Substantive Change Proposal

Addition of courses that constitute 50% or more of a program offered through a mode of distance or electronic delivery

Las Positas College
3000 Campus Hill Drive
Livermore, CA 94551

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Prepared by:

Scott Vigallon, Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator
Dr. Janice Noble, Vice President, Academic Services

To:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
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Table of Contents

Description of the Change and Reasons for it..... 2

Description of the Programs 3

Description of the Planning Process..... 5

Evidence of Institutional Provision for Human, Administrative, Financial, & Physical Resources & Processes....9

Evidence that the Institution has Received Internal or External Approvals.....18

Evidence that the Eligibility Requirements will be Fulfilled.....20

Evidence That the Accreditation Standards will be Fulfilled & Relevant Commission Policies are Addressed...24

Other Information for Commission Staff (Considerations for Distance Learning Programs).....35

Appendix 39

Description of the Change and Reasons for it

Since Las Positas College's second Substantive Change Proposal was approved in April 2010, the college now has four additional degree programs and one additional certificate program that have at least 50 percent of their units offered through the distance education modality. One other certificate program, Computer Desktop OS Security, is close to reaching 50 percent. Las Positas College is seeking approval to offer these programs in the distance education mode:

Degree Program	Percentage of Units Offered at a Distance
Environmental Studies, AA	56% (27 out of 48 units)
Humanities, AA	50% (18 out of 36 units)
Psychology, AA-T	100% (21 out of 21 units)
Sociology, AA-T	71% (15 out of 21 units)
Certificate Program	**Percentage of units Offered at a Distance**
Business Workforce Proficiency	50% (9 out of 18 units)
Computer Desktop OS Security	47% (7 out of 15 units)

The college mission statement states:

Las Positas College is an inclusive, learning-centered institution providing educational opportunities that meet the academic, intellectual, career-technical, creative, and personal development goals of its diverse students. Students develop the knowledge, skills, values, and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community.

To those ends, we are seeking approval of four degrees that will allow students at a distance to further their education in liberal arts and sciences. We also seek approval of two career certificates in vocational disciplines that will increase students' chances of joining the local workforce or enhancing their value within it. The degrees and certificates fall within the scope of the mission statement since they allow students to pursue educational opportunities in academic transfer and career technical education with the aim of becoming engaged and contributing members of the community. Inclusive by nature, distance education is the vehicle that gives many of the college's diverse students the chance to meet their goals.

The four degrees will prepare students for further exploration in their chosen disciplines after they matriculate to universities. In fact, two of the degrees, Psychology AA-T and Sociology AA-T, were created specifically to guarantee admission to a California State University campus for any community college student who completes such an associate degree for transfer. Students who complete the two certificates can look forward to competing in a job market that is projected to be positive. The Business Workforce Proficiency certificate produces office clerks, and in the East Bay Area, the number of Office Clerks, General positions is expected to grow at an average rate compared with the total for all occupations. Jobs for Office Clerks, General are expected to increase by 7.1 percent, or 1,790 jobs, between 2008 and 2018. An average of 180 new job openings per year is expected for Office Clerks, General, plus an additional 346 job openings due to net replacement needs, resulting in a total of 526 job openings.

Prospects for graduates of the Computer Desktop OS Security certificate, which is offered through the college's Computer Networking Technologies discipline, are also positive. In the East Bay Area, the number of

Network and Computer Systems Administrators is expected to grow faster than average growth rate for all occupations. Jobs for Network and Computer Systems Administrators are expected to increase by 9.9 percent, or 370 jobs between 2008 and 2018. An average of 37 new job openings per year is expected for Network and Computer Systems Administrators, plus an additional 63 job openings due to net replacement needs, resulting in a total of 100 job openings. Also, demand for computer security specialists will grow as businesses and government continue to invest heavily in "cyber security," protecting vital computer networks and electronic infrastructures from attack (ref. Appendix 1).

The online format allows students pursuing degrees and certificates, many of whom are working professionals, the flexibility they need to complete course work. Located close to the 580 and 680 interstate exchange, traffic and long commutes add to the necessity of online learning for those students unable to make the drive or attend classes at any other time. This, in turn, saves students money otherwise spent on gas and is better for the environment. Moreover, online learning allows students to fulfill their work and/or family commitments and to take classes that might better fit their learning styles. Survey results from Las Positas College students have consistently shown that they want more distance education courses, degrees, and certificates made available to them (ref. Appendix 2).

Description of the Programs

Las Positas College typically offers distance education classes in two formats: online, which is conducted over the Internet; and hybrid, which is a combination of online and on-campus instruction. In addition to class sessions, materials, and exercises being accessible online, distance education classes make full use of interactive technologies, such as email, discussion boards, blogs, chat, and even group assignments so students can stay connected with their instructor and fellow students.

The programs listed below are already offered on campus. Major, general education, and graduation requirements are identical for both distance education and on-campus programs. Courses, regardless of their mode of delivery, share a common curriculum and course outline of record. In addition, Las Positas College has procedures in place to ensure that rigor, breadth, objectives, learning outcomes, and academic quality of courses and programs offered in the distance education mode meet the same standards as those offered on campus (ref. Appendix 3).

Those procedures, along with descriptions and evidence that the Distance Education program at Las Positas College meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies related to student learning programs, services, and resources, will be presented in this proposal.

Environmental Studies, AA

The AA degree program in Environmental Studies is a multi-disciplinary program that provides students the academic foundation for understanding the scientific and technological basis of energy technology. In addition, it provides the foundation for understanding the political, environmental, and economic factors that underlie the energy policy choices—at the national and global levels—our students will make throughout their professional careers and as informed citizens. This transferable program provides a well-rounded foundation by featuring a diverse array of classes in the degree pattern from the natural and physical

sciences in such associated disciplines as Geology, Geography, Ecology, Biology, Chemistry, Statistics, Philosophy, and Economics.

Humanities, AA

Humanities is an interdisciplinary academic field that encourages its scholar/practitioners to interpret the world and their active role in it through a philosophical, creative, and artistic immersion in a number of different but overlapping and connected fields of study. Work in the Humanities also suggests a practical professional methodology combining hermeneutics and a "dialogue-reflection-action change" process that allows students to create new or expanded world-view paradigms resulting in personal and systemic growth and change. This degree prepares those interested in Interdisciplinary Studies, Humanities, or Classical Studies/Philosophy majors for successful transfer to four-year institutions.

Psychology, AA-T

The college's Psychology program offers an AA transfer degree that provides students with a basic understanding of behavior and motivation that is valuable in many careers in business, government, and education. In addition to core degree requirements in Psychology, students are required complete either CSU general education or IGETC patterns under the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act (Senate Bill 1440, now codified in California Education Code sections 66746-66749), which, as mentioned above, guarantees admission to a CSU for community college students who complete the degree.

Sociology, AA-T

Courses in Sociology are designed to prepare students for further study in Sociology leading to the BA, MA, MSW, and/or PhD degrees. This is a transfer degree similar to the Psychology degree above.

Business Workforce Proficiency Career Certificate

This program is designed to provide the basic and necessary foundation of skills for entry-level office workers. The curriculum focuses on basic computer skills (keyboarding, records, and data management). Courses in basic office procedural skills, and orientation and preparation for the workplace are also available. While some units in this program are transferable, others might not be depending on the institution.

Career certificates are not transcripted. Courses within them provide industry based professional development.

Computer Desktop OS Security Career Certificate

This certificate is designed to provide the basic and necessary foundation skills for installing, maintaining, and securing computer desktop devices. The curriculum focuses on Comptia A+, Networking+, and Security+ industry certifications.

Description of the Planning Process

Relationship to institutional planning and evaluation

Las Positas College is committed to an ongoing planning cycle that is rooted in our District Education Master Plan and the program review process. The District Education Master Plan process was initiated in 2003, and revisions and updates have occurred in 2005, with a 10-year plan. This plan was updated in 2006 and 2007. Most recently, a new master plan was drafted that incorporated the results of the 2010 newly revised program review process done by all sectors of the college. It included an internal and external environmental scan of our community and prioritized input from all sectors of the college campus (ref. Appendix 4).

Responsibility for institutional planning and evaluation is a cross-campus function, and constituency groups from all areas participate in this shared governance process, including the Resource Allocation Committee, Staff Development Committee, Curriculum Committee, Facilities Committee, Academic Senate, Institutional Effectiveness Committee, College Council, Distance Education Committee, and Technology Committee. Evaluation of planning begins at the program review level, which includes student, program, degree, and certificate level learning outcomes. Ultimate oversight for the planning and evaluation process is held by the College Council, drawing data and analysis from the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

The program review process is completed in all sectors of the college and used to identify goals and objectives for future development of disciplines, programs, degrees, and certificates. Curriculum, a faculty driven process, is included in the reflective and prospective review of needs for each. Through this process, faculty determine which courses would lend themselves to alternative forms of delivery, such as distance education. The addition of new courses, degrees, and certificates offered in an online method is a result of careful analysis and planning through the program review process.

A rigorous evaluation of the current program review process is being completed during this academic year and will culminate in a revised program review template for disciplines to complete. Part of this new template will include the opportunity for faculty to analyze course offerings and the mode of delivery that meet students' needs. This ongoing process will provide an opportunity to sustain the evaluation of modes of delivery for course work provided for students.

Relationship to the stated mission

The college's mission statement is: *"Las Positas College is an inclusive, learning-centered institution providing educational opportunities that meet the academic, intellectual, career-technical, creative, and personal development goals of its diverse students. Students develop the knowledge, skills, values, and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community."*

As noted previously, the approval of the four proposed degrees will allow students at a distance to further their education in liberal arts and sciences. Approval of the two career certificates in vocational disciplines will increase students' chances of joining the local workforce or enhancing their value within it. The degrees

and certificates fall within the scope of the mission statement since they allow students to pursue educational opportunities in academic transfer and career technical education with the aim of becoming engaged and contributing members of the community. Inclusive by nature, distance education is the vehicle that gives many of the college's diverse students the chance to meet their goals.

Currently, the college is in the process of revising its mission statement. The Las Positas College Planning Committee has proposed the following mission statement: *"Las Positas College is an inclusive, learner-centered institution providing learning opportunities and support for completion of transfer, degree, basic skills, career-technical, and retraining goals."* The relationships of the proposed degrees and certificates are fairly obvious with the tie-ins to transfer and career-technical goals.

Members of the college community have been given the opportunity to provide feedback on that mission statement and to define each part of the statement. At a college-wide meeting Oct. 3, 2012, employees were handed a feedback form to voice their opinions, and they participated in a brainstorming session to define key terms in the statement. For the terms "inclusive," "learning opportunities," and "support," distance education, its students, and the college's course management system, Blackboard, were listed, respectively, as definitions (ref. Appendix 5, 6).

Assessment of needs and resources

The original assessments of needs and resources to support the online learning aspect of distance education took place long before the aforementioned certificates and degrees reached the 50 percent threshold for Substantive Change. The first assessment began in 2000 and resulted in a need to offer students the ability to fulfill their general education requirements by completing courses online. With the resources and infrastructure in place, the college embarked on a pilot program whereby faculty members were trained to design and teach these courses. The second major assessment began in 2002 when representatives from Las Positas College, its sister college Chabot, and the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District's Information Technology Services (ITS) unit met regularly to identify the criteria for selecting a shared course management system and the related needs emanating from such a decision. The key results of that assessment were that Blackboard would be used by both colleges and that the system would be hosted by Blackboard, not by ITS.

