

## **Substantive Change Proposal**

### **Addition of Courses that Constitute 50% or More of a Program Offered Through a Mode of Distance or Electronic Delivery**

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October 15, 2012

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## Table of Contents

A. Proposed Change Description and Justification .....	3
B. Program Description .....	6
C. Planning Process Description .....	8
D. Evidence of Adequate Resources .....	10
E. Evidence of Necessary Internal and External Approvals .....	14
F. Accreditation Eligibility Requirements .....	15
G. Accreditation Standards and Relevant Commission Policies .....	19

## Attachments

1. [FLC Substantive Change Proposal, April 7, 2010](#)
2. [ACCJC Letter of Approval for FLC Substantive Change Proposal, July 19, 2010](#)
3. [FLC Substantive Change Proposal, March 14, 2011](#)
4. [ACCJC Letter of Approval for FLC Substantive Change Proposal, March 23, 2011](#)
5. [FLC Socrates Distance Education Report](#)
6. [FLC Socrates Program Course Listings with Distance Education Courses Marked](#)
7. [FLC Socrates AS General Education Including Courses Approved for Distance Education](#)
8. [FLC Online Program Inventory Spreadsheet](#)
9. [FLC 2012-2013 College Catalog](#)
10. [ACCJC Evaluation Report, Folsom Lake College, 2009](#)
11. [FLC OIR Reports Comparing Online and Onground Success Rates](#)
12. [LRCCD Screenshot of Online Degree Audit Application](#)
13. [LRCCD IT Plan](#)
14. [LRCCD Distance Education Plan](#)
15. [FLC Strategic Plan](#)
16. [FLC Technology and Distance Education Plan](#)
17. [LRCCD Collective Bargaining Agreement with Los Rios College Federation of Teachers](#)
18. [FLC Organizational Chart](#)
19. [LRCCD Organizational Chart](#)
20. [CCC Confer Home Page](#)
21. [FLC 2012 Accreditation Midterm Report](#)
22. [FLC Key Performance Indicators](#)
23. [FLC Instructional Program Review Cycle](#)
24. [LRCCD Exclusively Online Students Report](#)

25. [LRCCD Top Code Report](#)
26. [LRCCD Who's Online and How Are They Doing? August 2011](#)
27. [California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Program Inventory for FLC](#)
28. [LRCCD Board of Trustees Agendas Showing Program Approval](#)
29. [FLC Program Student Learning Outcomes Course Maps](#)
30. [FLC IT Services Inventory and Replacement Schedules](#)

## **A. PROPOSED CHANGE DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION**

### A1: Brief Description of the Change

Folsom Lake College (FLC) is one of four colleges in the Los Rios Community College District (LRCCD). The college has a main campus in Folsom (FLC-Main), an educational center in Placerville (EI Dorado Center), and an outreach center in Rancho Cordova (Rancho Cordova Center). In spring 2012, the college had 8,951 students enrolled.

FLC offers courses in a variety of modalities to best meet student needs, including the online and instructional-TV (iTV) distance delivery modes. As of spring 2012, the college's curriculum committee had approved 170 courses to be offered in one or both of these two distance delivery modes. For the fall 2012 semester, 67 of those approved courses are being offered online and seven are being offered via iTV.

The college has previously submitted two substantive change proposals for programs in which 50% or more of the coursework could be completed through online offerings. The first proposal, for 13 programs ([Attachment 1](#)), was approved by the Commission's Committee on Substantive Change at its June 21-22, 2010 meeting ([Attachment 2](#)). Following consultation with Commission staff, the college submitted a second proposal for seven additional programs ([Attachment 3](#)), and the proposal was approved by the Commission on March 23, 2011 ([Attachment 4](#)).

Those first two substantive change proposals considered only online course offerings; iTV course offerings were not included. Also, in developing these two proposals the college took into account only courses that had actually been offered online. It did not consider courses that had been approved for, but not yet offered in, the online modality. In spring 2012 the college accreditation liaison officer contacted the commission, and it was determined that the college should submit in fall 2012 another substantive change proposal that takes into account all courses that have been approved for both the online and/or iTV modalities, regardless of whether the courses have ever been offered in a distance education modality.

