



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 MIDDLE STATES LOG: A GROWING CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS, DOCUMENTATION, AND STANDARDS

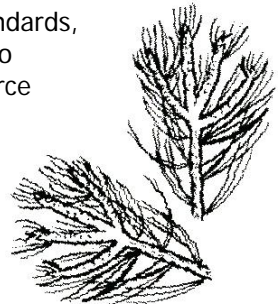
While the “Middle States Log” has been mentioned – and pages of it exhibited in venues and meetings throughout campus during the last eighteen months – we have never formally described this project in its entirety. It seems appropriate as we officially mark the start of the Middle States self-study process and begin Volume 4 of **FORTNIGHT**, that we describe the development and contents of this important resource.

Beginning in Fall 2008, the Office of the Associate Provost and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) immersed themselves in learning about the Middle States reaccreditation process, assessing information needs, and developing systems in preparation for the self-study. The two Offices agreed that it would be useful to develop a database in which meetings, events and relevant announcements from across the campus were recorded, including such information as the participating office(s), individuals involved, key issues, any relevant Middle States standard(s), and supporting documentation.

Over the last eighteen months, the Middle States Log has become more elaborate and extensive. Barbara Cohen, Survey Coordinator in the OIRA, is responsible for maintaining the Log, and receives input from key contributing individuals across the campus. They include Sandy Sanchez, President’s Office; Peggy Fuller, Office of the Vice President of Administration and Finance; and Penny McOlvin, Enrollment Management. More administrative areas will be added to the Log compilation process.

We are pleased to announce that plans to transform the Middle States Log from a simple document to a more dynamic resource are underway. In cooperation with the Computer Science Department, an undergraduate student with experience in database management is working on a long-term project in OIRA to enhance and improve the Log’s capabilities.

We anticipate that the Middle States Log will be a valuable and convenient resource for the Working Groups involved in writing the self-study document. Academic departments, staff offices, and operations throughout the campus are all involved in important initiatives to help facilitate student learning, streamline operations, and improve service delivery; these activities help demonstrate that the College meets the Middle States accreditation standards, and they are now recorded in a convenient, comprehensive, and systematic way. It is our intention to maintain the Log going forward and to continue to refine it, to make it a more readily available resource for the campus.



PREPARING FOR THE MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY: STANDARD 8

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

The institution seeks to admit students whose interest, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

The College's Admissions Committee, which oversees standards, outreach activities, and policies related to the admissions process, is central to meeting Middle States Standard 8. In our coverage of the fourteen standards, Standard 8 is the first of seven standards to address the educational experience.

CLOSING THE LOOP: CSI'S LIBRARY MAKES CURLING UP IN A COMFORTABLE CHAIR WITH A GOOD BOOK POSSIBLE

The process by which the Library arrived at its selection of comfortable seating is a very interesting example of the use of the feedback loop. Chief Librarian Wilma Jones noted that between 2004 and the present, several surveys relating to the Library focused on seating preferences and designs. The Library faculty also used observational research to ascertain how seating is used, where chairs were moved throughout the day, and what seating preferences Library patrons have on different floors. Herman Miller "Aeron" chairs (both with and without arms) rank at the top of the list of the CSI community's preferences, and we are pleased to report that many more chairs in this style are on order!

CAMPUS UPDATES

Warrick Bell, Coordinator of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, and Barbara Cohen, Survey Coordinator, represented Associate Provost Susan Holak at the Student Affairs Directors Meeting on January 27, at which time they discussed the Middle States reaccreditation process and the College's approximate anticipated timeline. Directors were also reminded to review their office mission statements and contribute to the Middle States Log, the compendium of events and documentation housed in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

CSI ANNUAL DAY OF ASSESSMENT

The seventh CSI Day of Assessment is scheduled for Friday, April 9, 2010, from 9am to 4pm in the Green Dolphin Lounge. Modeled after last year's very successful format, it will feature presentations spanning academic departments, special programs and operations, highlighting approaches and activities related to assessment and institutional effectiveness. The event is open to both the CSI community and colleagues from other campuses; last year, CSI hosted guests from eight sister institutions. Alan Hoffner, Director of College Testing and CSI's resident jester, is planning a special program segment to highlight the entertaining side of these important topics. Space is limited, so mark your calendars. Registration information will be forthcoming in future issues of [FORTNIGHT](#).

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

Associate Provost Susan Holak was invited to participate in a plenary panel discussion, "Preparing for and Moving on from Middle States," at the annual Joint Institutional Research/Testing/Assessment Council Retreat on Friday, February 5, 2010, at City College. Given the recent challenges faced by many CUNY campuses while going through the reaccreditation process, the Retreat focused on topics related to Middle States. The plenary panel, moderated by Dr. Michael Anderson, Director of Assessment at Brooklyn College, also included representatives from Lehman College and Queensborough Community College. Communication on campuses with regard to Middle States and assessment was one of the topics covered, so copies of [FORTNIGHT](#) were distributed to the audience to illustrate one of CSI's approaches to information dissemination.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

Danny Rubin, the screenwriter for the film *Groundhog Day*, originally planned to have the lead character relive the same day for the equivalent of 10,000 years. The film studio countered with two weeks – a "Groundhog [Fortnight](#)" – but director and co-writer Harold Ramis imagined the story lasting for about 10 years.

- Commentary track, *Groundhog Day* 15th Anniversary Edition.

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, 2010** for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

