

# RUSS

## Rowan University Self Study Update

Volume 1, Issue 8

### Background

*As the RUSS co-chairs refine the self-study draft document for the campus community, we continue our examination of the Middle States process focusing on Standard 6 (Integrity) and Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment). In Rowan's self-study design, Standard 6 forms a bridge between the Institutional and Educational Groups while Standard 7 encompasses the entire Institutional Group.*

### Spotlight on Standard 6

Standard 6 focuses on Integrity. For the Middle States Commission, integrity means that "...whether internal or external, an institution should keep its promises, honor its contracts and commitments, and represent itself truthfully," and recognize that "academic freedom, intellectual freedom and freedom of expression are central to the academic enterprise." (The quotes are taken from *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education* published by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.)

### Profile of Standard 6 working group leader

Joe Cardona, Director of Media and Public Relations, has a long history with Rowan. In addition to his 13 years as an employee, Joe was also president of the Student Government Association in 1989 while a student. He earned his BS in marketing and MA in public relations as well as his Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Rowan. In his current position in Media and Public Relations, Joe heads the office responsible for promoting faculty, staff, and student achievements and initiatives to Rowan's many constituent groups.

He joined the RUSS Team because he wanted to "get a broader understanding of the University and to work with individuals and groups I normally don't get an opportunity to work with." He reports that he "hopes to facilitate conversations that help us determine whether we are walking the talk."

Joe jokingly tells us he climbed Mt. Everest twice and swam the English Channel, but we think that fathering five sons and finishing his doctorate while working full time might be just as difficult!

### Standard 6 working group progress report

This working group was selected because of its expertise in issues related to academic integrity. Their methodology was to meet several times and to divide into sub-groups that specialized in student affairs, administration, university senate, and academic affairs and then examine available documents that related to the integrity standard. They employed this method to answer the following questions which were posed in the self-study document.

## **Standard 6 working group progress report continued...**

- 1) How does Rowan University ensure and protect the rights of our students, the integrity of our academic programs, and the fair and impartial treatment of our employees? How effective are these policies and procedures?
- 2) Is the process through which Rowan University informs its constituencies and the public about new plans, policies, and procedures transparent? How is this process monitored and what is its effectiveness?
- 3) How does the University community participate in the creation and updating of the strategic planning process? How effective is the process?
- 4) How do we ensure that the University community adheres to our codes of ethics and behavior? How effective are we in getting compliance?
- 5) What is the process by which Rowan University assesses its integrity, and how do the findings shape the integrity of what we do?

### **Standard 6 working group**

Michelle Fortugno (Student)

Laurie Kaplis-Hohwald (Associate Professor, Foreign Languages and Literature)

Jesse Liszkiewicz (Student)

John T. Mills (Coordinator, Multicultural Affairs)

Joe Mulligan (Assistant Dean, Residence Life)

Marie Tiemann (Executive Director, Human Resources)

Barbara Bole Williams (Associate Professor, Special Education)

Robert Zazzali (Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs)

*Joe Cardona—Working Group Coordinator*

### **Spotlight on Standard 7**

Standard 7 examines assessment from an institution-wide perspective. It asks the basic question, “Is the institution fulfilling its mission and achieving its goals—and how does it prove that?” This Middle States Commission standard compels us to research if our institution’s goals are clearly stated and in alignment with its mission, if we have a planned and organized approach to document that alignment, if resources are present to support the university’s goals, and if we have feedback processes to make improvements when our systems do not function the way they should.

### **Profile of Standard 7 working group leader**

Luci Nurkowski, Associate Director of Admissions, has been a member of the Rowan family for over 30 years. She functions mainly as the coordinator of transfer admissions. She notes, “As the primary recruiter and reviewer of all transfer applicants, it’s rewarding to be directly involved with the admission and transition of so many of Rowan’s new students.” Luci is the academic liaison for the NJTransfer.org website as well the lead Banner staff for the Office of Admissions.

She believes that “the process of self study is essential to continued growth” and admits that she identifies with the study’s theme “Learning to Live with Change.” She hopes that her many years of experience at Rowan will enable her to make a contribution based on her perspective on our institution’s changes. She volunteered to lead the Standard 7 working group because she went into the standard selection process

## Profile of Standard 7 working group leader continued...

“open-minded and ready for a challenge.” In her “spare” time, Luci teaches “Sociology of the Family” and is a member of an American Association of University Women book group that has been meeting monthly since 1988. Her backyard is a Certified National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat. She and her husband Paul, an art teacher and Rowan alum, have two daughters.

## Standard 7 working group progress report

The six members of the Standard 7 working group began with a review of all available institution-wide assessment documentation, followed by interviews with the Provost, four vice presidents, and the special assistant to the president. They investigated the following questions:

- 1) Is there a culture of institutional assessment?
- 2) What is the process by which Rowan University supports institutional assessment? Is it effective?
- 3) How well do our campus leaders understand institutional assessment and its importance?
- 4) How well do our documents reflect coherence among institutional assessment efforts?
- 5) Is there a link between institutional assessment and educational assessment as defined by Standards 7 and 14? Is it an effective one? (*Editor’s Note: Standard 14 concerns the assessment of student learning and will be covered in a future issue of the RUSS Update.*)

## Standard 7 working group

Suzanne Cole (Student)  
Donna Cook (Professor, Special Education)  
Diane Hamilton (Professor, Management/MIS)  
Nick Schmelz (Program Specialist, College of Education)  
Ed Ziegler (Director, University Marketing)  
*Luci Nurkowski—Working Group Leader*

## Open Forum Dates Reminder

The draft of the self-study document will be posted on the RUSS Team’s website on March 20, 2008. The website address is [www.rowan.edu/president/selfstudy/](http://www.rowan.edu/president/selfstudy/). Previous issues of the newsletters and other documents related to the self study are also available on this site. We are asking the campus community to review the draft of the self-study document and plan to attend the Open Forums on the following dates:

March 28	2-4 p.m.	Topic: The Institution	Campbell Library Room 226
March 31	10 a.m.-12 Noon	Topic: Academics	Campbell Library Room 226
April 11	12:30-2:30 p.m.	Topic: Assessment	Campbell Library Room 226

RUSS Update Editor/RUSS Team Communications Liaison.....Pat Alexy Stoll