Bronx Community College
of The City University of New York

Assessment Case Studies
January 2009

Bronx Community College Assessment Case Studies

Overview:

Over the past decade, there has been a focused effort at BCC to increase and improve the analytical capacity of the campus community in the use of information and evidence to improve student and institutional performance and outcomes. Recognizing that the Middle States Self Study Process could provide an opportunity to further develop this capacity, we incorporated three specific elements into the self study process: (1) training in project management for self study leaders; (2) training in argumentation for self study leaders; and (3) use of analytical briefs as the products of the self study working groups as the source documents for the self study process. More specific information about these efforts is highlighted below.

Project Management

A kickoff meeting on September 26, 2007 introduced the Middle States Committee members to project management and effective reasoning skills. Project management is the field of study that examines the way projects are designed, implemented and reported on within time, cost and scope constraints. A seasoned consultant was hired to lead the first half of the discussion on project management with an emphasis on how these principles can apply to a Middle States report timeline consisting of three phases: committees meet and assign roles and specific responsibilities during Fall 2007; draft and review of analytical briefs during Spring 2008; and editorial tem drafts report and campus community reviews document during Summer and Fall 2008. Technical as well as everyday life examples were used as a way to convey that most things that we accomplish well are also well planned.

Argumentation

A second half of the presentation was focused on the analytical and reasoning work that committees were being asked to perform through an introduction to the field of argumentation. The Director of Institutional Research led the discussion based on the curriculum of a renowned argumentation scholar David Zarefsky. Attendees were presented with the three components of an argument: claim, evidence and warrant and examples were given that aligned with the kind of work they were expected to produce. It was shown that arguments have different kinds of claims, evidence and inferences and that information can be used to support or attack one or more components of an argument. It was also demonstrated that some claims require a heavier burden of proof than others, such as policy or value claims compared with ones based on fact or definition.

Analytical Briefs

In order to support an increase in analysis as part of self study, working groups were asked to report their findings in analytical briefs (with a clearly defined format) instead of unstructured chapters (as we had done in the past). Argumentation principles were embedded in the creation and review of analytical briefs by asking subcommittee respondents to provide well-developed rationales, strengths, challenges and recommendations on particular research areas. Each member of the Steering Committee functioned as a liaison to each working group, and as analytical briefs were submitted to the Steering Committee. The liaison reviewed and critiqued the analytical brief. This critique was circulated to the rest of the Steering Committee, who each provided additional critique and recommendations.

Constructive feedback was provided to each working group for each analytical brief submitted and revised briefs were submitted after addressing the comments and critiques. All 60 analytical briefs were posted on the BCC Middle States web site with frequent requests for input (which could be provided to individual Steering Committee members or anonymously to a Middle States website – myvoice@bcc.cuny.edu.

Case Studies

In the first draft of the Middle State Self Study Report, we included a few case studies of how we used analysis and assessment results to solve problems or make improvements. On her preliminary visit to the campus, our Evaluation Team Chair, Dr. Carolane Williams, suggested that we consider expanding this effort across the campus. In response, we invited the Executive Council, the Coordinating Planning Council, the Administrative Council and the Academic Department Chairpersons to share case studies for this effort. In response, we received 40+ case studies to date. This revealed to us, a campus community, proud to demonstrate evidence of how they utilize information and assessment to make decisions, improve processes, and improve student learning outcomes. As the case studies continue to be developed, we are considering an appropriate format for addressing this completely unanticipated outcome of our self-study efforts.

The Case Studies follow:

Bronx Community College
Template for Case Studies for Middle States Review
Examples of How College Community Uses Assessment to Make Changes/Improvements

OVERVIEW OF BCC STRATEGIC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLANNING EFFORTS SINCE 2002
February 2009

Submitted by: William J. Brennan **Department OIT** **Date February 3, 2009**

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The College was challenged in the early 2000's by a weak campus technology infrastructure, inconsistent policies and procedures associated with computer and network planning and implementation, aging and limited technology facilities for students, and low levels of faculty familiarity and use of technology within their teaching and support for student learning.
The College made the decision that a comprehensive, strategic technology planning process was crucial to correcting existing technology deficiencies, while at the same time providing an organized and predictable foundation upon which to base future technology planning and decision-making.

As a result, the College, led by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, embarked upon a strategic technology planning effort in the fall of 2002, which included a planning committee inclusive of all major constituent groups on campus, and facilitated by an external consultant. This committee worked throughout the 2002/2003 academic year, with the completion of the College's first strategic technology plan in May of 2003. As a result of the success of its initial planning efforts, the College then institutionalized the technology planning process by establishing a three-year planning cycle. A follow-up plan was completed in 2006, and the College is on track to begin it's third plan in 2009.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
The strategic technology planning process was well received by the College community, by both academic and administrative users. The external consultant engaged to facilitate the process fit well with the College's needs, and provided a planning framework that proved well suited to the College's objectives.

As part of the planning process, the College-wide strategic technology planning committee, and the Technology Oversight Committee (TOC), evaluate the process toward completion of plan objectives, and recommend new areas for planning consideration, or mid-term plan adjustments as necessary. In preparation for the beginning of each planning cycle, the planning committee conducts a formal review of prior plan objectives against plan accomplishments to determine prior plan success, as well as identifying new areas for planning consideration.

The success of the initial planning effort spawned not only a follow-up plan developed in 2006, but also contributed to a subsequent academic department technology assessment in 2007, commissioned by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The assessment focused upon determining the degree to which technology was in use in the BCC curriculum, and identifying areas where student learning could be improved and additional faculty technology needs and professional development could be improved.
Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

The initial 2002/2003 technology strategic planning effort focused upon five critical areas: 1) improved network infrastructure, 2) predictable desktop technology replacement and upgrade on a predefined schedule, 3) improved student technologies to include expanded and improved student public laboratory facilities and email, 4) development and implementation of a College-wide technology oversight structure, and finally 5) expanded use of technology within the BCC curriculum.

Upon completion of an outcomes review in 2005/2006, as a prelude to beginning the 2006 planning effort, it was determined by the planning committee that the College had made significant progress in all areas identified in the initial planning effort except area 5, expanded use of technology within the curricula. While significant faculty development efforts had been ongoing since the early 2000's, largely spearheaded by the College's Teaching and Learning Technology Round Table (TLTR), it was felt by the planning committee that this should become an emphasis area for the 2006 plan.

Specific positive outcomes from the 2002/2003 planning effort included expanded wireless network access on the campus, upgraded and improved network infrastructure and cabling, expanded student computer labs and teaching facilities (supported by the newly implemented CUNY Student technology fee in 2002), new and improved policies and procedures, and upgraded PC desktops for most of the campus community.

As a result of the perceived effectiveness of the 2002/2003 planning effort, the focus for the 2006 plan was predominately on improved support for the wider introduction of technology within the curriculum, expanded faculty development efforts, continued expansion and improvement of student facilities, and a recommendation for a formal assessment of academic technology needs for faculty.

One of the most crucial, and strategic outcomes of the 2006 plan was the decision to conduct the previously mentioned academic assessment. This assessment was conducted in early 2007 and produced several key findings. It was determined that expanded faculty development and support would be necessary before any significant progress could be made at curricula reform, also, it was determined that few academic departments had addressed the issue of curricular technology standards, that improved instructional environments (specifically smart classrooms) had to be available before large numbers of faculty would engage in technology introduction within their courses, and finally, that some form of organized support infrastructure, specifically for faculty, would be necessary.

As a result of the prior assessment, the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the College's TLTR committee, created the Office of Instructional Technology, with a fulltime position of Director, for the 2007/2008 academic year. A senior faculty technology leader was appointed to the Director's position in the summer of 2007. The Office of Instructional Technology, supported by several key faculty members and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, embarked upon development of a Title V grant request in the summer/fall of 2007 to strengthen College efforts at faculty development and wider introduction of technology within the curriculum. The grant request was submitted in the fall of 2007. While the initial grant submission fell slightly short of approval in 2007, it was subsequently approved for funding in 2008 for a five-year total of 2.75 million dollars to support all of the key issues addressed in the 2007 academic assessment.

As of January 2009, the Office of Instructional Technology is supported by 3 professional staff, and is actively engaged in addressing the goals of the Title V grant.

New Questions/Next Steps

As a result of the successes of its technology strategic planning processes the College finds itself well positioned to continue to make progress in improving its overall technology environment.

It is anticipated that the results of the 2009 planning effort will only continue the positive planning tradition the College has enjoyed since 2002.

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Examples of How College Community Uses Assessment to Make Changes/Improvements
December 2008

<u>Improving Quantitative Literacy in Biology and Chemistry Courses</u>
Submitted by: Laura Broughton Department: Biology/MLT Date: 12/18/2008

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question: The Quantitative Literacy Initiative

Many of our faculty have noticed the deficiencies of our students when it comes to quantitative skills. For 2008-2009, faculty in the Biology and Chemistry Departments are striving to provide more continuity to the teaching and reinforcement of quantitative reasoning skills in several introductory classes. The quantitative skills emphasized will be measurement and graph creation and interpretation in General Biology I (Bio 11), graph interpretation and probability in General Biology II (Bio 12), graph creation and interpretation in Anatomy and Physiology (Bio 23), and a number of different skills including significant digits, measurement, and conversion factors in either Chm 02 or Chm 17. Our strategy is to introduce the skills early and reinforce those skills often throughout the course of the semester.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

Fall 2008 was used to design the quantitative literacy modules. QL modules will include both short (5 to 1o minute) exercises and long (45 to 60 minute) activities in either laboratory or lecture sessions. At least half of the sections in these multi-section courses will be participating in QL implementation. Modules will be implemented in Spring 2009. Assessment of the effectiveness of these modules for increasing student quantitative skills will be conducted through a beginning of the semester pre-test and end of the semester post-test. In addition, the Biology courses will be conducting self-perception surveys at the beginning and end of the semester to determine if students' attitudes match their aptitudes.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

We do not have the results yet. However, if the assessments show that these QL modules work, then we hope to incorporate them in all sections of these classes in the future. In Biology, the faculty will be voting on whether to incorporate them or not.

