Los Angeles Valley College Substantive Change Proposal

Identified Change:
Addition of Courses that Constitute 50% or More of a Program
Offered Through a Mode of Distance or Electronic Delivery

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Los Angeles Valley College: ACCJC Substantive Change Proposal 2009

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A. Proposed Change

Description of the Change

Over the past three years, the Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) Curriculum Committee has approved over 100 online and hybrid courses (Appendix A) that are part of Academic Plans A or B. LAVC will be able to offer a total of 43 Associate Degrees and 4 Certificates for which more than 50% of the 60 units required can be completed in a distance education format. Distance formats are 100% online or hybrid, an online/classroom blend. Degrees include options within a department where applicable, a means for students to select an emphasis within their chosen discipline. The college uses the Etudes Course Management System to deliver the online and hybrid courses. Students must be registered in the course to log in and provide their student identification number and password for authentication.

The chart below indicates the 43 Associated Degrees and 4 Certificates impacted by this change of delivery through the distance-learning program.

Table 1. Associate Arts Degree	
Administration of Justice	German *
Anthropology	Hebrew Studies *
Art History *	History
Biology *	Humanities *
Broadcasting *	Italian *
Child Development: Early Childhood Education (Option)	Jewish Studies *
Child Development: Special Education teacher (Option)	Journalism: Magazine (Option)
Computer Application Office Technology	Journalism: Newspaper (Option)
Computer Science	Journalism: Photojournalism (Option)
Earth Science	Mathematics *
Economics *	Philosophy
Electronics *	Physical Education
Engineering*	Political Science
English	Psychology: Development (Option)
Ethnic Studies	Psychology: General (Option)
Fire Technology *	Psychology: Personality & Social (Option)
Foreign Language *	Sociology: General (Option)
French *	Sociology: Social Welfare (Option)
General Studies: Social & Behavioral Science (Option)	Spanish *
General Studies: Natural Science (Option)	Speech Communications
General Studies: Arts (Option)	Theater Arts *

Geography	

* currently no associate degree major requirements are offered in an online or hybrid format.

Table 2. Certificates	
Business Escrow Management	Business Property Management
CSU Breadth	CSU IGETC

Evidence of Relationship to Institution's Mission

A key component of LAVC's mission statement (Appendix A), is to **"serve the community by providing transfer degree, career-technical, foundational, transitional and continuing education programs in an attractive and accessible learning environment that fosters student success."**

In addition, a core commitment of the college includes **"access to educational opportunities for all in a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment that provides a place for critical thinking, learning and personal growth."**

LAVC's mission statement is grounded in the framework of the principles outlined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which promotes access to education. Today, the international and national discussion regarding educational rights has centered on the role of distance learning technology in meeting a growing worldwide need for more educational options and opportunities in more places, for more people, in more preferred ways, and in defiance of the traditional barriers that have created a world of educational haves and have-nots.

Expanding the distance-learning program at LAVC provides access and opportunities for success to a variety of students. Many depend on online courses to meet their educational goals for transfer, degrees and on-going learning certificates. Most of our distance education students reside in our service area, enroll in our on campus classes, and take distance education classes in order to increase the number of units they take each semester to complete their degree and transfer requirements. As well as meeting the needs of on-campus students, our distance education classes provide access to our instructional programs to disabled students and those that do not live close to a community college or are outside our service area.

All of our online courses have the same transferability as our on campus courses and are accepted by the University of Southern California, the University of California and California State University systems. As a result expansion of our distance education course offerings increase our students' access to four-year colleges and universities.

By offering a delivery mode that will allow students to earn more than 50% of their education in a distance-learning format, LAVC will provide more opportunities for individuals to complete their education in a timely and affordable manner. An expanded

distance education program is clearly in alignment with the college's mission statement regarding access to education.

Rationale for the Change

Through a series of surveys and focus groups with students conducted by the Office of Research and Planning, it became apparent that students at LAVC were ineffective in completing their educational goals in three areas: transferring, completing certificates and earning their degrees. The unacceptably low rate of goal achievement among students is demonstrated below.

Table 3. LAVC Student Goal Achievement		
	*Goal	Actual Achievement
Fall 2004 Enrollees Earning AA Degrees in Spring 2006 or Earlier	67%	12%
Fall 2004 Enrollees Transferring in Spring 2006 or Earlier	81%	5%
Fall 2004 Enrollees Earning Certificates in Spring 2006 or Earlier	38%	3%
*Percent of students surveyed in 2005 with degree, transfer, or certificate goals; LAVC 2007		

In fact, LAVC students' transfer goals are rarely met: overall transfer rates have hovered around 5% for decades, and a 5-year longitudinal study by the University of California found that a typical LAVC student takes **9 semesters** to achieve transfer-ready status.