In preparation for this current substantive change report, the college reviewed all of its certificate and degree programs, including recently developed and approved Associate Degree for Transfer programs (AA-T and AS-T) that are compliant with the SB 1440 Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act. All of the college's courses and programs are catalogued in a district curriculum database, called SOCRATES, which provides several on-demand reports that were utilized in the review. One report lists all FLC courses that have been approved for distance education, including the specific mode of delivery ([Attachment 5](#)). The database also provides a course

listing report for each college certificate and degree program, with distance education courses marked ([Attachment 6](#)). Each program was reviewed using these two reports.

The number of courses required for each certificate and degree was totaled. For certificate programs there were only the program courses to count, but for degree programs the count included program courses as well as general education courses and also any additional courses needed to meet the 60 unit minimum requirement for the associate degree. Following that, the number of required courses that have been approved for distance education was determined and then the percentage of distance education courses calculated.

It should be noted that there are nine general education categories (or courses) required for each associates degree program (AA-T and AS-T programs not included), and the course listings for eight of those nine categories include at least one course that has been approved for distance education ([Attachment 7](#)). Thus eight of the nine GE courses could be taken via distance education. (The exception is category III.a (physical education) for which there is currently no approved distance education course.) The AA-T and AS-T programs use the CSU general education requirements course list, of which there are five categories and 13 courses, 11 of which can be taken via distance education. Since the college currently has 170 courses that have been approved for distance education, all additional courses needed to meet the 60 unit requirement for the associate degree could be taken via distance education. The result is that almost all of the college’s degree (but not certificate) programs can be completed with 50% or more of the coursework taken via distance education, including programs for which none of the program content courses have been approved for distance education.

The appendix includes a list of all of the college’s certificate and degree programs, along with the percentage of courses for each program that have been approved for distance education ([Attachment 8](#)). The list includes the 43 certificate and degree programs, listed below, that are included in this substantive change proposal.

<b>Program Title</b>	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>% DE</b>
Accounting	Certificate	50.00%
Accounting Clerk	Certificate	100.00%
Accounting Computer Applications	Certificate	100.00%
Business: Public Management	Certificate	100.00%
Communications Studies: Applied Communication Skills	Certificate	100.00%
Computer Science: Database Analyst-SQL	Certificate	100.00%
Computer Science: Programming	Certificate	83.33%
Computer Science: Relational Database Administration	Certificate	90.00%
Early Childhood Education-Teacher	Certificate	55.56%
Early Childhood Education-Associate Teacher	Certificate	50.00%
Early Childhood Education-Infant Specialist	Certificate	62.50%
Early Childhood Education-Master Teacher	Certificate	50.00%
Early Childhood Education-Family Child Care	Certificate	80.00%
Graphic Communications: Web/Graphics Production	Certificate	50.00%

Real Estate Broker	Certificate	57.14%
Real Estate Sales	Certificate	100.00%
Administration of Justice	A.A. Degree	66.67%
Art History	A.A. Degree	71.43%
Art-Design	A.A. Degree	63.64%
Art-Studio Art	A.A. Degree	52.38%
Biological Sciences	A.S. Degree	66.67%
Biological Sciences: Health Science: Pre-professional	A.S. Degree	50.00%
Biological Sciences: Pre-nursing	A.S. Degree	77.78%
Business: General Transfer	A.A. Degree	90.91%
Communications Studies	AA-T Degree	80.00%
Communication Studies: Organizational Communication	A.A. Degree	71.43%
Computer Science	A.S. Degree	89.47%
Early Childhood Education	A.A. Degree	55.00%
English	A.A. Degree	66.67%
Geology	A.S. Degree	60.00%
Human Services, General	A.A. Degree	57.14%
Interdisciplinary Studies: Humanities	A.A. Degree	80.95%
Interdisciplinary Studies: American Studies	A.A. Degree	90.48%
Interdisciplinary Studies: Arts and Humanities	A.A. Degree	76.19%
Interdisciplinary Studies: Communication and English	A.A. Degree	80.95%
Interdisciplinary Studies: Math and Science	A.A. Degree	80.95%
Interdisciplinary Studies: Understanding and Self Development	A.A. Degree	95.45%
Interdisciplinary Studies: Women's Studies	A.A. Degree	80.95%
Kinesiology	AA-T Degree	57.14%
Mathematics	A.S. Degree	66.67%
Mathematics	AS-T Degree	66.67%
Psychology	AA-T Degree	75.00%
Psychology	A.A. Degree	76.19%

### A2: Relationship to College Mission

The programs in this substantive change proposal support the college's stated mission, which reads as follows:

*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 9](#), page 6)*

Distance education courses within the proposed programs include general education, transfer, and career technical education courses. Through its distance education course offerings, the college provides access to students who cannot regularly attend on-ground courses or who may wish to learn via a different modality.

