RECREATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAMS
CAS STANDARDS and GUIDELINES

Part 1. MISSION

The mission of Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be to enhance the mind, body, and spirit of students and other eligible individuals by providing programs, services, and facilities that are responsive to the physical, social, recreational, and lifelong educational needs of the campus community as they relate to health, fitness, and learning.

To accomplish this mission, RSP should:
- provide programs and services for participants that are conducive to the development of holistic health, particularly fitness and wellness
- provide comprehensive programs and services in a variety of program formats that reflect and promote the diversity of participant interests, needs, and ability levels
- provide participation, employment, and leadership opportunities designed to enhance learning, growth, and development
- provide participation, employment, and leadership opportunities designed to increase interaction and understanding among individuals from various backgrounds
- contribute to the public relations efforts of the institution, including the recruitment and retention of students, faculty members, and staff members
- facilitate service-learning opportunities for students
- work in collaboration with academic units to facilitate professional preparation opportunities for students
- provide programs, facilities, and equipment that are delivered in a safe, healthy, clean, accessible, and enjoyable environment
- ensure the effective administration, operation, and stewardship of all aspects of the RSP, working in collaboration with other services, programs, campus affiliates (e.g., faculty, staff, alumni, guests, families, general public), and academic units where appropriate

RSP must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their mission. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission of the institution and with professional standards. RSP in higher education must enhance overall educational experiences by incorporating student learning and development outcomes in their mission.

Part 2. PROGRAM

The formal education of students, consisting of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, must promote student learning and development outcomes that are purposeful and holistic and that prepare students for satisfying and productive lifestyles, work, and civic participation. The student learning and development outcome domains and their related dimensions are:

- knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application
  - Dimensions: understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences; constructing knowledge; and relating knowledge to daily life

- cognitive complexity
  - Dimensions: critical thinking; reflective thinking; effective reasoning; and creativity
• intrapersonal development
  o Dimensions: realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity
devolution; commitment to ethics and integrity; and spiritual awareness

• interpersonal competence
  o Dimensions: meaningful relationships; interdependence; collaboration; and
effective leadership

• humanitarianism and civic engagement
  o Dimensions: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences;
social responsibility; global perspective; and sense of civic responsibility

• practical competence
  o Dimensions: pursuing goals; communicating effectively; technical competence;
managing personal affairs; managing career development; demonstrating
professionalism; maintaining health and wellness; and living a purposeful and
satisfying life

[See The Council for the Advancement of Standards Learning and Developmental Outcomes
statement for examples of outcomes related to these domains and dimensions.]

Consistent with the institutional mission, Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must
identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes from among
the six domains and related dimensions. When creating opportunities for student
learning and development, RSP must explore possibilities for collaboration with faculty
members and other colleagues.

RSP must assess relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes
and provide evidence of their impact on student learning and development. RSP must
articulate how they contribute to or support students' learning and development in the
domains not specifically assessed.

RSP must be:
• integrated into the life of the institution
• intentional and coherent
• guided by theories and knowledge of learning and development
• reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population
• responsive to needs of individuals, diverse and special populations, and relevant
constituencies

RSP must reflect the needs and interests of students and other eligible users.

Valid indicators include needs assessment surveys, research findings, and documented best
practices.

RSP, in collaboration with other campus units and community providers when appropriate,
should design programs and services through participation, employment, volunteerism, and
leadership opportunities to encourage, enhance, and highlight the value of learning outcomes.

RSP should utilize various program delivery formats including:
• informal - to provide for self-directed, individualized approach to participation. Specific times and facility loc
- intramural - to provide structured contests, challenges, meets, tournaments, and leagues for participants with
- club - to provide opportunities for individuals to organize around a common interest. Opportunities should be
- instructional - to provide individualized or group learning opportunities, knowledge, and skills through activity
- extramural - to provide structured tournaments, contests, and meets between campus
  participants and other institutions.

In addition to these program formats, the RSP may utilize specialized designations to describe programs or service delivery, including aquatics, fitness, wellness, outdoor, special events, special populations, and facilities.

