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.

MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION CONFIRMS REACCREDITATION

At its meeting on June 28, 2012, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaffirmed the accreditation of the College of Staten Island based on our self-study and the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee visit, conducted on April 1-4, 2012. The next major Middle States accreditation action for the College will occur in 2017, when we are required to submit our Periodic Review Report.

Based on the report of the visiting team, the Commission did request a monitoring report from the College, due in December 2013; no evaluation team visit will be required with this submission. The monitoring report must address two major areas:

1. the alignment and integration of Pathways and the overarching General Education goals of the College (developed by the General Education Committee over several semesters and passed by the Faculty Senate in 2011, prior to CUNY’s announcement of Pathways), and the subsequent assessment of learning outcomes [Standards 12 and 14], and
2. demonstrated progress and more consistency in the assessment of student learning outcomes across all departments and programs [Standard 14].

In its full report, the visiting team complimented the College on its approach to assessment, the many systems that are in place to encourage and support assessment activity, and the compilation of this work in locations such as The Assessment Matrix. The College received Commendations on Standards 12 and 14 in this regard. Specifically, the evaluators noted with regard to Standard 12 (General Education),

The team commends CSI for devoting extensive resources to support departments in the development of assessment plans and for supporting departments in addressing assessment of general education learning goals in general education courses.

Two areas were identified as noteworthy by the visiting evaluators in their commentary on Standard 14:

The team commends CSI for the manner in which the “Assessment at CSI” webpage has been developed and deployed. It provides convenient access to relevant assessment information, tracks the progress of CSI to engage in student learning assessment, and should facilitate the efforts of CSI to launch a comprehensive student learning assessment plan, gather assessment data, and employ those data to demonstrate successful student learning outcomes and program improvement strategies.

The final report submitted by the evaluators goes on to say, “In addition, the team commends CSI for the development of what appears to be an effective plan and workable processes to engage in assessment of student learning outcomes.”

The Statement of Accreditation Status for the College may be found on the Middle States Commission’s website at [www.msche.org/institutions_view.asp?idinstitution=58](http://www.msche.org/institutions_view.asp?idinstitution=58).

While the College can now look ahead to the next major step in accreditation reporting – the 2017 Periodic Review Report (PRR) – the Middle States Commission is reviewing the structure and format for this and other accreditation events. In past cycles the PRR has been a response to any formal recommendations and suggestions made by a visiting team in the prior decennial report. The existing purpose and format of the PRR may therefore have changed by the time the College is required to address it.
In summary, the College of Staten Island successfully met its decennial reaccreditation milestone. We would like to take this opportunity to again acknowledge the effort and dedication on the part of the co-chairs, Steering Committee, Working Groups, Special Resources Group, and everyone involved in orchestrating the campus visit.

**COLLEGIATE LEARNING ASSESSMENT (CLA) UPDATE: SUMMER 2012**

As reported in the most recent issue of FORTNIGHT (Volume 8, Issue 7), the City University of New York is instituting the Collegiate Learning Assessment, in part to replace the CUNY Proficiency Exam. During 2012-2013, each participating campus has a goal of 100 freshmen and 100 seniors completing the assessment. The window of opportunity for freshmen to participate is imminent, and will extend through October 31. Seniors will participate in the spring semester.

The campus CLA Team led by Associate Provost Susan Holak includes Janice Awerbuch (Design Services), Barbara Cohen (OIRA), Dr. Christine Flynn Saulnier (Academic Affairs), Alan Hoffner (College Testing), and Dr. Sam Michalowski (OIRA). The Team developed a communication and implementation plan over the summer, in conjunction with the CUNY central Testing Office. Hobsons Retain, a communications system being introduced on CUNY campuses, will be used to contact participating students and facilitate their participation in the CLA project.

Sam Michalowski and Alan Hoffner provided an overview of the CLA project at the Faculty Center for Professional Development on September 6, 2012. They will return to the Center on October 9 with further updates. Information about the Collegiate Learning Assessment can be found at [www.collegiatelearningassessment.org](http://www.collegiatelearningassessment.org).

**CLOSING THE LOOP: NEW FACULTY ORIENTATION CONTINES TO EVOLVE BASED ON FEEDBACK**

The College of Staten Island formally welcomed members of its 2012-2013 cohort of new faculty at its New Faculty Orientation on August 22-24. The orientation program has evolved over the last several years to incorporate updated material, and cover the many start-up needs and information requirements of both new and experienced instructors. This year’s program was shifted to three consecutive days, rather than a two-day orientation with later meetings held throughout the first semester. Based on positive feedback from last year’s new faculty, segments with College governance and PSC-CUNY representatives and pedagogy conversations with Dolphin Award winners were retained. In response to the Strategic Plan and informal faculty requests, a flash drive containing welcome materials to introduce our new faculty to Staten Island, its recreation and resources, was compiled for each new faculty member. The orientation is being followed up with a questionnaire to inform future plans.

**CAMPUS UPDATES**

**New Chairs’ Orientation** – Associate Provost Susan Holak and OIRA Coordinator Warrick Bell met with the Deans and three new chairs on August 21 as part of a multi-session orientation process. The presentation included a recap of the Middle States reaccreditation process and follow-up, a discussion of the academic program review calendar, scheduled program reviews for 2012-2013 and beyond, the recent activities of the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee, and the resources available for assessment-related activities through the Associate Provost’s website and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

**Faculty Center for Professional Development** – OIRA Coordinator Warrick Bell presented resources and strategies for “Using the Institutional Profile for Academic Program Review” at the Faculty Center on September 13. Material used in the presentation is available from on-campus computers at [www.csi.cuny.edu/oncampus/OIRAIN](http://www.csi.cuny.edu/oncampus/OIRAIN).

**FORTNIGHTLY NOTES**

To acknowledge and celebrate the Airfix company basing its range of plastic model kits on the collection of the Royal Air Force Museum in London, the museum held an Airfix Fortnight from August 20 to September 2 this year. Visitors were able to build and paint their own RAF Hawker Hurricane in 1:72 scale. More information is available at [http://tinyurl.com/AirfixFortnight](http://tinyurl.com/AirfixFortnight).

Everyone is invited and encouraged to submit items related to departmental assessment projects, College institutional effectiveness activities, committee announcements, and best practices by September 28, 2012, for consideration to appear in the next communiqué.