

**Substantive Change Proposal**  
**Addition of Courses that Constitute 50% or More**  
**of a Program Offered Online**

**Folsom Lake College**  
**10 College Parkway**  
**Folsom, CA 95630**

**Los Rios Community College District**  
**1919 Spanos Court**  
**Sacramento, CA 95825**

**March 14, 2011**

**Susan L. Lorimer**  
**Vice President of Instruction**  
**Accreditation Liaison Officer**

## Table of Contents

A. Proposed Change Description and Justification .....	5
B. Planning Process Description .....	6
C. Evidence of Adequate Resources .....	8
D. Evidence of Necessary Internal and External Approvals .....	11
E. Accreditation Eligibility Requirements .....	11
F. Accreditation Standards and Relevant Commission Policies .....	16

## Attachments

1. ACCJC Substantive Change Approval Letter, July 19, 2010
2. FLC 2010-2011 Catalog
3. FLC Vision and Mission Statement
4. LRCCD IT Technology Plan
5. LRCCD Distance Education Strategic Plan Resource Document
6. FLC Strategic Plan
7. FLC Technology and Distance Education Plan
8. LRCCD-LRCFT 2008-2011 Contract
9. FLC Organizational Chart
10. LRCCD Organizational Chart
11. FLC Key Performance Indicators
12. FLC Instructional Program Review Cycle 2009-2015
13. LRCCD Exclusively Online Students Report
14. LRCCD FLC Online Course Enrollments and Success
15. FLC Course Success and Retention Rates Comparisons of Online and Onground Modalities
16. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Program Inventory for FLC
17. MOU Content of College Catalogs, Cosumnes River College and Folsom Lake College
18. LRCCD Board of Trustees' Agendas Approving Curriculum

19. LRCCD Board of Trustees' Agenda for January 19, 2011
20. FLC Program Student Learning Outcomes for Vocational Programs

## A. PROPOSED CHANGE DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

### Brief Description of the Change

Folsom Lake College (FLC) is the fourth college of the Los Rios Community College District (LRCCD). The college has a main campus in Folsom, California, an educational center in Placerville (El Dorado Center), and an outreach center in Rancho Cordova (Rancho Cordova Center). In fall 2010, the college had 9,027 students enrolled.

FLC offers courses in a variety of modalities to best meet student needs, including traditional on-ground, instructional-TV, hybrid online, and fully online classes. As of fall 2009, the college offered 47 of its courses in an online modality. An analysis of how the courses contributed to the college's degree and certificate programs revealed that students could potentially take 50% or more of the required courses for 13 programs online. In response to the Commission's direction, the college submitted a substantive change proposal on April 7, 2010 to approve the 13 identified programs for offering in an online modality. The Commission's Committee on Substantive Change approved the proposal at its June 21-22, 2010 meeting (Attachment 1). The college also established an annual process to track when courses were first offered in an online modality (2 courses were added in fall 2010) and when programs met or exceeded the 50% online threshold. In fall 2010, using this process, 7 more programs were identified as having 50% or more of their required classes available online. Following consultation with Commission staff, the college began work on a substantive change proposal for the 7 programs to be submitted to the Committee on Substantive Change in spring 2011.

The names of the 7 programs proposed for online approval are listed below, including their purpose for transfer and/or vocational preparation, as well as the percentage of required program course units currently offered online. Descriptions of each program and its student learning outcomes are published in the college catalog, which is available online ([www.flc.losrios.edu/Academics/Catalog.htm](http://www.flc.losrios.edu/Academics/Catalog.htm)) and in print (Attachment 2).

<b>Degree (D) or Certificate (C) Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Total Units Required</b>	<b>% Available Online F09</b>
Accounting (D)	Transfer/ Vocational	60	62%
Interdisciplinary: Social and Behavioral Science (D)	Transfer	60	58%
Real Estate (D)	Transfer/ Vocational	60	60%
Computer Information Science, Computer Programmer SQL (C)	Vocational	21	58%
General Education: CSU General Education (C)	Transfer	39	61%
General Education: IGETC (C)	Transfer	34	97%
Non-Profit Management (C)	Vocational	21	57%

### Relationship to College Mission

The 7 programs proposed for online approval support the college's stated mission:

Folsom Lake College provides:

**Programs**

Rigorous academic programs for completion and transfer; training to enhance employment and career skills; preparatory programs for student success; and opportunities for lifelong learning and enrichment.