Las Positas College also assesses its needs and resources on an ongoing basis for distance education. Discussion and analysis of adding online courses, degrees, and certificates take place within disciplines and academic divisions, as well as within the Enrollment Management Committee, advisory committees, and the program review process (ref. Appendix 7, 8). For example, the latest program review for Business mentions the lack of classroom space as a reason for offering online courses. It also says that one course, Business 40 – Introduction to Business, includes a distance education section in order to meet "the existing and growing demand for business knowledge" (ref. Appendix 9). Business 40 is one of the required courses for the proposed Business Workforce Proficiency certificate.

Assessments of students' and faculty needs are also conducted on an on-going basis. Results of the annual Student Distance Education Satisfaction Surveys are discussed—and acted upon, if necessary—by the Distance Education Committee. For instance, in 2010, 53 percent of distance education students responded that they would be interested in participating in online tutoring (ref. Appendix 10). The Distance Education

Committee discussed these results and eventually embarked on a task to create an online tutoring program (ref. Appendix 11). Via surveys, students have also expressed a desire to have a wide variety of courses and programs available online. These results are posted online and also shared with the campus community (ref. Appendix 12). Faculty are surveyed annually to determine their online learning needs (ref. Appendix 13, 14). Those needs typically center around training on new technologies and result in additional workshops offered by the college's Teaching and Learning Center (ref. Appendix 15). These workshops concentrate not only on the technical aspects of the new tools, but also on the pedagogical aspects. Moreover, faculty needs are also delivered through their division representatives on the Distance Education Committee and discussed at those meetings.

Anticipated effect

It is anticipated that the college infrastructure should not be affected much by offering the proposed programs for the following reasons:

1. Three of the degrees are relatively new but contain courses that have been taught at a distance for a number of years. In fact, the Psychology and Sociology AA-T degrees are very similar to, and share many of the same courses with, the college's Psychology and Social Science (General) AA degrees that were approved for Substantive Change in 2010. The Environmental Studies AA degree shares a handful of courses with the AA-T degrees and includes several other courses that have been offered through Las Positas College for years.
2. Since the 2010 Substantive Change Proposal approval, only two new distance education courses have been offered that are even part of the sequence for the proposed degrees and certificates. Geology 12, Introduction to Oceanography, and Math 42A, Introduction to Probability and Statistics, are part of the sequence for the Environmental Studies degree, while Math 42A is part of the sequence for the Psychology AA-T degree.
3. The two proposed certificates are part of disciplines—Business and Computing Studies—that have had many programs approved for Substantive Change in the past. Business has had six degrees and eight certificates approved since 2007, and Computing Studies has had two degrees and eight certificates approved in that same time span. In other words, the two proposed certificates share many of the same courses as the previously approved degrees and certificates.
4. Not every distance education course is offered each semester. In fact, since offering 242 sections of distance education courses in the 2009-10 academic year, the number of sections decreased to 219 in 2011-12. This is primarily due to the overall reduction in sections precipitated by budgetary problems in California.
5. Consequently, the number of full-time equivalent distance education students has decreased from 853 in 2009-10 to 795 in 2011-12.
6. All online and hybrid courses are hosted on the district's course management system, Blackboard, and there is ample room for the courses. Blackboard administers the system at one of its facilities in Virginia.
7. Instructors for new courses have taught using Blackboard for a number of years, so their support needs should be minimal.
8. More than three full-time equivalent staff members are available to provide students with the technical support they might need. The exact figure has decreased from 3.6 in 2010 to 3.3, but that

has been offset by the decline in the number of student queries from 2,936 in 2009-10 to 1,918 in 2011-12 (ref. Appendix 16).

9. Two full-time staff members are available to provide faculty support.
10. The college continues to supply students with a large number of online support services, including admissions, registration, tutoring, library resources, and an online bookstore.

Intended benefits

The intended benefit of offering the career certificates in vocational disciplines is that students will not only update their knowledge and skills, but they will also improve their chances of retaining and/or gaining employment in this struggling economy. For those students completing coursework in the four degree programs, they will be able to continue their studies at four-year institutions.

Preparation and planning process

Like the assessment process, the planning process for a successful online program at Las Positas College began in 2000. The narrative of this process was detailed in the college's 2007 Substantive Change Proposal. In summary, all relevant constituency groups worked together to develop procedures and guidelines around topics such as targeted courses, faculty training, faculty incentives, faculty load, hiring faculty support personnel, online class size, intellectual property rights, choosing a course management system (at the time), creating a budget for distance education, student technical support, program evaluation, and developing best practices in designing online courses. Planning also occurred in 2002-03 during and after representatives from Las Positas, Chabot, and the district selected Blackboard as the course management system for both colleges. Processes needed to be put into place, including course requests and approvals, merging sections of courses, activating students, upgrades, sharing of training resources, future policy decisions, and general consultation between the colleges on technical issues.

Much planning was also done in subsequent years, and this was discussed within Las Positas College's Substantive Change Proposals of 2007 and 2010. As new issues arise and new technologies are created, the college continues the planning effort. Since the 2010 proposal, the college has accomplished the following in terms of planning for distance education:

1. Transitioned goals from a Distance Education Strategic Plan to the current format, a Non-Instructional Program Review. Since distance education falls under the purview of the Teaching and Learning Center, it is included in the Teaching and Learning Center's Non-Instructional Program Review (ref. Appendix 17). Goals from the Non-Instructional Program Reviews, the Instructional Program Reviews, and Student Services Program Reviews have been incorporated into the college's official planning and resource allocation process.
2. Planned and implemented several methods to improve the retention and success rates of distance education students. These were all included in the Non-Instructional Program Review.
    A. Began online tutoring for Math and Writing. Several constituencies at the college worked together to create an online tutoring program, whereby students can now get synchronous and asynchronous help with their Math and Writing needs.
    B. Installed and configured help desk software in order to move towards offering 24x7 student technical support (ref. Appendix 18).

   C. Piloted a Career-Technical Education project whereby a faculty mentor was inputted into two online Business courses to provide proactive support to students (ref. Appendix 19).
   D. Launched Psychology-Counseling 25, Transition to College, a course designed for freshmen that includes a module on being a successful online learner (ref. Appendix 20).
   E. Submitted a course proposal and course outline to the Counseling division to offer General Studies 1, Introduction to Online Learning, which is a standalone .5-unit online course dedicated solely to teaching students how to succeed in their online courses (ref. Appendix 21).
3. Planned and launched an annual survey for distance education students. Las Positas College had always participated in the State Chancellor's Office survey until that was abandoned in 2010. Therefore, an objective to create and launch our own survey was included in the Non-Instructional Program Review.
4. Added new goals in 2012 to the college's Common Tool, which has been Las Positas College's tool for compiling goals from all of the program reviews (ref. Appendix 22). One of those goals is to increase faculty awareness of options to lower course material expenses for students. Another is to evaluate faculty satisfaction with distance education. For the former, workshops have been offered, and a document on Open Educational Resources has been posted online (ref. Appendix 23). For the latter, a survey was planned and launched.
5. Planned and offered several new workshops on topics such as mobile learning, Google Docs, Open Educational Resources, and many on Blackboard features and tools.

Evidence of Institutional Provision for Human, Administrative, Financial, and Physical Resources and Processes

Student support services

All of Las Positas College's student support services are available to students at a distance as each of these services has its own web site, along with posted phone numbers and email addresses. Much of the business of the services is conducted online as outlined below.

1. **Admissions**. Students can apply for admission online via the Las Positas College CCCApply web site (ref. Appendix 24).
2. **Registration**. Students can register for classes, add, or withdraw from them using the online CLASS-Web system (ref. Appendix 25).
3. **Financial Aid**. Students can apply for financial aid online (ref. Appendix 26).
4. **Tutoring Services**. Students can get synchronous and asynchronous online Math and Writing help.
5. **Counseling**. Students can call or email counselors. Student emails are typically restricted to quick miscellaneous questions or brief academic questions. For more lengthy or complicated issues, students are encouraged to make a phone appointment (ref Appendix 27). The college has plans to implement an online appointment system in Spring/Fall 2013. It is also in the formative stages of implementing DegreeWorks, which is an online degree auditing and tracking tool that also allows for the creation of student education plans. As mentioned above, Las Positas College piloted a Career-

Technical Education program where a faculty mentor was made available in two online Business courses to provide proactive support to students.

6. **Advising**. The Transfer Center web site has a link to ASSIST, which is the official repository of articulation for California's public colleges and universities. From this web site, students can see how course credits earned at one public California college or university can be applied when transferred to another (ref. Appendix 28). Students also have access to the new Associate Degree for Transfer web site. This site gives important information and resources about the Associate Degree for Transfer (ref. Appendix 29). At a future date—possibly next year—District ITS is planning to provide the college with software that allows real-time academic advising online.
7. **Library**. The library's web site provides research materials for both the on- and off-campus student. The site includes databases, an online catalog, library guides and tip sheets, a plagiarism tutorial, and a citation generator tool. To access the databases from off campus, students and faculty log in with their college-assigned ID number and password (ref. Appendix 30).
8. **Orientation**. A general orientation about Las Positas College is accessible from the college web site (ref. Appendix 31). Live and asynchronous orientations specific to online learning are offered each semester to students who do not want to, or cannot, come to campus to attend face-to-face orientations (ref. Appendix 32).
9. **Student Technical Help**. Students can get technical help for any distance education issues by filling out a web form, emailing, or calling the college's support desk. They also have access to a knowledge base online that will answer their questions before they contact the help desk (ref. Appendix 33).
10. **Bookstore**. The college bookstore has a web site whereby students can purchase their books or other class materials online (ref. Appendix 34).
11. **Transcript Requests**. Students can download a Transcript Request form from the college's Admissions and Records web site, but they must sign it and can either mail it or fax it back to the college (ref. Appendix 35).
12. **Communication with Students**. District Information Technology Services administers a student email system, which gives every student in the district a free email account. The system, named Zonemail, is hosted by Google (ref. Appendix 36).

Sufficient and qualified staff

Las Positas' online courses have been developed and are taught by our regular full-time and adjunct faculty. Each faculty member is hired under the same quality criteria as applied to the hiring of faculty that teach any course offered by the college. This includes standards set forth by the minimum qualifications as defined by the statewide Academic Senate and published by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The ability to teach in a variety of modalities, including distance education, has been a criterion in the hiring of all full-time faculty, and is included on a case-by-case basis for adjunct hiring, depending upon the expected assignment. Once hired, the college provides all faculty, adjunct and full-time, with access to further extensive professional development opportunities in online teaching.

The Vice President of Academic Services provides leadership and oversight of online offerings in the same manner that this person provides oversight of all academic programs. Each division dean is responsible for the management of online offerings in their assigned areas. Additionally, the vice president is also

responsible for overall coordination of online offerings and is the supervisor for online support staff. This support staff includes an Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator and an Instructional Technology Support Specialist. The dean of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Math & Public Safety division is the supervisor for the staff in the college's Computer Center that provides a help desk function for online students. Online offerings also receive staff support from regular college functions such as Admissions and Records and Counseling. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning has also provided important support allowing for data-driven planning by the various groups and individuals responsible for online learning (ref. Appendix 37).

