



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.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT 2008: CHANGES TO CATALOG AND COURSE SYLLABUS CONTENTS

A number of important regulations relating to Higher Education came into effect on July 1, 2010, as part of the renewal of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) that was passed by Congress in 2008. This law obliges institutions to provide certain information to students during the registration process.

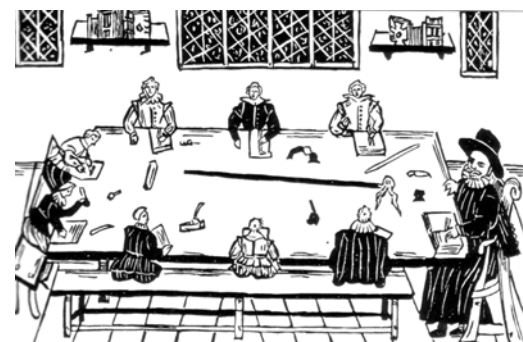
As part of the Textbook Affordability Provisions, all online course catalogs are now required, “to the maximum extent practicable,” to provide the ISBN and retail price of any textbooks and “supplemental material” – which includes printed materials, computer disks, website access and electronically distributed materials – that will be used in a course. This information must also be available through the college’s bookstore facility. Where such information is not available or not practicable, a “To Be Determined” designation must be used. Printed course schedules must include material that references the online location of this textbook information. CUNY is in the process of developing a centralized procedure to facilitate this textbook information reporting across all colleges.

Separate from the HEOA, but no less important, is the Middle States requirement that every course syllabus must include measurable course objectives. CSI’s own policies also require additional material, including: instructor’s name, contact information, office and hours; course title, number and section; year and semester, along with meeting days, times, and locations (as applicable – meeting times may not be appropriate for asynchronous online courses, for example); the course description as listed in the catalog; grading and evaluation criteria including the number of exams and other required assignments, and the weight given to each in the calculation of final grades; and the instructor’s attendance policy and any relation it may have to grades. Instructors may include additional material such as a description of the particular focus of the course, schedules of course topics, expectations of classroom conduct, and disability and academic integrity statements.

CAMPUS UPDATES

Enrollment Management Committee – At its recent meeting on March 23, the members heard a presentation by guests from the Division of Student Affairs, Chris Cruz Cullari and Debi Kee. The presenters described the Division’s progress made on assessment initiatives including the development of student learning outcomes, and the structure and operations of the Student Affairs Assessment Committee. The Student Affairs Division has been active in its reviews and revisions of the College’s Assessment Plan Template, and has adopted the format in various offices and programs. As reported in a previous issue of **FORTNIGHT**, the Division of Finance and Administration has already set forth an overarching assessment plan; the Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Divisions are both actively pursuing this goal.

Centers – The College’s Center for Engineered Polymeric Materials (CePM) hosted two external evaluators for its site visit on March 30, 2011. Like academic programs, centers are included in the program review process at the College and appear in the Academic Program Review schedule available on the website of the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness. Coordinated by CePM Center Director and Professor of Chemistry, Dr. Nan-Loh Yang, the visit included a tour of CePM facilities and meetings with CePM faculty and staff, industry advisory board representation, affiliated students, and members of the



administration. The Center has as its mission to serve as a resource for polymer chemistry research in partnerships with companies, thereby allowing them to be competitive and expand market opportunities. The Center also offers faculty, students and company professionals educational opportunities in industrial chemistry.

2011 Day of Assessment – The agenda for this year's event is set, and can be found on the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness' website at www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment/doa2011.html. Guests have registered from across CSI, as well as other CUNY colleges including the Borough of Manhattan Community College, Brooklyn College, and Hunter College. Additionally, the Director of Institutional Research for the Macaulay Honors College is one of the speakers. If you are interested in attending, please contact Lucy Lombardo in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at 718.982.2085 or by email at lucy.lombardo@csi.cuny.edu.

Curriculum Committee – At its March meeting, the College-Wide Curriculum Committee (CWCC) voted to approve new guidelines for assessment materials required on curricular proposals. Professor Catherine Lavender, Interdisciplinary Programs representative, presented a document discussing the inclusion of assessment in the curricular approval process. The CWCC agreed that the faculty-led Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC) is a more appropriate venue for detailed discussions of, and consultation on, academic assessment processes. Further, including assessment plans in the curricular approval process had led to the mistaken impression that departments' and programs' assessment plans were ultimately subject to approval by the Faculty Senate. In fact, academic assessment is always the domain of individual faculty members and programs. Therefore, the CWCC revised the template for course proposals; the new template still requires learning objectives, but instead of "assessment plans," to show that objectives are assessable, it now requires *examples* of the kinds of evidence generated in the course which could be collected and used for assessment purposes. This discussion will now go forward to the other curriculum committees; watch these pages for more information.

CLOSING THE LOOP: CLASSROOM CONDITIONS SURVEY SHARES INFORMATION ACROSS DIVISIONS

In an effort to provide the campus instructional community with opportunities to report about the state of classroom conditions, the Office of Finance and Administration recently made an online tool available, and notified both full-time and part-time faculty by email. Staff in Finance and Administration receive notifications when reports are submitted, allowing immediate action to be taken on urgent, addressable issues such as room cleanliness or dangerous conditions. In addition, periodic summaries of all reports are examined for issues that will need to be approached on a larger scale. The one-page questionnaire can be submitted at any time at www.csi.cuny.edu/classroomconditions, and will remain active going forward.

As condition reports have been received by the Office throughout this semester, it has become clear that not only are issues relating to the conditions of classrooms being brought to light, but additional questions regarding technology issues, furniture problems, bathroom conditions, and classroom suitability are being raised. These items, which often fall outside the realm of the Office of Finance and Administration, or which may be subject to budgetary constraints, are being brought to the President's Cabinet to be shared with the Divisions that can address them.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

Members of the CUE Committee (Coordinated Undergraduate Education) were introduced to Logic Models as a form of assessment in the CUNY-wide group's recent meetings. Logic Models link inputs and activities with outputs, outcomes, and program impact in setting assessment goals. This approach has been gaining attention nationwide, and was featured in sessions at last year's General Education Assessment Institute at the University of Vermont, attended by the CSI team of Associate Provost Susan Holak, Interim Dean Alfred Levine, Professor Maria Rice Bellamy, and Professor Richard Powers.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

"Child Employment Fortnight," an initiative of the National Network for Children in Employment and Entertainment (NNCEE), runs from March 28 to April 8. The event involves participants from across England and Wales, and focuses this year on efforts to ensure the safety of working, school-age children.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **April 22, 2011**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

