

# Managing Student Learning at Hunter College

## WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of the “new” assessment newsletter at Hunter College. Our intent is to inform faculty and administrators about the latest campus developments in assessment and publicize assessment-related events and activities in New York and beyond.

The Newsletter title—“Managing Student Learning”—is a reminder of why we do assessment: to improve student learning by setting our sights on learning outcomes, checking periodically to see where we are relative to our target, and making course and program corrections to bring us closer to the desired outcomes. It’s a goal-directed activity that requires active management, with student learning at the center.

Much is happening around assessment at Hunter, including the newly energized direct learning assessment within majors and graduate programs; the work of the Assessment Fellows; the F.I.T.T. (Faculty Innovations in Teaching with Technology) summer project; and some ACERT programs focused on assessment.



Of course, the Middle States Steering Committee is now looking across the institution at how we use assessment to manage outcomes in academic and, to a more limited extent, in administrative departments.

A major project on the horizon is the assessment of General Education. We devote enormous resources to General Education, a learning outcomes-based curriculum, and it is time that we developed a comprehensive plan to gauge our success with it. The program has many parts and cycling through the numerous learning outcomes—many prescribed by CUNY but others up to us—will be a multi-year project. The Senate Committee on Assessment and Evaluation and the General Education Requirements Committee are both discussing ways to approach General Education assessment. The College has a head start through current assessments of writing and math, but we need to look at the many other learning outcomes in General Education.

We look forward to sharing your activities and thoughts on the management of student learning, so please forward news to the Office of Assessment for inclusion in these pages

## Assessment Fellows

Hunter College Assessment Fellows are faculty who commit to one or two academic years to working with the Office of Assessment while broadly supporting assessment initiatives within their departments and across the campus. Assessment Fellows Scott Gentile and Ryan Yeung report in this edition of the Newsletter.

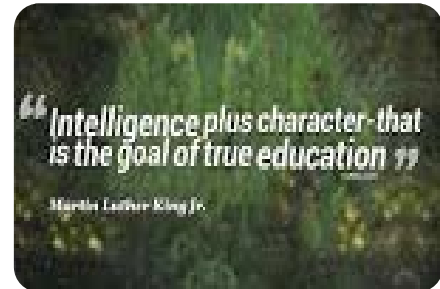
Funded to attend professional development conferences, presentations, and workshops, the Fellows share what they learn at public presentations through the year. They present their experiences at assessment breakfasts through ACERT and participate in the end of the year Assessment Brunch Recognition Ceremony.

They also work with the Office of Assessment to plan events such as last year's CUNY Institutional Research and Assessment Retreat where Hunter was "in the house." Rob Cowan, Jim Llana, Maureen Erickson, Manashi Chatterjee, Joan Lambe, Bryan Dowling, and Kirsten Grant all attended the event at BMCC. Maureen E. & Bryan D. opened the event with a team building exercise. Kirsten Grant and Manashi Chatterjee presented on technology in the classroom.

The Fellows often take on the role of Assessment Coordinator for their Departments as well, offering support and facilitating communications between the Office of Assessment and the faculty.

This year's fellows are Kirsten Grant (Chemistry); Jason Young (Psychology); Manashi Chatterchee (Chemistry); Ryan Yeung (Policy and Planning); and Scott Gentile (Math).

If you have an interest in becoming an Assessment Fellow, please contact Maureen Erickson @ 212.693.6299.



## Pearson's International conference on technology in collegiate mathematics

By Scott Gentile

Last spring, as part of Hunter College's Assessment Fellowship I attended Pearson's International Conference on Technology in Collegiate Mathematics (ICTCM) in Chicago and the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Annual Forum in Washington, D.C. Both events gave me a wealth of ideas and innovations to bring back to the assessment community here at Hunter, which is to discuss the development and execution of our ongoing assessment practices in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

ICTCM offered a variety of presentations related to pedagogy, assessment, and online teaching. I was able to connect with peers in my field, discuss their experiences and research, and learn about best practices in creating, assessing, and improving hybrid and online courses, as well as traditional lecture courses.

As the conference's title implies, much of the emphasis was on using modern technology to reach and conduct assessment as effectively and efficiently as possible. This knowledge is especially useful in multi-section courses, where corralling and organizing large amounts of data from numerous faculty is particularly challenging, thus making it essential to use technology to streamline and simplify the process as much as possible for both myself and other instructors.

The AIR Conference focused more on institutional research and how colleges and universities could best analyze and use the assessment data collected by their faculty to make the most sound administrative decisions possible.

This allowed me to connect with IR, Data, and Assessment experts from throughout the country and to see how various colleges were able to use assessment to better their institutions. This knowledge will help inform the evolution of continuous assessment practices in my department and assist us in our goal of making the information we gather as relevant and useful as possible with regard to data-based decision-making at all levels of administration.