There are many reasons why students fail to reach their goals: colleges with high attrition and student failure can expect low rates of goal attainment. However, LAVC's fall-to-fall retention rate (64% for 2005 – 06) is well above the national average (52%, ACT 2005). Overall, 85% of students who enroll in a course complete the course, and an average of 65% earn grades of C or better. So, the majority of students are passing their courses and returning to take more. They are just not taking very many more. The reality is that only 22% of students enroll in 12 or more credit hours, and more than a third (39%) take fewer than 6 credit hours (typically one three- or four-credit hour class). Nearly two-thirds (61%) take evening classes and a third take only evening classes.

This enrollment pattern suggests that most of LAVC's students face obligations and limitations outside of college influence, and statistics from a 2005 study by the Office of Research and Planning bears that out.

- More than half (56%) of our student's work half time and 30% work full-time.

- More than half (52%) of students said job obligations present obstacles to completing their degrees.

- Over 16% of our students are single mothers with responsibilities for childcare as

- What little time our students have for college is spent just going to class: 49% of students rarely or never meet with their professors, 68% spend three hours or less on campus outside of class each week, and 34% spend no time at LAVC outside of class each week.

Because of the time constraints that LAVC students face, offering more online classes will provide students with more opportunities to achieve their educational goals.

- More than two thirds of LAVC students have Internet access at home and demand for distance-delivered education has grown continually.

- A 2006 LAVC survey found that 70% of students were interested in taking more online classes.

The following tables provide statistical data regarding our online program and its increasing demand over the years. Information was supplied by the Los Angeles Community College District.

Table 4. Online Enrollments for LAVC		
Year	**Online Enrollment**	**% of All Class Enrollments**
2003-2004	373	0.4%
2004-2005	457	0.5%
2005-2006	743	0.8%
2006-2007	1,394	1.5%
2007-2008	2,683	2.9%

Table 5. Successful Course Completion of LAVC Online Students	
All online enrollments	58%
Students who were online only	59%
Dual enrolled students	58%
All non online enrollments	69%

Table 6. Fall to Spring Persistence of LAVC Online Students	
With 2+ classes but no online enrollment	71%
With both online and regular classes	73%
With online classes only	29%
With only one class (not online)	32%

B. New Educational Programs

Not Applicable

C. Planning Process

Relationship to Planning Process and Mission

LAVC's first distance education course debuted in Spring 2000. Since then, the distance education program has grown substantially through preparation and planning. While instructor interests originally drove course development, it is now determined by department and divisional objectives, usually to meet degree or transfer requirements. To date there are 97 approved online courses (Appendix B). The Distance Learning Program is involved in the planning process and stated mission through:

- The Campus Distance Education Committee
- The Technology Committee
- The Educational Master Plan
- The Curriculum Committee

The Campus Distance Education Committee

In 2006, as part of a systematic shared governance approach for expanding the Distance education program, the Academic Senate approved the establishment of the Campus Distance Education Committee (CDEC). The committee meets monthly to make recommendations to the Instructional Programs Committee (IPC) regarding distance education, to review administrative procedures related to distance learning, to identify and evaluate new educational technologies and to evaluate online course management systems. The committee, comprised of faculty, consists of the Committee Chair, Vice Chair, and additional five members including two AFT representatives and alternates for the Academic Senate and the AFT. CDEC advises the college in its decision-making regarding distance learning issues. It is a standing committee and reports to the IPC.

The Technology Committee

The Technology Committee is responsible for making recommendations relating to hardware, software and the necessary infrastructure to support instructional technologies. The Distance Education Coordinator serves as a permanent member of the committee as does the Information Technology Department Director and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

The Educational Master Plan

Expansion of the delivery mode through distance education is clearly related to the college's Educational Master Plan 2008-2013(Appendix C). The goals of the plan, which are also consistent with those of the Los Angeles Community College District Strategic Initiatives and the California Community College Chancellor's Office include:

- Increasing student retention, persistence and success

- Increasing student access

- Enhancing academic programs and services to meet student needs

- Enhancing institutional effectiveness

An environmental assessment was conducted as part of the preparation of the educational master plan to identify major forces and trends affecting the future of the college. This scan included assessing the Los Angeles Valley College student population, regional demographics, regional workforce trends, regional transportation, regional educational attainment, peer institutions and higher education trends. A key implication noted in the scan was how the growth and popularity of online learning provides the prospect for LAVC to increase its enrollment and access by offering more programs online, hence. In order to address this, the college's recently adopted Educational Master Plan states:

> *"Los Angeles Valley College has an opportunity to meet its instructional technology needs at all levels. It should invest in designers to assist faculty in creating online courses, distance education and teaching students how to make the most of online education. Expand online and hybrid offerings as to enable students to have as many choices as possible in determining how to complete their academic programs or course of study as expeditiously as possible."*

The expansion of the Distance-Learning program supports this objective as well as the objectives of the corresponding Academic Divisions.

The Curriculum Committee(VCCC)

In 2006 the Campus Distance Education Committee (CDEC) established distance education standards to ensure quality and value to the students at LAVC. These standards of quality and value enhanced the distance education program and have increased the number of approved courses to be delivered via distance education.