New Questions/Next Steps

We hope to continue modifying the existing modules and developing new ones in order to increase the (hoped-for) effectiveness over time. P.S. – This initiative is being supported through the Center for Teaching Excellence by a Perkins Grant. This particular initiative is the third year of the grant. [Year one was the Problem-based learning workshops led by Harriet Shenkman and Year two was the Quantitative Literacy workshops led by Don Read.

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Developing Joint Degrees and Articulation Agreements with CUNY Senior Colleges
Submitted by:__Howard Clampman Department_Business and Information Systems

Case Study: How the BCC gives priority to joint-degree programs and articulation agreements with CUNY senior colleges.

The Problem:
John Jay College (JJC), a senior CUNY college, recently has decided to stop offering two-year degrees. JJC proposed that all CUNY community colleges create joint-degree programs to work as the two-year arm of JJC and allow their (community college students) to move seamlessly from community college to JJC to earn their four-year degree. The two opportunities were for joint degrees were in Criminal Justice and Science for Forensics.

College Response:
During the Summer, 2007 and into the Fall, 2007 semester the College allocated resources to two departments (Social Sciences and Chemistry) to develop Letters of Intent for two new associate degree programs AA in Criminal Justice and AS in Science for Forensics. The normal progression for Letters of Intent is for the proposal to be vetted for three meetings within the Curriculum Committee (normally a five to six week process), when approved it is moved to the College Senate for two more (monthly) meetings. Receiving College Senate approval the Letters of Intent goes to CUNY for approval. After it is approved, it returns to the Curriculum Committee and College Senate for approval as a "new program", goes back to CUNY for final approval and is slated for implementation in the following semester. BCC recognized the urgency for streamlining the process and the involved departments, with the support of the Office of Academic Affairs, requested a special timetable whereby the Curriculum Committee would act on the "new program" as soon as the BCC Senate approved the Letter of Intent. This would serve to shorten the time to implementation by several months. The Curriculum Committee granted the streamlined timetable and approved the two Letters of Intent and on 10/02/2007. After receiving Senate approval on 11/01/2007, the now "new program" proposals were returned to the Curriculum Committee for discussion and were approved on 12/11/2007. The new programs were approved by the College Senate on 03/13/2008.

Postscript:
The new programs were approved by CUNY at the June 2008 Chancellors meeting with students currently enrolled.

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<u>Implementing CUNYfirst ERP Information Systems</u>
Submitted by: Mary Coleman/Alyce Zimerman Date: January 12, 2009
Department: Office of Administration & Finance

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
To better meet the needs of its students, faculty and staff, the University needed an integrated computer system that would replace aging legacy systems, use best industry practices and bring together in a reengineered environment financial systems, human resource management systems and student administration management systems common to all CUNY institutions.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
College presidents, vice-presidents, technology leaders and other executive leadership met in late 2006 to discuss enterprise resource planning (ERP) options. Phase 0 took 8 weeks and dealt with procuring an outside vendor and negotiating a contract which eventually went to Oracle (PeopleSoft). Phase 1 began on 3/1/07 – project completion is expected to be within 5 years from this date. Each college formed a Liaison Team and identified Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for all processes to work directly on the ERP project which was officially named CUNYfirst (first = Fully Integrated Resources & Systems Tool). Two Vanguard Colleges were selected to go online first with the others to be implemented in "waves." University-wide surveys were conducted throughout the process; hundreds of meetings were held CUNY-wide and campus-wide, including Fit/Gap and Conference Room Pilot (CRP) sessions where SMEs provide input as to whether the PeopleSoft processes will work for CUNY.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
General Ledger went live on 7/1/08; Procurement and Planning & Budget are underway.
Eventual improvements to include: streamlined online course registration; students, faculty and staff able to view their records online; online employment applications; online requests for financial aid; more flexibility in all interactive processes; more effective and timely rehiring and payment process for adjuncts.

New Questions/Next Steps

Training and communication efforts will remain ongoing. Depending on the completion date of the training, HR self-service is scheduled to be available sometime during the spring of 2009 and HR recruiting in late winter of this year. Student Administration systems will become active 2010/2011 (BCC is in Wave 3).

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How the Student Development and Enrollment Management Division Plans to Improve Management Effectiveness.
Kevin Davis, Student Development

The Problem:
The Student Development Division has continued to seek new and innovative ways to improve the delivery of student support and enrollment management services with the intended purpose to promote students' personal, academic, and career success. Based upon review of institutional performance and persistence data, it was determined that major areas within the Division needed to be reorganized to help improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates at the College.

Divisional Response:
Upon a transition in leadership during the fall 2006 semester, the Interim Vice President for Student Development initiated and conducted a year-long review of the organizational structure of the division to determine whether the prior organization of faculty/staff, services, and programs effectively facilitated student success. Based upon an extensive review of the organizational leadership, activities, and functions of each unit within the Division, the Interim Vice President made a number of important changes and recommendations to improve management effectiveness and ultimately to improve student success. The most critical of these changes included major redesign of the counseling and advisement unit, including creation and implementation of key management and professional staff positions and their respective offices, as described below.

- Associate Dean for Student Services: Student Services/General Counseling
- Executive Director for Special Services: Special Services/College Discovery
- Associate Director for Special Services: Career and Transfer Services
- Assistant Director for Special Services: Career and Transfer Services
- Career and Transfer Specialist (2-3): Career and Transfer Services
- Director for Special Student Services: Special Student/Psychological/Disability

Postscript:
It is anticipated that improved delivery of services, as a result of changes within the counseling and advisement unit, will contribute to increased student success including retention, graduation, transfer, and job placement. The managerial and professional staff responsible for conducting the activities and functions within the respective offices will implement newly designed assessment plans, which will guide continued improvement in the delivery of services.

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Improving Student Performance in Core History Course
Submitted by: Andrea Finkelstein, Acting Chair **Department:** History **Date:** 12/16/2008

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question: Passing rate in core course (HIS 10) consistently 15-20 percentage points below the College's overall passing rate.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

Phase 1: following a historical review of completion/withdrawal/failure statistics and informal discussions among department faculty of problems found in written assignments, an experimental course (HIS 11) was instituted with an added contact hour for skill building for students placing in the lowest levels of remediation. The higher completion rate (averaging 10 percentage points) for this experimental course, led in 2002 to the successful proposal of changes in the pre/co-requisites as follows:

HIS 11, 4 contact hours with co-requisites of ENG 01 and/or RDL 01
HIS 10, 3 contact hours with co-requisites of ENG 02 and/or RDL 02

Phase 2: By Fall 2007, enough data had accumulated to show that the ten sections of HIS 11 consistently had a 10 percentage point higher completion rate than the 30 sections of HIS 10 even though the students in HIS 11 were at a lower skill level at the time of taking the course. A more detailed examination of student completion rates by skill level showed that this result held true for students at all reading and writing levels, though students who placed out of remediation did complete HIS 10 at a rate closer to that of the College overall. Considering the financial impact as well as the academic impact, the decision was made to propose a further change in pre/co-requisites as follows:

HIS 11, 4 contact hours with co-requisites of any level of ENG or RDL remediation
HIS 10, 3 contact hours with pre-requisite of a passing grade in the reading and Writing CUNY/ACT exams.

This change passed successfully through the College Senate and was sent to the Chancellor in the June 2008 report to begin Spring 2009.

Phase 3: At the same time, the Department performed a General Education Assessment of HIS 10 revising the syllabus to make the "global" component of the course more transparent to students. General Education questions with varying combinations of contemporary global or interdisciplinary components were added to each unit in the syllabus. Instructors were required to make at least three of these questions the focus of oral or written assignments with one being chosen as the basis for an essay on the final exam.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

Phase 2: The changed pre/-co requisites for HIS 10/11 were put into place for Spring 2009. All departments and divisions, academic and student service oriented, were given flyers to distribute to students explaining how to decided which course to take a month before advisement began. Due to an unnoticed problem, however, the new requirements were not put into SIMS until a week after advisement and registration began, necessitating the removal of improperly registered students who will have to re-register before the term begins. Another issue to be resolved will be how correctly we have estimated the number of HIS 10 vs. HIS 11 sections that will be needed (which was based on past trends in students' ENG and RDL placements at time of taking HIS 10 or 11 for the first time). This will need close monitoring for at least the first two terms of the new system. Data will also need to be collected on changes in the completion rates for both courses.

Phase 3: The Department continues to evaluate responses to the General Education exercises through samples of student writing.

New Questions/Next Steps

Phase 2: The issue of manual overriding of the new pre/co-requisite rules will have to be addressed because if students are still allowed into the wrong course, data on changes in completion rates will not be valid. Also, the issue of accommodating students who complete out-of-term workshops and pass the ACTs during registration periods will have to be addressed. This caveats aside, the department expects to use the next two-three years of completion data to see what impact the changes in pre/co-requisites have made to determine what, if any, further work is needed to improve student learning in HIS 10/11.

Phase 3: Since all sections of HIS 10 and 11 must participate in the General Education exercises, the only way to access the impact of these exercises on the completion rate will be to 1) see if current and future sections of HIS 10 have a higher completion rate than the historical data for students in HIS 10 who placed out of remediation, and 2) see if students in the 01 level have a higher completion rate in future sections of HIS 11 than did students historically in this course. It will not be possible to get exact data on students in the 02 level because they will be in His 11 in the future when they were in HIS 10 in the past and any positive changes in completion could be due to any combination of the General Education exercises and the added contact hour. For the purposes of General Education assessment (rather than completion assessment), some sections (on a voluntary basis) will be assigning parallel written General Education essays at both the beginning and end of term to document expected improvement in understanding the global component of the course.

