3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience

Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous experience, or by launching a new idea or process.

4. Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences

Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.

5. Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively

Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.

6. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance

Students are able to identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally.

7. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions

Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.”

NOTE: Students must get out of their “comfort zones,” try new things, push themselves to a higher level, meet new people, and learn more about their community.

CAS Stages

CAS experiences and projects should demonstrate the framework of the five CAS stages outlined by the IBO. The following description has been drawn from page 17 of the IB CAS Handbook:

“The five CAS stages are as follows.

1. **Investigation:** Students identify their interests, skills and talents to be used in considering opportunities for CAS experiences, as well as areas for personal growth and development. Students investigate what they want to do and determine the purpose for their CAS experience. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.

2. **Preparation:** Students clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of actions to be taken, identify specified resources and timelines, and acquire any skills as needed to engage in the CAS experience.
3. **Action:** Students implement their idea or plan. This often requires decision-making and problem solving. Students may work individually, with partners, or in groups.
4. **Reflection:** Students describe what happened, express feelings, generate ideas, and raise questions. Reflection can occur at any time during CAS to further understanding, to assist with revising plans, to learn from the experience, and to make explicit connections between their growth, accomplishments, and the learning outcomes for personal awareness. Reflection may lead to new action.
5. **Demonstration:** Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example, by sharing their CAS experience through their CAS portfolio or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke response from others.”

CAS Projects vs. CAS Experiences

There is sometimes confusion over the distinction between CAS projects and CAS experiences. A wide variety of short or long term experiences may be considered acceptable for CAS. A project would consist of a planned collaborative CAS experience over the course of at least one month, which allows the student to achieve and grow in several of the required learning outcomes. To qualify, a long-term project must involve at least one category of CAS and take at least one month to plan, implement, and complete. Students **must** complete at least one long term project that involves collaboration and ideally blends two or more CAS categories.

Documentation

An adult (counselor, sponsor, volunteer coordinator, etc.) may monitor/supervise student’s experiences in terms of appropriateness, quality, and participation. This individual **SHOULD NOT BE A RELATIVE**. Such supervisors must complete the appropriate forms and sign the appropriate places. It is best to get this documentation at the end of an experience or season. Supervisors will only be required at the Coordinator’s discretion.

Students must include documentation such as schedules, plans, letters, logs, pictures with captions, brochures, web-site printouts, lesson plans, rosters, journals/diaries, etc. All of which can be used as reflections to demonstrate engagement with CAS.

Recordkeeping, Evaluation, and Reflection:

- Type essays (double-space).
- Your dates and categories must match those on the supervisor's evaluation form.
- Once an evaluation is signed, you may not change the dates without creating a new evaluation sheet.

CAS Portfolio

All documentation is to be included in the student's CAS Portfolio. The student will complete this portfolio electronically in ManageBac. The student will upload all relevant reflections, evaluation, and documentation of planning and completion of experiences as well as achievement of and growth in the required learning outcomes. The portfolio will need to be complete by April 1st of the senior year for review by the CAS coordinator.

The CAS Portfolio should include the following materials:

- Reflective essay
- Initial CAS Plan
- Documentation for each project, including
 - o Multiple student reflections
 - o Supervisor Evaluation Form if applicable
 - o Supporting materials (photographs, brochures, journal entries, etc.)
- Interview notes for the four required formal interviews with the CAS Coordinator

Always keep copies of CAS materials in case of loss or if they are needed for supporting paperwork for other programs (such as Bright Futures.)

CAS Clarifications

- **No credit for helping a family business/member**
- **No credit for activities for which an IB academic credit or grade is earned**
- **No credit for passive activities such as visiting an art gallery**
- **Clerical duties (typing, filing, etc.) should be limited, and will only qualify if the student is learning something new.**
- **No credit for religious activities that are part of the regular services/programs**
- **No credit for activities that try to convert a person to a particular religion**
- **Possible credit for community service as part of a religious organization (rehabilitating houses, etc.)**
- **No credit for Vacation Bible School**
- **No credit for immersion trips/stays unless a specific aspect of the trip involves creativity, activity or service**

A Note on Fundraising Projects

Fundraising projects for worthy causes can provide opportunities to create outstanding CAS projects. They can also raise difficult ethical issues for the student, organization, and school if care is not exercised. The CAS program at James S. Rickards High School does not wish to discourage fundraising projects that meet real needs and will help the students develop as caring and creative individuals. However, we also do not wish to encourage rote, mundane activity nor put the students in the position of violating either their own or the school's ethical standards. Therefore, students planning CAS projects that involve fundraising must present a written application to the CAS coordinator, which will be reviewed by the CAS and the IB program coordinator. The project must meet all of the rules and requirements of the JSRHS CAS program. The student application will also need to address the following questions:

- Who is the responsible adult supervisor of their project? Contact information needs to be provided.
- Are the students receiving any type of financial compensation for the project? According to IBO rules, this would automatically render the project not Service.
- Does the project itself involve student planning and initiative beforehand, and is it followed by reflection afterward? What evidence will be provided that both have taken place?
- Does the nature of the project allow the students to achieve and grow in one or more of the seven required learning outcomes of CAS?
- Is the fundraising merely self-help for the organization or team carrying it out? The funds being raised need to benefit someone other than the students doing the fundraising. This is a problem requiring special consideration if the fundraising is being done by a sports team.
- The funds being raised must be directed toward a true, specific need. This may involve relief in the case of a natural disaster, research toward a cure for a disease, etc. In the example of a sports team, fundraising merely for that team's general fund would not be CAS. However, fundraising directed toward opening access in that sport to students who otherwise could not afford fees or equipment could be a CAS project.
- How will the fundraisers be accountable for their financial record-keeping?
- Is the service being done in an ethical manner that respects the individual receiving the aid, and provides true assistance?

