



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

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 CUNY PROFICIENCY EXAM: READINESS, RUBRICS, AND RESULTS

Implemented in 1997, the CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) is administered to all CUNY students seeking an Associate’s or Baccalaureate degree once they have completed 45 credits, and is viewed throughout CUNY as way to evaluate a number of General Education goals. The exam aims to demonstrate students’ academic literacy skills by assessing their abilities to understand and think critically, and write clearly, logically and correctly. The CPE consists of two separate tasks: Analytical Reading and Writing, and Analyzing and Integrating Material from Graphs and Text.

Each task is scored by separate groups of external evaluators, according to rubrics designed to evaluate criteria specific to the task; the rubrics were developed concurrent with the CPE itself to ensure that the test would be measuring the desired student outcomes. Two raters score each task; if their two scores differ by more than a pre-determined margin, a third evaluator also scores the task.

CSI offers CPE preparation workshops through the Office of Academic Support. These have demonstrated a high rate of success, especially with students who did not pass the test on their first attempt. If a student does not pass the CPE on their third attempt, they may appeal to the College’s Course & Standing Committee for the chance to take the test again.

The University has a central CPE Committee to oversee testing, with representation from each campus. Professor Yumei Huo of the Computer Science Department serves as CSI’s representative. More information about the CPE can be obtained through Professor Huo, or at www.cuny.edu/cpe

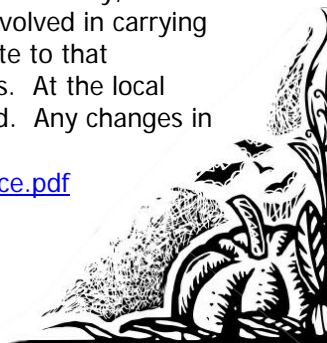
PREPARING FOR THE MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY: STANDARD 4

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The institution’s system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

The Middle States Commission adds further context to the language of Standard 4 as follows, “The Commission on Higher Education expects a climate of shared collegial governance in which all constituencies (such as faculty, administration, staff, students and governing board members, as determined by each institution) involved in carrying out the institution’s mission and goals participate in the governance function in a manner appropriate to that institution.” In the case of the CUNY Federation, the governing body is the CUNY Board of Trustees. At the local level, each college has its own governance plan, which might be periodically reviewed and amended. Any changes in the governance plan at the local campus level must be approved by the CUNY Board of Trustees.

CSI’s Governance Plan can be found on the College website at www.csi.cuny.edu/privacy/governance.pdf



CLOSING THE LOOP: THE OFFICE OF RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS REVISES THE WELCOME PROCESS FOR NEW STUDENTS

Prior to fall 2009, every student accepted to the College of Staten Island was introduced to the institution with a 10"x13" business envelope filled with forms, printed information, and immunization requests. With almost 8,000 of these packets mailed each fall and another 2,000 every spring, they were costly to produce, assemble, and mail. In addition, recipients who applied to another CUNY campus through the CUNY multiple admissions process often received similar amounts of material from each institution, so may not have focused on the contents of every packet.

Recognizing that considerable resources were being directed to these packets, and mindful of CSI's yield from CUNY's multiple admissions system, the Office of Recruitment and Admissions opted to revise the welcome process in fall 2009 by creating a simple full-color brochure that addresses basic information and the most common new-student inquiries. The full packet is still available by request.

Michelle Buonacore-Artz, Acting Deputy Director of the Office of Recruitment and Admissions, estimates that the College saved approximately \$8,000 in mailing costs alone during the fall semester as a result of this change. The same publication will be mailed out to students accepted for spring 2010. Student focus groups are now being planned to explore additional changes and improvements that can be made to the post-admission process.

CAMPUS UPDATES

The College's newly reconstituted Institutional Effectiveness Committee reconvened on Friday, October 16, 2009, having last met in September 2007. Representation from support offices included Publications, Communications & Marketing, Institutional Research and Assessment, Student Life, the Hub, the Center for International Services, the Health Center, Sponsored Programs and Research, Finance and Administration, Special Events, Registrar, Associate Provost, Center for the Arts, Library, Alumni Office, Buildings and Grounds, Auxiliary Services, Academic Support, Academic Advising, OIT, and Enrollment Management. The discussion included concepts of organizational structure, the Middle States Log, Middle States Standards, and a sample mission statement and goals for administrative offices, citing the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment as an example. A list of suggested transitions, interventions and changes was provided to help encourage the reflective evaluation of offices' changing roles and responsibilities in the College.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

CUNY Workshops - Susan Holak and Warrick Bell attended the second of three CUNY-wide Assessment Workshops scheduled on Friday mornings at the Macaulay Honors College on West 67th Street. On October 9, Ms. Diane Phillips, Director of Institutional Research at Macaulay Honors College and Ms. Vanessa Vacchiano, Coordinator of Assessment at Baruch College, presented a seminar on content analysis and the use of qualitative data in assessment. Discussion topics included inductive and deductive approaches, strategies to embed analysis opportunities in class work, and software products. Attendees participated in several analysis exercises.

Faculty Surveys – As noted in Fortnight (Volume 3, Issue 3), CUNY's central office is implementing the nationwide COACHE survey for untenured faculty in tenure-track positions. The parameters of this study exclude faculty who began their service in fall 2009 from the participant pool. The University Faculty Senate has also just announced that it is repeating its survey of faculty satisfaction. Postcard announcements and logon instructions for the online UFS survey have been mailed to faculty home addresses. A third opportunity for faculty to contribute to the University's understanding of its performance, the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) which was planned for last spring, has been rescheduled for implementation in spring 2010.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

In Tim Burton's 1999 film adaptation of *Sleepy Hollow*, the Burgomaster tells Ichabod Crane of three people who have been murdered in the town, "all within a **fortnight**. Each one found with the head lopped off."

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **November 11, 2009**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