In order to teach a course either fully online or hybrid (a mix of online and face-to-face instruction), the course must be submitted and approved by the Curriculum Committee (Appendix D). The focus of the process is to demonstrate that an online course can successfully achieve the same objectives that are described in the traditional course outline and that it meets accessibility requirements. The first step involves getting a 2/3-majority approval from the department faculty as well as the department chair's approval. The application is submitted to the Distance Education Subcommittee for Technical Review. Appropriate changes and recommendations are made to the application as noted by the subcommittee. The Curriculum Committee at large reviews and approves the application. Final approvals are required from the Department Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Assessment of Needs and Resources

The LAVC Technology Plan 2004 has driven our assessment of needs and resources. This plan provides a "blueprint" for technology planning, evaluation, and resource allocation. The creation of this plan demonstrated the seriousness with which the college addressed the issue of using technology to improve the institution and student learning. Through hundreds of surveys and interviews, a clear theme emerged regarding the need for the college to improve the presence, usage, and management of technology resources on campus. Overarching goals included:

- Promoting student success and students' educational and career goals through the collaborative use of new technologies across all departments and services

- Increasing professional excellence through training

- Fostering leadership and communication

- Providing a learning environment that supports technology

- Providing a secure technology environment

In particular, four recommendations from the needs assessment supported the expansion of the distance education program. These recommendations are listed below.

Table 7. Needs Assessment Recommendations	
Recommendation	Rationale
Implement Information Competency goals as part of proposed SLOs for LAVC as they relate to distance learning and mediated instruction.	• Satisfies proposed SLO guidelines. Assists institution's Program Review process.
Showcase online course technology usage for faculty and students through electronic and print media, workshops, and demonstrations.	• Broadens instructor repertoire for lessons and address multiple learning styles. Increases student-learning options Promotes more access and opportunity for course completion/progress towards obtaining a degree, certificate or transfer.

Table 7. Needs Assessment Recommendations Contd.	
Recommendation	**Rationale**
Encourage use of ETUDES as a recommended Course Management System (CMS) at LAVC and provide necessary funding to support its implementation.	• Etudes offers a stable, platform-independent, supported course creation and online delivery system used widely within the community college district. • Meets assistive technology requirements for access and usage by students with special needs. • State-of-the-art courseware development is needed to remain competitive and meet students' demands for technology and access. • Online instruction should be college-assigned, approved, and branded just as the on-campus course environment. • Provides uniformity in accessing online course materials while offering individual, student and instructor homepage, requiring single logon access.
Require that all distance ed courses (where instructor contact hours are replaced by online work) be reviewed and receive VCCC approval prior to implementation with students.	• LAVC policy and procedures should be brought into line with other California community colleges that offer extensive online instructional programs. • Assures that any instructional hours that students are required to spend online meet state requirements of 1) equivalency to face-to-face instruction; 2) adequate interaction between instructor and students; and 3) universal accessibility.

In addition to the assessment conducted under the Technology Plan, an assessment was also conducted for the 2008-2013 College Educational Master Plan. The plan describes four primary objectives, one of which is that the college "Build upon and support LAVC's diversified modes of instructional delivery." The strategies that are recommended to achieve this objective are:

• Make available to all students online assessment, counseling, library and financial aid services.
• Expand *Easy To Use Distance Education Software* (ETUDES) training.
• Provide the infrastructure (e.g., servers, WiFi, IT personnel, Help Desk) for technologies in and out of the classroom (e.g., e-portfolios, podcasting, multimedia).

Working under a framework of shared governance, faculty and staff worked on

comprehensive projects to address these recommendations. Implementation and assessment of the following projects have taken place in four key areas:

- Marketing efforts to promote the distance education program
- Faculty training
- Student services
- Student technical support

Marketing efforts to promote the distance education program

During interviews conducted for the College Technology Plan, Educational Master Plan and the 2007 Accreditation Self Study, recommendations were made about how to promote the distance education program. The central theme behind these recommendations focused on creating awareness and interest for online classes.

Promotion of the program through the Class Schedule – Every printed class schedule now has a dedicated section for distance education classes. The electronic version of the class schedule also has a dedicated section for distance education classes.

Expansion of the Virtual Valley Website – The Virtual Valley Website (Appendix E) has become a comprehensive repository of information for faculty and students. Extensive resources pages are available indicating:

> Online classes available
> Training programs for faculty
> System requirements
> Technical support
> Operational procedures

Faculty Training

A faculty survey conducted in Spring 2007, found that instructors were very limited in their understanding and competency of distance education technology skills. In fact, none of the survey respondents believed they even had an "adequate" knowledge of technology-based techniques to extend access to time bound students. The table below summarizes their lack of skills.