**Support Services**

Comprehensive support services to promote the success of all students.

**Opportunities**

Opportunities for leadership; professional development; and involvement in the college and community.

**Environment**

A collaborative and innovative environment that promotes personal interaction as the foundation of learning; honors diversity; cultivates sustainability; and encourages civic engagement (Attachment 3).

Online courses within the proposed programs include general education, transfer, and vocational courses. Through its online courses, the college is able to be responsive to the needs of students who cannot regularly attend on-ground courses or who may wish to learn using a different modality.

Rationale for Change

Folsom Lake College is committed to increasing educational access to the students in its service area, including those who may have difficulty traveling to college sites during regularly scheduled on-ground classes and those who may enjoy or benefit from a variety of teaching modalities. As the college has continued to increase its fully online offerings to meet these students' needs, it now has 7 more programs for which students could potentially complete 50% or more of the requirements online. Therefore, the college is submitting this substantive change proposal request.

**B. PLANNING PROCESS DESCRIPTION**

Relationship to College Planning Process and Mission

The proposed substantive change provides students with an online modality option to complete the courses needed to comply with the requirements for the 7 identified programs. As noted in Section A, the programs prepare students for transfer and/or vocational work in keeping with the college's mission (Attachment 3).

Individual program planning processes take place at the department level and in the case of vocational programs are informed by business and industry advisory committees. New curriculum and curriculum revisions are reviewed and acted upon by the college curriculum committee, a committee of the academic senate. New-to-college and new-to-district curriculum must also be reviewed and acted upon by the district curriculum

coordinating committee and then by the LRCCD Board of Trustees. As part of the college curriculum process, any course that faculty wish to offer in a distance modality must be reviewed and receive a recommendation from the distance education subcommittee of the curriculum committee. The curriculum committee then acts upon the subcommittee's recommendation. No course may be offered in an online modality without prior approval of the curriculum committee.

Departments are required to submit annual educational master plans each spring. As part of the plans, departments identify any upcoming changes in curriculum and the resources needed to support those changes. Resources may include additional staffing, facilities, equipment, operating budgets, and/or training. Actual requests for new resources must be documented in the plan before the appropriate college committee will consider the request for approval.

General responsibility for online technology infrastructure support for all four district colleges is maintained by the LRCCD information technology department (district IT). The LRCCD educational technology committee (ETC) has members representing district IT and administration, and college administration, faculty, and classified staff. Decisions regarding infrastructure needs and learning management system (LMS) support for online offerings are made with input from ETC. LMS infrastructure and software needs are regularly assessed by district IT with input from the college administrators, faculty, and staff who work closely with the LMS system. District IT is responsible for requesting resources for technology updates and expansions to support district-wide computing needs. Funds are then appropriated through the district budget process and published in the annual budget. The college is responsible for funding college equipment and any specialized software used by individual academic disciplines. In 2007-08, ETC made a recommendation to transition the district's LMS from BlackBoard to Desire2Learn, based on a deliberative assessment and recommendation process implemented by an ETC task force. The ETC recommendation was supported by each of the four college's academic senates and ultimately approved by LRCCD administration and Board of Trustees, along with the funding to support the transition. The transition has been successful and the new system provides improved support for students and faculty in an online learning environment.

Additional district and college plans and resource documents that support the ability to offer online education include the following:

- LRCCD IT Technology Plan,
- LRCCD Distance Education Strategic Plan Resource Document,
- FLC Strategic Plan, and
- FLC Technology and Distance Education Plan (Attachments 4, 5, 6, 7).

#### Program Needs and Resources Assessment

Online courses have been offered at the college since its initial accreditation in January 2004. The online offerings need and have in place the following resources:

- Permanent and adjunct faculty who choose and are assigned online classes in accordance with the LRCCD-LRCFT contract (Attachment 8, Article 4.4).

Faculty costs are paid for out of the regular instructional budget for salaries through the normal departmental allocation process.

- One permanent full-time faculty instructional design and development coordinator, who provides individualized and group training in the areas of instructional design, digital media and tools, teaching and learning, and online pedagogy. Particular emphasis is placed on continued development, training, and support for faculty on use of the Desire2Learn LMS.
- Access to regular lecture classrooms with state-of-the-art audiovisual technology, for any required on-ground orientations or exams for online courses.
- Readily available online reference materials, supplemental course materials, and media resources through the library, as well as online or on-ground dialogue with librarians.
- District and college technology support staff to maintain the infrastructure to support online courses, faculty, and students.
- Access to online and on-ground student and academic services that are available to all FLC students. Online services include admissions (application), e-Services (online registration and related transactions), counseling, financial aid, follow up services (Early Alert), college orientation, and transfer assistance.