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Organizing P&B Codification

Submitted by: Alice P. Fuller Department: Dean of Fac/Acad Affairs/President's Office Date: Jan. 29, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question: The College Personnel & Budget Committee has been operating based on rules and procedures of the University and College but, they have not been provided to the P&B members in a uniform format. As a result, when questions of procedure arise, there is a need to research the question. In addition because we have not had all of the procedures in one place, there are questions that arise for which there is no current procedure. Therefore, there are no clear cut answers, which results in ad hoc decision making. In addition, over the last decade there has been a significant turnover in Departmental chairpersons (membership of the College P&B) which has resulted in some loss of institutional memory. As a result there was a determination made that the Rules & Procedures of the College P&B should be codified.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?) The task of codifying the P&B Rules & Procedures was assigned to the Codification Committee. It was also determined that the membership of the Committee should be expanded to include, the Secretary of the College P&B. The Committee first culled the existing minutes of the College P&B meetings from 1965 to the present for procedural items. Then the Committee reviewed the prior procedural items to determine the current state of College initiated procedures. After that review the Committee presented to the College P&B those items which it needed to consider for acceptance, revision and/or deletion. The College P&B is currently reviewing those items and will make a determination on each of the items by the end of this semester. The University/College/Union procedures regarding P&B Personnel Actions was culled from the existing documents (i.e. CUNY By-Laws, College Governance Plan and PSC CUNY Agreement). Those items are currently being codified. This codification will be reviewed by the Codification Sub-Committee and then presented to the College P&B for approval.

Outcomes/impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
As a result of the review process, the College P&B members have (1) become more familiar with all of the procedures that impact the work of the various Personnel & Budget Committees as they relate to personnel actions (2) the College P&B has identified those areas where there is a gap in policy and procedures. It is engaged in developing those needed policies and procedures.

New Questions/Next Steps
The Codification Committee, the College P&B and in some instances Department P&B's are reviewing current policies and Procedures and will make recommendations for changes to or adoption of Policies & Procedures where needed. Subsequent to this, the College P&B will adopt a Codification of P&B Procedures for Personnel Actions.

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Creating Uniform Rubric to Improve Student Learning of HTML in Business Courses
Submitted by: Marilyn Gagion Department Bus & Inf. Sys Date 1/8/09

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The BIS 13, Introduction to the Internet, course requires students to create personal Web sites to be posted on the College server. To do this, students must learn the coding language HTML. While HTML is not generally considered a programming language, its use requires some of the same logical understanding and attention to detail as programming. However, many of the BIS 13 students are in non-programming majors, making it more difficult for them to learn the coding language itself, as well as to approach the project with the proper sense of organization.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
All faculty who regularly teach BIS 13 collaborated to develop a uniform rubric for the Web site project. The rubric specifications covered requirements not only for the finished product, but also for the planning and development phases of the project. At the end of the semester, instructors analyzed student projects and resulting grades. Although the class goals for successful project completion had been met, it was determined that some improvements could be made.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
Given the specific technical requirements of the Web project, the consensus was that

- HTML should be introduced earlier in the semester, possibly directly after midterms.
- Additional HTML learning materials should be compiled through Blackboard to supplement the textbook

New Questions/Next Steps
Develop better continuity between BIS 13 and BIS 23, Advanced Web Page Development
Explore the feasibility of compiling e-portfolios for students in the Web Page concentration.

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General Education Assessment in a Communications Course
Submitted by Debra Gonsher Department CAS Date January 28th 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
Integral to BCC's General Education mission statement is the concept that students who become "well-informed, globally aware, engaged world citizens making a meaningful contribution to society" understand how to synthesize information and understand that disciplines do not exist in a vacuum, but rather they intersect. This interdisciplinary understanding of knowledge is crucial students' long term acquisition of and desire for knowledge. However, this is rarely dealt with in most courses- the "silo effect" in disciplines both at BCC and other colleges is a problem that demands consideration.

To address this issue, the Communication Arts and Sciences Department developed a bank of what was first termed Integrative Questions, subsequently named Bigger Picture Questions. These questions looked at the intersection of communication and another discipline. Faculty assigned a question from the bank and students were required to address the question in a 5 page research paper, with a minimum of 5 MLA or APA citations. A rubric was created to assess the paper.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

The first term that these assignments were implemented, a number of papers were randomly reviewed by the then Faculty Director of General Education who was also the Chairperson of the CAS and the Director of Academic Assessment. Analysis pointed to the fact that students had never been asked to write a research paper nor think across disciplines- thus we modified the assignment. In the following term, the faculty used two of the Bigger Picture Questions in guided classroom discussion and a third for the written assignment.

In subsequent terms, four papers from each of 59 sections were chosen randomly for analysis. The problems with student learning have persisted. Students are underprepared and their writing and research skills are quite low. Students at the CMS11 level have difficulty thinking across disciplines and they lack awareness about plagiarism.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

Questions have been rewritten to be even more transparent, explicit and give the maximum amount of guidance. The paper has been reduced to three pages.

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<u>Developing a Strategic Human Resource Management Program</u>
Submitted by: Sahana Gupta, Affirmative Action Officer
Department: President's Office **Date: January 30, 2009**

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
Issue:
Several human resource functions are being performed in departments and by personnel with some or little linkage to HR. This causes overlapping of functions and responsibilities with little or no oversight by HR.

Senior Vice President Mary Coleman charged the HR Task Force which included members of the campus community involved in human resource functions to
- Inventory the human resource functions performed in specific departments and divisions across campus and make recommendations regarding efficiency, effectiveness and the appropriateness of where the functions are performed
- Assess the current overall functions of the HR department and make the recommendations for adjustments in functioning, if needed, including staffing and technology usage
- Develop an overview of a strategic human resource management plan for the College. Including a timetable for implementation

Goals:
- To develop a Human Resource Management Plan which will define the role and structure of the HR department in carrying out comprehensive HR functions on campus
- To develop a strategic Human Resource Management Plan which will define HR's role in the implementation of BCC's Strategic Plan

(HR Task Force consisted of the Shelley Levy, HR Director, Mary Rogan, Labor Designee & Legal Counsel; Donovan Thompson, Business Officer; Rolly Wiltshire, Director, Administrative Systems; Sahana Gupta, Affirmative Action Officer. (SVP Coleman and SVP Sanchez as ex-officio members).

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

What was studied: HR Task Force studied the life of an employee – from recruitment to retirement/resignation.

How was it studied: An outline of HR tasks and processes in the recruitment and hiring process was studied, beginning with position control and management, search process, hiring process, life of an employee, and exit of employee. The Task Force reviewed current processes and systems, identified where HR functions are currently performed and made recommendations for reconfiguration, adjustment and consolidation of functions in HR.

The Task Force identified HR functions, tasks and processes not currently performed and recommendations were made for developing an plan and implementing the same.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

As a result of the assessment, several recommendations were made for specific functions such as:

Position control and management: HR will coordinate and provide information on College, divisional and departmental organization structure, including vision for the department, the programmatic and functional attributes and goals of the department and specifically for academic departments, the P & B requirements. It will provide current and projected budgets to aid decision-making.

Search Process: Manual processes in recruitment and hiring will be transferred to electronic processes with the implementation of CUNY FIRST Human Capital (HC) and Talent Acquisition (TA) Management System.

Employee Retention: Two specific areas were identified as critical to "best practice":

- Orientation for new employees, including departmental orientation.
- Training and professional development initiatives, including specific modules on professional development plans and performance evaluations for managers and supervisors.

Succession Planning: Develop a succession planning training program for all departments, including topics such as leadership, building a department, skills development and business and operations systems and processes.

Other initiatives will include a standardized hiring, training and evaluation of employees of affiliated entities, such as BCC Foundation, BCC Child Care Center, BCC, Inc. and EOC and a and a comprehensive exit protocol for all employees.

New Questions/Next Steps

With the implementation of CUNYfirst and the Human Capital Management (HCM) system, including Talent Acquisition Management (TAM) system, it is expected that many of the core functions will be reconfigured and reinstated within HR. CUNYfirst will also clarify core functions, roles and responsibilities and accountabilities and performance measures for each employee.

HR will begin to develop a core training and professional development program for employees.

HR will begin to develop a strategic human resource plan for the campus.

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Diversifying the Faculty and Staff
Submitted by: Sahana Gupta, Affirmative Action Officer
Department: President's Office **Date: February 2, 2009**

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
BCC's mission speaks "to instill in them (students) the value of informed and engaged citizenship and service to their communities" while the Vision Statement focuses on graduating "students who are prepared to live within, profit from, and contribute to a 21st century global environment marked by diversity, change, and expanded opportunities for learning and growth".
BCC is committed to increasing the diversity of its current workforce and enhancing recruitment and retention initiatives in the classroom and workplace.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied? / How it was studied? / What were the findings?)

Conversations and discussions with students, faculty and staff spoke of the need to ensure an awareness of and a continuous discussion on diversity issues.

There is inadequate training and professional development initiatives on campus and many managers and supervisors do not have the necessary skills to manage diversity in their departments/campus.

The Affirmative Action Committee identified the "need" to enhance awareness of diversity on campus as well as help support compliance with the CUNY Employee Discrimination Policy.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

1) The Affirmative Action Committee members were trained by CUNY vendor, Employee Practices Solutions, Inc. to present a workshop "Diversity in Employee Relations". This Diversity Workshop module was then presented to Executive Council and Administrative Council for input and feedback, which were incorporated in a final module.

2) The Affirmative Action Committee presented 17 workshops for staff and faculty, receiving constructive feedback and suggestions for further campus engagement on diversity issues.

3) The Diversity workshop is presented to new faculty at one of the orientation sessions, combining discussions on classroom management.

4) The Center for Tolerance and Understanding and the Affirmative Action Committee members, Melissa Kirk, Director, Student Life and Sahana Gupta, Affirmative Action Officer, received a Presidential Faculty/Staff Development Grant to support "I AM BCC" – a signature campaign to

promote and celebrate campus-wide diversity through an exhibition of posters and essays by students, faculty and staff, representing the many cultures on our campus. 35 posters (16 faculty and staff) are available for viewing in key locations such as the Cafeteria and the Student Center.

5) Multicultural respect is at an all-time high (85.9) in the Faculty/Staff survey, 2008.

