



FORTNIGHT

Volume 2, Issue 4

Late March 2009

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

www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment

WHAT IS FORTNIGHT?

A **fortnight** is a unit of time equivalent to 14 days. The term derives 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. Prior issues are available on the Office of the Associate Provost website, at www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment

FACULTY SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (FSSE) BEGINS APRIL 14

CSI faculty will soon have the opportunity to communicate their perceptions about student learning experiences at the College, student-faculty interaction, institutional strengths, and the amount of time that instructors devote to teaching and related activities, by responding to the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). Invitations to participate in the survey, which is administered by the Center for Post-Secondary Research at the University of Indiana – Bloomington, will be sent beginning on **April 14** to the College email addresses of full-time faculty who taught in *either* Fall 2008 or Spring 2009, and adjuncts who taught for *both* of these semesters.

According to the Center for Post-Secondary Research, the 2008 FSSE was completed by over 23,000 faculty members at more than 150 campuses nationwide. The faculty instrument is designed to complement the NSSE, allowing for the identification of points of convergence and difference between student and faculty perceptions of an institution's academic experience. These insights can potentially inform program planning, resource allocation, and approaches to the improvement of student learning outcomes.

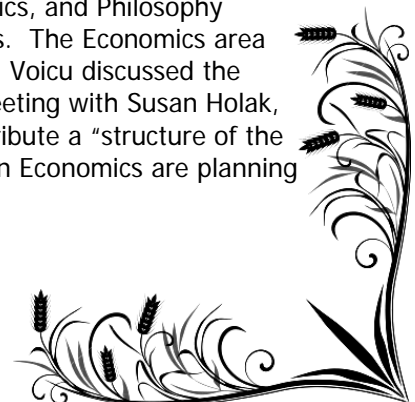
Maximizing campus response rates to both the NSSE and FSSE is critical to the usefulness of the results. We encourage department chairs to announce the FSSE to faculty both before and during the survey window. It is important to note that respondent anonymity is preserved in the survey reporting, so faculty should feel comfortable answering questions honestly. The information that we can glean from the NSSE and FSSE will be beneficial to the strategic planning process discussed in the previous issue of **FORTNIGHT**, and to the writing of the next Middle States self-study.

CAMPUS UPDATES

Academic Departments, Programs, and Courses

PEP – Economics

Given the distinct programs that are part of the Department of Political Science, Economics, and Philosophy (PEP), faculty members have opted to use separate approaches to assess their programs. The Economics area has a mission statement and program learning goals. On March 19, Professor Alexandru Voicu discussed the teaching tools and course evaluations that he and his colleagues are developing, in a meeting with Susan Holak, Warrick Bell, and Barbara Cohen. He reported that the Economics faculty members distribute a "structure of the major" document to students, which describes degree requirements. Faculty members in Economics are planning to embark on curriculum mapping as the next step in their assessment discussions.



English

Professor Ellen Goldner met with Susan Holak, Warrick Bell, and Barbara Cohen on March 10, to discuss the significant progress made by the English Department in approving a department mission statement and program goals for its four undergraduate areas: linguistics, literature, writing and dramatic literature. The department reported that, in addition, it has completed learning goals for the MA in English, and is progressing rapidly to the stage of curriculum mapping – evaluating how each of its courses contributes to program goals.

With respect to data collection, the department is beginning to develop rubrics for reviewing students' work in the various programs. Data have already been gathered to assess ENG 111 and 151. Professor Goldner also shared some preliminary ideas that English faculty members have about soliciting qualitative feedback, particularly from graduate students, which could take the form of surveys or reflective writing assignments.

Core 100

Donna Scimeca, Core Director, and Michael Batson, Adjunct Lecturer in History and veteran Core 100 instructor, updated Susan Holak, Warrick Bell, and Barbara Cohen on data collection in Core 100 sections, the evaluation rubric used by instructors, and the recent Core self-study, during a meeting on March 3. Core 100, a requirement for all students as part of General Education, covers three specific academic areas: US government structure, civil rights, and the economy. Course exams are in essay format, and multiple raters use a scoring rubric to evaluate outcomes across several sections.

Staff Offices: New Student Orientation/CLUE

Student surveys, a service log, and plans for implementing a national instrument were discussed during a meeting which included Brian DeLong, Director of New Student Orientation, Susan Holak, Warrick Bell, and Barbara Cohen on March 10. The office currently administers a New Student Orientation satisfaction survey, a Health Needs Assessment Survey, and a survey for Student Life. Data, particularly from the orientation satisfaction instrument, have been used to support grant applications and change office procedures. The group discussed the possibility of implementing the BCSSE (Beginning College Student Survey of Engagement) during this year's freshman orientation.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

The 6th CSI Day of Assessment will be held on Friday, April 24, from 9 am to 4 pm in the Green Dolphin Lounge. As we reported in the last issue of **FORTNIGHT**, the event will be both informative and entertaining. As an addition to the tentative agenda, we are pleased to note that Dr. Cecilia Macheski, Chair of Curriculum and Assessment at LaGuardia Community College, will be co-presenting with Dr. Paul Arcario in the presentation about ePortfolios and assessment. Space is limited, so RSVP soon to Robin Cavagnaro at ext. 2360 or via email at cavagnaro@mail.csi.cuny.edu. If you have scheduling conflicts and can only attend a portion of the day, please note that when you register.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data collection window remains open. Please continue to make announcements in classes and in meetings with student groups about the importance of the survey to planning and improving 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.

To celebrate the arrival of spring, we offer our **FORTNIGHT** readers a selection from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Hyperion: A Romance*.

"The red-flowering maple is first in blossom, its beautiful purple flowers unfolding a **fortnight** before the leaves. The moose-wood follows, with rose-colored buds and leaves; and the dog-wood, robed in the white of its own pure blossoms. Then comes the sudden rain-storm; and the birds fly to and fro, and shriek. Where do they hide themselves in such storms? At what firesides dry their feathery cloaks? At the fireside of the great, hospitable sun, to-morrow, not before; – they must sit in wet garments until then."

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **April 10, 2009** for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