Through District ITS, the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) oversees the licensing of, and contract with, Blackboard. The CTO also manages the district's Senior Programmer Analysts who contribute to the administration of online education by developing technical processes by which faculty can request courses, students can evaluate instruction, and perhaps most importantly, by connecting Banner, the district's administrative computing system, to Blackboard via a tool called Snapshot Controller.

At Las Positas College, the Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator manages the daily operations of the college's instructional technology efforts (including distance education), is the main administrator of the Blackboard server, and trains and supports faculty not only in the technical skills needed to use Blackboard, but also in the pedagogical skills necessary to design, develop, and teach online courses. This person has a master's degree in Instructional Technology. Assisting the coordinator is the Instructional Technology Support Specialist, a full-time position responsible for technical support of all instructional technologies, along with training and support in making online materials accessible to students with disabilities. As mentioned, student technical support is provided by the Computer Center staff, which helps students with problems logging in to Blackboard, submitting assignments, etc.

All of the major decisions surrounding distance education are directed by the college's Distance Education Committee. The committee, reporting primarily to the Academic Senate and secondarily to the Office of Academic Services, consists of eight full-time faculty members, one adjunct faculty member, two Classified professionals, a dean, a vice president, and a student.

The committee, which meets monthly, has a charge is to *"explore and recommend policies, procedures and tools to enhance student learning and services in the delivery of distance education offered through Las Positas College"* (ref. Appendix 38).

Professional development

The Online Course Development Program (OCDP) is the college's vehicle for training faculty to design, develop, and teach online courses. During participation in the OCDP, which is structured around best practices in online pedagogy, participants will design and develop their course over one semester, and then they will typically teach it the following semester. Faculty can participate in either the on-campus or online versions of the OCDP. The outcomes of the OCDP are that upon completing the training, faculty will be able to:

1. Design and develop an online course with sound instructional design and pedagogical principles, while incorporating current learning theory.

2. Teach an online course in a manner consistent with best practices in teaching and learning.
3. Utilize the various functions of Blackboard to design, teach, and manage an instructionally sound online course (ref. Appendix 39).

During the course development process—and while teaching their courses—faculty are supported by the Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator and the Instructional Technology Support Specialist. Instructors retain access to the online version of the OCDP, which contains all of the resources used in their training, along with any new or updated resources. They also have access to an online resource site called the Blackboard Online Learning Team (BOLT) that contains discussion board forums in which Las Positas College and Chabot College instructors can ask, and answer, pedagogical or technical questions. The discussion board is also available to read how other instructors are using Blackboard and to share successes, frustrations, and lessons learned. The BOLT also contains information and resources on planned Blackboard upgrades.

After the first year of the OCDP (while it was still called the Pilot Program), Las Positas College received the 2002 California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Educational Technology Focus Award for its Online AA Degree Pilot Program. The award was in the category of distance learning. As defined by the California Chancellor's office, "This award honors campus projects that have identified and solved significant problems with an elegance worthy of emulation—to serve users, provide for professional development of campus constituencies, or otherwise apply the potential of educational technologies to the business and mission of the institution" (ref. Appendix 40).

In addition to resources for online course development, faculty have access to training and support on non-Blackboard instructional technologies that enhance their courses. These include:

1. Google Docs, which can be used to increase collaboration among students.
2. Podcasts, which are audio files that students can download to their mobile devices and listen to wherever they are.
3. Instructor-made videos, which can be made to illustrate a point, show a process, or even introduce students to the class or a topic.
4. Professional video clips, which are licensed to the college and used to present content.
5. StudyMate, which is software that allows faculty to create interactive lessons to serve as study resources, typically prior to exams.
6. Inspiration, a program that creates concept map diagrams that particularly benefit visual learners.
7. CCC Confer, an online web- and/or phone conferencing tool that can be used for either office hours or one-on-one tutorial sessions with students.
8. Camtasia, a software tool that, among other things, allows faculty to narrate PowerPoint presentations and turn them into video files for posting online.

While faculty are participating in the OCDP, they undergo training on web accessibility in order to meet the requirements of Sections 504 and 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should faculty need help after that, they can make an appointment with the Instructional Technology Support Specialist, they can access tutorials on the Staff Development web site, or they can access Las Positas College’s Web Accessibility site, which includes guidelines, examples, and related links (ref. Appendix 41, 42).

Participation in the OCDP is strongly encouraged for instructors teaching online, and the vast majority of those instructors have completed the program. However, until mandatory participation is negotiated into the faculty contract, participation remains optional.

Equipment and facilities

All of the face-to-face training for the OCDP and other instructional technologies takes place in the college's Teaching and Learning Center (TLC). The TLC is a 1,879-square-foot facility that houses 15 faculty workstations, a studio for digital recording, wireless Internet access, and the hardware and software necessary for online course delivery (ref. Appendix 43). Las Positas College's Technology Department provides technical support for the equipment in the TLC. It also supports the college network, including the web server that houses instructional content used in distance education classes (ref. Appendix 44).

Blackboard hosts the server on which all of the online courses are delivered and manages the Snapshot process that connects Banner, the district's administrative computing system, to Blackboard. It also hosts a test server and a faculty/system administrator support web site. The college's system administrators for Blackboard consult with Blackboard Technical Support Managers on any problems relating to the production server, test server, Snapshot, or the Blackboard software. Blackboard's Managed Hosting department sends notifications whenever planned maintenance is scheduled and works with the main college system administrator to schedule upgrades and to archive courses at the conclusion of each semester. A Blackboard account manager deals with contract issues and facilitates discussions on any other high-level issues.

Sustainable fiscal resources

Although funding for Las Positas College and the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District has decreased since the last Substantive Change Proposal in 2010, the fiscal resources allocated to distance education have, for the most part, remained steady. For example, salaries and benefits for 7.6 full-time equivalent staff members at the college and at the district—when prorated to the percentage of time they dedicated to distance education—was $262,894 in the 2009-10 academic year. Currently, that figure for 7.3 full-time equivalent staff members is $303,404 (ref. Appendix 45). In 2009-10, the cost for the annual Blackboard license, hosting, and support was $176,100. In 2010-11, it was $176,200, and for 2011-12, it was $181,500. However, since the increase of $5,300 from 2010-11 to 2011-12, Blackboard has frozen the cost due to budgetary issues in California (ref. Appendix 46). The cost will remain frozen through at least 2013-14. One area that was not spared from being cut was the Teaching and Learning Center's operating budget. Line items in that budget for software licenses and hardware/software were $10,000 and $5,000, respectively, in 2009-10. Currently, it is $1,500 and zero. In 2011, employees responsible for budgets were asked to analyze expenses and identify items that could be reduced. Since Blackboard already contained an anti-plagiarism service called SafeAssign, the college's license to use a similar service, Turnitin, was terminated, saving $5,765 annually. Other non-essential licenses were reduced. The line item for hardware/software was subsumed by the Technology Department, which continues to be responsible for that hardware and software.

Funding for distance education comes from the district's budget and from Las Positas College's portion of that budget. The district pays for the Blackboard license, hosting and support. It also pays the salaries of the chief technology officer and two analyst positions. The salaries of the college employees are paid from the

college's general fund. The Technology Department's budget covers most of the hardware and software in the Teaching and Learning Center, while the TLC's budget covers the rest.

With the recent passage of Proposition 30 in California, those budgets are projected to be stable in the near future, enabling the college's distance education efforts to remain sustainable. Projections for considerable growth over the next 2-5 years is unrealistic unless a substantial amount of money is unexpectedly infused into the California Community College system, major grants are awarded, and/or the Las Positas College community decides to expand distance education significantly. There are no plans for the latter to occur. According to the draft District Education Master Plan, only the Psychology department has a goal to increase its distance education offerings. That discipline's AA degree was approved for Substantive Change in 2010, and its AA-T degree is included in this proposal. In the same plan, District ITS lists a long-term goal to "increase independent online student and counseling/tutoring services". Those services include DegreeWorks and academic advising, as mentioned above. Synchronous online tutoring is currently conducted using CCC Confer, which is free to community colleges in the state.

Budget, enrollment, and resources

Because of the tough fiscal situation facing California in recent years, the Las Positas College budget decreased from $27,509,980 in 2009-10 to 26,348,937 in 2011-12. During that time, the overall number of sections offered by the college naturally declined, too, from 1,823 to 1,571. Distance education was no exception, declining from 242 sections to 219. However, the distance education decline was proportional, accounting for 13-14 percent of the overall college sections. The drop in full-time equivalent students for distance education (853 to 795) was proportional, also, holding steady at 11-12 percent of the college's annual FTES figures.

Despite the aforementioned decrease in the college's main budget, the human, physical, and technology resources remain sufficient to deliver distance education. Aside from the minor decrease in the student technical support staff from 3.6 to 3.3 full-time equivalents, the remainder of staff that provided support and training in 2009-10 are doing the same today. Full-time equivalent faculty teaching distance education courses has been between 10-11 percent of overall faculty since 2009-10 (ref. Appendix 47). The computers in the Teaching and Learning Center are refreshed periodically based on a cycle developed by the Technology Department, which also maintains the college network (ref. Appendix 48). Maintaining and updating the equipment necessary to host Blackboard is done by Blackboard's Managed Hosting services.

Monitoring distance education outcomes

Each year, Las Positas College measures whether or not its online students are meeting the Program Outcomes for distance education. These outcomes were written by the Distance Education Committee and are intended to identify the skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of participation in the college's distance education program. Students are asked to assess their skills in four areas: communication techniques online with instructors and classmates, basic skills within the course management system, basic technology skills, and successful online study strategies. When results become available, the committee analyzes, then discusses the results. It then decides what, if any, action needs to be taken to improve results. Like the latest set of results, typical results show that students are meeting the distance education program outcomes (ref. Appendix 49).

Outcomes for individual courses, along with those for degrees and certificates, are written and assessed without regard to modality. Data emanating from assessments of distance education and on-campus courses are entered in eLumen, the college's assessment management system, and analyzed within each discipline's program review (ref. Appendix 50).

Student retention and success

Las Positas College has recently set milestones in success and retention rates among its distance education students. In Fall 2011, the retention rate was 78 percent, which is the highest rate for a fall semester since the college began recording rates in 1999. It also matched the highest rate for a non-summer term. The success rate (grade C or higher) was 60 percent, which is also the highest rate for a fall semester since 1999. The previous high marks for a fall semester came in Fall 2010 at 76 percent retention and 59 percent success.

The news got better for Spring 2012. For the first time in either a fall or spring semester, the retention rate reached 80 percent. In fact, it was only 6 percentage points below the retention rate of students in non-distance education courses. Moreover, the success rate was 63 percent, the highest for a spring semester ever at the college. The previous high was 61 percent in Spring 2010 (ref. Appendix 51).

Las Positas College's rates are slightly better than rates statewide. In Fall 2011, distance education students' success rate statewide was 58 percent, and their retention rate was 78 percent. In Spring 2012, distance education students' success rate statewide was 59 percent, and their retention rate was 79 percent. Still, like most community colleges in California, Las Positas College has seen lower success and retention rates in its distance education courses compared to its on-campus courses. The statewide success rate for Fall 2011 on-campus courses was 70 percent, and the retention rate was 86 percent. In Spring 2012, the rates were 70 percent and 85 percent.

Below are the Las Positas College figures for the 2011-12 academic year. The first table shows the overall results for the college, and the subsequent tables show cumulative results of courses in each of the degrees and certificates in this proposal.