New Questions/Next Steps

The College will continue to make deliberate efforts to attract and retain a richly diverse faculty and staff, including: annual review of underutilizations in staffing patterns; support of travel as part of the faculty search process; active participation of the President and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs in faculty hiring process; the implementation of a strong Diversity Awareness Program for all faculty and staff. Currently, 40% of full-time faculty members are minority (compared with 34% in FY03).

Diversity workshops will be presented to all new employees, in a session that includes compliance training.

Diversity Workshops to be incorporated into the Affirmative Action orientation for all search committees and also for academic departments, to continue to enhance diversity in recruitment and retention efforts.

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Assessing Information Literacy Requirements in Health Related Program
Submitted by:_Janet Heller_______________________
Department_Health,PE,Wellness___________________ Date_12/18/08________

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

Students graduating with a Community/School Health Education Degree must be Information Literate. In other words, students graduating from our program must be proficient in identifying appropriate sources of information and be able to evaluate the validity and reliability of the information.

How can instructors assess students' Information Literacy in health?

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

A writing assignment was developed to assess student's information literacy in two upper level classes (Human Nutrition—HLT 94 and Human Sexuality – HLT 93). The assignment asked students to obtain information on a course related health topic from a variety of sources (professional journal, newspaper/magazine, Internet .com source, Internet .edu, .gov or .org) and compare and contrast the various sources of information.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

The health faculty worked closely with Ms. Kathy Parsons from the Library on this project. Ms. Parsons presented a workshop for the 2 upper level classes on using the BCC databases prior to giving the assignment. After the assignment was submitted and graded, the health faculty identified a number of areas where students' knowledge was lacking. A PowerPoint presentation was developed (and reviewed by Ms. Parsons) to address these issues so that important facts were reinforced.

New Questions/Next Steps

The next step will be to revise this assignment for use next semester based on the review of student work. In addition, teaching instruction will be modified to incorporate salient issues in health information literacy. Similar assessments of information literacy will be implemented in additional upper level health classes.

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<u>Improvements of Specifications for Construction Projects:</u>
Submitted by: Andre Hurni
Department Campus Planning
Date: December 19th 2008

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
<u>Improvements of Specifications for Construction Projects:</u>
Even though there is software available for construction specifications, the Campus Planning Office created their own specifications that are campus specific and are easier to understand and follow by small contractors. The Campus Planning Office improved the standard text for the various divisions for specifications several times during the last few years.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

<u>Observation during interior construction:</u>
During interior renovations projects contractors did not show professionalism regarding orderliness, cleanliness, daily removal of debris, protection of existing features, and obeying daily work schedules mandated by the Campus Planning Office. Overall bad construction staging and site management was common to many projects.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
<u>Remedy and Improvements:</u>
The Campus Planning Office changed several paragraphs in their specifications to address these problematic issues (see above). The language became more specific, detailed and comprehensive. The Campus Planning Office also increased time spent on these issues during the pre-construction meetings with the contractors. As a result most contractors are more responsive to these issues and keep job sites inside the buildings under tighter control.

New Questions/Next Steps
The Campus Planning Office will continue to improve their specifications template, since there is a clear relationship between the language of construction specifications and the performance by contractors.

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Using Alternative Technology for Parent Education Program
Submitted by:__J. Juechter__________ Department Institutional Advance___Date_Jan 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
When grants are written and circumstances change, new plans and strategies must be developed while still meeting the objectives established with the agency. Work Plan IV of the HUD COPC grant, Parent Education Videotaping, could not be completed as the College did not have a videoconferencing center until December 2008 and the Lehman College facility was no longer available to grant personnel when the grant started in January 2006.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
The grant personnel researched available sites for videoconferencing and none were located. Without camcorders and sites, parent education programs could not be developed nor planned for the targeted audiences at La Peninsula Head Start Centers. Professor D'Alessio and Dr. Juechter determined to deliver parent literacy training through a similar medium. Education classes would be filmed on key parent education topics and edited to make an effective presentations. The Literacy Education Packet would consist of the BCC produced DVD, lesson plans for the parent education workshop presenter and a book that was used on the DVD.
Dr. Juechter studied the feasibility of obtaining a camcorder and supplies through the grant and obtained the help of a media technology technician to film two classes. As a result the camcorder and film were purchased and a filming script and recording organized.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
Although the original grant expectation was a videoconferencing experience, the resulting products were more useful. When the films were completed, they were packaged and distributed to 8 child care centers. Education majors serving as interns at the sites volunteered to provide parent education workshops using the DVD's which their class had made. The Education majors raised their level of presentation as a result of the filming, and volunteered more readily having experienced the topic of 'Shared Reading' in the classroom. In addition, the various child care centers had 'ready made' resources which could be delivered by a staff member or a parent.

New Questions/Next Steps
The targeted child care centers have enthusiastically endorsed and requested more parent education workshops and the faculty advisor, Professor D'Alessio is scheduling them as a requirement for field work students. A second filming in EDUC 16 occurred in December and the DVD is in the editing stage. As a result of the strong interest in parent literacy, the BCC Child Dev. Staff produced a substantial library list which has since been purchased for seven grant partners. These permanent libraries and ongoing activities would not have evolved if the original grant plan, videoconferencing, was conducted.

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Assessing and Improving Basic Adult Education, GED and ESL Programs
Submitted by: Blanche Kellawon **Departmen**t: Institutional Advancement Date: Jan. 29, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
How to address community needs in order to provide best services?

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

We recruit and assess students on a regular basis for existing classes in Basic Education, Pre GED, GED and ESL. We rely on the results students achieve on the assessment to create and form classes. Some years we need more ESL classes, less Pre-GED classes and so on. Several years ago we saw the need to create a level one Basic Ed. Class (0.0-1.9). This class met for approximately 5 years. Many students achieved and moved up to the next level. This Fiscal year we were not able to recruit any new students to fill the existing low level Basic Ed. class, but we realized that we had a need for more Pre-GED classes. Since we do not have the means to conduct an actual needs assessment of the community, we use this informal assessment tool to get a sense of the needs of our students and we are able to create classes for them, thus meeting the emerging need of the community. We feel that it is important to try to meet the needs of the students in the community.

Outcome/impact: (changes or improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

After we realized that we could not offer a level one Basic Ed class this year we contacted The Center of Reading and Writing at the Public Library at Bainbridge Ave. in the Bronx. We were able to make arrangements for the few Basic Ed students to attend the Basic Ed class at the Library.

We then created a Pre-GED class for the students who were available to attend at this time.

New Questions/Next steps

We will continue to use this informal assessment tool to check the population trend in the community and to try to meet their needs by creating programming that will enhance and improve their lives and the lives of their children.

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Comprehensive Assessment of the Digital Arts Program
Submitted by:__ Jeanine Kelley-Williams**__ Department__**Art & Music**___ Date_**2/2/09**__**

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The Art Department posed a series of questions to determine what proficiencies students should acquire upon completion of the departments Digital Arts AAS degree program. The first question was, what are the program goals of the Art Department, are the goals clearly defined well articulated and understood by the faculty. Secondly, what are the learning objectives in the various classes of the department and how do those learning objectives relate to the programs goals and learning objectives.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied? /How it was studied? / What were the findings?)

The department researched the learning goals set by similar institutions of learning and organizations of accreditation. The accreditation standards of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design were studied, with particular attention focused on the learning goals expected of 2-year institutions.

Faculty from the BCC Art Department attended student shows at other colleges and university to gain evidence of the learning outcomes at other programs. BCC faculty met with faculty of other Art Departments to discuss and compare teaching/learning goals. Educators from other institutions and professionals in the field were invited to the BCC campus to review graduating students work and give feedback regarding the readiness of BCC graduates to enter their schools (4-year institutions) or gain employment.

Drafts of degree program learning goals were drawn up and circulated among the faculty for comments and revisions. BCC Art Department faculty agree upon a set of proficiencies for the Digital Arts program. The result was a codification of program goals.

Once the program goals were clearly defined, a Visual Learning Map was creating, listing all of the classes of the degree program and the program goals. Through a series of meetings course teaching/learning goals were aligned with program goals. At these meetings each faculty member articulated the teaching/learning goals for their course and explained what assignments and projects where used. Student work from their courses where presented, along with the rubrics used to grade the work. Faculty discussed what learning outcomes where evident in the student work being presented, the projects and assignments given.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
In the meetings discussions centered on the degree to which the projects fulfilled the intended goals, and how program goals are presently distributed and how they might be introduced, reinforced or emphasized in specific courses.

In the weeks that followed the meeting, individual instructors implemented changes in course instruction based on the group review of projects, assignments and student work. Key changes included, changing curriculum within individual coursed in order to improve the alignment between the course goals and the program goals. Identifying teaching/learning goals that need reinforcement throughout the curriculum.

New Questions/Next Steps
In an effort to manage the Art Departments growing assessment program, the department will be examining alternative ways to collect and assess direct evidence, in the form of student projects, using the internet.

In addition to seeking ways to continue to assess the courses in the degree program, the Art Department seeks to answer new questions in new areas of the general curriculum. Art 11, The History of Art is a course that serves the entire college community. Recently, an assessment project has begun to clarify the learning outcomes of the course and to see if the course goals are in alignment with the college's General Education proficiencies.

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<u>Streamlining the Mathematics Remedial Course Sequence</u>
Submitted by:_Andrew McInerney_________ Department:_Mathematics and Computer Science_
Date: January 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
In Fall 2006, the Math Department set out to address the complicated structure of the BCC math remedial sequence. This structure has evolved over decades to address the different mathematical needs of different degrees and programs at BCC. The question that the department set out to address: Is it possible to “streamline” the remedial sequence in such a way that one sequence could serve the needs of the various different tracks, while at the same time preserving the content necessary to maintain the academic integrity and preparation of students as they enter their credit-bearing courses?

