



## Resolution on Non-Discrimination and CAA Accreditation Standards

### Background:

Recently, ASHA issued a statement strongly urging Brigham Young University to reverse its decision to deny medical services to transgender clients at its Speech and Language Clinic (<https://www.asha.org/news/2022/asha-statement-on-brigham-young-university-administration-decision-to-deny-speech-services-for-transgender-clients/>). Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) may be allowed to discriminate against students and clients who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community based on the institutions' Title IX religious exemptions. State and federal laws may protect these entities. Currently, it is not transparent if or how the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) accredits university programs that may participate in discriminatory practice that is inconsistent with CAA standards and the ASHA Code of Ethics. The CAA states that for accreditation, "The program must provide evidence that students are given opportunities to identify and acknowledge the impact of cultural and linguistic variables of the individual served may have on delivery of effective care (these variables include, but are not limited to, age, disability, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status)."

University programs that actively discriminate against LGBTQ+ people, or any other protected group, harm their students, faculty, and staff, the community, and ultimately, the professions. These harmful practices are numerous, but three are enumerated below:

1. The omission of information about serving clients who are LGBTQ+ inhibits health outcomes for LGBTQ+ clients and increases the risk for self-harm, assault, and suicide (Carter, et al., 2019; Jin et al., 2020).
2. The omission of relevant course content and information about clinical service delivery to a significant portion of the population inadequately prepares students for clinical practice and is, by definition, discriminatory to LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and clients. Such omissions are adversely affecting the disciplines of speech-language pathology and audiology and are in direct violation of the ASHA bylaws *Article IX* and the CAA's own accreditation policy.
3. Academic programs that actively enforce university policies that deny LGBTQ+ individuals admission to the university or free and active participation in

meaningful life experiences based on their innate attractions and gender are in clear violation to the ASHA Code of Ethics, which prohibits discrimination in individuals' relationships with "colleagues, assistants, students, support personnel, and members of other professions and disciplines on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity/gender expression, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, disability, culture, language, dialect, or socioeconomic status."

Harmful discriminatory and unethical practices are inconsistent with the accreditation standards maintained by the CAA.

**Be it Resolved that CAPCSD will:**

- Request that the CAA consistently implement the non-discrimination values embedded in CAA accreditation standard 1.8 equitably across institutions, which includes prohibitions on discrimination based on all categories described in standard 1.8.
- Request that the CAA provide clarification on the alignment between implementation of CAA accreditation standards relative to the ASHA Code of Ethics and relevant public law for both academic and service delivery contexts.
- Provide time and space at the CAPCSD annual conference for the membership to discuss the importance of ensuring that non-discrimination values are maintained across CAPCSD member programs.

**Sponsored by:**

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**References:**

Carter, S. P., Allred, K. M., Tucker, R. P., Simpson, T. L., Shipherd, J. C., & Lehavot, K. (2019). Discrimination and suicidal ideation among transgender veterans: the role of social support and connection. *LGBT health*, 6(2), 43-50.

Jin, H., Restar, A., Goedel, W. C., Ogunbajo, A., Biello, K., Operario, D., ... & Mimiaga, M. J. (2020). Maternal support is protective against suicidal ideation among a diverse cohort of young transgender women. *LGBT health*, 7(7), 349-357.

*Passed by a majority of the member programs that voted on March 28, 2022.*