#### Anticipated Effect on the College

The approval of the 7 proposed programs as online programs will provide greater access to students who may not be able to or who choose not to attend on-ground courses. Increased numbers of online students will further encourage the college to expand its online academic and student support services, which will increase options and convenience for both online and on-ground students.

#### Intended Benefits

The approval of the 7 programs as online programs will increase student course modality options for those interested in completing these programs, as well as students completing some primarily on-ground programs.

#### Description of Preparation and Planning Process

As described above, the planning process for the 7 programs proposed for substantive change involved individual department planning and implementation of online options for some of their program courses. Over time, the increasing number of course offerings led to 50% or more of the courses required for the 7 programs being available online. During this same time, the college has continued to improve its online academic and student support services to support both online and on-ground students, and it continues to seek ways to further enhance these services.

### **C. EVIDENCE OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES**

#### Faculty, Management, and Support Staffing

All full-time and adjunct faculty, regardless of which teaching modalities they use or area of service, are hired and evaluated in accordance with the district policies and procedures, which comply with relevant local, state, and federal laws and regulations, as well as with

the current collective bargaining agreement (Attachment 8, Article 8.9). Faculty have the ability to choose whether or not they wish to teach in the online modality and have access to teaching support through the college's innovation center, facilitated by the college's instructional design and development coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for working individually with faculty who are already teaching online or who wish to explore teaching in the online modality to assess their training and support needs. Depending on the number of faculty involved in a given semester, training may occur one-on-one with the coordinator or in longer, several day sessions in the summer term. In addition, the coordinator offers regular in-service sessions at the beginning of and during the semester to introduce faculty to new teaching and learning technologies; and he also facilitates an active FLC online educators group that meets twice monthly to share best practices and discuss emerging technologies. Faculty providing non-classroom academic or student support services are responsible for assisting any student with successfully accessing their respective services in both online and on-ground environments.

Scheduling of specific online courses is done in consultation with the appropriate discipline faculty department chair and area dean. One college dean, the dean of instruction and technology, is responsible for overseeing college distance education technical support services. The dean works collaboratively with district and college IT staff and the instructional design and development coordinator to address specific areas of concern and/or proposed innovations. This dean also serves on the college technology committee, the LRCCD educational technology committee, and the LRCCD IT deans work group. Area deans are responsible for administrative oversight of their respective discipline faculty, regardless of teaching modality choices (Attachment 9).

FLC participates with the district's other 3 colleges in using the Desire2Learn learning management system (LMS) for online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses. The district information technology (IT) department, under the direction of the associate vice chancellor of information technology, is responsible for all services related to district-wide technology infrastructure (network and cabling) and information systems (student services, business services, library system, telephone system, voicemail, internet, web services, e-mail, etc.), and distance education tools and support (Attachment 10).

The majority of FLC's online classes utilize the district-wide LMS. It is housed on a large server array at the district office and is used by all the district colleges. Students can log-in to one location (<http://elearning.losrios.edu>) for all online, hybrid, or web-enhanced classes offered by any district college. Students are automatically linked to the course sites, and the sites are archived at the end of each semester and preserved for at least 3 years. Server maintenance and support is managed by the district IT staff, where both full-time staff and contractors maintain the system and monitor it for problems. The entire system uses load balancing and bandwidth management to channel requests, maintain quick response times, and enhance instructional traffic efficacy. Backups are performed frequently in case of catastrophic failure, and daily backups are stored in case a need exists. FLC-main campus serves as a safe, off-site backup facility for district IT.



Students and faculty have access to multiple resources if they encounter problems with online classes. There is a 24-hour help desk with a toll-free phone number provided by a vendor on contract with the district. There is real-time online support via chat and an email system. Calls are answered by trained staff and escalated to district IT staff as necessary. In addition, there is a help desk at the district office, which operates from 7:30 am – 5:30 pm during the weekdays.