Table 8. Faculty Survey, Spring 2007	
1=None, 2= Minimal, 3=Some, 4=Adequate, 5=Substantial Knowledge	**Rating**
Use of e-mail, chat rooms, listeners.	3.83
Knowledge of effective online course design	2.21
Use of online course development tools (e.g., WebTV).	1.55
Delivery of online learning (e.g. assignments, tests, student feedback).	2.17
Knowledge of barriers to student success in online learning.	2.31
Use of online student support services (e.g., advisement, degree audit).	2.31

In an effort to alleviate this, substantial resources ($215,000) have been spent developing a comprehensive distance education training program over the last two years. This training program addressed four areas:

1. Computer technology
2. Certification in the classroom management system
3. Distance education technology
4. Distance education pedagogy

1. Computer Technology

Under the name of the Technology Institute, Los Angeles Valley College has developed and conducted a series of ongoing training programs to improve distance education faculty's use of technology. LAVC offers close to 70 workshops per year in a variety of courses. A sample set is provided here:

Table 9. Technology Institute Courses		
Introduction to Blogs	Introduction to iMovie	Introduction to Word
Introduction to Photoshop	Introduction to iDvd	Introduction to Excel
Introduction to PowerPoint	Introduction to iWeb	Intermediate Photoshop Session
Introduction to iClickers	Introduction to Camtasia	Intermediate PowerPoint Session
Introduction to Podcasting	Introduction to SnagIt	Intermediate Word
Introduction to iPhoto	Introduction to Video Maker	Intermediate Excel
Podcast Production		

In fall 2008/Spring 2009, 26 training sessions were held with 96 faculty participants. Pre and post-tests of the individual training sessions indicate that 98% of the faculty participating demonstrated 90% of the competencies.

Los Angeles Valley College also sponsors an annual three-day program of intensive technology training, Technology Festival (called TechFest by faculty). Courses are presented in this program which duplicate the technology and distance learning courses that are presented throughout the year.

2. Certification in the ETUDES Delivery System

LAVC uses the ETUDES classroom management system. In order for an instructor to have a classroom shell to use, he/she needs to be certified in the ETUDES LMS program. The certification program is a three-week session taught monthly online by instructors certified with the ETUDES organization.

LAVC also has three certified instructors. They offer on campus training for the faculty three times a year in a three week hybrid program with nine hours face to face and the rest of the class online. Pre and post-tests of the individual training sessions attended by these instructors indicate that 98% of the faculty participating demonstrated 90% competencies.

To date, LAVC currently has over 170 instructors who have successfully completed the program (Appendix F). These instructors represent 36 different areas of study.

3. Distance Education Technology

The ETUDES Certified Instructors at Los Angeles Valley College are offered additional courses to help them integrate current technology into their online classes. These courses include advanced courses and workshops in the effective use of the tools found in the Etudes classroom management system. Pre and post-tests of participants demonstrated that 92% of the participants demonstrated 90% of competencies addressed in training.

4. Distance Education Pedagogy

LAVC offers a series of courses and programs to improve the teaching and learning strategies of distance education instructors. These activities include:

> **Mentor Program -** In Fall 2008 Los Angeles Valley College initiated a mentor program in which experienced online instructors are teamed up with new online instructors to help them in teaching their first online course. Currently there are seven mentors and ten mentees.

> **Great Online Teachers Retreat -** Los Angeles Valley College sponsors a yearly three-day retreat for 20 of the college's online faculty which follows the Great Teachers Model of sharing successes and challenges in distance learning. During the retreat held in January 2009, 18 faculty attended. Of those who participated, 94% rated it highly satisfactory and 5% rated it satisfactory.

> **eNewsletter -** A periodic online newsletter is sent to all online faculty with teaching strategies and news of distance learning programs to help improve the quality of instruction.

> **LERN Online Instructional Opportunities -** Los Angeles Valley College maintains a yearly membership in the LERN Organization which sponsors a variety of instructional distance learning programs that can be taken by any number of faculty during the year.

Online Student Services

1. Online Tutoring

In Spring 2008, LAVC began offering online Writing Center and Tutorial Services to

students enrolled in pre-collegiate courses. Online tutoring is delivered using the online course management system used for our online classes, ETUDES. This provides online students with a familiar interface and enables them to toggle between their online classes and the tutorial services site. Supervised Learning Assistance 001T is a non-credited course that any LAVC student may register for to take advantage of online tutoring.

Prior to developing the pilot program we researched the essential elements and priorities of Writing Center services. Current successful online tutoring technologies were also investigated and concordance with state tutoring regulations was also addressed.

A certified ETUDES instructor designed and created the online tutoring course shell with a similar format to that of our other online courses. ETUDES offers the necessary course management tools including announcements, a discussion board, assignments and a chat room. It also complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Discussion and chat technologies support tutor/tutee interaction. The assignments tool allows students to send drafts of writing assignments to Writing Center staff. The Writing Center staff is assigned the role of T.A. within the course shell. Tutors access the documents and return them to students with comments. Students are able to review previously completed assignments and our staff track students' writing improvement as the semester progresses. The online tutoring program has a college email address which students use for questions or problems unrelated to course content. The students may also send private messages (PM) within ETUDES to the Tutorial staff.

