



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.

DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-STUDY RESOURCES CONTINUES TO FACILITATE CALENDAR AND REVIEW PROCESS

A major set of initiatives undertaken by the Office of the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness during the last three years is the development and refinement of a self-study calendar, the reorganization of a self-study repository in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA), and better integration with the Offices of the Academic Deans to facilitate self-study and accreditation. The calendar for academic program review is available on the Associate Provost’s website at www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment.

Entries in the self-study calendar reflect information that the OIRA has on file. They indicate each of the stages that comprise a self-study process: the self-study document; external evaluators’ report; department/program response to the report with suggested plans; and a one-year follow-up report. The next refinement to this public document will be color-coded indicators showing the duration of external accreditations. For example, if a program is accredited for eight years by an outside agency, this time period will be immediately visible on the calendar.

To assist academic departments and centers in the self-assessment process, the Associate Provost and the OIRA staff (collectively, the Institutional Effectiveness Group) have developed suggested guidelines and templates that are available on the Associate Provost’s website. Their next project in this area will be to develop letter templates inviting external reviewers to campus, as part of making the entire process more convenient and streamlined. As these resources continue to accumulate, they will gradually evolve into a comprehensive self-study handbook.

The Institutional Effectiveness Group met with the Academic Deans and their immediate staff members on October 24 to further delineate responsibilities in the self-study process and to coordinate efforts. As a follow-up to both that meeting and issues raised at a meeting of the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC), Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness Susan Holak hosted a “casual conversation” on November 14 in the Faculty Center for Professional Development, to share thoughts, information, and advice between individuals from the AOAC who had just completed self-studies and those who are about to embark on one.

In addition to academic departments and centers, offices in other divisions are now initiating plans to undertake self-studies. Vice President Ramona Brown is currently preparing the Office of Student Accessibility in her Division as the first to begin the formal process.

COUNTDOWN TO THE MIDDLE STATES SITE VISIT: LESS THAN FIVE MONTHS REMAINING

The College continues to make concerted progress towards the completion of its Middle States self-study. A second draft of the self-study document is available for review at www.csi.cuny.edu/middlestates. Members of the campus community are encouraged to review the draft and comment in the discussion section provided. Additionally, comments can be sent directly to Associate Provost Susan Holak, Co-chair of the Middle States Self-Study Process, at susan.holak@csi.cuny.edu.

The College is preparing to host Dr. Carlos Vargas-Aburto, Provost of Kutztown University, the Chair of our Middle States evaluation team, on Monday, December 5, when he will make his preliminary visit to campus. During this brief visit, Dr. Vargas-Aburto will meet with the Self-Study



Steering Committee, tour the hotel accommodations and campus facilities that will be set aside for his team's workspaces, and discuss his suggestions for the visit next April with Middle States Co-chairs Susan Holak and Richard Powers. Dr. Vargas-Aburto will also be briefed on campus plans for our documents repository and asked for his suggestions and requirements.

At the monthly Student Government meeting on November 3, Associate Provost Susan Holak, Warrick Bell, and Barbara Cohen addressed the senators, bringing them up to date on the planning and progress made to prepare for the April 2012 visit by the review team. Dr. Holak requested that the Student Government reach out to the student body to encourage review and commentary on the draft self-study document. The Associate Provost has made several visits to the Student Government relating to the Middle States process, and appreciates the time that they have devoted to the topic.

CLOSING THE LOOP: OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH IN THE CAMPUS CENTER RESULTS IN BETTER SPACE UTILIZATION

The Campus Center houses different functional spaces, including open public areas like the West Dining Room, office space such as in the Health Center, student organization space, and program and conference space in the Green Dolphin Lounge. The Office of Student Life hires approximately 15 students each year to help run the Campus Center, and among other duties, these student employees complete hourly rounds of the building to observe occupancy and usage. This location use information is used when making decisions about space, timetables, and room allocations within the building.

These observational data have supported a number of changes. In 2009, for example, the Multi Faith Center was relocated from 3A to the Campus Center. The new room for the Multi Faith Center was found to be too small for its purpose, and a review of several semesters' room use data indicated that the large Sleeping Dolphin Lounge was underutilized. Based on this information, the large lounge was reconstructed into two separate spaces, both of which were still large enough to suit their intended uses. The Multi Faith Center was moved into one space, while the Sleeping Dolphin Lounge remained in the other.

As another example, in Spring 2010 the Office of Student Life opened a new Game Room in 1C. The room, which is staffed by student employees, was initially open Monday through Friday, 10am – 5pm. A combination of low income from the Game Room and limited funds to pay the students prompted an analysis of the facility's usage. When it was discovered that Friday usage was well below that of the other days, the Game Room was closed on Fridays beginning in Spring 2011, which freed funds to pay student employees for other higher priority tasks.

CAMPUS UPDATES

Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee - The committee has made concerted efforts to develop The Assessment Matrix, located on the Associate Provost's website at www.library.csi.cuny.edu/assessment. Significant progress was made in the last month by the Chemistry, Computer Science, and Business Departments, and interdisciplinary programs including the MA in Liberal Studies; Science, Letters and Society; Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies, the Minor in Public Administration, and the Computer Science-Mathematics dual major.

CUNY NEWS AND EVENTS

COACHE Survey – The COACHE Survey, currently being administered by CUNY, invites tenured faculty to comment about many aspects of their academic and professional experiences. The survey is open through January 13. Please refer to **FORTNIGHT**, Volume 7, Issue 4, for more details.

CUNY Assessment Council – The Council hosted a seminar on Assessment of Student Support and Academic Support Services on Friday, November 18, 2011, featuring speakers from Hunter College, BMCC, and the Lehman College Library. CSI was represented by Linda Sharib, Chrisanthi Anastopoulou and Jason Turetsky from the Office of Academic Support, and Warrick Bell from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

FORTNIGHTLY NOTES

During the first two weeks of November 2011, Welsh libraries are celebrating Libraries Fortnight. The initiative is part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, which aims to inspire creativity and community across all forms of culture as a lead-up to the athletic events of the London Olympiad. More information is available at library.wales.org/libraries-fortnight.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by **December 11, 2011**, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.