Example of a Preliminary CAS Timeline

2024-2025 Juniors

September 13: Students have logged into ManageBac

September 20: Juniors plan CAS programs, begin experiences

September 23: Preliminary CAS Plans due in ManageBac

September 30: Students have begun uploading reflections in ManageBac (1 per month, so one for September is due by this point)

October 3-7: Junior CAS interviews with Coordinator or Advisor

January 9-13: Junior CAS portfolio check

May 15-19: Junior spring CAS interviews

2024-2025 Seniors

September 23: Senior fall CAS interviews due

December 5-9: Senior CAS portfolio check

January 13: Senior CAS Reflective Essay due

March 24: Senior CAS Portfolio due

April 3-7: Senior CAS exit interviews

Note: Completion of CAS is essential to earning the IB Diploma. Failure to meet key CAS deadlines will result in a conference CAS Coordinators and possibly with Dr. Williams considering your continued placement in the IB Program.

Volunteering Opportunities in Tallahassee and Leon County

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| American Red Cross | Leon County Schools |
| Animal Aid | Literacy Volunteers of Leon County |
| Big Bend Cares | Ronald McDonald House |
| Big Dog Rescue | Alfred B. Maclay Gardens |
| Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts | Mission San Luis |
| Challenger Sports | Museum of Florida History |
| Dick Howser Center | Salvation Army |
| Elder Care Services | Second Harvest Food Bank |
| Florida State Park Service | The Shelter |
| Florida Trust for Historic Preservation | Tallahassee Little Theater |
| Florida Tax Watch | Tallahassee Museum |
| Goodwill industries | Tallahassee Parks and Recreation |
| Habitat for Humanity | Tallahassee Senior Center |
| HOPE House | Teen Court |
| Humane Society | United Way |
| Kids Incorporated of the Big Ben | WFSU TV/FM Radio |
| LeMoyne Art Foundation | Boys/Girls Club |
| Leon County Animal Shelter | |

You can also check with VolunteerLEON or YouthCorps.

Further CAS ideas Addendum:

There are lots of cool things you can do from the comfort of your own home to do your part as a global citizen!

Check out these ideas for inspiration...

CREATIVITY

Having extra time and less resources than usual can spark a lot of great creativity, or time you finally have to pursue some passion projects...

- Create YouTube videos (but first have a theme...)
 - Baking videos
 - Minimalism (Watch the [documentary](#) and then try the [minimalist challenge](#))
 - Music
 - [Celebrities sing 'Imagine' to lift spirits](#)
 - Movie reviews
 - Fashion/beauty
 - Workout videos
 - Science demos
- Take online classes through [Coursera](#), [Udemy](#), [Khan Academy](#), [EdX](#), etc. and document your learning- the documentation should take the form of a creative product
- Try blogging or writing short stories/poetry
- Try out some baking or cooking recipes
 - [Tasty YouTube Channel](#)
 - [5 wholesome breakfast smoothies](#)
 - [Creamy one-pot pastas](#)
- Create an online art portfolio to showcase your work, or take online art classes; Alternatively, use your artistic side to share some depictions/expression of the current global situation
 - [10 University Art Classes You Can Take for Free Online](#)
- Work on developing your photography/videography skills
- Learn a DIY skill
 - Crafting
 - Scrapbooking
 - DIY Beauty/Health Products
 - [DIY Hand Sanitizer](#)
 - Crocheting/knitting
 - [Jonah's Hands Crochet YouTube Channel](#) (He's younger than you are!!)

ACTIVITY

Be sure to take good care of not only your mind, but your body as well...

- If you have a gym in your building or at home, use the machines and develop a weekly fitness plan for yourself to follow
 - [Fitness plan templates](#)
- Do some yoga
 - [Yoga with Adriene YouTube channel](#)
 - [Yoga with Kassandra YouTube Channel](#)
- High intensity workouts
 - [Youtube Channel: The Body Coach TV](#)
 - [30-Minute HIIT Cardio Workout with Warm Up - No Equipment at Home](#)
 - [5-Minute Epic Cardio Boxing Workout](#)
 - [30-Minute BodyCombat-Inspired Workout With Boxing, Kung Fu, and Muay Thai](#)
 - [K-POP Fitness](#)
- 30-day fitness challenges
 - [Yoga with Tim 30-Day Challenge](#)
- [Online wellness/exercise links \(Tons of great resources!!!\)](#)
- Mindfulness practices

SERVICE

Think about how you can be helpful to others from a safe distance...

- Create a website to fundraise for a cause
- Offer free online lessons for teaching a language or a skill to people who need it
 - [Speaking Hub](#) (online platform that enables Thai high school students to improve their English communication skills as well as learn about social issues and the SDGs)
- Sign up for [Be My Eyes](#) to help people who are blind or have low vision
- Set up a dog walking service for elderly neighbors