### **A3: Rationale for Change**

Folsom Lake College is committed to increasing educational access for students in its service area, including those who may have difficulty traveling to college sites during regularly scheduled on-ground classes as well as those who may enjoy or benefit from a variety of teaching modalities. As of spring 2012, the college's curriculum committee has approved 170 courses for distance education offering, with the result that 50% or more of the courses for each of the 43 programs listed in this proposal could be offered via distance education. As instructed by the commission, the college is submitting this substantive change proposal.

## **B. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **B1: Educational Purposes**

The instructional departments that oversee the 16 *certificate* programs listed in this proposal have purposefully gained distance education approval for program content courses in order to provide improved access for students. Faculty in these departments have distance education training and experience as well as direct knowledge of student educational needs and are therefore able to determine the appropriateness of distance education offerings within their programs. This is also the case with four of the *degree* programs included in this proposal: the business, communications studies (two programs), and computer science departments have purposefully gained distance education approval for some of their program content courses, with the intended result that at least 50% of program content courses can be offered via distance education.

Such is not the case with the remaining degree programs included in this proposal, all of which have few or even no content courses approved for distance education. Degree programs include not only major courses, but also GE and other elective courses, and in some instances the number of GE and elective courses outnumber the content courses. There are nine GE categories (or courses) that degree program students must complete, and eight of those categories include courses that have been approved for distance education. In addition, since the college has 170

courses approved for distance education, all elective courses could also be taken via distance education. The *incidental* result is that at least 50% of the courses for almost all the college's degree programs can be taken via distance education, even in instances where *none* of the program major courses have been approved for distance education.

## B2: Compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission Policies Related to Student Learning Programs and Services

The programs listed in this proposal meet, or are in compliance with, the eligibility requirements, accreditation standards, and commission policies that relate specifically to student learning programs and services. These include the following:

- Eligibility Requirement 8, “Educational Programs:” The programs included in this proposal are congruent with the college mission in that they are intended to prepare students for transfer and completion. Additionally, the distance education offering of program courses improves access to students.
- Eligibility Requirement 10, “Student Learning and Achievement:” The college’s 2009 accreditation *Evaluation Report* ([Attachment 10](#)) recommended that the college “evaluate the educational effectiveness of electronically delivered courses including assessment of student learning outcomes.” Since that time the college’s office of institutional research (OIR) has completed several reports ([Attachment 11a](#) & [11b](#)) that compare course success rates for courses offered in both online and on-ground modalities. The most recent report documents eight courses with diminished rates for online sections, but also six courses with improved rates for online sections. The college is currently developing a process to investigate these anomalies (both positive and negative) so that course success rates are improved in all modalities. All regularly offered college courses have identified student learning outcomes as well as documented plans and methods for their assessment.
- Accreditation Standard II.A.1.b, “The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students:” Discipline faculty who propose and teach distance education classes have distance education training and experience as well as direct knowledge of student educational needs and are therefore able to determine the appropriateness of distance education offerings within their programs. No course may be offered via distance education until such offering has been deemed appropriate and approved by the college’s curriculum committee and its distance education subcommittee.
- Accreditation Standard II.A.1.d, “The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students:” The college has a very broad service area, ranging from eastern Sacramento to the western slope of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, with the result that some students must travel prohibitively long distances to take classes at one of the college’s three sites. Other students have obligations or special needs that prevent them from attending classes on site. Offering courses via distance education addresses these diverse student needs.
- Accreditation Standard II.B.3.a, “The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method:” Many student support services are available online. For example, students can apply to the college, register for classes, add/drop classes, purchase parking stickers, and review their progress toward degree and

certificate completion using the district's online degree audit application ([Attachment 12](#)). Financial aid services (FAFSA application and online BOG fee waiver application, financial aid orientation, financial aid handbook) are also available online.