#### Equipment and Facilities

The facility and equipment infrastructure for providing online courses and services is already in place district-wide, is proving adequate, and has been updated over time as is demonstrated by the ongoing and increased online courses and services since the college was first accredited. District IT carefully monitors LMS use and quality of system response time to determine if additional resources and/or alternate strategies need to be put in place to deliver needed services. The district's education technology committee (ETC) is charged with ensuring that the needs of end-users, both faculty and students, are clearly communicated to district and college IT services staff.

#### Initial and Long Term Fiscal Resources

Folsom Lake College already has allocated sufficient fiscal resources for the current online course offerings. The salary costs for faculty teaching online courses are the same as for on-ground courses. College and district IT support staff are already in place to provide support for both on-ground and online technology. ETC members regularly discuss system growth needs, how to maximize current technologies to meet those needs, and how to identify and acquire new technology to more effectively and efficiently deliver services.

The regular institutional process, which allocates funds to pay for faculty based on analysis of prior course section fill rates, wait-listed students and available growth monies, will fund additional course sections as needed. The budget review and allocation processes allow for the purchase of new or replacement equipment. Other financial needs are supported by the operating budgets established within the office of instruction and the specific instruction areas.

#### Achievement Monitoring Plan

The college provides annual reports on degrees awarded, course enrollments, and student success rates (Attachment 11). In addition, the college has a six-year cycle for all programs to undergo review. The next cycle of instructional review has been established by the curriculum committee (Attachment 12). In November 2009, the district's office of institutional research produced a report regarding *exclusively* online students that includes students' demographic profile and survey responses regarding their primary reasons for enrolling in fully online courses, completion rates, and satisfaction with online courses and services (Attachment 13). The college reviewed this data as well as student success and retention data for all online students when it developed a more comprehensive distance education plan in fall 2010 (Attachments 14, 7). The college augmented the student success data provided by the district by creating its own report on online student success and retention rates by individual course (Attachment 15). The new report will be

run annually and the data shared with online faculty to use along with student learning outcomes assessments to improve their courses.

#### **D. EVIDENCE OF NECESSARY INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL APPROVALS**

##### Statement of Required Approvals

The Folsom Lake College curriculum committee is responsible for approving all modalities, including online, in which a specific course may be offered. All courses now offered in an online modality have been approved for that purpose. Each of the 7 degrees and certificates submitted in this proposal has been approved by the FLC curriculum committee, LRCCD curriculum coordinating committee, and LRCCD Board of Trustees. All of the proposed programs appear on the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Approved Credit Inventory List for Folsom Lake College, except for those certificates under 18 units (Attachment 16).

##### Legal Requirements

There are no special legal requirements for these programs.

##### Evidence of Governing Board Action

The LRCCD Board of Trustees approved 3 of the 7 proposed online programs in 2003 when they approved Folsom Lake Center's transition from being an educational center of Cosumnes River College to an individually accredited college (Attachment 17). The Board approved the remaining 4 programs at its meetings on December 17, 2007, March 26, 2008, and May 15, 2008 (Attachment 18). The Board approved this substantive change proposal at its January 19, 2011 meeting (Attachment 19).

#### **E. ACCREDITATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

##### **1. Authority**

*Folsom Lake College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is approved under regulations of the California State Department of Education and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The college received its initial accreditation in January 2004 and had its accreditation reaffirmed in January 2010.*

The 7 programs proposed to be offered in an online modality will be offered under the same authority requirements as on-ground programs.

##### **2. Mission**

*Folsom Lake College's educational mission as a community college is clearly defined and published in its catalog. The educational mission is aligned with the Los Rios Community College District's educational mission statement. The Los Rios Community College District Board of Trustees approved the college's most recent revision to its mission statement in November 2010.*

The 7 programs proposed to be offered in an online modality fall within the college's mission of offering transfer and vocational programs to students.

### **3. Governing Board**

*Folsom Lake College is one of 4 colleges in the Los Rios Community College District. The district is governed by a publicly elected 7-member Board of Trustees, joined by a non-voting student trustee. The Board of Trustees functions as an independent policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in Board activities and decisions, and is sufficient in size to fulfill its responsibilities consistent with the California Education Code. A majority of the Board members have no employment, family, or personal financial interest in the institution.*

The 7 programs proposed to be offered in an online modality have Board approval as instructional programs and for proposal to the Commission to be offered in an online modality (Attachments 16, 18, and 19).