Las Positas College Overall						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	64%	78%	60%	72%	63%	72%
Retention	77%	87%	78%	86%	80%	86%

Environmental Studies, AA						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	61%	82%	58%	69%	64%	68%
Retention	72%	88%	79%	84%	81%	84%

Humanities, AA						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	71%	NA	61%	86%	66%	77%
Retention	77%	NA	74%	92%	78%	91%

Psychology, AA-T						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	65%	79%	60%	70%	65%	71%
Retention	77%	86%	78%	86%	76%	88%

Sociology, AA-T						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	66%	89%	61%	69%	66%	70%
Retention	78%	90%	79%	85%	78%	87%

Business Workforce Proficiency Certificate						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	NA	NA	62%	70%	59%	57%
Retention	NA	NA	75%	91%	76%	85%

Computer Desktop OS Security Certificate						
	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	NA	NA	NA	65%	46%	84%
Retention	NA	NA	NA	75%	88%	91%

The NAs above simply mean that there were no courses offered in that modality during the corresponding term. Detailed results can be found in the document titled “Program Retention and Success Rates” (ref. Appendix 52).

Completion rates for some of the proposed degrees and certificates are premature due to the relative newness of them being offered. The Environmental Studies AA degree and the Psychology and Sociology AA-T degrees do not have any graduates yet. The predecessors to Environmental Studies, Environmental Occupational Studies and Environmental Studies GeoScience, both had just one graduate since the 2000-01 academic year. The predecessor to Psychology AA-T, Psychology AA, has awarded 60 degrees since 2000-01, and the predecessor to Sociology AA-T, Social Science (General), has awarded 12 degrees during that time. Humanities AA has awarded 34 degrees since 2000-01, including 20 in 2011-12 (ref. Appendix 53). Of the two proposed certificates, only Business Workforce Proficiency has awarded a certificate, that one coming in 2009-10 (ref. Appendix 54). These degree and certificate completion figures reflect student awards without regard to the modality of their courses. Students have the option of combining distance education courses with on-campus courses.

Program review and the Evaluation of Instruction process are the main methods for faculty to use to determine whether any changes need to be made to their courses. The Distance Education Committee reviews the overall data such as retention rates, success rates, and distance education program outcomes results to determine if improvements are needed to the program as a whole. In the past, several improvements have been made, including the implementation of an online tutoring program.

For the second time in three years, Las Positas College participated in the State Chancellor's Office Distance Education "W" and "DR" Survey. According to the Chancellor's Office, "The purpose of the follow-up CCC "W" and "DR" survey is to continue to test the hypothesis of the original survey (in Spring 2008) that there is a significant relationship between why students take distance education courses and why they drop distance education courses and to compare the results between the two surveys over a two-year period." Fall 2010 students who dropped courses after the census date and prior to the last day to withdraw with a W were surveyed via email by the Chancellor's Office.

Similar to 2008, results for Las Positas College showed that students who drop distance education courses do so for the same reasons they registered for the courses: personal circumstances and work responsibilities. In other words, taking distance education courses are more conducive to their busy daily schedules, but it was those schedules that did not leave an ample amount of time for their courses (ref. Appendix 55). The results mirrored results from community college students throughout the state.

The college's Academic Standards Policy was established to assist students in making appropriate educational plans. There are two indices to academic standards: Academic Status and Academic Progress. Both are detailed in the college catalog, and both cover all students, regardless of whether they are taking courses on campus or at a distance (ref. Appendix 56).

Other processes

Other institutional processes that contribute to online learning include marketing efforts, information provided for current and prospective online students, and accommodations for any on-campus requirements. Marketing is done both online and in the printed schedule of classes. Online students can search for, and register for, distance education courses on CLASS-Web. They can also view a listing of all online and hybrid courses by accessing the college's Online Learning web site. On the course listings pages on that web site, each course contains a link to additional, specific information that is intended to give prospective students a

better understanding so they can make a more informed decision about registering for it (ref. Appendix 57). Considering that most online courses fill quickly during the registration period, the college's minimal marketing efforts have been successful. The Online Learning web site also gives students a plethora of other information they might need. Linked pages include Frequently Asked Questions, Technical Requirements, and Student Support. Similar information is provided to students in a dedicated Online Learning section of the printed scheduled of classes, as well as on the Zone, the district's web portal. CLASS-Web, the Online Learning web site, and the printed schedule all provide information on on-campus requirements for hybrid courses. Hybrid course instructors, department chairs, and the Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator work with the college scheduler to ensure that on-campus meeting dates, times, and locations are accurate (ref. Appendix 58).

Evidence that the Institution has Received Internal or External Approvals

Necessary approvals

All courses, degrees, and certificates offered by Las Positas College have been approved by the college's Curriculum Committee, the district Board of Trustees, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Courses taught in the distance education modality, either as hybrids or fully online, have been reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee using a separate review process in accordance with California administrative code and regulation.

Decisions affecting distance education are discussed and made in the Distance Education Committee, which is a shared governance committee. Policies affecting distance education faculty and students are made by the Academic Senate.

The college's first Substantive Change Proposal was approved by the ACCJC Committee on Substantive Change on March 16, 2007 (ref. Appendix 59). Its second proposal was approved by the same committee on April 16, 2010 (ref. Appendix 60). In its January 2010 accreditation evaluation report, the ACCJC awarded the college's Innovation Center (later renamed the Teaching and Learning Center) with a special commendation as part of the overall Information Technology commendation (ref. Appendix 61). The TLC staff oversees and coordinates the distance education efforts of the college.

This Substantive Change Proposal, Las Positas College's third, was approved by the college district's Board of Trustees on XXXX XX, 2013 (ref. Appendix 62).

Legal requirements

As stated above, while faculty members are participating in the Online Course Development Program, they undergo training on web accessibility in order to meet the requirements of Sections 504 and 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Las Positas College also participates in the Distance Education Captioning and Transcription grant, which provides California Community Colleges with funding for captioning and transcription of video and audio files to increase the accessibility of distance education courses (ref. Appendix

63). Also, while participating in the OCDP, faculty are trained on basic copyright law, particularly when using someone else's materials in their classes (ref. Appendix 64).

Although the federal Department of Education recently reversed its program integrity rule on state authorization, the controversy over it raised awareness that colleges still need to adhere to state regulations. Those state regulations stipulate that colleges be approved to operate in every state in which they enroll online students. At Las Positas College, a process was set up to determine which, if any, of its online students reside outside of California (ref. Appendix 65). Two students from Texas were identified as having enrolled in distance education courses for the Fall 2011 semester. After researching the Texas requirements for authorization, a letter was sent to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to request an exemption. Texas offers exemptions if the petitioning college is accredited and has no physical presence in its state. Las Positas College meets both criteria. Texas contacted the college, stating that we should assess our status based on a flowchart on its web site. That was done, and now we have a Statement of Exemption from the Texas board (ref. Appendix 66). No out-of-state residents taking distance education courses were identified for the Spring, Summer, or Fall 2012 semesters.

Despite the state authorization rule being reversed at the federal level, the associated student complaint regulation is still present. This regulation says: "The institution must also provide its students or prospective students with contact information for filing complaints with its accreditor and with its State approval or licensing entity and any other relevant State official or agency that would appropriately handle a student's complaint." Las Positas College meets this requirement by providing the appropriate information on a web page called Student Complaint Process on its Online Learning web site (ref. Appendix 67).

Las Positas College meets the requirement in the Higher Education Act of 2008 that stipulates that institutions authenticate the identity of distance education students submitting coursework. This authentication is done through the secure Blackboard login process. Each student is assigned a randomly generated user identification number that is used to log into Blackboard. That number is used in lieu of students' Social Security numbers. Students enter their passwords, which are encrypted by Blackboard, and the system is further enhanced by the district taking the additional measure of adding SSL security to the login page. This—along with information that details the protection of student privacy— is explained to students in the college's Blackboard Privacy Statement (ref. Appendix 68). As a secondary measure, students are identified by the default email addresses in Blackboard that are given to them by the district. Each email address is formatted based on students' names. The college, along with its sister college, Chabot, is currently in the process of drafting a board policy on authentication as it relates to integrity, along with a policy on distance education program quality.

In response to the Department of Education's concern over financial aid fraud, Las Positas College is complying with the "last day of attendance" guideline. The department clarified that when a student withdraws from an online class without officially notifying the institution, using the last login of that student as the "last day of attendance" is insufficient; colleges have to determine the last date that the student had "academic engagement" with the class. To deal with this, Las Positas College added a sentence to the end of its official Instructor's Withdrawal Option: Distance Education. The entire policy now reads: *"The instructor may drop students who miss the first meeting of a course. The first meeting of online or hybrid Distance Education courses is the first day of the class as specified in the class schedule listing. For these courses,*

instructors may drop students who do not log into their Blackboard course and/or complete indicated activities by the third day of classes. DE instructors may drop students if they have not submitted work and/or accessed the class for two consecutive weeks" (ref. Appendix 69). Students' academic engagement with the class is preserved since all Blackboard courses are archived after each semester. Instructors are also encouraged to archive their class-related emails with students.

Evidence that the Eligibility Requirements will be Fulfilled

Las Positas College was last visited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC/WASC) in Fall 2009 and officially received notification of its accreditation reaffirmation in January 2010. The college completed its accreditation self-study report in Summer 2009 and will do so again in 2015. Las Positas College will continue to meet the Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation in the following areas:

1. **Authority:** Las Positas College has the authority to operate as a degree-granting institution by the State of California based on its continuous accreditation by the ACCJC/WASC. The development and offering of online courses falls within the scope of this authority.

2. **Mission:** Las Positas College's current mission statement was approved by college constituents in Fall 2008 and by the Board of Trustees on July 23, 2009. The offering of online courses and programs provides our community with additional educational opportunities and aligns with the college's commitment to diversity and to the preparation of students to fully participate in our technologically-oriented society.

   Las Positas College is an inclusive, learning-centered institution providing educational opportunities that meet the academic, intellectual, career-technical, creative, and personal development goals of its diverse students. Students develop the knowledge, skills, values, and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community.

3. **Governing Board:** The Chabot-Las Positas Community College District is governed by a Board of Trustees that consists of seven members elected by the county at large and two non-voting student trustees elected by the students of the two colleges. The function of the board is to determine policies, establish rules and regulations, and oversee the use of financial and other resources to ensure that they are used to provide a sound educational program consistent with the mission and goals of the district. The educational program includes all online offerings and services. The Board of Trustees approved this Substantive Change Proposal at its XXXX 2013 meeting.

4. **Chief Executive Officer:** The Las Positas College President serves as the chief executive officer for the college and is responsible for the development of all programs and services and for the administration and operation of the college. The president was appointed by the Board of Trustees.

5. **Administrative Capacity.** The college has a sufficient number of administrators to effectively manage the college's programs and services. All administrators are selected using appropriate statewide minimum qualifications and district guidelines and have the education and experience needed to perform their assigned duties, which includes oversight of, and support for, online courses and

programs.

6. **Operational Status:** The institution is operational, with 3,119 full-time equivalent students enrolled in Fall 2012. Most of these students are enrolled in courses that lead to degrees, certificates, or transfer. Online courses are extensions of existing courses and programs.