- Accreditation Standard II.C.1.b, “The institution provides ongoing instruction for users of library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency. The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and service adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery:” The college regularly offers an online “Library Research and Information Literacy” class (LIBR 318) that provides instruction to students who cannot attend classes on site. The college’s libraries provide remote access to over 60 research databases, which include over 40,000 periodical titles and more than 30,000 eBooks. Students, faculty and staff can access these databases from any district computer or from remote locations using their unique student, faculty or staff identification number and password. Individual database tutorials are available online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and librarian assistance is available in-person, by phone, or via e-mail during open library hours. Additional materials and services that can be accessed remotely include internet subject directories, eReserves (electronic course reserves), research guides, tutorials, handouts, inter-library loan requests, “Ask a Librarian” e-mail service, telephone reference, and the ability to renew books and check one’s library account online. Distance education students with no on-campus classes can apply online for a barcode to access the library’s electronic resources and services.
- ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education: The programs included in this proposal as well as the distance education delivery methods utilized for program courses are consistent with the college’s total educational mission. The development, implementation, and evaluation of the programs (and the courses they comprise) are monitored and controlled through various college processes, including those of the curriculum committee and three of its subcommittees—the program development and planning subcommittee, the distance education subcommittee, and the student learning outcomes subcommittee. Student learning outcomes and assessment methods are in place for all courses and programs, with assessment data reported annually in departmental educational master plans to be used by faculty to improve student learning outcomes. Additional reports are provided annually by the college’s office of institutional research and the student learning outcomes subcommittee. The college has an annual process for assessing the proportion of online course offerings for all instructional programs and maintains contact with Commission staff to determine whether a substantive change proposal is needed. The college uses secure log-in and password to verify student identification and to protect student privacy.

## **C. PLANNING PROCESS DESCRIPTION**

### C1: Relationship to College Planning, Evaluation, and Mission

Individual program planning processes take place at the department level and in the case of career technical education programs are informed by business and industry advisory committees. New curriculum and curriculum revisions are reviewed and acted upon by the college’s curriculum committee, which is 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 as well as the LRCCD Board of Trustees. As part of the college curriculum process, any course that faculty wish to offer in a distance education 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 a distance education 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 upcoming changes in curriculum and the resources needed to support those changes. Resources may include additional staffing, facilities, equipment, operating budgets, and/or professional development 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 LRCCD colleges is maintained by the district's information technology department (district IT). The district's educational technology committee (ETC) has members representing district IT and administration as well as college administration, faculty, and classified staff. Decisions regarding infrastructure needs and learning management system (LMS) support for distance education offerings (as well as in support of on-ground 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.

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

- LRCCD IT Plan ([Attachment 13](#))
- LRCCD Distance Education Plan ([Attachment 14](#))
- FLC Strategic Plan ([Attachment 15](#))
- FLC Technology and Distance Education Plan ([Attachment 16](#))

The programs included in this proposal are in keeping with the college's mission in that they prepare students for transfer and/or career technical work. Additionally, offering program courses via distance education increases student access to college programs.

## C2: Program Needs and Resources Assessment

The college has offered distance education courses since its initial accreditation in January 2004 and has the following resources to support these offerings:

- Permanent and adjunct faculty who choose and are assigned distance education classes in accordance with the *Los Rios Community College District Collective Bargaining Agreement with Los Rios College Federation of Teachers* contract ([Attachment 17](#),

Article 4.4). Faculty costs are paid for out of the regular instructional budget for salaries through the annual departmental allocation process.

- One permanent full-time faculty instructional design and development coordinator, who provides individualized and group training and consultation 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 use of the Desire2Learn learning management system (LMS).
- Access to regular lecture classrooms with state-of-the-art media services, 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 who maintain the infrastructure to support online and iTV 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.

#### C3: Anticipated Effect on the College

The college's existing distance education infrastructure is sufficiently robust to support additional distance education course offerings. The college anticipates that no additional resources will be needed.

#### C4: Intended Benefits

The distance education offering of courses for programs included in this proposal will provide options and increased access for students who may not be able or who choose not to attend on-ground courses.

#### C5: Description of Preparation and Planning Process

The planning process for the programs in this proposal originated within individual departments and involved the educational master plan process, the processes of the curriculum committee (and its distance education subcommittee), and the processes of the college's technology committee. Planning and assessment has been informed by annual reports from the college's office of institutional research and the student learning outcomes subcommittee.

