



# FORTNIGHT

Volume 4, Issue 2

Late February 2010

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

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## 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](http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment)

## MIDDLE STATES REACCREDITATION 2011-2012: A LOOK AT THE PROCESS AND OUR PROGRESS TO DATE

As we have reported in past issues of **FORTNIGHT**, the College of Staten Island has now officially begun its Middle States reaccreditation self-study process, which will culminate in a visit by an evaluation team in 2011-2012. This process presents the campus with an exciting opportunity for retrospection, introspection, analysis, and renewal. It is a vast endeavor involving individuals and offices from the entire campus community, which takes well over two years to complete. We anticipate that the process will result in a thorough self-assessment, given this opportunity to focus the wealth of talent and diverse perspectives on our institution.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education requests that its member institutions approach the self-study process in two phases: the Self-Study Design phase, followed by the full Self-Study Process. The College of Staten Island is currently in the Design phase, which officially began just after the Middle States Self-Study Institute that was held in mid-November. Associate Provost Susan Holak and Warrick Bell, Coordinator of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, were CSI's representatives at that mandatory, invitation-only event. The purpose of the Self-Study Institute is to disseminate up-to-date information about the self-study process, train campus leaders, provide opportunities for interaction with the Middle States Vice-Presidential liaisons, and hear from institutions that have recently experienced the process.

There is a very brief window between the November Institute and the next major milestone in the College's reaccreditation process: a required visit of our Middle States Vice President to our campus later this semester. Prior to this visit, the College needs to have a substantial draft of its Self-Study Design document ready for submission to Middle States. This document, which must be completed in the next few weeks, requires that a design structure has been determined, a Steering Committee is in place, and Working Groups have been named. The Working Groups and Steering Committee should have met at least once during this phase of the self-study process to discuss charges and develop research questions.

The College is in the process of preparing for this milestone. Both the Steering Committee and Working Groups have taken shape, and the Steering Committee held meetings on February 18 and 24, during which its members voted unanimously to endorse the proposed Self-Study Design. Responses to Working Group participation invitations have been overwhelmingly accepted, and the proposed Working Groups will be meeting during the first and second weeks of March. More details about the Self-Study Design, Working Group assignments, and plans for the major research and writing effort that will take place in 2010-2011 will be discussed in future issues of **FORTNIGHT**, and will also be disseminated on the College's forthcoming Middle States website.



## PREPARING FOR THE MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY: STANDARD 9

### Standard 9: Student Support Services

*The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.*

The College of Staten Island provides a wide array of services and support programs to address student needs and foster success. During a student's career on campus, for example, they may begin by interacting with New Student Orientation, Financial Aid, SEEK, and taking SPD courses. As they progress through their studies, they could become involved with Student Activities, register with the Office of Disability Services for special assistance, or benefit from the Emerging Leaders Program. Academic support might be obtained through the Office of Academic Support, the English Writing Center, or tutoring labs. Assistance with internship applications, career advice, or résumé consultations might be sought in the Office of Careers, Scholarship, and Awards. These are just a few of the panoply of opportunities and supportive resources provided by the College that help to demonstrate compliance with Standard 9.

## CLOSING THE LOOP: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT USES SURVEYS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' POST-GRADUATION SUCCESS & SATISFACTION

Among the topics that the Education Department covers in their alumni surveys are questions about graduates' career satisfaction, and which areas of their job they find stressful. From these data, the department has found that those teachers who learn to handle relationships with their students' parents are much happier in their careers than those for whom parental relationships are a difficulty. Based on this set of findings, the department now provides more and earlier opportunities for student teachers to learn how to interact with parents. The department has also added items to its graduating student and alumni surveys to monitor how well this early intervention is preparing its graduates for more satisfying – and thus perhaps more successful – careers.

## CSI ANNUAL DAY OF ASSESSMENT

As noted in the previous issue of *FORTNIGHT*, the 2010 CSI Day of Assessment is scheduled for Friday, April 9, 2010, from 9 am to 4 pm in the Green Dolphin Lounge. This year's program will again feature five presentations, which highlight varied assessment and institutional effectiveness initiatives from diverse sectors of the campus community. Presenters representing the Business Department, the Library, the STEAM Project, transportation and operations, and the Middle States reaccreditation effort will share information on survey data use, closing the loop, and campus renewal. Alan Hoffner will again add perspective to our five topic areas in his own lunchtime segment. The Day of Assessment is open to all our CUNY colleagues, but space in the Green Dolphin Lounge is limited. If you are planning to attend all or part of the day, please register for the event by contacting Robin Cavagnaro in the Testing Office at ext. 2360, or via email at [robin.cavagnaro@csi.cuny.edu](mailto:robin.cavagnaro@csi.cuny.edu). We ask that you let her know about special dietary restrictions, as luncheon will be served.

## CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), originally scheduled for implementation last spring but delayed by central administrative issues, will be distributed this semester. As a complement to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that was administered last year, the Faculty Survey asks instructors about their perceptions of student experiences, activities, and engagement on campus. These responses may be used as a lens through which to gain understanding about student feedback. More details about the FSSE schedule and faculty invitations to participate will appear in future issues of *FORTNIGHT*.

## FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

In a letter to his wife Abigail dated 12 August 1776, John Adams wrote, "These **middle States** begin to taste the Sweets of War. Ten Thousand Difficulties and wants occur, which they had no Conception of before. Their Militia are as clamorous, and impatient of Discipline, and mutinous as ours, and more so. There has been seldom less than four Thousand Men in this City at a Time, for a **fortnight** past, on their March to New Jersey. Here they wait untill We grow very angry, about them, for Canteens, Camp Kettles, Blanketts, Tents, Shoes, Hose, Arms, Flints, and other Dittoes, while We are under a very critical Sollicitude for our Army at New York, on Account of the Insufficiency of Men."

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **March 10, 2010** for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