### **4. Chief Executive Officer**

*Folsom Lake College has a chief executive officer whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. The president is appointed by the Los Rios Community College District Board of Trustees and reports to the district chancellor. The chancellor is appointed by and reports to the Board of Trustees.*

The college president and district chancellor approve all college programs for recommendation to the Board of Trustees, as well as providing regular reports to the Board regarding degrees and certificates awarded and overall student success.

### **5. Administrative Capacity**

*Folsom Lake College has sufficient academic and support services administrative staff members with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the college mission.*

The college has 9 instructional, student services, and administrative services administrators whose responsibilities include oversight of on-ground and online programs and services. College and district organizational charts are provided in Attachments 9 and 10.

### **6. Operational Status**

*Folsom Lake College is operational with over 9,027 students enrolled in fall 2010. Most are actively pursuing vocational certificates, associate degrees, and/or transfer to four year institutions. There were 1653 students enrolled in online courses in fall 2010.*

Courses offered in an online modality are operational and supported by regular college and district operating processes and procedures.

## **7. Degrees**

*Folsom Lake College offers the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. It has 38 degree programs. A majority of students are enrolled in courses that are required for a certificate or degree program, and/or required for transfer to 4-year institutions.*

Degrees and certificates that include 50% or greater online courses have the same academic requirements as on-ground programs. Program course requirements and student learning outcomes are described in the college catalog.

## **8. Educational Programs**

*Folsom Lake College's degree programs are congruent with its mission and are based on recognized higher education fields of study. The curriculum committee, a committee of the Folsom Lake College academic senate, ensures the programs are of appropriate content and length, and are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the degrees offered, regardless of course modality. The degree programs meet California Code of Regulations, Title 5 curriculum requirements, and when combined with the general education component, represent 2 years of full-time academic work. The college also offers 42 vocational certificates.*

Degrees and certificates that include 50% or greater online courses have the same requirements as on-ground programs, with the addition of a review for modality suitability by the curriculum committee.

## **9. Academic Credit**

*Folsom Lake College awards academic credits based on accepted practices of California community colleges under California Code of Regulations, Title 5. Detailed information about academic credits is published in the college catalog and schedules.*

All courses comprised by the 7 programs have unit (credit) values based upon these same accepted practices. All courses, including their unit values, are described in the college catalog.

## **10. Student Learning and Achievement**

*Folsom Lake College has developed a framework by which student learning and achievement outcomes for all courses, programs, and degrees are regularly and systematically assessed. Authentic assessment is underway for programs, and results are being used for improvement. Outcomes for all degree programs are published in the college catalog. Outcomes for courses are described in the course outlines, which are maintained on the district-wide curriculum management system.*

Program student learning outcomes are listed in the college catalog, and course outcomes are listed in course outlines as well as in all course syllabi. A *Program Student Learning Outcomes* document has been developed for each vocational program to illustrate the courses in which program learning outcomes are achieved (Attachment 20). Program and course learning outcomes are assessed regularly regardless of modality.

### **11. General Education**

*Students must complete a minimum of 21 semester units of general education courses and demonstrate competency in writing, reading, and mathematical skills to receive an associate degree. The general education units include an introduction to major areas of knowledge. The general education program has comprehensive learning outcomes that will be assessed regularly.*

Students in online programs must meet the same general education requirements as on-ground students. It is possible to fulfill the 21-unit general education requirement with courses offered in the online modality.

### **12. Academic Freedom**

*Faculty and students at Folsom Lake College are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study. The college catalog contains the American Association of University Professors Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom, and also the Los Rios Colleges Federation of Teachers Statement on Academic Freedom.*

Administration of online courses and programs supports the academic freedom of faculty and students in the same manner as on-ground courses and programs.

### **13. Faculty**

*Folsom Lake College has 109 full-time faculty and over 185 adjunct faculty. Faculty must meet the minimum requirements for their disciplines based on regulations for the Minimum Qualifications for California Community College Faculty established in California Code of Regulations, Title 5. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities exists in the faculty contract, and this includes assessment of student learning outcomes.*

Online courses are taught by faculty who meet the minimum requirements for their disciplines and who are hired and evaluated through authorized district procedures. Most faculty teaching online course sections also teach on-ground sections.

### **14. Student Services**

*Folsom Lake College provides a comprehensive array of student services for all its students, as well as basic skills courses for those students requiring better preparation for college level work.*

Students may apply to FLC and enroll in classes online via e-Services through the FLC web site ([www.flc.losrios.edu](http://www.flc.losrios.edu)). The college catalog and schedule of classes are also available online. Currently, other essential services such as counseling, financial aid, follow up (Early Alert), college orientation, and transfer assistance are available online and by telephone.