### **D. EVIDENCE OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES**

#### D1: Student Support Services

Many student support services are available online. For example, students can apply to the college, register for classes, add/drop classes, purchase parking, and review their progress toward degree and certificate completion using Oracle/PeopleSoft's online degree audit application ([Attachment 12](#)) via the district's eServices application. Financial aid services (FAFSA application and online BOG fee waiver application, financial aid orientation, financial aid handbook) are also available online. Students are provided with computer accessibility at all three campuses.

## D2: 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 17](#), Article 8.9). Faculty have the ability to choose whether or not to teach using distance education modalities 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 distance education courses as well as those who wish to explore distance education modalities 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, multiple day sessions during the summer term. In addition, the coordinator offers regular in-service sessions throughout the semester to introduce faculty to new teaching and learning technologies; the coordinator 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 students with successfully accessing their respective services in both online and on-ground environments.

Scheduling of distance education courses is done in consultation with the appropriate discipline faculty department chair and area dean. One of the college deans, 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 co-chairs the college technology committee, serves on the LRCCD educational technology committee, and represents the college on the LRCCD IT deans work group. All area deans are responsible for administrative oversight of their respective discipline faculty, regardless of teaching modality choices ([Attachment 18](#)).

FLC participates with the district's other three colleges in using the Desire2Learn learning management system (LMS) for online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses. The district information technology (district IT) department, under the direction of the associate vice chancellor of information technology, is responsible for all services related to district-wide technology infrastructure (WAN and LAN) 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 19](#)).

The majority of FLC's online classes utilize the district-wide LMS. It is housed on a large server array at the district office (with a redundant server cluster located at the college) and is used by all the district colleges. Students can log-on 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, which are archived at the end of each semester and preserved for at least three years. Server maintenance and support is managed by the district IT staff, with both full-time staff and contractors maintaining the system and monitoring its operation. 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 they are needed later. The district's backup facility at the FLC-main campus is situated well above the flood plain of Sacramento.

Students and faculty have access to staff resources if they encounter problems with online classes. There is real-time online support via chat and email systems. 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 that operates weekdays from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm.

The college's iTV broadcast facility is staffed by a chief broadcast engineer and two audio/visual (A/V) production and maintenance technicians. Additional assistance (collection and distribution of paperwork; turning on equipment) is provided by El Dorado Center and Rancho Cordova Center IT/computer lab staff.

### D3: Professional Development for Faculty and Staff

The college's Innovation Center provides training and resources to assist faculty in the design and development of distance education teaching methods. The center consists of an open computer lab, an editing studio, and a small classroom. It is staffed by FLC's 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. Additionally, faculty teaching online and those considering teaching online are encouraged to attend the FLC online educators group, which is facilitated by the instructional design and development coordinator. The group meets twice monthly to share best practices and discuss emerging technologies.

Instructional television personnel provide training on equipment, the distance education model used, and strategies for classroom management and inclusiveness. Instructors with iTV experience also help train faculty who are new to this modality through observation and practice, often in conjunction with other training programs (e.g., the mentoring and faculty diversity internship programs). Media services also provides customized training on the use of sophisticated video teleconferencing facilities in several locations on campus, as well as technical support to other district colleges and the district office. Media services staff members themselves attend regular trainings sponsored by professional organizations and vendors.

### D4: 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 ongoing online course and services development since the college was first accredited in 2004. District IT carefully monitors LMS use and quality of system response time to determine whether additional resources and/or alternative strategies are needed to deliver 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.

The instructional television (iTV) system utilizes the latest in high-performance broadcast technology to provide programming over two cable systems and district-maintained fiber

infrastructure or commercial fiber links. A completely automated staging system allows for preemptory screen control and program management from a single location. The technology also includes video teleconference capability, both for nationwide and international purposes (e.g., MegaConference). Students can access televised classes from any of the three college sites, each of which is connected via studio-grade camera equipment and microphones with “my turn” buttons to mitigate extraneous noise. Both distant sites have recently been equipped with state-of-the-art 70” viewing screens and codec equipment. Home viewers are connected via CCC Confer’s phone bridge system ([Attachment 20](#)), which is a first for deployment of this service. Students and instructors can view all center-based audiences simultaneously, without loss of conventional classroom functionality.