Program planning and implementation process must be inclusive and include:
- equitable participation for men and women, with opportunities to participate at various levels of ability and disability
- interpretation of institutional policies and procedures
- a variety of opportunities that reflect and address cultural diversity
- participant involvement in shaping program content and procedures
- co-recreational activity with opportunities to participate at various levels of ability and disability

Program operational planning and implementation process must include:
- participant safety through the use of rules, regulations, and facilities management
- effective risk management policies, procedures, and practices
- supervision of recreational sports activities and facilities
- facility coordination and scheduling
- consultation with groups and organizations for sport and fitness programming
- training of office and field staff
- conflict resolution management protocols
- procedures for the inventory, maintenance, and use and security of equipment
- recognition for participants, employees, and volunteers
- publicity, promotion, and media relations
- volunteerism in service delivery and leadership
- customer service practices
- promotion of socially responsible behaviors

Part 3. LEADERSHIP

Because effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations, Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) leaders with organizational authority for the programs and services must:
- articulate a vision and mission for their programs and services
- set goals and objectives based on the needs of the population served and desired student learning and development outcomes
- advocate for their programs and services
- promote campus environments that provide meaningful opportunities for student learning, development, and integration
- identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that foster or inhibit mission achievement
- advocate for representation in strategic planning initiatives at appropriate divisional and institutional levels
- initiate collaborative interactions with stakeholders who have legitimate concerns and interests in the functional area
apply effective practices to educational and administrative processes
prescribe and model ethical behavior
communicate effectively
manage financial resources, including planning, allocation, monitoring, and analysis
incorporate sustainability practices in the management and design of programs, services, and facilities
manage human resource processes including recruitment, selection, development, supervision, performance planning, and evaluation
empower professional, support, and student staff to accept leadership opportunities
encourage and support scholarly contribution to the profession
be informed about and integrate appropriate technologies into programs and services
be knowledgeable about federal, state/provincial, and local laws relevant to the programs and services and ensure that staff members understand their responsibilities by receiving appropriate training
develop and continuously improve programs and services in response to the changing needs of students and other populations served and the evolving institutional priorities
recognize environmental conditions that may negatively influence the safety of staff and students and propose interventions that mitigate such conditions.

RSP leaders also must...
empower student staff and participants to build their own leadership skills
value diversity through effective recruitment and retention of professional and student staff
identify organization values and innovative opportunities
establish risk management, technology, and marketing plans
establish strategic, operational, and resource utilization plans
manage facility resources
advocate for financial and physical resources

RSP leaders must educate other institutional leaders about the significant differences in mission among intercollegiate athletics, physical education and recreation academic units, and the recreational sports programs.

Leaders should establish effective working relationships throughout their institution, with special emphasis on those units that impact, affect, or support the mission of the RSP. Leaders should actively seek opportunities for collaboration that may result in partnerships that benefit the institution as well as the RSP.

Part 4. HUMAN RESOURCES

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish the mission and goals. Within institutional guidelines, RSP must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision; and provide appropriate professional development opportunities to improve the leadership ability, competence, and skills of all employees.

RSP professional staff members must hold an earned graduate or professional degree in a field relevant to the position they hold or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.
Degree- or credential-seeking interns must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and by relevant experience. These individuals must be trained and supervised adequately by professional staff members holding educational credentials and related work experience appropriate for supervision.

RSP should provide graduate assistant and/or internship opportunities to enhance professional preparation experiences. Desirable characteristics of interns and graduate assistants should include: knowledge of the principles and philosophy of recreational sports, demonstrated skills on leadership and communication, a well-developed sense of responsibility, sensitivity to individual differences, academic success, enthusiasm for working with students, and an understanding of current issues facing students.

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. They must be educated on how and when to refer those in need of additional assistance to qualified staff members and must have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments. Student employees and volunteers must be provided clear and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing staff development.

RSP should develop mechanisms designed to recognize employees and volunteers. These efforts should recognize contributions, improvements, and involvement.

Employees and volunteers must receive specific training on institutional policies and privacy laws regarding their access to student records and other sensitive institutional information (e.g., in the USA, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, FERPA, or equivalent privacy laws in other states/provinces or countries).

RSP must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish their mission. All members of the staff must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions, be knowledgeable about ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training and resources to support the performance of their assigned responsibilities.

Technical and support staff includes those positions with an expertise in such areas as customer service, facility/equipment maintenance and operations, marketing, information technology, fundraising, research, and business services.

All members of the staff must receive training on policies and procedures related to the use of technology to store or access student records and institutional data.

