

FORTNIGHT

Volume 5, Issue 3

Mid October 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.

STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT INFLUENCED BY NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

While much of our discussion about the assessment of student learning outcomes at the College of Staten Island has focused to date on academic departments, there is substantial ongoing effort to assess learning in programs outside of these areas. Co-curricular activities, student activities, roles in student government, peer advising, programs for students with disabilities, and athletics are just a few of the campus opportunities or programs that foster learning, personal growth, and skill-building. Many education researchers including George Kuh, Peter Ewell, and Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini have documented that considerable learning takes place out of the classroom.

Nationally, organizations such as NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) provide resources and guidance for the evaluation of student learning in such areas as student affairs, student development, and student services. CAS specifically focuses on six Student Outcome Domains: knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application; Cognitive Complexity; Intrapersonal Development; Interpersonal Competence; Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement; and Practical Competence. Each of these domains is divided into several dimensions, and all integrate with recommendations laid out in the books *Learning Reconsidered* and *Learning Reconsidered 2*.

CSI’s Division of Student Affairs has been implementing assessment processes for a number of years; presentations from offices including Career and Scholarship Center and Disability Services have been featured at the College’s annual Day of Assessment. Professional development opportunities and divisional workshops on assessment have spurred interest and competence in the assessment of student learning. Now under the leadership of Vice President A. Ramona Brown, the Divisional Assessment Committee includes Katie Acuri (Athletics), Linda Conte (Health and Wellness), Brian DeLong (New Student Orientation), Geoffrey Hempill (Career and Scholarship), John Jankowski (Center for the Arts), Debi Kee (Student Activities), Winnie Ng Brophy (Pluralism and Diversity), and Dr. Roberta Vogel (SEEK). Christopher Cruz Collari, Director of the Office of Disability Services, serves as the Committee’s chair.

The Student Affairs Division continues to build collaborative enterprises with Academic Affairs in areas such as First-Year Experiences, Learning Communities, and Civic Engagement. Such initiatives offer many opportunities for the assessment of processes as well as of student learning.

One example of the emergence of such innovative cross-divisional programming at the College is a collaboration between Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and the Office of Disability Services. A Writing Fellow has been working with Disability Services on evaluating learning outcomes related to their dedicated programming; a special writing handbook for students with disabilities is an innovative outcome of this collaboration.



THE MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY PROCESS: WORKING GROUP 3

Co-Chairs: Dr. A. Ramona Brown, Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. Abdeslem El Idrissi, Professor of Biology

Working Report Title: Fostering Student Learning Opportunities, Retention and Success

Working Group 3 is focusing on elements from Middle States Standards 6, 8, 9, and 13. The group's charge reads as follows:

Working Group 3 will examine the College's recruitment and admissions policies and procedures in terms of their alignment with the College's mission, goals, vision, and values. Working Group 3 will also review the College's student support programs in terms of their appropriateness, resources, delivery, and the integrity with which programs and services are promoted and implemented as they relate to student retention and student success.

The membership of Working Group 3 includes members of the College Admissions Committee, champions of access, recruitment personnel, academic support (to address the Basic Skills aspect of Standard 13), and representatives for integrity related to the way in which the College is promoted.

CLOSING THE LOOP: SMALL CAREER EVENTS BENEFIT STUDENTS

The Career and Scholarship Center has used student learning outcomes as evidence to support its decision to focus its job fair initiatives on smaller career-themed venues, rather than larger traditional job fairs. Caryl Watkins, Director of the Career and Scholarship Center, explains that smaller events related to a particular major or field of study help students learn to showcase their strengths with greater impact, and help CSI students resonate more deeply with recruiters.

Assessment analyses have revealed that student learning is deepened when students' career events are closely related to their majors. The smaller themed events being focused on by the Career and Scholarship Center also help to foster a professional identity in a students' chosen field of study.

CAMPUS UPDATES

OIRA has been working with the several offices and departments across the campus to design simple assessment plan templates flexible enough to apply to the broad scope of activities that occur at CSI. Additionally, the guidelines for academic self-studies are undergoing revision and will be presented to the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee for comment and review.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

The CUNY Assessment Council, with support from the Graduate Center, is presenting a program entitled "Faculty-Driven Assessment in the Humanities." Professor Matthew Moore, Chair of Philosophy (Brooklyn College) will speak on *Program Assessment in Philosophy*; Professor Carlos Riobo, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (City College) will present *Reflections on Assessment in an English Department*; Professor Richard Braverman, Deputy Chair, Department of English (City College) will speak on *My Experience in Assessing Four Programs in the English Department*; and Professors Regina Galasso, Valerie Thiers-Thiam, and Philippa Kim, Department of Modern Languages (BMCC), will present *Outcomes Assessment in the Modern Languages Department*. The event will take place on Friday, October 29, from 9:30 am to 12 noon at the CUNY Graduate Center in the Skylight Room. Space is limited to 40 attendees, and breakfast will be served from 9:30-10 am. **If you are interested in attending, please RSVP by October 26 via email to hjohnson@brooklyn.edu.**

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

Hundreds of restaurants take part in the annual London Restaurant Festival, which runs for the **fortnight** of the fourth to the eighteenth of October this year. www.londonrestaurantfestival.com

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **October 27, 2010**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

