



FORTNIGHT

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A Communiqué focusing on topics related to Outcomes Assessment, Institutional Effectiveness, and Institutional Research produced jointly by the Office of the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Research (OIRA) at the College of Staten Island/The City University of New York

WHAT IS FORTNIGHT?

A **fortnight** is a unit of time equivalent to 14 days. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, the term is derived from the Old English *feorwertyne niht*, meaning "fourteen nights."

Inspired by the opportunities and challenges of Middle States Standard 14 and the desire to share information and best practices, **FORTNIGHT** is a communication vehicle which is distributed online and via hard copy to the campus community. As we revise the College web presence devoted to assessment topics and develop our graphics, **FORTNIGHT** will be archived on the website.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: BEGINNING A CONVERSATION

Assessment and accountability are on the minds of many across public and private sectors. In higher education, evidence of student learning - and systematic ways to document it - informs institutions and their stakeholders in planning and resource allocation decision-making. Regional accrediting bodies like Middle States that evaluate entire institutions, as well as national discipline-specific accrediting agencies, have been raising expectations for the rigor of assessment.

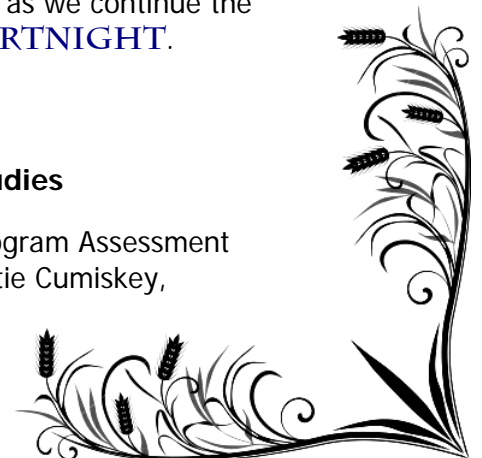
As we noted in the first issue of **FORTNIGHT**, Middle States accreditation (www.msche.org) requires that an institution meet 14 standards, the last of which focuses on the assessment of student learning. It is our understanding that this standard presents challenges for campuses, in part, because of the steps and time necessary to the evidence-based decision-making process of assessment.

It is important to make clear at the outset of our conversation that outcomes assessment activities are in no way meant to judge individual students or faculty members. Department mission statements, assessment plans, program goals, course objectives, and outcomes measures are all decisions made by faculty. We are here to serve as a conduit of information and resources, as we continue the conversation about these elements of assessment in future issues of **FORTNIGHT**.

COLLEGE UPDATES

Division of Humanities and Social Sciences: Interdisciplinary Studies

Women's Studies: The Women's Studies Program has named a Program Assessment Committee comprised of Professors Alyson Bardsley (Chair), Katie Cumiskey, Catherine Lavender and Ananya Mukherjea.



History: Membership of the Departmental Assessment Committee includes Professors Marcela Echeverri, Samira Haj, Eric Ivison (Chair), Catherine Lavender, Richard Gid Powers, Jonathan Sassi and Susan Smith-Peter.

Graduate Studies Committee

During the monthly meeting on October 6th, Interim Dean Alfred Levine (Chair) and Interim Associate Provost Susan Holak reminded department representatives that graduate courses and programs, as well as undergraduate offerings, are considered by Middle States in the reaccreditation process. Since some specialized electives may be offered only periodically, departmental assessment committees should note opportunities to collect assessment data. Later in the meeting, Professor Margaret Lunney reported on the format used by the Nursing Department to monitor progress in graduate course assessment. She noted the significant efforts on the part of Professor Eileen Gigliotti and other department faculty in data collection for an assessment cycle.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

The College of Staten Island is in good company in terms of Middle States reaccreditation, as many of our sister institutions are currently in the process of site visit preparation. Scheduled for Spring 2009 evaluation visits are Brooklyn, Hunter, Lehman, and Queensborough. Baruch and the Graduate Center will host Middle States evaluators in 2009-2010. CUNY campuses that just completed their decennial cycle in 2007-2008 include BMCC, City, New York City Tech, and York. We encourage you to reach out to friends, acquaintances, and department members in your disciplines at other campuses with regard to their Middle States visit preparations and experiences. Please let us know what you learn.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

The College of Staten Island has hosted four Day of Assessment day-long workshops. Agendas from the 2003-2006 annual events can be viewed on the OIRA website at http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/oira/assess_news.html. Videotapes and DVDs featuring speakers and panel participants are available for review from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. Please contact Warrick Bell at ext. 2086 or via email at bell@mail.csi.cuny.edu if you would like more information or the opportunity to review these presentation archives.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

FFF System of Measurement – Furlongs, Firkins, and Fortnights:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FFF_System

We invite our colleagues in computer science and other fields to discuss the merits of microfortnights, nanofortnights, femtofortnights and gigafortnights.

We wish to thank members of the CSI community for their encouraging messages and emails in response to the inaugural issue of **FORTNIGHT**.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **October 25, 2008**, for consideration to appear in a future communiqué.