RSP must ensure that staff members are knowledgeable about and trained in emergency procedures, crisis response, and prevention efforts. Prevention efforts must address identification of threatening conduct or behavior of students, faculty members, staff, and others and must incorporate a system or procedures for responding, including but not limited to reporting them to the appropriate campus officials.

Salary levels and benefits for all staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

National salary surveys should be consulted when evaluating salaries.

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RSP must maintain position descriptions for all staff members.

To create a diverse staff, RSP must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, proactive, and non-discriminatory.

RSP must conduct regular performance planning and evaluation of staff members. RSP must provide access to continuing and advanced education and professional development opportunities.

Part 5. ETHICS

Persons involved in the delivery of Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. RSP must review relevant professional ethical standards and develop or adopt and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice. RSP must publish these statements and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

Ethical standard statements utilized by relevant professional associations should be reviewed in the formulation of RSP ethical standards.

RSP must orient new staff members to relevant ethical standards and statements of ethical practice.

RSP staff members must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained with respect to all communications and records to the extent that such records are protected under the law and appropriate statements of ethical practice. Information contained in students' education records must not be disclosed except as allowed by relevant laws and institutional policies. RSP staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved, or when otherwise required by institutional policy or relevant law.

RSP staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's policies pertaining to human subjects research and student rights and responsibilities, as well as those in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

RSP staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflicts of interest or appearance thereof in the performance of their work.

RSP staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they interact.

When handling institutional funds, RSP staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

Promotional and descriptive information must be accurate and free of deception.
RSP staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

RSP staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

RSP staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.

Part 6. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities and that may pose legal obligations, limitations, or ramifications for the institution as a whole. As appropriate, staff members must inform users of programs and services, as well as officials, of legal obligations and limitations including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial, and local governments; and the institution’s policies.

To address and minimize the risks inherent in RSP, a comprehensive risk management plan must be implemented.

Development and implementation of a risk management plan should include: identification of appropriate certifications, training and development of personnel, development and implementation of emergency action and critical incident plans, accident care and documentation, participant waivers and consents, participant conduct policies, and the inspection, supervision, and care of facilities and equipment.

RSP must have written policies on all relevant operations, transactions, or tasks that may have legal implications.

RSP staff members must neither participate in nor condone any form of harassment or activity that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.

RSP staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution and its officers, employees, and agents. RSP staff members must be informed about institutional policies regarding risk management, personal liability, and related insurance coverage options and must be referred to external sources if coverage is not provided by the institution.

The institution must provide access to legal advice for RSP staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

Recreational sports professionals should understand legal responsibilities related to individual rights and liability including but not limited to due process, employment procedures, equal opportunity, civil rights and liberties, and liability of wrongful or negligent acts.

RSP should conduct a periodic audit of its policies and practices with university counsel and risk management officials.
The institution must inform RSP staff and students in a timely and systematic fashion about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

Part 7. EQUITY and ACCESS

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be provided on a fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory basis in accordance with institutional policies and with all applicable state/provincial and federal statutes and regulations. RSP must maintain an educational and work environment free from discrimination in accordance with law and institutional policy.

Discrimination must be avoided on the basis of age; cultural heritage; disability; ethnicity; gender identity and expression; nationality; political affiliation; race; religious affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; economic, marital, social, or veteran status; and any other bases included in local, state/provincial, or federal laws.

Consistent with the mission and goals, RSP must take action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

RSP must ensure physical and program access for persons with disabilities. RSP must be responsive to the needs of all students and other populations served when establishing hours of operation and developing methods of delivering programs and services.

RSP must adhere to applicable government standards and legal directives regarding access.

RSP must recognize the needs of distance learning students by providing appropriate and accessible services and assisting them in identifying and gaining access to other appropriate services in their geographic region.

RSP must define the eligible user population, with consideration given to such groups as undergraduate and graduate students, faculty members, staff, retirees, alumni, and the general public.

RSP should:
- consider the impact of fees and charges on access to programs and services
- participate in establishing institutional facility scheduling policies to support and encourage appropriate and equitable utilization of resources

Part 8. DIVERSITY

Within the context of each institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must create and nurture environments that are welcoming to and bring together persons of diverse backgrounds.

RSP must promote environments that are characterized by open and continuous communication that deepens understanding of one's own identity, culture, and heritage, as well as that of others. RSP must recognize, honor, educate, and promote respect
about commonalities and differences among people within their historical and cultural contexts.

