



FORTNIGHT

Volume 6, Issue 1

Mid February 2011

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.

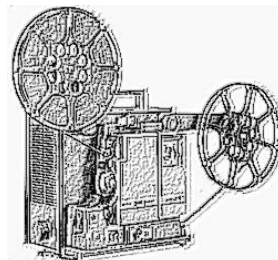
ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COLLEGE'S ALUMNI ESTIMATED IN RECENT STUDY

The City University of New York highlighted its contributions to the New York City labor market in a recent publication, noting among other statistics the percentage of graduates who remain in the metropolitan area and New York State; the advanced degrees awarded; and the contributions of highly trained professionals in occupations like teaching, nursing, and finance who graduate from system institutions. CUNY graduates represent a significant part of the city and state tax base, benefit from greater earning potential, and often elect to pursue additional education. For more information about the CUNY value, see www.cuny.edu/about/info/value.html.

As a complement to the University document, the College of Staten Island compiled a similar array of information and statistics in a summary presentation, "CSI Value and the Staten Island Labor Market," which details economic impact on the borough. In terms of enrollment, 2010 totals reached a record 13,894 matriculants, of whom 75% reside on Staten Island. Since its founding in 1976, the College has conferred more than 54,000 degrees, continuing to build an alumni base that chooses to remain on the island at a high rate. The College employs approximately 3,000 people, more than 60% of whom live in the borough. The significant contributions made by the College of Staten Island as an institution of higher education and one of the borough's largest employers were shared with state and local politicians at the College's annual Legislative Breakfast held on Friday, January 21, 2011.

With the assistance of Hanover Research, the College embarked on an alumni survey project in late 2010. While the full report is still being compiled, preliminary analysis of local employment figures for alumni contributed to the aforementioned presentation by providing new insights about alumni employment status and labor market impact. The survey data included information from almost 1,400 graduates of the College of Staten Island and its precursor institutions, Richmond College and Staten Island Community College. Extrapolating from the survey responses, Hanover Research estimated that there are approximately 26,700 alumni living on Staten Island, 58% of whom are employed full-time. Based on reported salary information from the respondent group, Hanover Research estimated that the wage and salary total for alumni living in the borough is approximately \$1.45 billion.

It is customary for colleges and universities to gather such information about the impact they have on the local and regional labor market. The College of Staten Island last did an Economic Impact Study in 2004 in which it was reported that total local expenditures attributable to the College had risen by 33% in the preceding seven years, and local jobs attributable to the College had risen by almost 10% over the same period. Following the completion of the 2010 Alumni Survey Report, the Office of the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment are planning to initiate a project to update the College's understanding of its economic impact on the borough and region.



CLOSING THE LOOP: WINTER SESSION SURVEY EVOLVES TO BETTER ADDRESS PROGRAM ASSESSMENT NEEDS

The Winter Session Survey, administered to students taking at least one course during the Winter Session, has been conducted since CSI first offered these intersession courses in 2006. Surveys composed and prepared by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment request information on course preparations; the pedagogical experience in a shorter, concentrated time frame; campus services; transportation to and from campus; etc. The survey was reviewed recently by the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment in order to ensure that the questions that are being asked of our students will produce the most useful information and result in "actionable data." Survey items that have produced stable results over multiple iterations were removed, as they are not providing new information. This revision allowed the existing survey to be shortened, making space for new questions about services which can be directly related to the biennial CUNY Student Experience Survey.

CAMPUS UPDATES

The College's eighth Annual Day of Assessment is scheduled for Friday, April 8, 2011, from 9:00am to 4:00 pm in the Green Dolphin Lounge. As in years past, the event will feature presentations reflecting accomplishments and best practices in assessment and institutional effectiveness spanning the entire campus. The planning committee, chaired by Associate Provost Susan Holak with members Dr. Sam Michalowski, OIRA Director; Dr. El Samuels, Assessment Coordinator in Education and Chair of the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee; Alan Hoffner, Director of College Testing; Warrick Bell, Coordinator of Assessment; and Barbara Cohen, Survey Coordinator, has been meeting over the past several months to plan this year's event. Alan Hoffner is once again developing a presentation to reflect conference topics that will follow the luncheon. More details about the program agenda will appear in upcoming issues of [FORTNIGHT](#) and on the CSI assessment website. Please mark your calendars for April 8!

CUNY NEWS

Board of Trustees Votes to End CUNY Proficiency Exam – On November 22, 2010, the CUNY Board of Trustees voted to remove the CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) as a requirement for all CUNY students. With ten years of results to examine, a CPE Task Force had determined that the academic systems in place on CUNY campuses ensure that nearly all students who maintain a minimum GPA of 2.00 passed the CPE, so the test was largely redundant as an assessment of students' writing and critical thinking abilities. This revelation, along with the fact that results of this test could not be compared to those of any national examination, helped inform the decision to end the program. Removing the CPE requirement will reduce the burden on tutoring centers and testing offices across the University, and save CUNY an estimated \$5 million per year. Locally, various aspects of CPE data have been used by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to demonstrate students' achievement of certain General Education goals, and to corroborate other measures of students' writing ability.

CUNY Institutional Research Council – Dr. Sam Michalowski, Director of CSI's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, made a presentation entitled "Utilizing IRDB Discoverer and Excel to Produce Retention and Outcomes Presentations" at the December 17 meeting of the CUNY Institutional Research Council. During the session, Dr. Michalowski shared with his fellow IR directors and staff specialists approaches to utilizing the CUNY institutional research database (IRDB) and MS Excel to present longitudinal retention and graduation outcomes by program, department, division and college. This type of analysis has been the focus of a recent project in the College's OIRA that will provide department chairs with details about student cohort retention over time.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

This year's annual Documentary [Fortnight](#) at the [Museum of Modern Art](#) runs from February 16 to 28. The event showcases nonfiction film and other media, and incorporates an international selection of 20 films from 14 countries. The program for this year includes a selection of independent films from China, live performances and discussions, and a review of the legacy of early documentary distribution cooperative New Day Films.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **February 25, 2011**, for consideration to appear in the next [communiqué](#).