#### D5: Initial and Long Term Fiscal Resources

Folsom Lake College has allocated sufficient fiscal resources to support the current number of online and iTV course offerings. The salary costs for faculty teaching distance education courses are the same as that for on-ground courses. College and district IT support staff are already in place to provide support for both on-ground and distance education technology. The online infrastructure is funded and maintained by the district, while the college is responsible for the iTV infrastructure. The iTV control system is relatively new, having been upgraded in summer 2008. The college’s budget allocation processes ensure funding to maintain existing equipment as well as planned upgrades and/or replacement. Other financial needs are supported by the operating budgets established within the office of instruction and the specific instruction areas.

#### D6: Budget, Enrollment, and Resource Analysis

The college and district budgets are sufficient to support online and iTV course offerings. The college is responsible for iTV infrastructure, the budgetary needs of which are addressed through the college’s annual budget allocation process. Media services staff, in consultation with the area dean, creates an annual educational master plan (EMP) that describes resource needs, including staffing, materials, building remodels and minor alterations. After reviewing all departmental EMPs, college administration reviews priorities and then allocates funding to address appropriately the needs across all instructional departments.

Online classes are typically capped at 40 students, which is consistent with on-ground class caps. Online sections are quite popular and fill faster than on-ground sections. iTV classes are capped based upon the broadcast and receiving room capacities (34 at FLC-main, 18 at RCC, and 16 at EDC), with enrollments averaging around 40 students per class (with some variance depending upon course and instructor). Retention and success rates in online sections are generally lower than that of on-ground sections of the same course, though there are some courses for which rates are better in online sections. The college’s 2012 *Midterm Report* ([Attachment 21](#)) includes a planning item to investigate anomalies in student success and drop rates so that the rates in all modalities, including on-ground, online, hybrid, and iTV, may be improved and any gaps minimized.

District and college resources are adequate to support distance education course offerings. The district’s Desire2Learn learning management system is well maintained by a sufficiently staffed district IT department. The college’s media services department is adequately staffed, and the iTV infrastructure has received upgrades and repairs as needed. The college has made a

commitment to provide the resources needed to continue iTV classes as a service to students and the community, including real-time class broadcasts, recorded class sessions, and community service offerings.

#### D7: Achievement Monitoring Plan

The college produces annual reports on degrees awarded, course enrollments, and student success rates ([Attachment 22](#)). In addition, the college has a six-year cycle for all programs to undergo review ([Attachment 23](#)). 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 24](#)). In February 2010, the district produced a second report that compares success rates of online and onground students enrolled in courses with similar TOP codes ([Attachment 25](#)). The college reviewed these two district reports as well as student success and retention data for all FLC online students, and in June 2010 created its own report on online student success and retention rates by individual course ([Attachment 11a](#) & [11b](#)). That report is now run annually and the data shared with online faculty to use along with assessment of student learning outcomes to improve their courses and student outcomes. The college considered all of these reports when it developed a more comprehensive distance education plan in fall 2010 ([Attachment 16](#)). In August 2011, the district produced a third report that compares enrollments and success rates of students enrolled in online and onground writing, math, and business courses ([Attachment 26](#)).

#### D8: Evaluation and Assessment of Student Success, Retention, and Completion

In June 2010 the college's office of institutional research (OIR) completed a comprehensive report comparing course success and retention rates of fall 2009 courses offered in both online and on-ground modalities ([Attachment 11a](#) & [11b](#)). The most useful comparisons are for subject codes for which multiple sections of a course are offered in both online and on-ground modalities. For fall 2009 there were four such courses: Business 300, Economics 302, Math 30, and Math 100. While the two math courses and the economics course had considerably lower online course success and retention rates, the business course's online and on-ground rates were virtually the same. In spring 2011, the OIR completed a follow-up report ([Attachment 11a](#) & [11b](#)) that compares course success and drop rates for 27 courses that had been offered in both online and on-ground modalities. The online course success rates are lower for eight of the courses, and online drop rates are higher for nine of the courses. However, for six of the online courses, the online course success and drop rates are actually better than the on-ground rates. So while improvements are needed and can be made for some online courses, it is possible that some on-ground courses can be improved through the implementation of certain online teaching methods. The college is currently working on a process to investigate these anomalies (both positive and negative) so that course success and retention rates are improved in all modalities.