Writing Center staff training and development was essential to the success of the online tutoring program. The Writing Center Director was exceptionally adept in tutoring skills and using ETUDES. He and two existing Writing Lab Tutors had prior online course experience and easily transitioned to ETUDES. Online tutoring is provided seven days a week, including chat sessions on evenings and weekends. Student documents are reviewed and returned within 48-72 hours. These sessions are asynchronous.

2. General LACCD Operational Services

The Los Angeles Community College District offers the following online operational procedures for all students:

- Application for Admissions
- Course enrollment and withdrawal
- View schedule of classes
- Fee Payment
- View grades and transcripts

3. LAVC Online Library Resources

- Electronic access to the library catalog
- An e-book collection
- Periodical and research databases

- Research guides and tutorials

4. LAVC Counseling Website

- Counselors and their contact information
- Hours, office location and FAQs
- Online inquiry submission form
- Scheduling a counseling appointment
- Los Angeles Valley College Course Equivalency System
- Associate Degree checklist (will be available on Degree Works in 2010)
- California State University checklist (will be available on Degree Works in 2010)
- University of California General Education checklists (will be available on Degree Works in 2010)

5. LAVC Financial Aid Website

- Online application
- Office location, hours and contact information
- How to apply, Eligibility
- Types of aid
- Scholarships
- Board of Governors Grant Fee Waiver (BOGFW) information
- Student loans
- How financial aid works
- Forms and grant application deadlines

6. Online Scholarships

- Online scholarship search
- View LAVC Foundation scholarships and requirements

7. Online Orientation

- Information about campus policies and procedures
- Educational programs offered at the college
- How to use the college catalog and schedule of classes
- How to plan and register for your first semester courses
- Overview of campus resources and special program

8. Online Advising

- Assistance in program, degree, or class selection.
- Information regarding admission or program requirements
- Explanations of placement testing and advising procedures

- Referrals to appropriate sources for information, assistance, or problem resolution

9. Online Placement Results

- View English and math placement results
- Online practice tests

10. Degree Audit Reporting System

- View academic progress toward completion of a certificate, associate degree or transfer in a student's declared or proposed major

11. Virtual Career Center

- E-mail a Career Advisor
- Develop a student educational plan
- Job searches
- Resume writing and interview guide
- College Search
- Career Assessment

Student Support

Significant scholarly research has been conducted and published in the area of understanding the primary factors that impact retention/completion for an online course environment. One of the critical factors most often cited is the quality of technical support and its availability. Capitalizing on this research, LAVC has developed a support infrastructure to assist students with their technical needs related to the online learning management system known as Etudes. This support is delivered through:

1. Virtual Valley Student Resources
2. The Virtual Valley Help Desk

1. Virtual Valley Student Resources

The Virtual Valley team understands that online classes provide some students with their only opportunity for a higher education. However, not all of students who take online classes have the technical skills or knowledge to succeed before they enroll. We also understand that instructional time in any class is limited and cannot be spent teaching students the basic technical skills they need to succeed. Instructors may become frustrated at having to spend extra time to help their students develop the necessary technical skills. Thus, to remove the burden from discipline instructors, and to provide students with the technical skills they need to succeed in an online educational

environment, the Virtual Valley program designed several helpful self-paced tutorials for our "Student Resources" webpage (Appendix G).

Our "ETUDES Tutorial" contains lessons on how to use the ETUDES-NG course management software, while our "Online Learning Success" tutorial provides information about online learning in general. Combined, these two tutorials have registered over 7,000 hits on their counters since installation in 2008. In 2009, over 500 students have viewed the "Online Learning Success" tutorial and nearly 150 people have viewed our ETUDES Tutorial.

Etudes Tutorial consists mainly of animated screen captures, showing how to perform all the basic operations of important ETUDES-NG tools. The goal was to provide students with detailed information in an easy to understand format. Over 1600 students have visited this tutorial since it's posting. It contains 29 individual lessons assigned to the following categories:

1. **Getting Started**: This section contains 12 lessons and is intended to show students how to prepare their computer to run ETUDES efficiently, including operations such as using a supported browser, setting browser cache, meeting computer requirements, enabling cookies and JavaScript, and disabling pop-up blockers. This section also shows students how to formulate their UIA username and password, how to logon to their ETUDES-NG account, and how to troubleshoot login problems. Finally, this section offer students simple "Keys to Success" to assist them in making their online class experience a positive one.

2. **My Workspace**: This section contains 9 lessons, borrowed from Foothill College, on how to manage an ETUDES account. With Foothill College's permission, we re-formatted these lessons, and copied them into our ETUDES Tutorial to give students easy, convenient access to all ETUDES-NG lessons in a single location.