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
The department formed a committee of 7-10 faculty members that discussed alternatives and possible approaches, as well as evaluated different data. Two main types of data informed the committee’s work: statistical data generated from Institutional Research based on past classes and random samples (for example, to compare performance rates and to analyze COMPASS scores), and data generated from a series of informal pilots (“05X” sections) carried out over the course of four semesters. This assessment had two main impacts on the discussion. First, it demonstrated that students in liberal arts degrees and programs performed at the same level as students in science and business majors at the remedial level. Second, it provided insight into ways of crafting the syllabus in a way to improve student performance.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
As mentioned above, data generated from the pilot 05X sections resulted in changes to the proposed syllabus in a way that more sharply focused the aim of the course. In addition, the assessment indicated a need to ensure solid arithmetic skills, prompting a departmental discussion of our MTH 01 course that resulted in modifications to the course as well as a proposed 01 prerequisite to the 05X course.

New Questions/Next Steps
The department is currently preparing to present the proposal to the Curriculum Committee in Spring 2009 with the goal of implementing the new sequence in Fall 2009.

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Maximizing Paralegal Library Functions
Submitted by: Teresa McManus   Department: Library and LRC   Date: January 23, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

The paralegal program is accredited/approved by the ABA. The extensive cost of covering resources needed to support the program is problematic, and disproportionate in terms of providing support to all areas of the curriculum. The students do not always heavily use the resources, and there is a tension between what we are required to supply, and the need to provide support for other areas. Since FY 2005-2006, the direct costs to the library budget of purchasing print and electronic materials for the Paralegal Program rose from approximately $35,000/year to nearly $54,000/year. As this increase was substantial and adversely affecting other purchasing decisions, we decided to review the contract with the vendor (Thomson West) to see if savings could be realized going forward.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

The Library revisited the ABA guidelines, and reviewed requirements. Librarians met with paralegal department representatives to identify and assess their perception of needs. Other libraries in the CUNY system with paralegal programs approved by ABA were contacted, and a survey was done to compare sources, prices, and data on support provided for the program. Discussions were held at the CUNY level to seek assistance in obtaining lower prices. The vendor was contacted, and options were reviewed. Librarians met with the paralegal department again, and all options were discussed, and final decisions were made on the basis of fulfilling the Library's mission to support the college's educational programs while maximizing effectiveness in regard to stewardship and resource allocation issues.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

The Library cancelled some titles, reducing costs, while enhancing support through negotiating a different package with vendor based on input from the other college libraries and the paralegal department.

New Questions/Next Steps

The process continues – the Library monitors use of sources, and costs continue to climb, and the assessment of need for print and electronic formats will be revisited prior to each contract renewal.

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Assessment of Information Literacy Supports
Submitted by: Teresa McManus Department: Library and LRC Date: January 23, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
To what extent are efforts to support Information Literacy proficiencies successful in terms of:
1) reaching students, and 2) achieving desired learning outcomes?

Assessment or Analysis:

What was studied: The Library's instruction program was reviewed with the aim of assessing performance in terms of 1) effectiveness, i.e., achieving learning goals, and 2) outreach.

How was it studied: Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered over several years. Each annual assessment report of the department provides data, and supplemental data was gathered using surveys.

What were the findings?: The Library collaborates in regard to learning goals and objectives: expectations are defined at the CUNY system-wide level for students at the 60 credit level (http://web.cuny.edu/academics/library/Lilacadmin/LearningGoals.html), and individual instructors often have specific learning goals for particular classes, usually related to assignments and class activities. Librarians consult professors prior to providing instruction, and accommodate requests to customize content of the Library instruction sessions. There is need to continue outreach efforts, as many professors are not aware of the relatively newly established learning expectations for students at the 60 credit level. Data collected in survey of faculty (79 responses) indicated 62% require students to evaluate information resources, 65% require use of library resources, 74% require students to cite sources. The open ended comments were also helpful (see attached). Data collected from students being trained to serve as IT interns and tutors indicated strong positive reactions to Information Literacy training sessions, with the most common comment that it would be helpful for other students to receive the same level of training (these students receive 7 hours of instruction, split over 2 days). Data collected from students attending instruction sessions as part of OCD classes (these students receive approximately 45 minutes of instruction), indicated extremely high positive reactions to the instruction, with 98% of respondents recommending the instruction be included in classes every semester. Additionally, instructors communicate with librarians regarding their assessment of the extent to which learning goals are achieved; though written records of their positive feedback have not been collected, their positive assessments are also indicated by their continued collaboration and scheduling of sessions in subsequent semesters. Teaching faculty have shared their assessment that there is a "correlation between the frequency of assignments requiring library research and students proficiencies in library skills…once these students were "molded" so to speak in getting used to doing research via the library, their writing, critical thinking on a subject matter, and presentation improved."

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

The findings indicated positive reactions to instruction, and even more positive assessments to longer instruction sessions. It is not within the power of the department to lengthen classes, even though this is advisable based on the findings. As a result, the Library has scheduled follow up sessions with the same class (when requested by the professor). Instructors interested in developing student Information Literacy proficiencies are collaborating with librarians to improve learning outcomes by scheduling follow up sessions to focus on particular aspects of the assignments, such as using RefWorks, the bibliographic software purchased by CUNY for use in citing sources, with the instructor identifying which of the learning goals they feel are most important for their courses. Additionally, librarians are continuing outreach efforts to faculty, providing demonstrations at department meetings or other faculty development events when opportunities arise. Additionally, librarians are encouraging the creation of class activities or assignments that require research, and bringing information about the learning expectations at the 60 credit level to faculty in multiple forums to try to increase awareness.

New Questions/Next Steps

Continuing to gather data to assess instruction is important. Also, the Library should consider trying to capture faculty assessments of the value of instruction in a cumulative written record.

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Creating an Analytically-Driven Case Management Program
Jennifer Misick, Student Development

The Problem
The Interim Vice President of Student Development requested data on counseling and advisement contacts by Counseling Faculty in order to determine whether of not the current services provided to students were sufficient and or effective. Prior to his arrival, all counseling faculty were required to maintain daily contact sheets, summarize weekly contacts on a weekly reporting form and then submit monthly reports along with the weekly contact sheets to the director of General Counseling. The intent was to place data into a excel spreadsheet so that student behavior could at least on the surface be monitored. The data was collected; however placing in a form that would allow for analysis remained a problem.

Department Response
The Office of Institutional Research was asked to assist the department in developing an analytically driven freshmen case management advisement and counseling model. All first and second semester freshmen were assigned to a counseling faculty member. In most cases this was the instructor with whom the student enrolled for the freshman success seminar. Freshmen students who did not enroll in the freshman seminar course were evenly distributed to counseling faculty and instructed by IT through correspondence to contact the teacher. Records of all student/faculty contacts were electronically maintained in two places: eadvisement and advisor trac. These procedures allow the counseling unit to develop a system for creating data reports about their students (absences, mid-term grades, etc.) on a semester by semester basis. The information provided the counseling faculty with information pertaining to their students' academic performance, plus provided the Vice President of Student Development with information that would allow him to analyze the effectiveness of counseling faculty as well as the case management approach.

Postscript The General Counseling unit has a comprehensive assessment component with enough data to evaluate the impact of the counseling and advisement process within the unit, by individual counseling faculty and activity. The results of the research will be used to further develop strategies for effective counseling.

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<u>Obtaining Financial Aid for GED Students</u>
Submitted by: Elizabeth Payamps Department: Institutional Advancement Date: 1/29/08

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The Future Now Program delivers GED services to a large number of out-of-school youths who may be criminally at-risk and/or have been incarcerated. Our students come from very disadvantaged economic backgrounds and therefore they all needed assistance with the College Application Fee in order to enroll into Bronx Community College immediately after obtaining their GED Diploma.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
We compared the number of students who were passing the GED examination and completing the college application with the number of students who were actually completing the admissions and registration process. We found that many students were not returning to our office after being informed that they had to bring back a $65.00 money with the completed application. Many students shared that they were not able to afford the fee therefore they were postponing their admissions process.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
As a result and with the assistance of the Institutional Advancement office we sought out the help of the BCC Academic Affairs Department. For the last 4 semesters, they have included us in the CUNY Chancellor’s reports and we have been able to receive fee waivers for all of our students. We have significantly increased the number of students who complete the admissions process at Bronx Community College.

New Questions/Next Steps
We are still working in facilitating the Financial Aid and Registration processes for our population. Even though more students are being admitted, many students are still discouraged when they are not able to validate their classes (they have 24 hours before all of their classes are dropped) and this is mainly due to technical fees and balances resulting from financial aid issues. We have spoken to the financial aid Director who will be coming next week to bring forms and to discuss the possibility of our staff having access to the system in order to expedite student’s financial verification.

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Improving Student Performance in Gateway Accounting Course
Submitted by: Prof. Rosemary Quinn **Department: Business and Information Systems** **Date: December 18, 2008**

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
ACC 11 was classified as a Gateway Course due to high failure and withdrawal rates (passing rates approximately 50%).

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied? /How it was studied? /What were the findings?)
In an attempt to increase student success, various interventions were implemented as follows:
Spring, 2007
Two-hour embedded tutorial workshop (section 1102X) to reinforce accounting principles and procedures through the completion of individual and group exercises. It was expected that this approach would address a main obstacle to student success; namely, students' lack of time and/or discipline to complete course assignments.

Increase in Mathematics course prerequisites (section 1103X) to require completion of the first level of remedial math in AAS Degree (MTH 01) and AS Degree (MTH 05) – It was expected that a stronger foundation in Mathematics would contribute to students' analytical ability and also increase their level of maturity in adapting to demanding college-level coursework.