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

#### E1: Statement of Required Approvals

The college's curriculum committee is responsible for approving all modalities by which courses may be offered. All courses offered in a distance education modality have been approved for that method of delivery. Each program included in this proposal has been approved by the FLC

curriculum committee, the LRCCD curriculum coordinating committee, and the 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 27](#)).

#### E2: Legal Requirements

There are no special legal requirements for these programs.

#### E3: Evidence of Governing Board Action

The LRCCD Board of Trustees approved 31 of the 43 proposed programs in 2004 when they approved Folsom Lake Center's transition from being an educational center of Cosumnes River College to an individually accredited college. The remaining programs included in this proposal have been approved by the Los Rios Community College Board of Trustees ([Attachment 28a](#) & [28b](#)).

### **F. 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 Commission reaffirmed the college's accreditation in January 2010. The distance education programs listed in the proposal 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 proposed distance education programs fall within the college's mission of offering transfer and career technical education programs to students.

#### **3. Governing Board**

Folsom Lake College is one of four colleges in the Los Rios Community College District. The district is governed by a publicly elected seven-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 district activities and decisions, and is sufficient in size to fulfill its responsibilities consistent with California's Education Code. A majority of the Board members have no employment, family, or personal financial interest in the institution. The proposed programs have LRCCD Board approval as instructional programs and are ready for proposal to the Commission to be offered in a distance education modality.

#### **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. They also provide 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 ten instructional, student services, and administrative services administrators whose responsibilities include oversight of on-ground and distance education programs and services. College and district organizational charts are provided in [Attachments 18](#) and [19](#).

### **6. Operational Status**

Folsom Lake College is operational with over 8,951 students enrolled in spring 2012, with 1,801 students enrolled in distance education courses. Most are actively pursuing career technical education certificates, associate degrees, and/or transfer to four year institutions. Courses offered in a distance education modality are 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 as well as the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees for Transfer. As of spring 2012, the college has 39 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. The academic requirements for the degrees included in this proposal remain the same, regardless of whether courses are offered on-ground, online, or via iTV. Degree program course requirements and student learning outcomes are identified in the college catalog.

### **8. Educational Programs**

Folsom Lake College's degree programs are congruent with the college mission and are based on recognized higher education fields of study. The college's curriculum committee and its subcommittees utilize processes to ensure that programs are of appropriate content and length and 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 two years of full-time academic work. In addition to its 39 degree programs, the college has 39 certificate programs as of spring 2012. The college's educational programs, including those listed in this proposal, have requirements and student learning outcomes that remain the same regardless of whether courses are offered on-ground or via a distance education modality. Educational program courses cannot be offered via distance education without first being reviewed and approved 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 contained within the programs listed in this proposal 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**

All college courses have student learning outcomes that 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 listed in the course outlines, which are maintained on the district-wide curriculum management system. Program student learning outcomes course maps has been developed for all programs to illustrate the courses in which program learning outcomes are achieved ([Attachment 29](#)). Program and course learning outcomes are assessed regularly regardless of delivery 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 Associates Degree. The general education courses provide an introduction to major areas of knowledge and include the same course content and outcomes regardless of delivery 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. Faculty and students in distance education courses and programs have the same academic freedom as faculty and students in on-ground courses and programs.

### **13. Faculty**

Folsom Lake College has 103 full-time faculty and over 180 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 appears in the faculty contract, and this includes assessment of student learning outcomes. Distance education 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 distance education 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 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. 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 distance education courses and programs are the same as for on-ground courses and programs.

## **16. Information and 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 provides access to online support for all distance education 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 to support 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 its 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 financial resources in place to support both distance education and on-ground courses and programs.

## **18. Financial Accountability**

The Los Rios Community College District regularly undergoes and publishes 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 distance education and on-ground courses and programs is 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. Distance education courses and programs are included in instructional departments' regular program review and planning processes. Academic and student support services departments include online services in their regular program review and planning processes.

## **20. Public Information**

Folsom Lake College 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 provided in the class schedule. However, the programs listed in this proposal are not identified or advertised in the catalog or elsewhere as being distance education programs because they are all offered in both on-ground and distance modalities.