### **15. Admissions**

*Folsom Lake College has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission as a public California community college and in compliance with California*

*Code of Regulations, Title 5. Admissions policies are published in the college catalog and class schedules.*

Admission policies for online courses and programs are the same as for on-ground courses and programs.

#### **16. Information & Learning Resources**

*Folsom Lake College provides specific long-term access to sufficient print and electronic information and learning resources through its library and programs to meet the educational needs of students and programs.*

The library web site (<http://www.flc.losrios.edu/Libraries.htm>) provides access to online support for all online and on-ground students and includes the online catalog (LOIS), online databases, and online research assistance. An additional full-time librarian position was added in fall 2010. The position enhances support to students enrolled at FLC's centers and in distance education classes.

#### **17. Financial Resources**

*Folsom Lake College, through the Los Rios Community College District, publicly documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support its mission and educational programs, and to assure financial stability.*

The college has the resources in place to support both online and on-ground courses and programs.

#### **18. Financial Accountability**

*The Los Rios Community College District regularly undergoes and makes available an external financial audit for the district and its colleges by a certified public accountant. The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.*

Information regarding online and on-ground courses and programs are included in the appropriate financial documents and audits.

#### **19. Institutional Planning & Evaluation**

*Folsom Lake College assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. The college systematically evaluates how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes through various integrated processes that include strategic plan review, program review, student learning outcomes assessment, and educational master plan review.*

Online courses and programs are included in instructional departments' regular program review and planning processes. Academic and student support services include online services in their regular program review and planning processes.

## **20. Public Information**

*Folsom Lake Colleges publishes in its catalog, college website, and other appropriate places the college vision and mission statement; information about programs, courses, and degrees; admission requirements and procedures; college and academic regulations; student development programs and services; policies on the rights of individuals; student rights and responsibilities; and academic credentials of faculty and administrators.*

Information about program courses is available in the college catalog and class schedule. Course modality options are only provided in the class schedule. Since using online courses to complete the proposed 7 programs is only one modality option for students, the programs themselves are not identified or advertised in the catalog or elsewhere as online programs.

## **21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission**

*The Los Rios Community College District Board of Trustees provides assurance that Folsom Lake College adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the Commission, describes the college in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.*

Online courses, programs, and services are integrated into the overall college mission and operations and are subject to all Accrediting Commission eligibility requirements, accreditation standards, and policies. None of the 7 proposed programs is accredited by any other agency.

## **F. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND RELEVANT COMMISSION POLICIES**

### Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

- **Mission:** The college has a mission statement that demonstrates strong commitment to providing transfer and vocational opportunities that lead to student learning and achievement (Attachment 3). The proposed online programs include both transfer and vocational programs. A process is in place to review and update the mission statement as necessary every three years. The most recent review took place in spring 2010 and a revised vision and mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees on November 17, 2010. Representatives of all college constituents participated in the review process.
- **Improving Institutional Effectiveness:** The college has a regular program review process in place for all instructional programs, as well as educational master plans that are updated each year. The 7 proposed online programs are addressed within their respective departments' review and planning processes. The program review process was updated in fall 2010 to ensure inclusion of student learning outcomes assessment results in the next cycle of reviews. Online courses and programs are included in the regular program reviews for departments and disciplines. Academic and student support services also have established program

review cycles that include review of online services within their regular review processes.

### Standard 2: Student Learning Programs and Services

- **Instructional Programs:** Each of the proposed 7 programs has in place student learning outcomes in its approved course and program curriculum. Program student learning outcomes are listed in the college catalog (Attachment 2). Student learning outcomes for all instructional courses and programs are approved through the curriculum approval process. The college continues to work diligently on identifying, documenting, and implementing strategies for assessing course and program student learning outcomes by the Commission's 2012 Student Learning Outcomes rubric proficiency deadline.
- **Student Support Services:** The college recruits and admits diverse students who can benefit from all its programs. FLC has a broad variety of student support services to create a supportive learning environment for all students. Most services may be accessed online as well as on-ground at the main campus and two centers. Student services programs have identified student learning outcomes. Outcome assessments are included in their regular program review processes, and assessment results are used to further improve services.
- **Library and Learning Support Services:** The college has the necessary library and learning support services to support its programs, including online courses and programs. Online library classes are available for students to learn how to effectively and efficiently use library resources. Student learning outcomes are identified and assessed as part of the library's regular planning and program review processes. A new full-time public services outreach librarian was hired in fall 2010 to strengthen library services to online and off-site students.