7. **Degrees:** Las Positas College offers 41 associate degree programs and 57 certificate programs. All students are enrolled in courses that either relate directly to completion of a degree/certificate program or are remedial/basic skill courses leading to degree/certificate applicable courses. Certificates and degrees offered via online courses are the same as those currently offered by the college.

8. **Educational Programs:** Las Positas College degree programs are congruent with the college's mission to provide a learner-centered education, with its values statement reflecting academic excellence. Programs are based on recognized higher education fields of study and conform to nationally recognized standards for content, length, quality, and rigor. Online courses and programs are designed and conducted with the same level of academic quality and rigor as traditional, on-campus courses and programs.

9. **Academic Credit:** Credit for all coursework is awarded based on the Carnegie unit, the standard generally accepted in degree-granting institutions of higher education. When the Curriculum Committee approves a course, the awarding of credit is carefully reviewed for compliance with Title 5 of the Education Code. The award of credit is the same for online courses as it is for courses offered on campus.

10. **Student Learning and Achievement:** The college continues to make progress on its Student Learning Outcomes. Currently, SLOs have been written for 91 percent of our courses, and assessments have been completed for 64 percent of courses. Additionally, 55 percent of degrees and certificates have outcomes, and 39 percent of our programs have been assessed. Those assessments include methods that will demonstrate that students who complete Las Positas College programs achieve the stated outcomes regardless of where or how they complete program requirements. Each of the college's five core competencies for general education courses have been assessed. Outcomes are posted on the Student Learning Outcomes web site (ref. Appendix 70).

11. **General Education:** Las Positas College requires that any student receiving an AA or AS degree satisfactorily completes the college and general education requirements, basic competency requirements, and specific area requirements, in addition to the requirements of the student's major. All General Education requirements are listed in the catalog. Many of the online course offerings have been developed to include courses that meet the college's general education requirements.

12. **Academic Freedom:** The Las Positas College statement on academic freedom is in the Faculty Handbook. In addition, the Faculty Association contract has a notation on academic freedom. The

college adheres to the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District statement on academic freedom found in board policy 4320.

The academic freedom statement includes the following statement:

Academic Freedom exists and is nurtured in our community for the common good of all citizens. Students, faculty, administrators and society itself derive benefits from the practice of academic freedom with its open search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom is fundamental for the protection of the instructor's right in teaching and the student's right in learning in the classroom and on the campus. Academic freedom carries with it responsibilities correlative with rights, such responsibilities being implicit in all freedoms and assured by all members of the college to ensure the rights of others.

The use of online methods of instruction does not affect the academic freedom of faculty or students.

13. **Faculty:** During the Fall 2012 semester, Las Positas College employed 96 full-time faculty members and 114 part-time faculty members. All faculty, whether full-time or part-time, meet at least the minimum requirements established by the Board of Governors for California Community Colleges. The core of full-time faculty is sufficient in size and experience to support all of the institution's educational programs. The statement of faculty responsibilities is noted within the Academic Senate web site and is also noted in the Faculty Association contract. Online courses are developed and taught by qualified full-time or part-time faculty members who meet or exceed the minimum qualifications for their disciplines.

14. **Student Services:** Las Positas College provides a wide range of student services including counseling, orientation, assessment, financial aid, transfer and career information, health services, and disabled student services. The focus of all student services is to help students successfully meet their educational goals. These services are available to students at a distance via the college web site, email, and/or telephone.

15. **Admissions:** Las Positas College is an open access institution. The college admission policy is published in the college catalog beginning on page 9, and it clearly states the qualifications for admission to the college and its programs. Enrollment in online courses follows the same statutes and board policies as for traditional courses.

16. **Information and Learning Resources:** Las Positas College maintains a full-service library for student use. The library offers a wide range of print material including books, periodicals, and newspapers, as well as access to a vast array of electronic databases. These databases, along with many other resources, are available to students over the Internet.

17. **Financial Resources:** The Chabot-Las Positas Community College District is funded by local property taxes and state apportionment. The district develops a budget, which is board approved. Using a

district allocation process, the district distributes a portion of the district funds to Las Positas College, and the college independently develops an operating budget to support and improve student learning programs and services. The college has made a commitment to fund the development and offering of courses via online delivery to the same extent as for traditional courses. In some cases, additional funds have been allocated for the specific purpose of developing online courses.

18. **Financial Accountability:** The district undergoes an annual external audit by a firm of certified public accountants. The accountants present and explain the audit at a Board of Trustees meeting. Las Positas College is included in the audit as a sub-unit. The audit covers both the cost and income generated by online courses.

19. **Institutional Planning and Evaluation:** Las Positas College is committed to an ongoing planning cycle that is rooted in our District Education Master plan and the program review process. The Education Master Plan process was initiated in 2003, and revisions and updates occurred in 2005, with a 10-year plan. This plan was updated in 2006 and 2007. Most recently, a new master plan was drafted that incorporated the results of the 2010 newly revised program review process done by all sectors of the college. It included an internal and external environmental scan of our community and prioritized input from all sectors of the college campus.

    Responsibility for institutional planning and evaluation is a cross-campus function, and constituency groups from all areas participate in this shared governance process, including the Resource Allocation Committee, Staff Development Committee, Curriculum Committee, Facilities Committee, Academic Senate, Institutional Effectiveness Committee, College Council, Distance Education Committee, and Technology Committee. Evaluation of planning begins at the program review level, which includes student, program, degree, and certificate level learning outcomes. Ultimate oversight for the planning and evaluation process is held by the College Council, drawing data and analysis from the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

    The program review process is completed in all sectors of the college and used to identify goals and objectives for future development of disciplines, programs, degrees, and certificates. Curriculum, a faculty driven process, is included in the reflective and prospective review of needs for each. Through this process, faculty determine which courses would lend themselves to alternative forms of delivery, such as distance education. The addition of new courses, degrees, and certificates offered in an online method is a result of careful analysis and planning through the program review process.

    A rigorous evaluation of the current program review process is being completed during this academic year and will culminate in a revised program review template for disciplines to complete. Part of this new template will include the opportunity for faculty to analyze course offerings and the mode of delivery that meet students' needs. This ongoing process will provide an opportunity to sustain the evaluation of modes of delivery for course work provided for students.

20. **Integrity in Communication with the Public:** The Las Positas College catalog is available in print and on the web. The catalog contains all of the following information in precise, accurate, and current entries:
    A. Official name, address, telephone number, and web site address of the college
    B. Educational mission
    C. Course, program and degree offerings
    D. Description of distance education
    E. Academic calendar and program length
    F. Academic freedom statement
    G. Available student financial aid
    H. Available learning resources
    I. Names and degrees of administrators and faculty
    J. Names of governing board members
    K. Requirements for:
        1) Admissions
        2) Student fees and other financial obligations
        3) Degree, certificates, graduation, and transfer
    L. Major policies affecting students, including:
        1) Academic regulations, including academic honesty
        2) Nondiscrimination
        3) Acceptance of transfer credits
        4) Grievance and complaint procedures
        5) Sexual harassment
        6) Refund of fees

    Many of these and other policies and procedures are found in the catalog, Schedule of Classes, the Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, District Rules and Regulations, and on the college web site.

21. **Relations with the Accrediting Commission:** Las Positas College adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards of the ACCJC and describes itself in identical terms to all agencies. The college communicates any changes in its accredited status and agrees to disclose all information required by the commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities. The submission of this Substantive Change Proposal is in accordance with the college's commitment to the commission.

Evidence That the Accreditation Standards will be Fulfilled and Relevant Commission Policies are Addressed

Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A. **Mission:** The current mission of Las Positas College is, as stated in the 2012-14 college catalog:

Las Positas College is an inclusive, learning-centered institution providing educational opportunities that meet the academic, intellectual, career-technical, creative, and personal development goals of its diverse students. Students develop the knowledge, skills, values, and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community.

To those ends, we are seeking approval of four degrees that will allow students at a distance to further their educations in liberal arts and sciences. We also seek approval of two career certificates in vocational disciplines that will increase students' chances of joining the local workforce or enhancing their value within it. Distance education is the vehicle that gives many students the opportunity to meet their goals.

B. **Improving Institutional Effectiveness:** Monitoring, evaluating, and improving the quality of instruction involves the same process for distance education as it does for on-campus instruction. First, there is the Evaluation of Instruction process that allows for an instructor teaching a distance education course for the first time to be evaluated by a peer. After conducting the formal evaluation, the peer recommends improvements to the instructor (ref. Appendix 71). There is also the program review process, in which faculty in individual disciplines review their course and program outcome results to determine what, if any, changes need to be made, and what, if any, resources are necessary to implement those changes. Within the eLumen assessment management system, faculty can compare data from their distance education classes with data from their on-campus classes. The results of program review are used to drive, and integrate into, Las Positas College's planning, resource allocation, and institutional improvement processes (ref. Appendix 72).

Improving the effectiveness of the distance education program as a whole falls mainly with the Distance Education Committee. Aside from discussing the ongoing and future needs of distance education students and faculty, the committee is also responsible for formulating and implementing the goals for distance education. The Non-Instructional Program Review for the Teaching and Learning Center includes these goals, which are measured by the committee. The committee constantly seeks to improve the effectiveness of the goals by evaluation and subsequent modifications. For example, the college has modified its online tutoring efforts over the past year based on feedback from student tutors and the Tutorial Center coordinator, data on tutorial sessions conducted, and survey results from students using the service (ref. Appendix 73, 74). New goals are added to the Non-Instructional Program Review during the college's update window. Goals from the Non-Instructional Program Reviews, the Instructional Program Reviews, and Student Services Program Reviews are incorporated into the college's official planning and resource allocation process.

As mentioned previously, Las Positas College annually measures whether or not its online students are meeting the program outcomes for distance education. These outcomes were written by the Distance Education Committee and are intended to identify the skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of participation in the college's distance education program. Students are asked to assess their skills in four areas: communication techniques online with instructors and

classmates, basic skills within the course management system software, basic technology skills, and successful online study strategies. When results become available--they emanate from the annual Distance Education Student Satisfaction Survey— the committee analyzes, then discusses the results. It then decides what, if any, action needs to be taken to improve results. The committee does the same with the results of the rest of that survey. Furthermore, it performs the same process each semester when comparing retention and success rates of distance education students to the corresponding rates for on-campus students.

Standard 2: Student Learning Programs and Services

A. **Instructional Programs:** The use of online delivery methods increases accessibility to education. Online delivery enables the college to provide existing students additional options for access to our high-quality programs, and it provides access for new students who were potentially limited by work schedules, family obligations, distance, transportation, or other factors. The institution, faculty, and administrators commit significant resources to curriculum review, course and instructor review, and student learning outcomes for online learning. In addition, appropriate resources are available to faculty and students using online delivery systems.

To ensure that systems of delivery and modes of instruction are compatible with the course objectives, every course outline and course proposal form must be vetted and approved by the discipline, division, and Curriculum Committee. For a course that is offered fully or partially online, the distance education portion of the proposal must be completed within CurricUNET, the district's online curriculum development and approval system. This process ensures each course proposed for distance delivery meets the following criteria:

1) Regular and effective contact is maintained between the instructor and students through group or individual meetings, orientation, review sessions, study sessions, field trips, library workshops, chat rooms, telephone contact, email, or other activities. (Regular Effective Contact Guidelines for distance education have been approved by the college; ref. Appendix 75).
2) Effective pedagogical techniques appropriate to the distance education mode are utilized to ensure that quality and rigor of instruction is equivalent to that of the on-campus version of the course.
3) Appropriate technology is used to achieve course objectives.
4) Multiple measures are used to achieve and assess student learning.