Introduction of Revised Practice Set
Accounting faculty agreed that reinforcement of the Accounting Cycle (i.e. preparation of Journals, General Ledger, Financial Statements, etc) could be achieved through the completion of a required practice set. Historically, the practice sets were provided by the textbook publisher and sold to students as an addendum to the textbook. During spring 2007 & fall 2007 the course coordinator met with faculty to discuss the practice set. It was determined that a revised practice set, to more closely reinforce course objectives and to address problem areas (journalizing transactions, preparation of Financial Statements, etc.) be implemented beginning in fall 2007. Faculty would utilize a full two hour class period to explain the practice set. A senior accounting faculty member designed a revised practice set, to closely follow the faculty recommendations and it was first implemented in fall 2007.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

Two-hour embedded tutorial workshop (section 1102X)
Faculty member for this section reported a passing rate of 47% as compared to this instructor's previous accounting 11 sections which generated a 45% passing rate. Therefore, the overall increase was not that significant. However, it is revealing to note that students in this section had an overall GPA of 1.65 in comparison to this faculty's other ACC 11 sections whose students had an overall GPA of 2.39. Therefore, in this context, the two percent increase in passing rate for this low achieving class was indicative of the effectiveness of this intervention.

This intervention was attempted in two subsequent semesters, but due to lack of enrollment the section was cancelled.

Increase in Mathematics course prerequisites
In spring 2007, ACC 11, 1103X had a passing rate of 39% as compared to overall sections that semester of 44%. In fall 2007, ACC 11, 1104X had a passing rate of 55% as compared to overall sections that semester of 53%. The results of these experimental sections did not produce the expected results. It was hoped that the addition of Mathematics prerequisites would better prepare students of the analytical components of ACC 11.

Introduction of Revised Practice Set
The new practice set presented positive, but mixed results. In fall 2007 approximately 84% of ACC 11 students earned a grade of C or better on the practice set. In spring 2008 approximately 72% of ACC 11 students earned a grade of C or better on the practice set. While this evidence is promising, the results fell short of expectations. It was determined that meetings be held each spring to monitor student outcomes and suggest interventions if necessary.

New Questions/Next Steps

Two-hour embedded tutorial workshop
An analysis the outcomes of the embedded tutoring workshops indicated that engaging students in workshops has the potential to be a practical, effective intervention. Therefore in fall 2008, with the support of George L. Sanchez, Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs, three weekend study group workshop sessions were introduced. These sessions were well attended and students appeared attentive and motivated. A thorough analysis of their effectiveness will be conducted, subsequent to the submission of final grades, in the early spring 2009 semester.

Increase in Mathematics course prerequisites
While the experimental sections did not produce the expected results, the Department is still in favor of officially changing the course prerequisites to include a Math component. In fall 2008, the Department proposed a change in ACC 11 prerequisites to the College Curriculum Committee. The item is currently under review and should be voted on the in the spring 2009 semester.

Introduction of Revised Practice Set The Accounting faculty is scheduled to conduct a meeting to discuss the practice set in the spring 2009 semester. The results of this meeting could lead to further refinements in the practice set.

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Assessing Analytical Reasoning in Business Department Course (DAT10)
Submitted by: Prof. Rosemary Quinn Department: Business and Information Systems Date: December 18, 2008

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
DAT 10 is a core course in the Business curricula. Ten sections are offered each semester (approximately 240 students). In planning assessment efforts it was determined to include this foundation course for analysis.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied? /How it was studied? /What were the findings?)
Faculty agreed to use a uniform Excel spreadsheet project (utilizing mathematical formulas and reinforcement of analytical thinking to solve a business problem) to assess the students proficiency in the creation of an electronic spreadsheet.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
This uniform project was implemented in the fall 2006 semester. The Department set a minimum criteria of 80% of all students completing this uniform spreadsheet project earning a grade of 70% or better. The criteria was not met in fall 2006 (60% earned 70% or better), the first semester in which the project was administered. It was met in the three subsequent semesters (88%, 83% & 84% respectively).

During the spring 2007 & 2008 semesters the course coordinator met with DAT 10 faculty to discuss the spreadsheet project. It was determined that: (1) Faculty review basic mathematical concepts prior to the introduction of the MS Excel application; (2) Faculty should designate sufficient class time during which the content of the project will be explained and set aside classroom time for students to complete the project.

New Questions/Next Steps
The DAT 10 faculty and the curriculum coordinator will hold meetings each spring semester to monitor student outcomes and suggest refinements if necessary.

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A Case Study of Reengineering a Department to Increase Efficiency, Satisfaction, and Cost Effectiveness

Submitted by: Nancy Ritze Department: Research, Planning & Assessment Date: 1/7/09

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The longstanding Director of the Testing Office resigned from the College – with only 1 week notice in the middle of Fall semester registration 2006 (last week of July), with another departure of a research staff member at about the same time. A first inclination was to quickly fill the Director's position – but a more thorough assessment and analysis informed a different approach.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
A quick, but thorough assessment included: analysis of the current and projected workload (including number of tests administered, scored and maintained in accordance with enrollment projections); an analysis of requirements for administrative and test proctoring coverage (in 2 separate testing locations – 2 testing computer labs in Nichols Hall and 2 administrative offices in Colston Hall); a description and analysis of each staff members' functions and responsibilities – compared to CUNY generic job descriptions by level; identification of any overlaps in responsibilities or gaps; interviews regarding perceptions of departmental strengths, weaknesses and demands as well as personal aspirations and job satisfaction; review of job performance and future capabilities by the Associate Dean for the area.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

A proposal was developed (by the end of August, 2006) and accepted, which included a reorganization of the entire Research and Testing Unit of the College. The reorganization included: the elimination of the 2 vacated positions (Director of Testing and Information Systems Assistant); reclassification of all remaining staff in the Research and Testing Department, (including an upgrade to the position of the Director of Institutional Research to a higher level administrative position of Director of Institutional Research and Testing); adding an Administrative Assistant position to the administrative testing area.

At the time of the initial implementation of these changes, the amount of salary saved from the resigned positions ($128,878) and the additional position and increased salaries requested ($66,091) saved the college $62,787 in the first year in salary costs alone, which did not account for any savings in fringe benefits.

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Organizing a Records Management Program
Submitted by: Mary Rogan Department: Legal Counsel, President's Office Date 1/28/09

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The College has not had a records management program. There was no one person in each department with the responsibility for the management of records and no schedule of record storage or destruction. As a result, many departments have been hesitant to destroy files, although the retention period has long passed. The University has a Records Retention Schedule based on legal considerations, but there had never been any discussion with the various departments about the practicality of the schedule in light of the specific tasks for which the department is responsible. This resulted in a number of problems: departments were not able to find records needed because of the volume of records being kept; records requested pursuant to a court order could not be answered with the level of assuredness needed; and much needed space was being occupied with files that are no longer needed.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
The College embarked on developing a records management program, in conjunction with a University pilot project to revise the records retention schedule. A Records Coordinator was identified in each department and that person was provided with a job description for this task. An organizing meeting was held with all of the Records Coordinators to explain the project and their role, and to answer any questions. An inventory of the types of records kept by each department and where those records are located was conducted. Working in conjunction with the University General Counsel's Office and the Records Management Project, a retention schedule was developed for each department based on the specific records kept. Once the inventory was complete, a follow up meeting was held with all the Records Coordinators to present the departmental records retention schedules, explain the process for archiving and destruction of records, and answer any questions. It was found that: (1) the draft records retention schedule, developed by the University based on legal considerations and a schedule developed by the New York State Archives, needed revisions in both the types of records listed and the retention periods; many records were retained well beyond the retention period required (in some instances for decades); there are spaces across the campus that can be better utilized if we conduct an initial purging of all records beyond the retention period and maintain the effort through a Records Management Program.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
As a result of the inventory and development of the departmental records retention schedule, the College has made a commitment to having a Records Management Program. The Office of Legal Counsel will provide information and advice on specific records and the retention periods. The physical aspects of the Records Management Program (e.g., coordination of destruction, archiving and retrieval of inactive files) will be the responsibility of the Office of Campus Services. Initiating a Records

Management Program will take place in two phases: the destruction of all records past the retention period; and the implementation of a process and schedule for managing records going forward.

An ancillary impact of this project has been the increased morale of the Records Coordinators. There were two meetings held with this group, who are predominately office clerical staff. At both meetings, there were representatives of the University pilot project and the College President. The group sensed that they were engaged in and central to a project of importance to the College and the University. Many of the attendees commented that they had never attended a professional meeting and the participation and engagement of the Records Coordinators, both at the meetings and with the project, was impressive.

New Questions/Next Steps

To date, Records Coordinators have begun the process of identifying those files ripe for destruction. The College has engaged the services of a shredding company and the destruction of records that are past the retention period will begin shortly. Once the destruction phase is complete, a process and schedule for archiving and retrieval of inactive files will be developed and implemented.

In terms of the ancillary impact on morale, the College should consider developing a venue for the clerical staff to meet, discuss issues of common concern and have an opportunity to develop skills and gain knowledge about the University and College, as well as about the functions they perform.

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<u>Maintaining Library Hardware and Software</u>
Submitted by: Jesus E. Sanabria______ Department: Library Date: January 12, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

The Library has numerous workstations to troubleshoot and maintain, and the constant demand and the need for sudden repairs and software updates needed to be brought under a system to keep track of progress or difficulties, while avoiding the disruption of computer use by our students and duplicating work of staff working a variety of shifts that don't necessarily overlap.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

A mapping system of all workstations in the Library was created. The system provides a mechanism for tracking maintenance, troubleshooting, repairs, software updates, and so forth to control and manage the processes. It serves as a communication tool, and makes it easier to manage repairs or maintenance with minimal disruption of students' use of workstations.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

This approach has improved the department's effectiveness in providing access to well functioning workstations, while reducing labor time devoted to maintenance and troubleshooting.

New Questions/Next Steps

The department will look at variables that can be added to make the system more accessible and useful to facilitate effectiveness going forward.

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Improve Remote Access to Academic Database Offerings
Submitted by: Jesus E. Sanabria   Department: Library   Date: January 12, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

We had identified instances wherein remote access to our academic database offerings did not work. We wanted to improve the reliability of our students and faculty access to this service.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

A plan was proposed to test the remote access to all of our academic databases. We began a frequency of tests conducted off-campus on a weekly basis from a home PC. There are many databases, testing required checking each from off campus. The remote testing identifies dead and obsolete links, and connectivity issues dealing with new or revised proxy settings. IT had been asked for years to provide the Library with access to the servers where the proxy files are placed as well as access to editing and re-initializing changes to the EzProxy file. IT gave the Library access, and this has proven to be critical in improving reliability of access, as many times the problem related to routine maintenance of servers, and then a failure to "re-start" the ExProxy software on the part of IT staff that had the authorization to do so. Once the Library was given responsibility/authorization to manage the software, there were no more instances of this kind of failure.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

This testing resulted in more reliable access to our remote service offerings and in the continuous maintenance and updating of our EzProxy files and web site.