### Standard 3: Resources

- **Human Resources:** All full-time and adjunct faculty meet state and district minimum qualifications to be eligible to teach their respective discipline courses. Academic, student services, technology, and facilities support staff are qualified to provide support services to the programs. Sufficient permanent staffing is available at the college and district to maintain the needed organizational infrastructure to support online and on-ground programs and services. All personnel are treated equitably, evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Training is available for faculty wishing to learn how to teach online or how to enhance their online teaching skills.
- **Physical and Technology Resources:** The college and district have in place the required physical and technology infrastructure to support online courses and services as demonstrated by the current online offerings. Needed upgrades to infrastructure and software are part of the regular planning, budgeting, and implementation processes at both the college and district. Due to the district's



size, the 4 colleges and district office benefit by working together to acquire and administer costly technology hardware and software. Recent local and state bonds have allowed Folsom Lake College to bring on a number of new, technologically up-to-date instructional, student services, and administrative services facilities. The college and district work collaboratively to standardize equipment and software for ease of use, while still maintaining specialized options for unique programs and services.

- **Financial Resources:** The college and district's financial planning and budget processes provide sufficient and stable support for the current online offerings. Processes allow for program growth as increased resources become available. District fiscal services has in place conservative budget and spending practices that ensure the college and district are well prepared for challenging financial times. The colleges and district were commended during their comprehensive accreditation visits in fall 2009 for the district's 3-year plan to address the current state budget crisis, while keeping programs, services, and full-time employee positions intact.

#### Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

- **Decision-Making Roles and Processes:** Faculty, administrators, classified staff, and students are encouraged to actively participate in the appropriate college and district governance and operational committees and processes required to support their on-ground and online programs and services.
- **Board and Administrative Organization:** The college operates within the required district governing board policies and regulations, which apply to on-ground and online programs, services, students, and personnel.

#### Relevant Policies

In keeping with the Commission's *Policy on Distance Learning and on Correspondence Education*, Folsom Lake College is committed to ensuring its online courses and programs have the same quality, accountability, and focus on student learning outcomes as do the college's on-ground courses and programs. The college offers distance learning with verification processes in place to assure that students who register in an online course or program are, in fact, the same persons who participate every time in and complete the course or program. Students who register at FLC are given a student ID number which functions as their user ID for all technology services. Active directory functions, including access to unofficial transcripts online, are always available to students once their account is initially activated. Students log on to e-Services (a function of the PeopleSoft system) and create a password for their own use. This log on procedure is then active for all services available online to students (including computer lab log on) with the same user name and password.

Similarly, each faculty member is assigned an employee ID number that remains the same throughout his/her employment in Los Rios. The ID number serves as a user name log on, which when combined with an employee selected password, provides access to

assigned online, hybrid, or web enhanced classes, as well as to email services and secure college and district web pages.

The student verification commitment extends to instructional uses, including learning management system (LMS) access for testing, quizzes, assignment completion and turn in, chats, and viewing of course content (e.g., written, video, animations, and other links). For these purposes, new technologies and/or practices are constantly being reviewed for possible adoption to ensure effectiveness in verifying each student's identification. Some online instructors have determined that on-ground testing is a useful strategy to ensure academic integrity, and the college provides students information regarding these requirements prior to registration in distance education classes.

Student services such as orientation, admissions, registration, and financial aid are accessible to online students and are comparable to services provided for on-ground instructional programs. Advising for distance education students is also available and is comparable within parameters of identity verification and confidentiality. Due to current limitations regarding the verification of student identity, assessment services for all students are only available on-ground or by proctoring arrangement through another college or approved facility. Working with district IT and other district colleges, FLC continues to explore trusted and affordable options by which to verify student identity and thereby improve the accessibility and/or comparability of some student services. Technical support is available to students by contacting the Los Rios help desk or each respective student services office.

Students have access to information on the FLC website regarding policies designed to protect student privacy. At the present time there are no fees associated with identity verification for students enrolling in online courses. If such a policy is implemented, students will be notified prior to class registration of any related additional charges.