As mentioned previously, the Online Course Development Program (OCDP) is the college's vehicle for training faculty to design, develop, and teach online courses. Based on best practices in online pedagogy, participants will design and develop their course over one semester, and then they will typically teach it the following semester (ref. Appendix 76). Faculty can participate in either the on-campus or online versions of the OCDP. Participation is strongly encouraged for instructors teaching online, and the vast majority of those instructors have completed the program. However, until mandatory participation is negotiated into the faculty contract, participation remains optional.

A number of processes have been established to monitor students' success at meeting course objectives. Student learning outcomes have been written for all distance education courses, and the results of their assessments are entered into the eLumen (ref. Appendix 77). Course-level outcomes are being assessed in different ways, including traditional assessments such as written papers, projects, and exams, and alternative assessments such as student web sites and PowerPoint presentations. Program outcomes are also entered into eLumen, and assessment results are obtained by entering data at the course level, then mapping course outcomes with the program outcomes (ref. Appendix 78).

In comparing a sampling of student learning outcomes assessment data from distance education courses to data from corresponding on-campus courses during Spring 2012, results for the most part mirror the success rates reported earlier in this document. Those success rates were 63 percent for distance education and 72 percent for on campus, a gap of 9 percent. For similar courses that used a 5-point rubric (a scale of 0-4) to assess outcomes, there is a 7-point advantage for on-campus courses at level 3 of the rubric, and there's a 4-point advantage at level 4. The total for those two higher levels of the rubric equals 11 percent (ref. Appendix 79).

Rubric scale	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**
Overall results	140	77	384	308	251	1160
DE results	69	30	163	97	85	444
f2f results	71	47	221	211	166	716
Percentages						
DE results	16%	7%	37%	22%	19%	
f2f results	10%	7%	31%	29%	23%	

For similar courses that used a 6-point rubric (a scale of 0-5) to assess outcomes, there's an 8-point advantage for distance education courses at level 4 of the rubric, and there is a 20-point advantage for on-campus courses at level 4. The total for those two higher levels of the rubric equals 12 percent.

Rubric scale	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**
Overall results	14	20	13	32	72	119	270
DE results	6	15	4	20	38	41	124
f2f results	8	5	9	12	34	78	146
Percentages							
DE results	5%	12%	3%	16%	31%	33%	
f2f results	5%	3%	6%	8%	23%	53%	

Appropriate resources are offered to faculty needing training in writing and assessing course and program outcomes. Faculty on the college's Student Learning Outcomes Committee provide training on writing and assessing outcomes, and staff in the Teaching and Learning Center train faculty on entering outcomes and assessment data into eLumen. Adjunct faculty are paid a stipend for writing

and assessing SLOs.

Most students seem satisfied with their distance education courses. On the Fall 2012 Distance Education Student Satisfaction Survey, students were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with different components of online learning, and the 318 students who completed the survey were mostly satisfied or very satisfied in all areas. This included the distance education program as a whole (76 percent), overall course quality (75 percent) and overall course satisfaction (73 percent). When asked if they would take another distance education course from Las Positas College, 85 percent indicated that they would. Students also indicated (66 percent) that they learned about the same in their distance education classes than they would have in an on-campus class. Interestingly, 20 percent said they learned more in their distance education classes, and 14 percent said they learned less (ref. Appendix 80).

In that same survey, students' needs are assessed prior to the Distance Education Committee evaluating those needs. Regular evaluation of all instructors as described in the faculty contract also gives students, instructors, and administrators the opportunity to evaluate student needs, along with the delivery systems and modes of instruction (ref. Appendix 81).

Las Positas College offers many ways to prepare students for taking distance education classes. As mentioned, the college offers an online study skills course (Psychology Counseling 25) that includes instruction on how to be a successful online learner. This course has been developed and taught by a counselor who can be accessible to students who might need extra assistance with online course study strategies.

Students enrolled in online and hybrid courses are invited to attend on-campus or virtual orientations held the week before the semester begins and during the first week of classes. These orientations are designed to familiarize students not only with online learning in general, but also with utilizing Blackboard. They are not course-specific.

Typical topics covered at these orientations are:

1. Dispelling myths about online courses
2. Understanding the course requirements
3. Online course overview
4. Qualities of a successful online learner
5. Tips to succeed online, including time management
6. Student readiness for taking these courses, including those who tend to struggle
7. Researching online
8. Using Zonemail (the district's student email system)
9. Basic Blackboard course navigation
10. Using Blackboard course tools, including submitting assignments
11. Blackboard tips, including those for taking quizzes
12. Technical tips and requirements
13. Technical support

14. Academic support, including Counseling
15. Popular FAQs
16. Login procedures
17. Importance of reading the class syllabus carefully
18. Students with disabilities

For students who cannot attend the on-campus or virtual orientations, there is an asynchronous orientation posted on the Online Learning web site (ref. Appendix 82).

Also on that web site is a tutorial titled "Succeeding in an Online Course" (ref. Appendix 83). This tutorial consists of 7 lessons:

1. **What is an online course?**
2. **Are online courses right for you?** Includes 10 facts students need to know about online courses and a profile of students who tend not to do well in online courses.
3. **Successful study strategies.** Includes Getting Ready to Learn, Choosing the Right Time and Place to Study, Avoiding Procrastination, Developing a Support System, Participating Actively in Class, Reading Actively and Taking Notes, Preparing for (and Taking) Exams, Working in Groups, and Researching Effectively and Efficiently.
4. **Communicating online.** Includes Netiquette, Using Emoticons and Acronyms, and Tips for Writing Emails and Discussion Postings.
5. **Online student ethics.** Includes Cheating on Exams, Plagiarism, Copyright Violations, and Inappropriate Postings. Also includes links to the Academic Honesty Statement of the Las Positas College Academic Senate, and the college's Student Conduct and Due Process policy.
6. **Preparing technologically.** Includes Computer Requirements, Web Browser Information, Plug-ins, Software, Student Email Addresses, and Password Information.
7. **Las Positas College resources.** Includes information for students with disabilities and technical support for students.

As mentioned, a course proposal and course outline have been submitted to the Counseling division to offer General Studies 1, Introduction to Online Learning, which is a standalone .5-unit online course dedicated solely to teaching students how to succeed in their online courses.

Also mentioned earlier is the fact that Las Positas meets the requirement in the Higher Education Act of 2008 that stipulates that institutions authenticate the identity of distance education students submitting coursework. This authentication is done through the secure Blackboard login process. Each student is assigned a randomly generated user identification number that is used to log into Blackboard. That number is used in lieu of students' Social Security numbers. Students enter their passwords, which are encrypted by Blackboard, and the system is further enhanced by the district taking the additional measure of adding SSL security to the login page. As a secondary measure, students are identified by the default email addresses in Blackboard that are given to them by the district. Each email address is formatted based on students' names. The college, along with its sister college, Chabot, is currently in the process of drafting a board policy on authentication as it relates to integrity, along with a policy on distance education program quality.

Furthermore, within distance education courses, academic integrity is guided by the Academic Senate's Academic Honesty Statement, which includes examples of cheating online (ref. Appendix 84). Online instructors also utilize pedagogical measures to maintain integrity. When asked which measures they use to verify the integrity of student work, distance education instructors replied with the following:

1. Activate "anti-cheating" options for quizzes and exams (force completion, randomize questions, time exams, etc.): 69 percent
2. Personalize writing assignments: 56 percent
3. Compare student writing on discussion boards to papers: 53 percent
4. Include a lesson on plagiarism: 50 percent
5. Require students to submit papers to a plagiarism checker: 36 percent (ref. Appendix 85)

While participating in the OCDP, faculty are trained on the above, and they read and discuss the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) document titled "Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education." That document incorporates the above measures and identifies other ways to promote integrity. Furthermore, the college's English department has developed a Reading and Writing Resources web site that, in addition to providing writing help to students, teaches faculty to design writing assignments that help ensure that plagiarism will be minimized (ref. Appendix 86).

Most of the college's distance education courses are conducted completely online, but all of our hybrid courses have on-campus requirements. Some of the hybrids include laboratories or other performance-based instructional environments. For example, Astronomy 30, Introduction to Astronomy Lab, not only requires students to complete virtual labs online, but it also requires them to come to campus and to meet at nearby "dark sky" locations to complete other labs (ref. Appendix 87). Kinesiology 4, Personal Fitness, requires students to meet on campus for pre- and post-fitness assessments (ref. Appendix 88). Other hybrids like Computer Information Systems 43, Professional Communications, and all of our Math hybrid offerings require that students attend the on-campus meetings to take exams proctored by the instructors.

B. **Student Support Services**

Many of the college's academic resources are available on the web, including the catalog, schedule, course outlines, and high school articulation information. The application and enrollment process, including payment, is entirely online. All students have access to bookstore services online, and they can also access class schedules, check grades, purchase a parking permit, apply for financial aid, check financial aid status, etc. online. The college has devoted resources to ensuring the accessibility of web sites and courses to students with disabilities. The Online Learning web site contains a link called Student Support, which has information on counseling for distance education students and on how students with disabilities can optimize their technology for online learning (ref. Appendix 89). The site contains links to many other resources intended to help online students, such as technical requirements, login information, and frequently asked questions. Students consistently rate the site

highly in terms of satisfaction. In fact, in the Fall 2012 Distance Education Student Satisfaction Survey, 59 percent of students were either satisfied or very satisfied with the site, compared to only 8 percent who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

The institution offers additional support to students to help them meet the outcomes of courses taken online. As mentioned, orientations are offered synchronously and asynchronously, tutorials are offered, an online Transition to College course is offered, and counseling is offered to distance education students by email or telephone. Online tutoring is also offered. Since online tutoring began in Fall 2011, 85 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statements "The tutor helped me understand my assignment or how to improve my work" and "I was satisfied with my online tutoring session". Also, 77 percent agreed or strongly agreed with "I think my grade will improve as a result of the online tutoring session" (ref. Appendix 90).

Student technical support for Blackboard login problems, submitting assignment problems, etc., is provided in the following ways: face-to-face, telephone, direct email, and via an online form on the support web page that automatically generates an email to the support account. A knowledge base of information is available for students who need answers during non-support hours. In rating their levels of satisfaction with the help desk, 41 percent of students were either satisfied or very satisfied, while 6 percent were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied. Many students indicated they did not use the help desk.

The latest accreditation evaluation report from the ACCJC's evaluation team noted: "The team determined that the college assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution" (ref. Appendix 91).

C. **Library and Learning Support Services**

In support of the college's educational programs, the Las Positas College library provides resources, information services, classes, and facilities that directly contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. To accomplish this, the library selects and maintains educational materials and equipment to support the varied learning needs of a diverse student population.

The library's collection is balanced between print, audio-visual, and online materials to support curriculum and student needs. Online materials are an important part of the library resources. These resources are accessible at all times from the library web site, providing convenient access to research materials for both on- or off-campus students (ref. Appendix 92). The library web site includes databases of films, music, and art, as well as full-text magazines, journals and newspapers. It also includes electronic books, electronic reference materials, streaming videos, an online catalog, access to faculty course reserves, library guides and tip sheets, a plagiarism tutorial, and a citation generator tool. To access the databases from off campus, students and faculty log in with their college-assigned ID number and password.

