



FORTNIGHT

Volume 5, Issue 1

Mid September 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

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.

Now in its third year, **FORTNIGHT** continues to increase its distribution with a list exceeding 500 recipients and growing. As in our two previous years, we plan to compose 14 issues in 2010-2011. In addition to serving as a vehicle for discussing assessment-related items, techniques, and current topics, **FORTNIGHT** has become an important mechanism for documenting campus accomplishments in assessment. All prior issues are available on the website of the Office of the Associate Provost at www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment.

Our plans for 2010-2011 include significant focus on the Middle States Self-Study and the Strategic Planning Process. Volume 5 (Fall 2010) will feature coverage of the Middle States Self-Study design and the charge of each of the seven Working Groups. The seven issues of Volume 6 (Spring 2011) will revisit each of the Working Groups to provide updates on their process and research. It is also our intention to retain our **CLOSING THE LOOP** segment, in which we highlight exemplary practices of improvement and renewal on campus.

We welcome and appreciate topic suggestions, examples of best practices, and news from academic departments and offices. As noted, our distribution list continues to increase; please forward new recipient suggestions to us. The campus focus on assessment, institutional effectiveness, improvement, and renewal continues to grow at a rapid rate. We look forward to being part of that evolution and wish everyone a successful academic year.

SUMMER RECAP AND A LOOK AHEAD TO 2010-2011: THE MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY PROGRESSES

At a time when the campus pace is usually a bit more leisurely, much activity and progress was made on two key initiatives during the summer months of 2010: the Middle States Self-Study Process and the Strategic Planning Process. Following the major April 14th self-study milestone of the campus visit by Dr. Barbara Loftus, our Middle States Commission Vice Presidential Liaison, the College moved on to the next phase of the process. Since early summer, revision of the self-study design and self-study questions has been ongoing. As noted above, the College's design consists of seven Working Groups, each focusing on two or more of the 14 Middle States Standards (the Standards were reviewed in Volumes 3 and 4 of **FORTNIGHT**); Working Groups are co-chaired by a member of the administration and a faculty member. The Steering Committee includes the Working Group Co-Chairs, the Chairs of the three Advocate Groups, the Co-Chairs of the Middle States Process Susan Holak and Richard Powers, and Provost William Fritz.

Working Groups are charged with preparing reports that cover their assigned standards, demonstrating compliance with the Middle States Commission's “fundamental elements” of each Standard, while also looking forward a bit to development and recommendations. This process starts with the formulation of questions that each group will address in its report. The seven resulting reports will be merged into one cohesive self-study document, with a first draft anticipated by the end of this academic year.

In preparation for the ambitious timeline for 2010-2011, the Steering Committee has been working to hone self-study questions and conduct a “gap analysis” to make certain that questions potentially covered Middle States Commission's requirements. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) has been working to expand a vast document repository on the



Middle States Self-Study SharePoint site in preparation for the imminent Working Group activity. At its September 3 meeting, the Steering Committee discussed a revised draft timeline with significant detail about Working Group report deadlines, preparation of the initial self-study draft, and external evaluator visits.

THE MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY PROCESS: WORKING GROUP 1

Co-Chairs: Dr. Ann Lubrano, Acting Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Programs and Strategic Planning Process Liaison
Dr. Mary O'Donnell, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Nursing

Working Report Title: Supporting the Institution's Mission and Goals Through Planning, Implementation, and Assessment

As noted above, **FORTNIGHT** will continue to serve as a window to the Middle States self-study process by presenting each of the seven Working Groups this semester, one per issue. Working Group 1 is focusing on elements from Middle States Standards 1, 2, 3, and 7. As such, members are considering the College's new mission and strategic directions; planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal; our institutional resources, and institutional assessment. Their charge reads as follows:

Informed by the College's Strategic Planning Process and the related Special Emphasis of this self-study ("developing and strengthening assessment and evidence-based decision-making to continue building institutional effectiveness"), Working Group 1 will examine the manner and extent to which the College is achieving its mission and goals, is working towards its vision, and is remaining true to its values. The Working Group will analyze the alignment of mission and goals with planning and resource allocation processes, institutional effectiveness, and procedures for informed decision-making.

As is the case with all seven groups, Working Group 1 represents a broad spectrum of campus constituents. Given their charge, however, the membership taken together has knowledge of strategic planning, familiarity with budgets, some corporate experience, and exposure to resource management and institutional effectiveness.

CLOSING THE LOOP: CENTER FOR THE ARTS USES DATA TO PLAN EVENTS AND FUTURE PROGRAMMING

Assessment-related activities are ongoing in the Center for the Arts in relation to program selection, event scheduling, and ticket sales management. John Jankowski, Director of the Center for the Arts, reports that considerable revisions have been made in the past few years to the ways that the Center plans and manages its events and facilities.

Of particular interest is a possible change in ticketing practices: sales and projection data indicate that a different system may not only be cheaper for the College to manage, but could provide more opportunities to examine patrons' experiences. Revised data acquisition and management facilities would allow the Center to investigate attendance habits and audience characteristics, which in turn could be used to support maintenance funding and diverse programming.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

Late in the summer of 1861, The *Paterson Guardian* reported that "The rebels and destroyers of the Union are at work in the Middle States," and that "During the last **fortnight** agents of the Southern Confederacy have been visiting various sections of New-Jersey."

The **FORTNIGHT** staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome new faculty and staff members. Faculty arrivals were introduced to this communiqué during the New Faculty Orientation sessions and have been added to the distribution list. We wish all our new colleagues a creative, fulfilling, and lengthy career as part of the College of Staten Island community.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **September 24, 2010**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