## The Program Assessment Process for Urban Policy

By Ryan Yeung

As an instructor in the Masters of Science in Urban Policy and Leadership program, one of my regularly assigned courses is “Introduction to Urban Policy Processes.” Because I teach another course in the department, “Program Evaluation,” I was asked to assist with the Department’s assessment process. The more I did assessment--and especially after teaching the Policy Process class--it occurred to me

how similar the policy and assessment processes were.

The policy process (see the graphic below) begins with agenda setting. Because the attention of society and our institutions is limited, not every problem or issue can be given attention. Agenda setting involves bringing problems and solutions to the attention of the public and their officials. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, college departments will not willfully engage in assessment. Instead, it must be explained: what it is, the logic behind it, why it is important, and why faculty should do it (my colleague

Jill Gross is terrific at this). Instructors must be persuaded to take time out of their busy lives to do it in a process similar to agenda setting.

The next part of the policy process is policy formulation. In this stage, policymakers identify problems, goals and potential solutions. Assessment plans, likewise, involve identifying program learning outcomes (goals), potential concerns we may want to focus on (problems) and methods of assessment

leading to potential solutions. Then, as in the policy process, a decision has to be made. Which class do we assess? How are we going to do it? Next in the assessment process, the class has to be taught, and the method of assessment (an exam, perhaps) has to be implemented.

The final stage of the policy process is monitoring and evaluation. Here, perhaps in an auditor’s office or

an inspector general’s office, officials ensure public dollars are being spent efficiently and honorably. Evaluations focus on whether individual programs are achieving the outcomes they were supposed to achieve. If not, individuals ask why the program fell short. Perhaps it worked, but could work even

better with a few changes. This information is used in agenda setting and the process begins anew. This stage is perhaps the most analogous to the assessment process as this is when the results of the assessment are reviewed. As individual instructors and as departments, we ask how well we are achieving our program learning outcomes. If we are not, why not? What changes do we need to make to do better? And then the process begins anew.

Missing from the diagram below, but interweaved throughout the process is stakeholder engagement.

Excerpt from (Stedman and Wellstead 2015)



## Middle States Update

### Middle States Update

The Middle States Steering Committee is beginning to research and write an institutional Self-Study to evaluate Hunter's performance against seven standards. The committee will look at the standards primarily through four "strategic priorities": enhancing Hunter as a research institution; expanding opportunities for student success; promoting interdisciplinarity; and developing our relationships with New York City institutions and neighborhoods. The model of assessment as goal-directed management shapes the Self-Study as a whole. We have to demonstrate that

our Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan guide our policies, practices, programming and resource allocation. We periodically determine our position relative to goals and make adjustments to close the gap. In our academic departments, we manage student learning in majors through the same cycle of feedback and course correction. For more on the reaccreditation effort please see <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/middle-states/>

### Middle States 2018 Events

<b>2/5/2018</b>	<b>Special Topic Workshops &amp; Conferences</b> <i>(Open to the Public)</i>
When: 2/5/2018, AM to PM	
Description: <b>Integrating Periodic Assessment Everywhere</b>	
Location: DoubleTree by Hilton Philadelphia Center City 237 Broad Street Philadelphia, PA 19102	
<b>4/13/2018</b>	<b>Special Topic Workshops &amp; Conferences</b> <i>(Open to the Public)</i>
When: 4/13/2018, AM to PM	
Description: <b>Using Evidence to Prove Our Worth: Using Assessment Tools and Data - Linking the Student Experience to Institutional Mission, Goals, and General Education.</b>	
Location: Courtyard by Marriott - Philadelphia Downtown 21 Juniper Street Philadelphia, PA 19107	
<b>4/23/2018</b>	<b>Special Topic Workshops &amp; Conferences</b> <i>(Open to the Public)</i>
When: 4/23/2018, AM to PM	
Description: <b>Using a Balanced Scorecard Approach to Strategic Planning</b>	
Location: Doubletree by Hilton Philadelphia Center City 237 Broad Street Philadelphia, PA 19102	
<b>11/28/2018</b>	<b>Annual Conference</b> <i>(Open to the Public)</i>
When: 11/28/2018 - 11/30/2018	
Description: <b>2018 MSCHE Annual Conference</b>	
Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel 2660 Woodley Road NW Washington, DC 20008	

## Other Assessment Events & Notices

Click on the Links Below for full Conference Details

[2018 General Education and Assessment Conference](#) The Drexel University 2018 Network for Academic Renewal General Education and Assessment conference will meet in Philadelphia.

### [Assessment Network of New York Conference](#)

“The Heart of Healthy Assessment: Cultivating Assessment Literacy” is the focus of this year’s ANNY conference.

### [Association of American Colleges & Universities](#)

2018 General Education and Assessment: Foundations for Democracy

[Click this Link for an Extensive List of Assessment Conferences](#)

There will be ACERT Assessment Breakfasts in the spring; please look at the ACERT web page for the information on dates and also other assessment events.

Keep updated with Higher Education happenings, more conferences including regional, state and national as well as opportunities for webinars and more by going to [Insidehighered.com](http://Insidehighered.com) and [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

For more information or assistance please contact  
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