Reference assistance by the librarians is available in person and by phone whenever the library is open. The library also provides an email reference service with a response time of within 24 hours Monday through Friday. When asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the library's online resources, 54 percent of distance education students in Fall 2012 indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied, while 7 percent said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

Library faculty have developed several academic courses, including Library 8, Introduction to Library Research and Information Literacy, their first online course. Library 8 teaches the skills needed to successfully find, evaluate, and document information in print, electronic, and Internet formats. It covers plagiarism, the ethical and legal aspects of information use, and the critical thinking skills necessary for successful college research.

Standard 3: Resources

A. **Human Resources:** Faculty and staff who are involved with online courses and programs will continue to meet all the minimum qualifications and be held to the same standards as other faculty and staff, in accordance with applicable state codes. Through the Teaching and Learning Center, faculty and staff have access to extensive technical and pedagogical training and support provided by the Instructional Technology/Open Learning coordinator and support provided by the Instructional Technology Support Specialist. Both are full-time employees. The coordinator has a master's degree in Instructional Technology, 14 years of experience, and has served on the statewide Educational Technology Advisory Committee. The support specialist has 6 years of experience providing technical and multimedia support to faculty, in addition to being responsible for training and support in making online materials accessible to students with disabilities. These two staff members get consistently high satisfaction marks from distance education faculty. In the Fall 2012 Distance Education Faculty Survey, 86 percent indicated that they were very satisfied with faculty support from the Teaching and Learning Center staff, and the other 14 percent indicated that they were satisfied.

   Student technical support is provided by the college's Computer Center staff, which helps students with problems logging in to Blackboard, submitting assignments, etc. That staff consists of 3.3 full-time equivalent employees. Through District Information Technology Services, the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) oversees the licensing of, and contracting with, the course management system vendor, Blackboard. The CTO also manages the district's Senior Programmer Analysts who contribute to the administration of online education by developing technical processes by which faculty can request courses, students can evaluate instruction, and perhaps most importantly, by connecting Banner, the district's administrative computing system, to Blackboard via a tool called Snapshot Controller.

B. **Physical Resources:** Faculty and staff have access to instructional technologies and support in the college's Teaching and Learning Center. The TLC is a 1,879-square-foot facility that houses 15 faculty workstations, a studio for digital recording, wireless Internet access, and the hardware and software necessary for online course delivery. Las Positas College's Technology Department provides technical

support for the equipment in the TLC. It also supports the college network, including the web server that houses instructional content used in distance education classes. Evaluation of the center is conducted by surveying faculty and staff who use the center's services. The survey, delivered to all faculty and staff who use the center, seeks their level of satisfaction and seeks to determine what training can be added. Results are consistently positive (ref. Appendix 93). When only distance education faculty were asked to rate their satisfaction with "facilities and equipment used for DE", 78 percent marked either Satisfied or Very Satisfied, while 16 percent marked Not Applicable, most likely because they are adjuncts who teach online and rarely come to campus (ref. Appendix 94).

C. **Technology Resources:** The District Information Technology Services staff and the college Technology Department staff collaboratively provide support for the management, maintenance, and operation of the technological infrastructure and equipment. Services provided include instructional computing, administrative computing, system design and applications programming, network infrastructure (WAN and LAN), desktop support, hardware and software support, centralized help desk, and user training on specific topics. District ITS provides the system planning, development, operational control, monitoring, and security of services offered via the district's network infrastructure (ref. Appendix 95, 96). With regard to maintaining equipment, the district and the Las Positas College Technology Department establish vendor maintenance agreements or warranty terms to ensure service levels are sustained for all standard hardware and software. The college refreshes office and lab computers at predetermined intervals set forth in the Technology Equipment Life Cycle Plan (ref. Appendix 97). Requests from individuals for new technology occurs via the Instructional Equipment Request process (ref. Appendix 98).

The decision to purchase a license to utilize Blackboard was made by a district-wide committee with representatives from various constituencies, including several faculty members. The committee also decided to have Blackboard host, maintain, and support the server. Blackboard also hosts a test and development server and the Snapshot Controller. Additionally, it is responsible for ensuring reliability, disaster recovery, and security (ref. Appendix 99).

Among the other technologies that faculty have access to are an anti-plagiarism service and an assessment management system, as well as tools for creating videos, podcasts, narrated presentations, mobile content, interactive study games, and web pages. The tools for creating such digital content are housed in the college's Teaching and Learning Center and are purchased based on faculty needs (ref. Appendix 100). Those needs are expressed informally and also through surveys. Furthermore, because the output of the aforementioned tools are posted online for distance education and non-distance education courses, procurement and usage of those tools are also discussed in the Distance Education Committee. Depending on the need, the following standing committees and areas will discuss, assess, and evaluate other technological needs: Technology Committee, Resource and Allocation Committee, division meetings, technology meetings conducted by the head of the college's Technology Department with individual programs as needed, and program review reports by disciplines and departments.

D. **Financial Resources:** Although funding for Las Positas College and the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District has decreased since the last Substantive Change Proposal in 2010, the fiscal resources

allocated to distance education have, for the most part, remained steady. For example, salaries and benefits for 7.6 full-time equivalent staff members at the college and at the district—when prorated to the percentage of time they dedicated to distance education—was $262,894 in the 2009-10 academic year. Currently, that figure for 7.3 full-time equivalent staff members is $303,404. In 2009-10, the cost for the annual Blackboard license, hosting, and support was $176,100. In 2010-11, it was $176,200, and for 2011-12, it was $181,500. However, since the increase of $5,300 from 2010-11 to 2011-12, Blackboard has frozen the cost due to budgetary issues in California. The cost will remain frozen through at least 2013-14. One area that was not spared from being cut was the Teaching and Learning Center's operating budget. Line items in that budget for software licenses and hardware/software were $10,000 and $5,000, respectively, in 2009-10. Currently, it is $1,500 and zero. In 2011, employees responsible for budgets were asked to analyze expenses and identify items that could be reduced. Since Blackboard already contained an anti-plagiarism service called SafeAssign, the college's license to use a similar service, Turnitin, was terminated, saving $5,765 annually. Other non-essential licenses were reduced. The line item for hardware/software was subsumed by the Technology Department, which is responsible for that anyways.

Funding for distance education comes from the district's budget and from Las Positas College's portion of that budget. The district pays for the Blackboard license, hosting and support. It also pays the salaries of the chief technology officer and two analyst positions. The salaries of the college employees are paid from the college's general fund. The Technology Department's budget covers most of the hardware and software in the Teaching and Learning Center, while the TLC's budget covers the rest.

Purchases and contract policies and procedures adhere to, and are compliant with, all relevant legal codes.

Standard 4: Leadership & Governance

A. **Decision-Making Roles and Processes:** During the 2005-06 academic year, the Academic Senate and the college administration assessed, and in some instances modified, the shared governance structure. One of the beneficial changes was the elevation of the Distance Education Subcommittee, to status as a regular standing shared governance committee. This committee is primarily faculty driven, but includes student and Classified representation, along with administrative participation in an "ex officio" role. In addition to the Distance Education Committee, the Technology Committee also serves a role by making recommendations about technology infrastructure and support. These committees work with administration and the Resource and Allocation Committee to ensure that planning documents such as the District Education Master Plan, the Teaching and Learning Center's Non-Instructional Program Review, and the Technology Equipment Life Cycle Plan reflect adequate resources to effectively support online learning. The Curriculum Committee is responsible for approving courses for distance education delivery.

The Office of Academic Services, specifically the Vice President of Academic Services and deans, also plays a key role in decision making and planning processes. This group regularly reviews progress, and works with faculty and the Distance Education Committee to plan and make changes as needed.

The Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator, who coordinates the college's online learning efforts, reports directly to the Vice President of Academic Services.

B. **Board and Administrative Organization:** The Board of Trustees for the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District gives final approval to all courses and contracts involving distance education. It also establishes policies, such as those for academic standards, access and use of district property, that affect distance education. The board selects and evaluates the chief executive officer and confirms the appointment of other major academic and administrative officers, who collectively are ultimately responsible for the execution of distance education courses and programs.

At the district level, the Chief Technology Officer negotiates contracts with Blackboard, participates in high-level discussions on technical topics relating to distance education, and supervises the programming staff that develops technical processes that help improve the efficiency of the distance education program.

Other Information for Commission Staff (Considerations for Distance Learning Programs)

Growth Projections

As reported in the Anticipated Effect section of this proposal, Las Positas College has actually seen a decline in the total number of distance education sections offered since our 2010 Substantive Change Proposal. That decrease is a consequence of the decrease in state funding to the college. The number of full-time equivalent distance education students has also decreased. Although both of these decreases have occurred, support and resources for distance education have hardly changed. Nevertheless, projections for considerable growth over the next 2-5 years is unrealistic unless a substantial amount of money is unexpectedly infused into the California Community College system, major grants are awarded, and/or the Las Positas College community decides to expand distance education significantly. There are no plans for the latter to occur.

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Total sections	242	233	219
Online sections	205	198	188
Hybrid sections	37	35	31
FTES	853.1	774.4	795.1
FTEF	44.5	42.8	41.6

Increasing Expectations

Las Positas College provides the following institutional processes online that impact student access and completion of online programs:

1. **Admissions**. Students can apply for admission online via the Las Positas College CCCApply web site.

2. **Registration**. Students can register for classes, add, or withdraw from them using the online CLASS-Web system.
3. **Orientation**. A general orientation about Las Positas College is accessible from the college web site. Live and asynchronous orientations specific to online learning are offered each semester to students who don't want to, or can't, come to campus to attend on-campus orientations.
4. **Advising**. The Transfer Center web site has a link to ASSIST, which is the official repository of articulation for California's public colleges and universities. There, students can see how course credits earned at one public California college or university can be applied when transferred to another. Students also have access to the new Associate Degree for Transfer web site. This site gives important information and resources about the Associate Degree for Transfer. At a future date—possibly next year—District Information Technology Services is planning to provide the college with software that allows real-time academic advising online.
5. **Financial Aid**. Students can apply for financial aid online.
6. **Course Delivery**. Las Positas College offers fully online and hybrid courses using Blackboard.
7. **Communication with Students**. District ITS administers a student email system, which gives every student in the district a free email account. The system, named Zonemail, is hosted by Google.
8. **Tutoring Services**. Students can get synchronous and asynchronous online Math and Writing help.
9. **Graduation Applications**. Students can download the application form from the college's Graduation web site, but they must sign it and return it to the Admissions and Records office on campus. (ref. Appendix 101).
10. **Transcript Requests**. Students can download a Transcript Request form from the college's Admissions and Records web site, but they must sign it and can either mail it or fax it back to the college.
11. **Student Survey Collection and Analysis**. The college uses the online surveying tool Survey Monkey and a survey function within CLASS-Web to deliver a multitude of surveys to distance education students. Among the surveys delivered are the annual satisfaction survey, a retention survey, a course preferences survey, and the Student Response to Instruction Form that is part of the official Evaluation of Instruction process for online courses. Aside from the Student Response to Instruction survey, results for the others are posted on the Distance Education Committee web site (ref. Appendix 102).