3. **Assignments**: This tutorial is broken into 7 separate lessons and demonstrates how to use the ETUDES-NG "Assignments" tool. These lessons illustrate how to navigate the assignment list, how to post an assignment, how to paste text into an ETUDES assignment from Microsoft Word, and how to attach a file to an assignment, including important information about saving files in different formats so all users can open them. Recently, Foothill College has requested that, rather than the Assignments tool, instructors use the Test Center for all student work. Thus, we plan to provide a section on how to use the ETUDES-NG Test Center in the future.

4. **Discussion Forum and Private Messages**: This lesson was borrowed with permission from Foothill College. It is placed conveniently with the rest of the ETUDES-NG lessons for easy access in a single location.

5. **Glossary**: The glossary contains definitions of basic computer terminology, and a link is provided to the glossary definition of these terms whenever they are used throughout the other lessons.

The Online Learning Success tutorial has had more than 4,100 visitors since implementation. Lessons in this tutorial orient students to online learning in general. Many students do not know what to expect from their online classes and some are under the assumption that online classes will be easier than traditional ones. This tutorial informs them that their online classes will be just as academically rigorous and challenging as any other class. It emphasizes the principles of active learning and encourages students to be self-motivated, self-sufficient learners, as well as answers many basic questions they may have about online education. It contains 6 main lessons and a Glossary:

1. Expectations:
    a. What can I expect from my online classes?
    b. What will be expected of me?
    c. What can I expect from my instructor?
    d. Can I work at my own pace?
    e. Keys to success
2. Am I ready to take an online class?
    a. What computer skills will I need?
    b. What computer equipment will I need?
    c. What personal qualities or motivation will I need?
    d. Readiness quiz – a short online quiz that test whether students have the skills and motivation to be a successful online learner.
    e. Helpful links – this section provides numerous links to website tutorials on the basic computer and Internet skills necessary for successful online learning. Thus, student may supplement their knowledge and skills prior to the start of their online class.
3. Time management:
    a. Overview – this section gives students an understanding of the amount of time they will need to invest in their online classes, including an explanation of Carnegie rule and how it relates to online classes.
    b. Resources – this section provides links to several useful time management websites.
    c. Keys to success
4. Participating in Online Discussions and Chats:
    a. Benefits and challenges
    b. Threaded discussions
    c. Netiquette
    d. What do I say?
    e. The chat room
    f. Keys to success
5. Plagiarism:

        a. What is Plagiarism? -- Since cheating may be even easier in an online environment, this module gives students a clear understanding of how to use and document sources appropriately.

        b. Resources – this lesson provides links to online documentation sources and style manuals.

        c. Keys to success

6. Ergonomics:

        a. What is ergonomics? -- This section is intended to make students aware of the physical challenges sitting at the computer for long stretches of time with poor posture can pose. It gives them information about how to organize their workspace to minimize these risks. Also, it lets our students know that we care about them as complete human beings, and not just names on rosters.

        b. Resources

        c. Keys to success

Virtual Valley provides these helpful materials and will continue to build on the resources we offer to make students think of us first for their online learning needs, as well as to help them succeed once they get here.

2. Virtual Valley Help Desk

A help desk for the ETUDES distance learning system was implemented in Spring 2008. The help desk is available 50 hours per week during the week before the semester starts and during the first two weeks of school. The remaining weeks of the semester it is open 10 hours per week. The help desk can be accessed via email, telephone and in person support. During a typical semester the help desk fields over 400 inquiries.

Anticipated Effect on Institution

There are a variety of effects expected on the college as the number of distance learning courses and students increases.

1. The number of students enrolling in courses will increase. All online courses fill early in the enrollment process. This increases the number of students attending LAVC without the significant physical costs associated of a face-to-face course.

2. LAVC expects to see more students graduating. Current data indicates that students take an online course in addition to the face-to-face courses simultaneously. This allows them to take more courses per semester and thus complete their AA degree in a timelier manner.

3. LAVC will continue to increase services for online students. Students will have increased online access to services such as Financial Aid, Student Advisement, and the Bookstore.

4. An increase in hybrid courses will allow for greater use of campus facilities. We are beginning to schedule courses that meet one day a week and the rest of the course conducted online. This will allow for a single room to be used for twice as many courses. For example, on a Monday the room may be used for three hybrid courses and then on Wednesday, three other hybrid courses.

5. Increase dialogue between faculty on effective teaching strategies. LAVC is already experiencing an increase in faculty interaction over online teaching strategies and pedagogies that also extend over into face to face courses. These interactions have been both formal, as in campus training sessions and retreats, and informal between faculty.

Intended Benefits

A widely diverse, highly mobile, and time-challenged population requires different modes of instructional delivery to assure ongoing availability of LAVC instruction. Expansion of the online program will provide LAVC students with more convenient access to courses needed for degree, transfer or certificate completion. It is expected that the student retention and success rates will increase. The following table compares online student statistics with traditional student statistics.

