



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 are available on the Office of the Associate Provost website (www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment) which is now in development. If you missed earlier communiqués, we would be happy to forward copies to you.

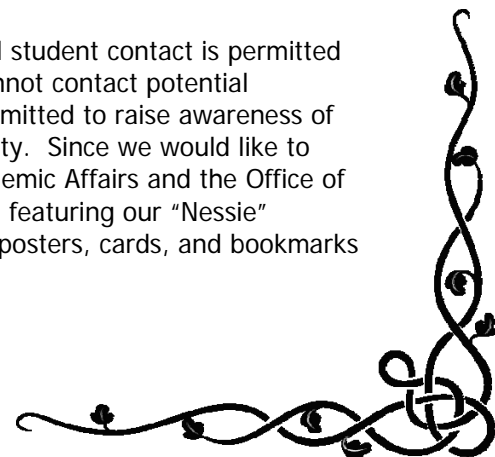
NSSE IS COMING! NSSE IS COMING! CUNY CAMPUSES TO TAKE PART IN NATIONAL SURVEY

Beginning on February 23rd, freshmen and seniors at the College of Staten Island will receive email invitations to participate in the 2009 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The survey, which is implemented by the Center for Post-Secondary Research at the University of Indiana-Bloomington, explores many facets of the student college experience including time spent on and off-campus, contact with faculty, assignment demands, academic advisement, and co-curricular activities. Other senior colleges in the CUNY Federation are participating in the 2009 survey along with hundreds of institutions across the country. Results from the NSSE will provide the CSI community with the opportunity to learn about our own campus environment, compare aggregate experiences across CUNY campuses and benchmark with respect to national results.

The NSSE (pronounced "Nessie") was first implemented in 2000 following several years of development. In an effort to learn more about factors that influence student experiences on campuses, to explore opportunities for strengthening connections between students and their institution, and, ultimately, bolster student success, the Pew Charitable Trusts provided initial funding to support instrument development and design.

Later in the semester, CSI faculty will also receive email invitations from the Center for Post-Secondary Research to request their participation in the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). This companion instrument (pronounced "Fessie") to the NSSE will ascertain the faculty perspective on student experiences at CSI. Taken together, the surveys provide a unique opportunity to explore the convergence and divergence of opinions. The College is also planning to implement a third survey, the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), to be administered to entering freshmen at the time of orientation.

The NSSE research design is very structured and carefully implemented; individual student contact is permitted only through email invitations and reminders from the NSSE organization. CSI cannot contact potential respondents individually outside of the specified messages. We are, however, permitted to raise awareness of NSSE on campus, publicize the survey, and generally inform our campus community. Since we would like to maximize our student and faculty response rate on the surveys, the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment are implementing an information campaign featuring our "Nessie" character in print, on transit, the website, and plasma screens. Please display the posters, cards, and bookmarks in high-traffic office locations. Additional material is available upon request.



In an effort to raise student awareness of the NSSE, Susan Holak and Warrick Bell made a presentation to CSI Student Government officers and students in attendance at the February 5th meeting. The group was very receptive to the NSSE and FSSE survey effort, and provided some useful suggestions for promoting awareness on campus. We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Student Government President Peter DeCrescenzo and other officers, as well as to Acting Dean Carol Brower for facilitating this presentation.

More information about NSSE, FSSE, and BCSSE (pronounced "Bessie," as you probably guessed) will be forthcoming in future issues of **FORTNIGHT**. Department chairs will also be informed about the surveys. Please take a few minutes to bring the NSSE to the attention of classes and student groups.

CAMPUS UPDATES

Academic Departments: Performing & Creative Arts

Susan Holak and Warrick Bell were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with PCA Faculty on February 5th to discuss their Department Assessment Schematic, data collection, and the role of their courses in General Education. The visit sparked a conversation about the undergraduate degrees conferred by the department, and the pros and cons of the Art Program and the Art/Photography Concentration offering a BFA instead of a BS.

Staff Offices: Sustainability Initiative

The College is gaining momentum in its sustainability efforts as evidenced by recent changes like ferry shuttle access, reduction in paper usage, and new lighting. During the January intersession, Lillian McGinn and George Targownik of the Campus Planning Office met with Susan Holak, Warrick Bell, and Barbara Cohen to discuss the many campus sustainability initiatives, supporting data requirements and CUNY's mandates. A major impetus in this office is CUNY's new Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory Program which will focus on cataloging the many sources of greenhouse gas emissions on campus, including boilers and generators, transportation vehicles, and chemicals, in an effort to reduce GHG levels.

Committees: College-wide Assessment Committee

The College-wide Assessment Committee will meet on Wednesday, February 25, from 2:30-3:30 in 1A-308.

CSI ANNUAL DAY OF ASSESSMENT

Please reserve the date for CSI's sixth "Day of Assessment" scheduled for Friday, April 24, 2009, from 9 am to 4 pm in the Green Dolphin Lounge. The event, which will feature presentations and activities related to different aspects of learning outcomes assessment and institutional effectiveness, is open to CSI faculty and staff as well as to colleagues from other campuses. More information about the Annual Day of Assessment will be forthcoming in future issues of **FORTNIGHT**.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

Dr. Linda Suskie, Vice President of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, will present an assessment workshop at York College on March 19-20, 2009. Invitations have been extended to other campuses; CSI has six spaces. If you are interested in attending as part of a CSI contingent, please contact Warrick Bell at ext. 2086 or via email at bell@mail.csi.cuny.edu.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

In a nod to our masthead and in recognition of Valentine's Day (February **14**), we invite you to read Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Parliament of Fowls* at <http://www.librarius.com/parliamentfs.htm> (especially lines 309-315) which reflects the early reference to birds finding a mate on the second *fortnight* of the second month.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **February 23, 2009** for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