RSP must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

In support of diversity, RSP must:
• publish, post, and circulate a statement to articulate a commitment to diversity in programs, services, and staffing
• recruit, hire, and seek to retain a diverse professional and student staff
• include diversity education for its employees and volunteers
• reach out to diverse and under-represented populations through such means as surveys, assessments, focus groups, and campus organizations to identify needs and interests used in program design and delivery and in student employment practices

Part 9. ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT

To promote student learning and development outcomes, Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated program and service delivery expectations.

Members of the campus community should be involved in the selection, design, governance, and administration of programs and facilities. Students and other eligible users may be involved through participant, employee, and living unit committees, councils, and boards.

The organizational placement of recreational sports within the institution should ensure the accomplishment of the program's mission.

RSP must monitor websites used for distributing information to ensure that the sites are current, accurate, appropriately referenced, and accessible.

Evidence of effective management must include use of comprehensive and accurate information for decisions, clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, procedures for decision-making and conflict resolution, responses to changing conditions, systems of accountability and evaluation, and processes for recognition and reward. RSP must align policies and procedures with those of the institution and provide channels within the organization for their regular review.

To fulfill its mission and goals effectively, RSP must maintain well-structured management functions, including planning, personnel, property and risk management, emergency response, purchasing, contract administration, marketing, financial control, and information systems.

A short and long range planning document that specifies goals, objectives, student learning outcomes, strategies, and timelines should be developed to provide direction for the program. This plan should be reviewed annually.
Purchasing and property management procedures should be designed to ensure value for money spent, security for equipment and supplies, and maintenance of property inventories.

Other areas for consideration in determining structure and management of the RSP should include:
- size, nature, and mission of the institution
- scope of recreational sports programs
- philosophy and method of service delivery
- financial resources
- availability and characteristics of facilities

Part 10. CAMPUS and EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must reach out to relevant individuals, campus offices, and external agencies to:
- establish, maintain, and promote effective relations
- disseminate information about their own and other related programs and services
- coordinate and collaborate, where appropriate, in offering programs and services to meet the needs of students and promote their achievement of student learning and development outcomes

RSP must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for responding to threats, emergencies, and crisis situations. Systems and procedures must be in place to disseminate timely and accurate information to students and other members of the campus community during emergency situations.

RSP must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy for communicating with the media.

RSP should establish advisory councils to facilitate communication and collaboration with other campus and community units to improve programs and services. Representatives should be solicited from a variety of units and should represent diverse users. This may include representatives from student organizations, student union, clinical health services, health promotion services, counseling services, campus information visitor services, career services, student government, faculty and staff governance councils, conference services, residence halls/apartments, cultural centers, fraternity and sorority affairs, academics, campus police/public safety, athletics, alumni affairs, financial affairs, and physical plant. Community organizations may include hospitals and recreation and fitness centers.

Part 11. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have adequate funding to accomplish their mission and goals. In establishing funding priorities and making significant changes, a comprehensive analysis, which includes relevant expenditures, external and internal resources, and impact on the campus community, must be conducted.

RSP must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional protocols.
Institutional funds for RSP should be allocated to ensure long term viability. Sources of income may include governmental appropriations, student fees (e.g., general, recreational, or health), user fees, donations, contributions, sponsorships, fines, entry fees, rentals, grants, contracts, dues, concessions, and retail sales.

If student funds from any source are dedicated to RSP, those funds should be designated for programs and services that directly benefit students, and the students should retain first priority for the use of facilities, programs, equipment, and services.

The budget process must include consideration of all expenses that are incurred in order to produce a quality RSP.

Expenses include but are not limited to programs and operations, human resource processes and labor costs, support area expenses (e.g., technology, facility support, member services, marketing, research and development), equipment replacement, capital improvement, administrative cost recovery, and reserve account allocations.

Expenditures should be based upon departmental and institutional goals and protocols, periodic needs assessments, and cost/benefit analysis.

All members of RSP staff should be accountable for financial and other resources.

Part 12. TECHNOLOGY

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have adequate technology to support their mission. The technology and its use must comply with institutional policies and procedures and be evaluated for compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements.

RSP must maintain policies and procedures that address the security and back up of data.

When technology is used to facilitate student learning and development, RSP must select technology that reflects current best pedagogical practices.