Table 10. Face to Face Students vs. Online Students*							
		Face to Face	Online		Face to Face	Online	
Semester		Success** Rate	Success Rate	% Diff	Retention Rate	Retention Rate	% Diff
FALL	2004	68%	64%	4%	86%	78%	8%
WINTER	2005	80%		n/a	93%		n/a
SPRING	2005	66%	67%	0%	85%	85%	0%
SUMMER	2005	80%	70%	11%	93%	88%	5%
FALL	2005	66%	57%	8%	85%	79%	6%
WINTER	2006	80%		n/a	92%		n/a
SPRING	2006	66%	62%	4%	84%	80%	4%
SUMMER	2006	81%	73%	7%	93%	89%	4%
FALL	2006	65%	58%	7%	85%	81%	3%
WINTER	2007	81%	72%	9%	94%	94%	-1%
SPRING	2007	79%	59%	20%	93%	81%	12%
SUMMER	2007	79%	60%	19%	93%	82%	10%
FALL	2007	66%	58%	8%	86%	83%	3%
WINTER	2008	79%	78%	1%	93%	94%	-1%
SPRING	2008	67%	57%	9%	86%	79%	6%
SUMMER	2008	80%	71%	9%	93%	86%	7%
FALL	2008	66%	54%	11%	86%	79%	7%
WINTER	2009	79%	69%	10%	93%	87%	5%

* data includes hybrid courses. ** Success is defined as a grade of A, B, or C.

The increased emphasis on developing core competencies for faculty teaching online courses should also enhance satisfaction levels of students who are taking these classes.

Preparation and Planning Process

Identification of strengths, challenges and solutions for the distance education program grew out of LAVC's long-term strategic and annual operational analysis. Efforts were made to ensure that the distance education program was aligned with the Technology Plan and the Education Master Plan. To ensure campus wide participation and adherence to shared governance principles these processes included formally involving all college constituents: community members (including business, industry, and government leaders), administrators, faculty, staff, and students. College administrators reviewed demographics and performance data from Institutional Research, the results of the Program Review Process (involving community members serving on advisory committees, faculty, staff, and students), and plans from Technology, Student Equity, and Strategic Student Advancement/Retention Committees. Their analysis updated goals and produced objectives for the institution, which were presented to the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees for approval. Approved objectives have driven detailed planning and budgeting over the past three years.

In addition to these processes, LAVC also wrote and received two grants, totaling nearly $7 million. In 2007, LAVC received a Title V grant that runs five years and is for $5 million. This grant is directed at Hispanic students and is designed to increase access to education outside of traditionally scheduled classes through an expansion of the distance education program. In 2008, LAVC received a Title III, Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) grant that runs two years and is for $1.8 million. This grant is designed to expand the distance education program with an emphasis on science, technology and math courses. Key faculty, administration and support staff were involved the preparation and planning process. Upon receiving the grants, a taskforce of faculty members were designated to assist in the implementation activities. The grant teams also meet on a weekly basis to review the grant progress. In addition, these teams have an annual retreat to develop strategies for implementation of best practices and to assess grant activities. The following table summarizes the preparation and planning process.

Table 11. Nature and Extent of Constituent Involvement in LAVC Title V and STEM Analysis and Planning		
Planning Entity	**Constituents Involved**	**Nature and Extent of Involvement**
Distance Education Team	Administrators, counselors, faculty, staff	Meets weekly to review and design ways to strengthen the distance education program and monitor grant activities.

Educational Master Planning Team	Administrators, faculty, students, staff	Reviews goals and strategies to align with revised mission/vision statements, student learning outcomes, program review and other planning documents.
Office of Research and Planning	Administrators, staff	Analyzes student and program data to identify problems and weaknesses.

Table 11. Nature and Extent of Constituent Involvement in LAVC Title V and STEM Analysis and Planning Contd.		
Planning Entity	**Constituents Involved**	**Nature and Extent of Involvement**
Program Review Participants	Advisory committee (community), staff, faculty, students	Reviews program success measures (e.g. enrollment, results, costs) to recommend program improvements.
Technology Committee	Administration, faculty, students, staff	Conducts surveys and interviews to prepare Technology Master Plan (current state of technology)

D. Evidence of Resources

Faculty, Management and Support Staffing

There are a number of positions that support the distance education program at LAVC. (Appendix H). These positions are funded through Program 100, Title V and Title III Stem Grant money. The distance education team is comprised of individuals fulfilling the following roles:

Faculty Positions

Distance Education Trainer: A full time individual (1.0 FTE) responsible for training faculty on the use of the Course Management System, incorporating technology into the classroom and implementing sound distance education pedagogy principles.

DE Coordinator: A .7 FTE individual responsible for the daily operations of the Course Learning Management position.

Instructional Designer: A full time individual devoting 100% of their time to providing technical support in web design for faculty converting traditional classes to online classes. Additionally, this individual assists faculty in the use and integration of technology into the classroom.