Student Success/Student Achievement Data

Although most research shows that online classes operate more optimally with fewer students, the district's faculty contract stipulates that there shall be no difference in class size whether the class is online or on campus (ref. Appendix 103). By contract, the maximum number of students for many Math and English courses is 27. Other class maximums are 30, 35, and 44.

Below are the success and retention rates for Las Positas College distance education students compared to non-distance education students during the 2011-12 academic year:

	Summer 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE	DE	Non-DE
Success	64%	78%	60%	72%	63%	72%
Retention	77%	87%	78%	86%	80%	86%

Please refer to the section titled "Student success and retention" for those figures broken out by proposed degrees and certificates, along with figures on student completion.

Please refer to the section on Standard 2A for data on student learning outcomes assessment.

Program review and the Evaluation of Instruction process are the main vehicles for faculty to determine whether any changes need to be made to their courses. The Distance Education Committee reviews the overall data such as retention rates, success rates, and distance education program outcomes results to determine if improvements are needed to the program as a whole.

Success and retention rates are gathered after each semester by the college's Institutional Planning and Research office. These data are posted on the Distance Education Committee web site.

Quality Assurances

As mentioned earlier, Las Positas College meets the requirement in the Higher Education Act of 2008 that stipulates that institutions authenticate the identity of distance education students submitting coursework. This authentication is done through the secure Blackboard login process. Each student is assigned a randomly generated user identification number that is used to log into Blackboard. That number is used in lieu of students' Social Security numbers. Students enter their passwords, which are encrypted by Blackboard, and the system is further enhanced by the district taking the additional measure of adding SSL security to the login page. As a secondary measure, students are identified by the default email addresses in Blackboard that are given to them by the district. Each email address is formatted based on students' names. The college, along with its sister college, Chabot, is currently in the process of drafting a board policy on authentication as it relates to integrity, along with a policy on distance education program quality.

Furthermore, within distance education courses, academic integrity is guided by the Academic Senate's Academic Honesty Statement, which includes examples of cheating online. Instructors also utilize pedagogical measures to maintain integrity, along with Blackboard options when giving exams and the anti-plagiarism service SafeAssign, which is built into Blackboard.

The college makes no distinction between course content in online courses versus on-campus courses. This is reflected in the course outline of record for each course (ref. Appendix 104).

Although more faculty who have online teaching experience are being hired, the college trains all faculty who are interested in teaching online courses. The Online Course Development Program (OCDP), as noted earlier, trains faculty in both the pedagogical and technical skills needed to design and teach online.

The college also does not require students to have prior experience before registering for online courses. Instead, it offers on-campus, virtual, and asynchronous orientations. Many instructors include an initial learning module in their courses that allow students to become comfortable with online learning before actual course content is presented. Furthermore, students have the option of enrolling in an online study skills course (Psychology Counseling 25) that teaches study skills for online learners.

The Teaching and Learning Center staff, which includes two full-time positions—the Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator and the Instructional Technology Support Specialist—provide support to all online instructors. All faculty have access to the center. Training for the OCDP and workshops on all instructional technology topics take place in the center.

Student technical support is provided by the college's Computer Center staff, which helps students with problems logging into Blackboard, submitting assignments, etc. This help desk is available online, by phone, by email, and in person. All academic support services are available in person and have web sites, and they are available by phone or email.

Outcomes for individual courses, along with those for degrees and certificates, are written and assessed without regard to modality. Data emanating from assessments of distance education and on-campus courses are entered in eLumen, the college's assessment management system, and analyzed within each discipline's program review.

The current mission of Las Positas College is to *"provide educational opportunities that meet the academic, intellectual, career-technical, creative, and personal development goals of its diverse students. Students develop the knowledge, skills, values, and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community."* Offering the proposed degrees and certificates at a distance integrate with the institutional mission by allowing students to pursue educational opportunities in academic transfer and career technical education with the aim of becoming engaged and contributing members of the community. Inclusive by nature, distance education is the vehicle that gives many of the college's diverse students the chance to meet their educational goals. The college's Vision Statement is even clearer in its commitment to distance education: *"Las Positas College meets our students and community where they are and creates experiences for them that build their capacity, speak to their potential, and transform their lives."* Several of the college's 10 Institutional Strategic Goals also pertain to distance education as they mention providing "excellence in teaching, student learning," offering "cutting edge educational opportunities," expanding "professional development for all employees," and expanding "an environment of accessibility." Finally, the first bullet point in the college's Values Statement says that Las Positas College will "promote and celebrate lifelong learning" (ref. Appendix 105). Distance education, by its nature, allows people of any age to continue learning.

Evaluating effectiveness and quality involves the same process for distance education as it does for on-campus instruction. First, there is the Evaluation of Instruction process that allows for an instructor teaching a distance education course for the first time to be evaluated by a peer. After conducting the formal evaluation, the peer recommends improvements to the instructor. There is also the program review process, in which faculty in individual disciplines review their course and program outcome results to determine what, if any changes need to be made, and what, if any, resources are necessary to implement those changes. Finally, for the distance education program as a whole, each year, the college measures the program

outcomes for distance education. These outcomes are intended to identify the skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of participation in the college's distance education program. Students are asked to assess their skills in four areas: communication techniques online with instructors and classmates, basic skills within the course management system software, basic technology skills, and successful online study strategies. When results become available, the Distance Education Committee analyzes then discusses the results. It then decides what, if any, action needs to be taken to improve the program.

Las Positas College would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following people for their contributions to this proposal: Rajinder Samra, director of research and planning; Jeannine Methe, district chief technology officer; Vicki Shipman, project manager of career and technical education programs; Natasha Lang, college administrative services officer; Sharon Gach, administrative assistant to the president; Jeff Sperry, instructional technology support specialist; and the members of the Distance Education Committee.

Appendix

Please note that if you are viewing this proposal electronically in either Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF, you can simply Control-click (Word) or single-click (PDF) any of the links below to view the corresponding document.

You can also access the Appendix via your web browser by going to the college's Accreditation Document Repository at

http://acclpc.laspositascollege.edu/lpcaccred.html#[[Substantive%20Change%202013%20Appendix]]

If you have any questions or problems with accessing the Appendix, contact Scott Vigallon at 925-424-1654 or svigallon@laspositascollege.edu.

Description of the Planning Process

Appendix 1 - Overview - Labor Market Information
Appendix 2 – Overall Student DE Course Preferences survey
Appendix 3 – Curriculum Handbook
Appendix 4 – District Education Master Plan
Appendix 5 – New mission statement feedback form
Appendix 6 – New mission statement brainstorming session
Appendix 7 - Enrollment Management Committee web site
Appendix 8 - Program Review web site
Appendix 9 – Business program review

Appendix 10 - Distance Education Student Survey - Fall 2010
Appendix 11 – Online Tutoring web site
Appendix 12 – Town Meeting presentation
Appendix 13 – TLC survey results
Appendix 14 – DE Faculty survey results
Appendix 15 – TLC Workshops web page
Appendix 16 – Help desk statistics, 2009-10 through 2011-12
Appendix 17 - TLC Non-Instructional Program Review
Appendix 18 – Help desk software
Appendix 19 – CTE mentoring pilot
Appendix 20 – Psychology-Counseling 25, Transition to College, information page
Appendix 21 – General Studies 1, Introduction to Online Learning, course outline
Appendix 22 – Common Tool update
Appendix 23 – Open Educational Resources document online

Evidence of Institutional Provision for Human, Administrative, Financial, and Physical Resources and Processes

Appendix 24 – LPC CCCApply web site
Appendix 25 – CLASS-Web
Appendix 26 – Financial Aid web site
Appendix 27 – Counseling for Online Students web page
Appendix 28 – ASSIST web site
Appendix 29 - Associate Degree for Transfer web site
Appendix 30 – LPC library web site
Appendix 31 – LPC general orientation
Appendix 32 – Online Learning orientations
Appendix 33 – Help desk knowledge base
Appendix 34 – Online bookstore
Appendix 35 – Transcript request form
Appendix 36 - Zonemail
Appendix 37 – Organization chart
Appendix 38 – Distance Education Committee home page
Appendix 39 – OCDP outcomes, goals, objectives
Appendix 40 – Technology Focus Award
Appendix 41 – Accessibility resources on Staff Development web site
Appendix 42 – Web Accessibility site
Appendix 43 – Teaching and Learning Center pictures
Appendix 44 – Technology Department web site
Appendix 45 – DE budget figures
Appendix 46 – Blackboard renewal notice
Appendix 47 – Enrollment stats 2009-12
Appendix 48 – Technology Equipment Life Cycle Plan

Appendix 49 – Distance Education Student Survey – Fall 2012
Appendix 50 – eLumen login page
Appendix 51 – Retention and success rates for DE students
Appendix 52 – Program Retention and Success Rates
Appendix 53 – Degrees by major
Appendix 54 – Certificates by major
Appendix 55 – DE retention study survey results
Appendix 56 – LPC catalog
Appendix 57 – Online course listings page
Appendix 58 – Example hybrid course information page

Evidence that the Institution has Received Internal or External Approvals

Appendix 59 – Substantive Change approval 2007
Appendix 60 – Substantive Change approval 2010
Appendix 61 – Evaluation report from ACCJC 2009
Appendix 62 – Board of Trustees' Substantive Change Proposal approval 2013
Appendix 63 – Example captioning invoice
Appendix 64 – OCDP screenshot on copyright
Appendix 65 – LPC state authorization procedures
Appendix 66 – Texas statement of exemption
Appendix 67 – Student complaint process web page
Appendix 68 – Blackboard Privacy Statement
Appendix 69 – Instructor's Withdrawal Option: Distance Education
Appendix 70 – List of SLOs

Evidence That the Accreditation Standards will be Fulfilled and Relevant Commission Policies are Addressed

Appendix 71 – Evaluation of Instruction form: Online Class
Appendix 72 – Planning Cycle
Appendix 73 – Feedback from student tutors
Appendix 74 – Online tutoring data and survey results
Appendix 75 - Regular Effective Contact Guidelines
Appendix 76 - Best Practices in Designing Online Courses
Appendix 77 – Example course assessment results
Appendix 78 – Example program outcomes results
Appendix 79 – SLO comparisons
Appendix 80 - Distance Education Student Survey – Fall 2012
Appendix 81 – Faculty contract
Appendix 82 – Online Learning Orientation
Appendix 83 – Succeeding in an Online Course tutorial
Appendix 84 - Academic Honesty Statement
Appendix 85 - DE Faculty survey results

Appendix 86 - Reading and Writing Resources web site
Appendix 87 – Astronomy 30 information page
Appendix 88 - Kinesiology 4 information page
Appendix 89 – Student Support page
Appendix 90 – Online tutoring data and survey results
Appendix 91 – Evaluation report from ACCJC 2009
Appendix 92 – LPC library web site
Appendix 93 – TLC survey results
Appendix 94 – DE Faculty survey results
Appendix 95 – District IT master plan
Appendix 96 – District IT master plan 2010 supplement
Appendix 97 – Technology Equipment Life Cycle Plan
Appendix 98 – Instructional Equipment Request form
Appendix 99 – Blackboard Managed Hosting
Appendix 100 – TLC Technology page

Other Information for Commission Staff (Considerations for Distance Learning Programs)

Appendix 101 – Graduation web site
Appendix 102 – Distance Education Committee site
Appendix 103 – Faculty contract
Appendix 104 – Course outlines page
Appendix 105 – College mission statement page