

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 and Assessment (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 to the campus community. Our prior issues will soon be archived on a new Assessment website now under construction. If you missed earlier communiqués, we would be happy to forward copies to you.

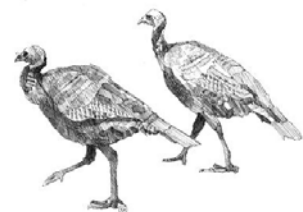
MISSION STATEMENTS, PROGRAM GOALS, AND COMMITTEES: SOME SUGGESTED CHECKPOINTS FOR FALL 2008

Assessment-related activities, data collection, and evidence-based decision-making have been occurring across the CSI campus in academic departments, administrative offices, and special programs for many years. The Office of the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment now serve as the center of these dynamic processes of renewal. Among our goals this semester were to get a sense of where departments are with respect to assessing student learning outcomes, and provide assistance when requested.

In September meetings with Divisional Chairs and in several department meetings since then, we have suggested that academic departments develop (if one does not already exist) and formally adopt a department mission statement. In preparation for reformation of the College-wide assessment committee, each department was urged to form a departmental assessment group (possibly with its Gen Ed, Curriculum, and Graduate Studies representatives as members); the committee's chair would likely become the department's College Assessment Committee representative. As you may have noted from the College Updates in prior issues of **FORTNIGHT**, several committees have been formed and are actively engaged in starting processes or continuing those already initiated by their department faculty. We plan to convene a College-wide Assessment Committee after the holidays, so we look forward to hearing from departments that are still finalizing these activities. Department mission statements will be featured on our new website.

COLLEGE UPDATES

All offices and departments at CSI contribute to the learning outcomes of students and their experiences on campus. The Division of Student Affairs encompasses many opportunities for student instruction, service, personal growth, and intervention. Michael R. Daniels, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, reports that a working plan outlining the assessment goals of the Division was prepared in 2000. The plan included a timeline designating which areas in Student Affairs would be responsible for conducting assessment during any given year. Division offices have been responsible for developing assessment tools and conducting an overall assessment within a designated timeframe.



Since 2000, the CLUE Program (College Life Unit Experience) conducted an extensive assessment of its area which resulted in a detailed report published in spring 2004 entitled, "CSI's CLUE Program: Thirteen Years Later." Additionally, the Office of Disability Services, the Career and Scholarship Center, the Health and Wellness Program, the Counseling Center and the Office of Student Life have conducted assessments for their areas.

As a complement to the timeline grid outlining the plan for assessment within the Division, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs maintains assessment resources and tools used by Division areas. The Division has conducted other assessment initiatives outside of office reporting areas, including a survey on student lounge space, a reading interests assessment, and an annual Student Interest Survey distributed at Orientation.

Vice President Daniels notes that the Division is moving towards a student learning outcomes model with several offices having already developed student learning outcomes for specific programs. A Student Affairs Assessment Committee made up of Vice President Daniels; Debi Kee, Associate Director of Student Life/Activities; and Chris Cruz-Cullari, Assistant Director of Disability Services, has begun reinvigorating foundational plans conceptualized in 2000 and developing meaningful future assessment initiatives.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

On Friday, November 14, three CUNY Councils (Testing, Institutional Research, and Assessment) hosted a joint day-long retreat at Hostos Community College which featured presentations pertinent to the juncture of their functional areas. Among the approximately 100 professionals in attendance were representatives from CUNY's central administration including, Dr. Sherri Ondrus, PMP Director, and Dean Cheryl Littman of the central Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. Warrick Bell, Coordinator of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA); Alan Hoffner, Director of Testing; and Susan Holak, Interim Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, attended the event from CSI. Warrick also served on the retreat organizing committee.

Topics covered at the retreat included testing and measurement, rubric development, and CPE scoring. Issues related to General Education assessment ran throughout the session tracks. Much interest and conversation followed the presentation by Barika Barboza, OIRA Coordinator from Hostos, who presented that institution's General Education mapping tool. This technology, generated in-house, allows students and faculty to rate the extent to which courses address the four General Education skill areas required at Hostos: Global Citizenship, Communication, Science & Math, and Academic Literacy.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

*Doubtless the President's neglect to issue his proclamation making Thursday, Nov. 25, a day of National thanksgiving until less than a **fortnight** before the holiday, has not in the least disturbed the Nation. Our Thanksgiving Day is always safe, even if both the President and the Governor forget that it is coming. The date is marked in red on the calendars, and preparations for keeping it, in the accustomed manner of later years, have long been afoot.*

The New York Times, November 15, 1909
(referring to President Taft)

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **December 8, 2008**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

