



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."

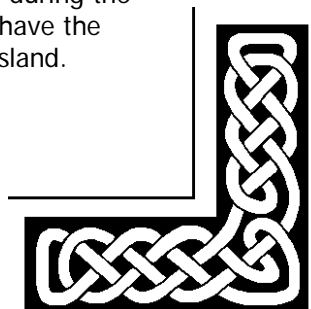
Inspired by the opportunities and challenges of Middle States Standard 14 and the desire to share information and best practices, **FORTNIGHT** is a communication vehicle which is distributed online to the campus community. Our prior issues are available on the Office of the Associate Provost website (www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment). If you missed earlier communiqués, we would be happy to forward copies to you.

COLLEGE TO EMBARK ON STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Introspection, evaluation, and change are integral to the existence of a healthy organization. Processes like program self-studies, discipline-based accreditation, and regional evaluator site visits present opportunities for assessment and renewal in an academic setting. Given that the most recent campus-wide strategic planning process at CSI occurred more than ten years ago, campus leadership and governance bodies have enthusiastically endorsed a major strategic planning initiative to set the institution's course for the next decade. Important issues related to the College's positioning, the constituents it serves, the many sources of potential, and the organization's strengths and weaknesses are at the center of this process.

As proposed, the strategic planning process will occur in five phases and will involve a broad range of participants. **Phase I (Justification of Need and Initial Approval)** started during Fall 2008, when discussion and endorsement of the process took place in the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Provost's Council, President's Cabinet, Institutional Planning Committee, and Faculty Senate/College Council. **Phase 2 (Process and Focus Groups)** is now under way, as decisions are made about the organization, composition, and implementation of focus groups to discuss the College's mission and vision. For this phase of the process, the College will engage external facilitators who have the expertise and objectivity necessary to conduct qualitative research. The year of 2010 will be spent completing Phase 2 and embarking on **Phase 3 (Strategic Plan Development)**, during which the collected qualitative and quantitative data will be organized to inform more targeted discussions about CSI's positioning, mission, and constituent groups. Once a draft plan is developed, **Phase 4 (Campus Approval)** is scheduled to occur during Spring 2011, when draft documents from the previous semesters' work are brought before the appropriate leadership and governance bodies. Finally, **Phase 5 (Adoption and Maintenance)** involves the critical step during which each division, department, and office will align its particular mission and functions with the College's new vision.

The College's strong endorsement of a new strategic planning process is a timely development for the Middle States self-study and evaluation visit, scheduled for Spring 2012. While they are independent in their purposes, strategic planning activities and self-study preparation will dovetail in a synergistic way during the next two years. The opportunities for focused conversations, introspection, and idea-generation have the potential to result in significant changes to benefit many constituencies of the College of Staten Island.



EPORTFOLIOS AS ASSESSMENT TOOLS: COLLEGE TO PARTICIPATE IN LAGUARDIA PROGRAM

The College of Staten Island was awarded a grant to participate in LaGuardia Community College's FIPSE-funded program, "Making Connections: ePortfolios, Integrative Learning, and Assessment." Used to present students with an opportunity to reflect upon, select, and integrate material that represents their progress as learners, ePortfolio technology is gaining wide acceptance in academic settings. The proposal, entitled "Piloting ePortfolios in Linked General Education Courses for The Verrazano School at the College of Staten Island," provides funding for the participation of Donna Scimeca, Core Program Coordinator, and Louise Levine, Adjunct Instructor in English, to attend monthly training sessions at LaGuardia; technical support at CSI for implementing ePortfolio technology in piloted Verrazano sections; and funding for a CSI Day of Assessment speaker on ePortfolio use and assessment. Interim Associate Provost Susan Holak, Principal Investigator, looks forward to the incorporation of ePortfolios in The Verrazano School and beyond, as part of instruction and assessment at CSI.

CSI ANNUAL DAY OF ASSESSMENT

As we reported in the last issue of *FORTNIGHT*, the 2009 CSI Day of Assessment promises to be an informative day for everyone in academic departments or support offices campus-wide. The event, scheduled for Friday, April 24, from 9am-4pm will feature the following presentations: Dr. William "EI" Samuels and Dr. Brian Carolan (Education), "Streamlining Data Collection Within and Across Departments for SPA Reports;" Dr. Paul Arcario (LaGuardia Community College), "ePortfolios and Outcomes Assessment at LaGuardia Community College;" Ms. Shannon Cammarano (Manager, The Hub), "One-Stop Student Services at CSI – The Hub: Inception and Evolution;" Ms. Caryl Watkins (Director, Career and Scholarship Center), "The Career and Scholarship Center: Our Mission, Services, and Evaluation;" and Provost William Fritz, "Benchmarking, Strategic Planning, and Institutional Vision." Alan Hoffner, Director of Testing and CSI's resident humorist, is planning a lunchtime activity featuring his special brand of levity. Spaces at this event are limited by the capacity of the Green Dolphin Lounge, so please RSVP to Robin Cavagnaro at ext. 2360, or via email at cavagnaro@mail.csi.cuny.edu

CAMPUS UPDATES

The College-wide Assessment Committee, which includes representation from each academic department, met on Wednesday, February 25 to discuss its activities this semester. Susan Holak provided a brief overview of the 14 Middle States standards to familiarize the group with the commission's expectations. The group also discussed some of the campus activities necessary to prepare for the next visit in 2012. In addition to finalizing mission statements and program goals, the committee is delving into a focused data collection effort about the Library, its use by each department, information literacy opportunities on syllabuses (particularly for majors and graduate students), and feedback following class assignments that have included library visits or training sessions. The committee is scheduled to meet again on March 25.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

Seachtain na Gaeilge is an annual worldwide festival held for a **fortnight** prior to St. Patrick's Day, to promote Irish language and culture. Éirinn go brách! www.snag.ie/eventsinternational.php

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data collection window remains open. Please continue to make announcements in classes and meetings with student groups about the importance of the survey for the planning and improvement of the College. It would be particularly helpful to remind students that survey invitations have been sent to their College **CIX email accounts**, not personal email addresses. We appreciate all of the efforts and cooperation on the part of faculty and staff to promote this effort.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **March 25, 2009** for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