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

## **G. 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 career technical education (CTE) opportunities that lead to student learning and achievement ([Attachment 9](#), page 6). The proposed distance education programs include both transfer and CTE programs. A process is in place to review and update the mission statement as necessary every six 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 ([Attachment 28b](#)). Representatives of all college constituencies 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 an annual educational master plan process that involves all departments. The programs listed in this proposal are addressed within their respective departments' review and planning processes. The program review process was updated in fall 2010 so that student learning outcomes assessment results are now considered during the reviews. Distance education 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 programs in this proposal has in place student learning outcomes in its approved course and program curriculum. Program student learning outcomes are listed in the college catalog ([Attachment 9](#)). Student learning outcomes for all instructional courses and programs are approved through the curriculum approval process. The assessment of course and program student learning outcomes occurs regularly as part of the annual educational master planning process, which involves all departments.

- **Student Support Services:** The college recruits and admits diverse students who can benefit from its programs. FLC provides 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. Students can apply to the college, register for classes, add/drop classes, purchase parking stickers, and review their progress toward degree and certificate completion using the district’s online degree audit application ([Attachment 12](#)). Financial aid services (FAFSA application and online BOG fee waiver application, financial aid orientation, financial aid handbook) are also available online. Student services programs have identified student learning outcomes. Outcome assessments are included in the program review process, 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 distance education courses and programs. The college regularly offers an online “Library Research and Information Literacy” class (LIBR 318) that provides instruction to students who cannot attend classes on site. The college’s libraries provide remote access to over 60 research databases, which include over 40,000 periodical titles and more than 30,000 eBooks. Students, faculty and staff can access these databases from any district computer or from remote locations using their unique student, faculty or staff identification number and password. Individual database tutorials are available online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and librarian assistance is available in-person, by phone, or via e-mail during open library hours. Additional materials and services that can be accessed remotely include internet subject directories, eReserves (electronic course reserves), research guides, tutorials, handouts, inter-library loan requests, “Ask a Librarian” e-mail service, telephone reference, and the ability to renew books and check one’s library account online. 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 and are 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 distance education 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 using online or iTV delivery modalities.
- **Physical Resources:** The college and district have in place the required physical and technology infrastructure to support distance education courses and services as demonstrated by the current 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 four colleges and district office benefit by working together to acquire and administer costly technology hardware and software. 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.

- **Technology Resources:** The college and district have in place the required technology infrastructure to support distance education courses and services. Needed upgrades to infrastructure and software are addressed as part of regular planning, budgeting, and implementation processes at both the college and district. Due to the district's size, the four colleges and district office benefit by working together to acquire and administer costly technology hardware and software. 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's 2009 *Evaluation Report* ([Attachment 10](#)) recommended that the college "calculate the real costs of facilities, ownership, including technology, over the next six years and then identify a reliable and ongoing revenue stream that will fund the significant increase in the operating budget." The college responded to that recommendation in its recent 2012 Midterm Report ([Attachment 21](#)). Local and state bonds have allowed the college to bring on a number of new, technologically up-to-date instructional, student services, and administrative services facilities. College and district IT support staff are already in place to provide support for both on-ground and distance education technology. The college's budget allocation processes ensure funding to maintain existing equipment as well as planned upgrades and/or replacement. Other financial needs are supported by the operating budgets established within the office of instruction and the specific instruction areas. Technology planning is supported by the college's Information Technology (IT) Services department, which develops and maintains equipment/infrastructure inventory and replacement schedules ([Attachment 30a & b](#)). Working in conjunction with the vice president of administration, the vice president of instruction, and the college's Technology Committee, IT Services develops recommendations and prepares budget requests each year for the upgrade and/or replacement of desktop computers, servers, computer networks, wireless, and other related peripherals. As part of the annual operating budget development process, each division develops its own capital equipment budget (CEB), which is used to address equipment needs, including technology. All departments submit CEB requests through an area/division's established budget process. CEB expenditures are authorized annually in amounts that the college may reasonably be able to fund. The college also maintains a technology sinking fund.

#### 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 the college's on-ground and distance education 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 delivery 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 distance education 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 unique student number that functions as their user ID for all technology services. Active directory functions, including access to unofficial transcripts online, are available to students once their account is 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. Password information is changed every six months by the user as required by district IT policy.

The student verification system is also utilized for learning management system access for testing, quizzes, assignment completion and submittal, 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 distance education instructors have determined that on-ground testing is a useful strategy to ensure academic integrity, and the college provides students with information regarding these requirements prior to registration in distance education classes.

Student services such as orientation, admissions, registration, and financial aid are accessible online and are comparable to services provided on-ground. 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.