Technology, as well as any workstations or computer labs maintained by the RSP for student use, must be accessible and must meet established technology standards for delivery to persons with disabilities.

When RSP provide student access to technology, they must provide:
• access to policies that are clear, easy to understand, and available to all students
• access to instruction or training on how to use the technology
• access to information on the legal and ethical implications of misuse as it pertains to intellectual property, harassment, privacy, and social networks.

Student violations of technology policies must follow established institutional student disciplinary procedures.

Students who experience negative emotional or psychological consequences from the use of technology must be referred to support services provided by the institution.
Part 13. FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must have adequate, accessible, suitably located facilities and equipment to support their mission and goals. If acquiring capital equipment as defined by the institution, RSP must take into account expenses related to regular maintenance and life cycle costs. Facilities and equipment must be evaluated regularly, including consideration of sustainability, and be in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

RSP staff members must have work space that is well-equipped, adequate in size, and designed to support their work and responsibilities. For conversations requiring privacy, staff members must have access to a private space.

RSP staff members who share work space must have the ability to secure their work adequately.

The design of the facilities must guarantee the security of records and ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information.

The location and layout of the facilities must be sensitive to the special needs of persons with disabilities as well as the needs of constituencies served.

The institution must provide adequate indoor and outdoor facilities with a documented facility usage schedule that includes prioritized blocks of time for RSP to accommodate the needs and interests of the campus community. The use of the facilities must be coordinated to provide efficient and effective utilization.

The schedule should be disseminated to all user groups and reviewed periodically.

RSP must ensure that staff members are knowledgeable of and trained in safety and emergency procedures for securing and vacating the facilities.

Institutions should use available research and assessment data when assessing facility needs. Consideration should be given to sustainability and to a balance of facilities that support the program delivery formats of RSP. Examples of such facilities include swimming pools, strength and cardiovascular training facilities, multi-purpose activity spaces, multi-use fields, nature trails, group exercise and dance rooms, challenge adventure facilities, martial arts mal/studio rooms, personal training rooms, mind-body studios, health and wellness labs, skateboard and rollerblade venues, and racquet sport courts. Facilities should provide activity areas that are diverse as well as flexible and spaces for such support activities as offices, member services, repair rooms, locker/shower rooms, and storage.

Social space should be provided for users to encourage socialization and an inclusive environment. Examples of such facilities include lounges, lobbies, or food service areas.

Renovation, design, and development of facilities must adhere to established federal, state/provincial, and local laws.

RSP may also refer to separate standards and guidelines for specializations governed by professional organizations for the use of facilities.
Technology resources including software and hardware as well as resources for training should be available to support RSP.

**RSP must provide equipment adequate to meet the needs of participants.**

Institutions should use available research and other assessment data when assessing technology and equipment needs.

**RSP must require personal protective equipment and safety devices as appropriate.**

Processes must be established for determining needs, inspecting, cleaning, maintaining, repairing, and replacing equipment.

**RSP must establish appropriate policies and procedures for responding to emergency situations, especially where RSP facilities, personnel, and resources could assist the institution.**

**Part 14. ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION**

Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must establish systematic plans and processes to meet internal and external accountability expectations with regard to program as well as student learning and development outcomes. RSP must conduct regular assessment and evaluations. Assessments must include qualitative and quantitative methodologies as appropriate, to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission, goals, and student learning and development outcomes are being met. The process must employ sufficient and sound measures to ensure comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other affected constituencies.

Evaluation procedures should yield evidence relative to student/staff recruitment and retention, the achievement of program goals, scope of program offerings, responsiveness to expressed interests, program attendance and effectiveness, participant satisfaction, cost effectiveness, quality of facilities, equipment use and maintenance, staff performance, recruitment and retention, and data as a result of benchmarking against other programs.

Data sources should include student and other eligible users and nonusers. Data should include program evaluations and internal or external assessments and should be maintained in the office of the RSP administrator. They should be accessible to planners of subsequent programs.

RSP should pursue best practices and meaningful research to review and improve programs and services.

**RSP must evaluate regularly how well they complement and enhance the institution's stated mission and educational effectiveness.**

Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving programs and services, identifying needs and interests in shaping directions of program and service design, and recognizing staff performance.

*General Standards revised in 2008; RSP content developed/revised in 1986, 1996, & 2007*