

FORTNIGHT

Volume 2, Issue 7

Mid May 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.

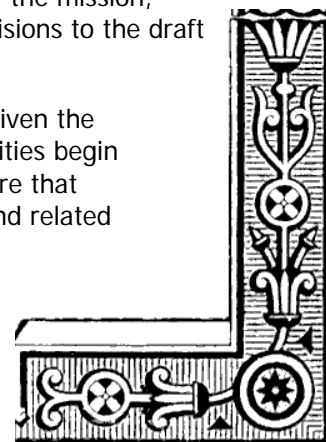
THE COLLEGE’S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS: AN UPDATE

As we reported in the mid-March issue of **FORTNIGHT**, the College of Staten Island is embarking on a strategic planning process, which is being designed to proceed in five phases. The institution has experienced dramatic changes in recent years; thus it is a good time to undertake a comprehensive analysis of CSI’s current situation and course for the next decade. The last complete campus-wide strategic planning process at the College of Staten Island that fully examined the mission, vision, and values of the institution occurred over 15 years ago. Phase I of the strategic planning process (Justification of Need and Initial Approval) took place during Fall 2008, with endorsements from many committees and governing bodies including the Faculty Senate/College Council.

Since our last writing on this topic, substantial progress has been made on Phase 2 (Process and Focus Groups). The Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), which serves as the steering committee for the strategic planning effort, began discussions regarding the process and committees to be used at CSI. The IPC wants to ensure that the process encompasses all areas of the college community, and that it is open and transparent. To that end, careful attention is being paid to the formation of focus groups that will be both representative of the college community, and viable and manageable in size. In order to provide maximum opportunity for participation and information dissemination, focus groups will be supplemented by Town Hall meetings, blogs, a dedicated website, and information in communication outlets, including **FORTNIGHT**.

Given the momentous information-gathering effort required, the College has decided to hire an outside consultant to facilitate the planning process. A Request For Proposals is being finalized to be sent out this month. The Institutional Planning Committee anticipates interviewing consultants during the month of June, in preparation for a final selection by July. After some preliminary discussion with the IPC to initiate the process, the consultants will begin meeting with divisional leaders, department chairs, and academic departments in August and September. According to the proposed timeline, focus groups are expected to meet in October, with Town Hall meetings following later in the fall. It is anticipated that the synthesis and preparation of an initial draft of the mission, vision, and goals statement for the College will occur during the January 2010 intersession. Revisions to the draft will be completed by the end of February.

The strategic planning process is expected to be completed during academic year 2009-2010. Given the expeditious timeline, it is important that department meetings and focus group preparation activities begin promptly at the start of the Fall 2009 semester. Department chairs, in particular, should be aware that communication may be forthcoming during the summer, notifying them of proposed meetings and related activities.



CAMPUS UPDATES

The Library

The Department of the Library has named its Departmental Assessment Committee. The committee, chaired by Dr. Linda Roccas, includes Professor Rebecca Adler Schiff, Professor Ewa Dzurak, Dr. James Kaser, Mr. Mark Lewental, Professor Andrew Leykam, Professor Robert Nelson, and Professor Wilma Jones.

Professor Wilma Jones, Chief Librarian, met with Associate Provost Susan Holak; Warrick Bell, Coordinator of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA); and Barbara Cohen, OIRA Survey Coordinator, on May 4 to discuss revisions to the library's faculty-staff and student surveys. Questions about new library resources, the CELT Center, library instruction, and technology will be added in preparation for survey implementation in Fall 2009 and Fall 2010.

The Center for International Service

Ann Helm, Director of the Center for International Service; Barbara Clark, Deputy Director; and Chris Tingue, Coordinator for Education Abroad, met with Warrick Bell and Barbara Cohen of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) on May 6 to discuss the functions, surveys and data needs of CSI's Center for International Service. The Center caters to the needs of visiting scholars, college staff, international students, study abroad participants, and faculty who are visiting institutions overseas. The study abroad programs alone serve about 600 students per year, including those affiliated with CSI, with our sister CUNY campuses, and individuals enrolled in other institutions across the country. In addition, the Center helps to develop and maintain international relations for the College and promotes international and intercultural learning through on-campus and off-site programs and services.

Considering aspects of the Office relevant to [FORTNIGHT](#), the Center for International Service has a comprehensive mission, which is listed in their brochure. Ongoing evaluations are carried out so that internal issues can be dealt with as they arise, but the Center would like to determine the ways in which the effects of their services extend beyond purely administrative functions. To this end, the OIRA and International Services discussed plans to gather and review data about the international students to whom services are provided.

The Verrazano School

New surveys, including one for second-year students in the learning community and an exit survey to obtain information from graduating seniors, were among the topics discussed by Dr. Charles Liu, Director of The Verrazano School; Katie Geschwendt, the learning community's coordinator; Associate Provost Susan Holak; Warrick Bell; and Barbara Cohen on May 12. Since its inception, The Verrazano School has been using a survey administered after a student's first semester at CSI. Going forward, some revisions in data collection may be instituted, now that the program is maturing and will soon have its first graduating cohort.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), which explores faculty perceptions of student experiences and complements the NSSE survey, was scheduled to be administered across the participating CUNY campuses beginning in April, as we reported in [FORTNIGHT](#) (Volume 2, Issue 4). Just before invitations were to be emailed, a processing delay occurred. Ultimately, there was concern at the CUNY central Office of Institutional Research and Assessment that faculty would have too little time to participate in the survey before it closed in early June, so administration of the FSSE to all CUNY campuses was withdrawn for this academic year.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

The Nepalese festival of Mata Tirtha Puja or Mata Tirtha Aunsi falls on the last day of the dark [fortnight](#) of the Hindu month of Baisakh, which occurs in late April or early May. People celebrate the day with their mothers, as a show of respect in return for the invaluable contributions they make to their children's lives, or by making a pilgrimage to the sacred site of Mata Tirtha near Kathmandu.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **May 26, 2009**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