New Questions/Next Steps

Continued testing of access from off site locations are now part of routine operations, performed on a weekly basis (more frequently when and if needed, as determined by access problems).

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Managing Multiple External Funding Sources in Continuing Education Programs
Submitted by: Glenda M. Self Department: Institutional Development Date: January 30, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

The DEP #6 Air Pollution/Oil Burner instructor at Alfred E. Smith High School retired after 30 plus years of teaching. DEP and DOE became locked in a dispute over the funding of the teaching position. The course is a requirement for my students. DOE and DEP could not give me a date when this problem would be resolved. In the meantime, I had 32 students waiting for an evening enrollment date. Also, an instructor had not been indentified to replace the teacher who retired.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

Should Project H.I.R.E. risk not offering this co-enrollment for the first time in 23 years? Who else is offering the course? Will they take my students? Can I get this resolved before the Summer/Fall session ends? Can I assist in identifying a teacher? Should I approach the problem seeking a temporary solution or should I work on getting the course back to Alfred E. Smith high school? Who can help me through this?

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

I reached out to my contacts at DEP, DOE, and the City Council. I impressed upon them the impact this course has on workforce development. Project H.I.R.E. students were not the only community member affected. My students enrolled in the course at Co-op Tech in Manhattan. The funding issue was resolved between DOE and DEP. I was able to identify a teacher. DOE licensed him. The course has returned to Alfred E. Smith high school.

New Questions/Next Steps

Why is there not more communication between DOE Adult Workforce Development programs and Community Colleges' Continuing Education programs?

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Improving CUNY+ Database Functionality
Submitted by: Zuwang Shen Department Library Date 1/15/09

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

Case 1. An estimated 24,000 books in storage were not in the CUNY+ Union Catalog database. As such, books that were kept in the storage room could not be found in the catalog search. Students or faculty would have to get such books elsewhere or through interlibrary loans.

Case 2. Frequently Interlibrary loan requests from other college or university libraries requested specific titles which were listed in OCLC as being holdings, but not listed in CUNY+ as the records were deleted when the items turned up missing, or were discarded due to poor condition or obsolescence by the library. The problems caused extra labor and time for staff and delays for the end users.

Case 3. Multiple editions of textbook titles in older editions by the same author or authors coexisted on the shelves, for example, in nursing, engineering, Windows and MS office suite training, causing confusion and taking much needed shelf space. The external evaluator's report on the Library recommended removal of obsolete materials as a high priority.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

Case 1. Books in storage were assessed against needs, CUNY Libraries holdings, and authority or reputation the title, author and publisher. Many titles were determined to be in the subjects of American and British literature, art, and education and worthwhile to be added into CUNY+ Union Catalog. A significant number of duplicates in literary classics were found. During the processing, each title was carefully examined in terms of subject, content, redundancy, currency, necessity and value for the college's academic programs. When appropriate, titles determined to be obsolete or not needed were discarded.

Case 2. The reason why books were found to have been discarded or missing but still requested by other libraries was that our bibliographic records and holdings information in OCLC WorldCat database were not updated fully. When file uploads to OCLC were implemented, only additions were uploaded (the CUNY Office of Library Services did not update OCLC records to reflect deletions of records of discarded materials when OCLC file uploads were routinely submitted). In each instance, actions were taken to update OCLC records to resolve inaccuracies.

Case 3. Collection analysis was conducted by using the Aleph cataloging system to retrieve titles in subject areas of nursing, engineering, and computer technology. Obsolete editions were discarded in accordance to the guidelines as set by related academic department and the library. General nursing books of 5 years old, for example, were withdrawn from the collection. There bibliographic records in the Aleph system and holdings information in the OCLC WorldCat database were also updated, accordingly. See the binder, *Collection Analysis and Bibliographic Record Maintenance*, for the screenshots.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

As a result of careful assessment and subsequent operations performed, the library collection has been updated in the related subject areas, the integrity of the library holdings information in CUNY online Union Catalog and OCLC WorldCat with the physical holdings on the shelves was maintained so as to serve the college and the library community in the use of library resources more effectively and efficiently. Less time and labor is wasted responding to requests for materials that were not available. Students are able to find needed materials more easily. Room has been made on shelves to keep collections in order, facilitating reshelving of materials after circulation and to accommodate areas of the collection developed to support new curricula or to update titles.

New Questions/Next Steps

The book inventory process is expected to be completed in 2009. Continuous efforts are necessary to reassess collection against full text resource aggregators, to minimize duplication and gain maximum value from investments in learning resources. As titles in packages delivered by publishers and vendors continue to vary over time, and as packages become too costly to continue, and are dropped and new subscriptions added, the need to re-examine options necessitates renewal of assessment processes. New courses and programs also factor in assessing needs and resource options.

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Facilities Infrastructure Needs Assessment
Submitted by: David A. Taylor
Department: Administration and Finance
Date: Friday, January 23, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
Assessment of Infrastructure Needs
Past efforts to comprehensively compile condition assessment reports of our facilities and infrastructure were ineffective for several reasons. The data had as short shelf-life and was of limited usefulness; the report did not include or produce and upgrade and replacement strategy; nor did it include a funding stream.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
The task was to uniformly assess the condition of the infrastructure across the campus within a short timeframe by utilizing a Building Condition Assessment Survey Tool. The tool, designed to be used by staff who know the campus infrastructure, produced timely data that could be updated, analyzed, and validated. The team consisted of the campus superintendent, architect, engineers, electricians, etc. who compiled the survey results in the web-based application. After data-entry was completed, costing results were validated and the assessment database was finalized.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
The process, undertaken and completed within a week's time, produced a baseline assessment of current facility and infrastructure conditions along with dollar values. These assessment results were forwarded to a consultant (central) who applied a Current Replacement Value (CVR) model to calculate the costs of facility and infrastructure replacement. In addition to the CVR, the following values were also realized: Average Annual Renewal- the average cost per year to keep up with facility renewal needs; Backlog - all subsystems that have no remaining useful life and need immediate replacement; and Facility Condition Index (FCI) - the backlog divided by the CRV; the ideal being to maintain an FCI under .05.

The campus' has a CRV of $660 million; backlog of $88 million and an FCI of .13

New Questions/Next Steps
Through the use of the Building Condition Assessment Survey Tool we are able to assess and outline 5-year capital funding needs as it relates to replacing obsolete infrastructure systems. These needs have been presented in the University's funding request to the State.

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<u>**Automating Purchasing Processes**</u>
Submitted by: Donovan Thompson **Department:** Purchasing Department **Date:** January 26**,** 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
The College's purchasing system was manual and highly labor- and paper-intensive. Among campus users the most common issues were that:
1. requisitions were constantly lost or misplaced;
2. there were significant delays between the requisitioning of goods, the processing and issuing of purchase orders and the receiving of goods;
3. the requesting department often supplied insufficient and incorrect information on the purchase requisitions to properly complete purchase orders;
4. the requesting department were often informed that there was insufficient funds to support a purchase due because accounts were not up to date;
5. the Purchasing Office, without proper authorization or without conferring with the requesting department, spent funds in excess of the department's budget on certain purchases or purchased items that were not to the specifications requested.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
Observations/Findings/consequences:
A study of the purchasing process yielded the following observations:
1. Purchasing requisitions, routed through inter-office mail to various authorized signatories and finally to the Purchasing Office, were often delayed, lost or held by the signatory and not approved;
2. the manual receipt and recording of requisitions created service delays;
3. occasionally, purchase requisitions were misfiled, creating a documentation backlog;
4. approximately 70% of all campus purchase requisitions were being submitted to the purchasing department too late in the year (between February and May); and as a result all goods could not be received by the June 30th fiscal year deadline, resulting in a loss of the committed budget dollars.

Faculty and staff who did not receive their purchases on time or not at all or lost their spending power reacted negatively to the Purchasing Department requirement's and often went around the department by trying to purchase items directly from the vendor. Department staff, stressed by both the work load staff and faculty antagonism due to their inability to successfully consummate transactions, felt demoralized. This resulted in highly ineffective purchasing process, diminished customer service and poor staff morale.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
Improvements:

The implementation of our e-procurement system has enabled us to track transactions from the user requisition through the departmental issuance of a purchase order. The process flow from requestor to the Purchasing Office now takes hours instead of weeks. The turn-around time for a standard requisition has been significantly reduced. Customer service relationships have improved incrementally and the loss of a department's purchasing power due to the inability the Purchasing Office to complete a purchase transaction is practically non-existent.

New Questions/Next Steps

The concentration of most purchases within the months of February through May has only marginally changed. We are implementing an alert system in the Budget Office to inform departments of their spending status. However, we anticipate that CUNYfirst, the university new ERP system, e-procurement module will facilitate this effort particularly since it is university-wide problem. Our current e-procurement system does not readily provide statistical reports. Consequently, the data has to be exported to other software and analyzed. This will also be addressed by the CUNYfirst e-procurement module.

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Tuition Payment Process Analysis

Submitted by: Donovan Thompson **Department:** Bursar Office **Date:** January 26, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
Students were only allowed to pay tuition with cash and financial aid and every student, even those receiving full financial aid, and having zero balance owed, had to personally visit the Bursar Office to be validated. Students complained about the limited payment options, the long lines and time waiting in those lines. To service all these students, the Bursar Office had a staff of 15 when our student population was approximately 7,000 average of approximately 467 students to each staff.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
A review of other college operations showed a ratio of one staff to a thousand students. Students were not spending as much time waiting on line, more payment options were available and students receiving full financial aid with zero balance were not required to visit the Bursar Office.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

We implemented IWR system allowing students to pay tuition by credit card and e-checks. We implemented a Zero Balance Validation system so student receiving full financial aid can self validate online. The lines were decreased, and staff to student ration has changed to 818 from 467.

New Questions/Next Steps
Students utilizing the self validating system for financial aid have to wait 24 hours after receiving financial aid to validate. We are pursuing eliminating that waiting period.

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<u>Transparency of Budget Process</u>

Submitted by: Donovan Thompson **Department:** Budget **Date:** January 27, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question: <u>Transparency of the Budget Process</u>

The budget process was administered centrally by the Business Office and little budget information was shared with the campus community. There was an overall lack of information and total absence of transparency about the college's funding and the budget process. The Vice President of Finance and Administration was provided financial data on overall college spending that was unreliable and often untimely. Campus department heads were not provided budget reports and expense data on a routine basis. The College's P&B committee was not being provided reliable budget information. There was no routine system of checking budget balances in place in, particularly for temporary services and OTPS. The Business Manager who had responsibility for budget relied on the University financial system which system did not produce detailed, user-friendly budget and expense information in a timely fashion. In addition, the Business Manager did not share or distribute any of the reports that were generated from the University system. Departments wishing to make purchases often submitted requisitions without the benefit of knowing what resources were available. Some departments would call first to ascertain if resources were available, before preparing and submitting purchase requisitions.

All of these factors created conditions that increased the potential for significant overspending on a campus-wide basis and fostered mistrust between the faculty and staff, campus governance and the administration.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

After the retirement of the former Business Manager and prior to the hiring of the new Business Manager, the day-to-day functions of the Business Office were run on an interim basis by the Dean of Administration. During that time, workflow and job functions in the budget area were analyzed and evaluated, resulting in the reassignment of job functions. The budget workflow process was enhanced to allow for the development of an internal system for recording budget and tracking expenditures, albeit a manual system. While the budget and expense function was still centralized there was greater and more accurate information provided to upper management, governance areas and the general campus. The Vice President and Dean held budget seminars for the campus leadership to de-mystify the process and facilitate greater transparency. The new Business Manager further analyzed the budget process and made enhancements, which included the automated gathering and reporting of budget data.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

The Business Office implemented an internal budget system that generated and issued accurate monthly Department Budget Reports (DBRs) to heads of departments. Quarterly college-wide reports are now issued to Vice Presidents and College leadership. Periodic college-wide reports are presented to the College's P&B Subcommittee. Budget checking is a major component of the existing internal system.

New Questions/Next Steps
Departments will be given budget inquiry ability in CUNYfirst, the University ERP system, so they can self-determine their balances. The College's budget and expenditure data will be available on the College's Website.

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Developing and Sustaining a Faculty Development Program for Online Instruction
Submitted by:__Howard Wach_____ Department_Instructional Technology Date_12/22/08__

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:
How can BCC develop and sustain an effective faculty development program that will build quality online instruction? A faculty development program started in 2005 had been partially successful. While some highly motivated participants developed and delivered online courses and continuously utilized the Blackboard course management system, others—perhaps less intrinsically motivated—did not. How could the number of program "deliverables"—successful online courses and faculty continuing to utilize online teaching technologies—be increased from approximately 50% of program participants?

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)
Survey data of participants revealed that the most successful elements of the program were the provision of sustained faculty mentoring and group activities that extended from summer sessions through the following Fall semester. Beginning in 2007, program leaders determined to strengthen this program element, while adding a new accountability mechanism that tied payment of program stipends to clearly defined program performance benchmarks. Participants who could not meet the benchmarks would be asked to withdraw.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
Impact of assessment-based changes are measured as follows:
2005—10 participants. Results: Five new Blackboard users, 2 new distance learning instructors.
2006—13 participants. Results: Seven new Blackboard users, 4 new distance learning instructors.
Following program revisions:
2007—16 participants. Results: Thirteen new Blackboard users, 11 new distance learning instructors. Three participants asked to withdraw.
2008—14 participants. Results: Eleven new Blackboard users, 11 new distance learning instructors. Three participants asked to withdraw.

New Questions/Next Steps We have succeeded in creating a mechanism for adding to the roster of distance learning courses and instructors. How can we assure the quality of this instruction while continuing to expand course offerings? While our survey data indicates high satisfaction with faculty mentoring, we need to create additional structures to monitor quality and measure student outcomes. A new peer observation procedure will begin in Spring 2009. A dedicated form for student evaluation of online instruction is also needed. An institutional study of online learning currently under way will provide additional data, and we expect to incorporate its findings into further program revision.

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Managing Distribution of Laptops and other Devises for Campus Loan Programs
Submitted by: James Watson **Department** Library **Date** 1/15/2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

Managing distribution of laptops and other devices for the various campus loan programs.
In 2006, the Library assumed responsibility for the distribution and tracking of 120 laptops for the student Honors program. In four semesters, the program has expanded to distributing and tracking nearly 500 technology devices including over 300 notebook/tablet systems, 140 scientific calculators, nearly 50 IPODS and mp3 players, and a video camera. The Library also provides services for the faculty loan and ASAP programs.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

The Problem:
The immediate problem was to create a migration plan to move from a paper-based inventory tracking and distribution system to one managed electronically. The following incremental procedures were implemented:

- create a form and mail-merge document to facilitate creation of student/faculty contracts;
- manually enter transferred inventory items into a Microsoft Access Inventory Tracking database;
- Build a patron's table that links to specific loan programs inventory, and update transactions offline.
- Create forms and mail-merge documents for recently acquired devices.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)

We are currently developing the final stage of the inventory distribution/tracking system. In the new system inventory and patron records will be loaded into a Microsoft SQL Server database that will provide greater control in the maintenance and distribution of resources. Key features of the new system include:

- automated linking of patron and inventory records;
- tracking an inventory item's disposition, in-service, re-image needed, repair needed, transferred, etc.;
- most importantly the new system will provide audit controls regarding the modification of patron and inventory records.

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Assessing and Improving Alumni Regional Receptions
Submitted by: Robert Whelan Department: Alumni Relations Date: 1/30/09

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question: The continuation of Alumni Regional Receptions and their impact on future alumni support, either in person or financially. Is the amount of outreach from a community college to graduates currently outside of the community worth the effort? In addition, how does the alumni office increase participation in the reception, and continue to ask for financial support.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?) The alumni office looked at the graduates invited to take part in the regional reception looking at their past support of BCC and their future support after the reception. In addition, the alumni office looked at early outreach to ensure an improved outcome for the current event.

The first regional reception was Tampa, FL in 2007. Tampa had 550 alumni in a 50 mile radius, and 35 alumni and friends attended the reception. The event had a 6% response rate from the mailing. The alumni donations from January 1, 2001 to April 14, 2007 totaled $620.00, roughly $100.00 per year. From April 14, 2007 to December 31, 2008 alumni donations totaled $1,115.00, more than $560.00 per year. The decision was made to visit another city.

The second regional reception was Philadelphia, PA in 2008. Philadelphia has 1,100 alumni in a 50 mile radius, and significantly closer in location to college. Alumni have visited the BCC area more often than the first regional reception. The mailing response was 3%. The alumni donations from January 1, 2001 to April 8, 2008 totaled $650.00, approximately $93.00 per year. Alumni donations after the event from April 8, 2008 to December 31, 2008 totaled $300. In 7 months alumni donations were half of what was raised in 7 years. The decision was made to visit a third city that is the Phoenix, AZ.

Another benefit in the choice of city is the number of BCC administration already attending a conference in the area. Thereby, allowing the alumni to meet more BCC staff, and not worry about the cost of transportation of so many BCC staff.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment) More outreach is needed prior to the actual invitation. The alumni office has articles in the Gateway describing the most recent event, as well as informing the graduates of the newest location. In addition, phone calls are made to alumni prior to the invitation telling them that BCC will be in the area. The outreach will hopefully increase to response percentage to the event.

New Questions/Next Steps: Should the alumni office limit the reception to once a year, or should it add more events? What will be the results in Arizona, considering the distance from BCC? The alumni office needs to collect additional data for more than three-years. It is also looking at the future cities that are part of the reception. In 2010, the office will travel to Seattle, WA with 40 alumni followed by New Orleans, LA with 30 alumni.

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Emergency Response Planning
Submitted by: Alyce Zimerman **Department: Office of Administration & Finance**
Date: January 12, 2009

Description of Topic, Issue, Problem or Question:

As one of the consequences of the horrific events of 9/11, CUNY became much more focused on emergency response plans for all of its member institutions. Then, following the tragic shooting at Virginia Tech, the University became keenly aware that it needed an effective emergency notification system to provide timely information to protect lives and minimize campus disruption.

Assessment or Analysis: (What was studied?/How it was studied?/What were the findings?)

Several vendors were considered to provide the University with a rapid-response system. In the event of an emergency (severe weather, fire, bomb threat, civil disturbance, hazardous material, major road closing, medical emergency, personal safety situation, utility failure, etc.) the system would advise students, faculty, staff and any other members of the college community who chose to sign up – both on and off campus – by means of emails, instant text messaging and telephone broadcasts messages. At the time the proposals were being considered, many SUNY campuses were already in the process of testing a system based on NY-Alert, New York State's emergency notification system. CUNY followed SUNY's lead and CUNY Alert was created. Each college was asked to appoint a team [of three] who would be trained to use the system although the only individuals authorized to declare an emergency and set the system in motion are the President and members of her Cabinet. Tests are run every month to ensure that the system is operating properly.

Outcomes/Impact: (Changes or Improvements made/proposed as a result of assessment)
In conjunction with the NYS Office of Emergency Management and monitored by the University, CUNY Alert was implemented in early 2008. It is an opt-in system; by the end of Spring 2008, more than 1,000 BCC individuals had registered to participate. The system was used once after a campus robbery at BCC and was found to work well. However, there are still some questions as to its most appropriate use.

New Questions/Next Steps
Efforts continue to have all students, faculty and staff sign up for CUNY Alert.