Faculty Mentors: Four faculty members experienced in online teaching assigned 10 hours per week to assist new faculty members in designing and developing online classes

Online Instructors: Over 170 instructors have received Etudes Training and have been certified in core competencies related to using the online delivery system and pedagogy techniques.

Professional Development Director: A faculty member (.67 FTE) runs the professional development program at the college, oversees the training center used for most of the sessions, and helps publicize the workshops and training opportunities.

Management

Title V Director: A full time individual coordinating all aspects of the Title V Grant. This individual is responsible for meeting grant objectives related to the distance education program and ensuring compliance with US Department of Education. This individual also coordinates data collection and evaluation.

STEM Director: A .5 FTE individual coordinating all aspects of the STEM grant. This individual is responsible for meeting grant objectives related to the distance education program and ensuring compliance with US Department of Education. This individual coordinates data collection and evaluation.

Dean, Academic Affairs: Provides strategic direction to the distance education program and allocates 15% of her time to coordinating faculty, management and support activities.

Support Staffing

STEM Specialist: A full time individual providing academic counseling for students taking online courses.

Portal Expert: A full time individual who provides developmental assistance for the portal.

Virtual Valley Help Desk: Student workers who staff the Virtual Valley Help Desk up to a total of 55 hours per week during each semester.

Virtual Valley Webmaster: A part time employee who updates the Virtual Valley Website up to 5 hours per week.

Equipment and Facilities

LAVC has invested in appropriate equipment for the distance education program. Purchases include:

An academic portal: The portal enables communication and student information available for web-enabled student services including online advising, online tutoring and eportfolios.

Faculty computers and software: Twenty five laptop computers have been purchased to be used on a loan out basis for faculty members who are involved in teaching an online, hybrid or web enhanced course. Faculty members submit proposals to the grant team outlining how the computers will be used and what

the expected results are. In addition, computers for a mini professional development lab have been purchased to be used for faculty training.

Student Computers: Over 100 computers will be purchased for students. These will be checked out to students who are taking a distance education course.

Digital Studio for Faculty: Technology equipment has been purchased for faculty use in designing content material for their course. This includes digital cameras, iPods, microphones, speakers and video cameras. Equipment can be checked out or used in a lab setting.

While facilities exist to support the distance education program, these facilities are small and are located in various parts of the campus. A dedicated area for the distance education program is currently being developed as part of the Library and Academic Resource Center. This 92,000 square foot building is scheduled for completion in January 2011. There will be a dedicated classroom for the distance education trainer and instructional designer to lead faculty classes. There will also be two offices and six workstations for the distance education team. Students will also have access to a dedicated computer lab that houses over 60 computer stations.

Fiscal Resources

Fiscal and physical resources for the distance education program are generated through the following three sources.

General Campus Funding

The College provides funding on an annual basis to support the distance education program. The majority of the contract for the ETUDES Course Management System is paid for through Program 100 funding ($35,000). In addition, Program 100 pays a .2 FTE assignment to a faculty member to act as the distance education coordinator to handle all operational aspects of the course management system.

Title V Grant Funding

Los Angeles Valley College has applied for and received a $2.9 million Title V Grant which supports distance education. Below is the table of total expenditure for the first

year of the grant (2007-2008) as well as remaining projected expenditures.

Table 12. Title V Expenditures					
Item	Expenditures 2007-2008	Expenditure 2008-2009	Expenditure 2009-2010	Expenditure 2010-2011	Expenditure 2011-2012
Personnel	256,145	338,337	208,870	188,911	185,574
Benefits	53,035	94,484	45,455	40,888	40,078
Table 12. Title V Expenditures Contd.					
Item	Expenditures 2007-2008	Expenditure 2008-2009	Expenditure 2009-2010	Expenditure 2010-2011	Expenditure 2011-2012
Travel	12,245	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Equipment	48,116	31,000	150,000	150,000	0
Supplies	54,214	19,295	45,500	70,500	55,500
Contractual	32,500	80,000	60,000	60,000	50,000
Construction	0	0	0	0	0
Other	606	610	53,374	54,760	57,,158
Endowment	3150	5,250	5,750	3,750	180,500
Total	**$430,761**	**$574,976**	**$574,949**	**$574,809**	**$574,810**

STEM Grant Funding

LAVC has also received $1.8 million through a Title III, Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) grant. This grant is designed to support distance education at the college.

Table 13. STEM Expenditures		
STEM Budget Categories	Expenditures 2007-2008	Expenditures 2008-2009
Personnel	26,7500	530,980
Fringe Benefits	63,749	73,159
Travel	13,727	13,727
Equipment	256,376	30,000
Supplies	160,840	58,116
Contractual	136,810	208,875

Construction	0	0
Other	7,500	7,500
Endowment	0	0
Total	$502,906	$922,357

Plan for Monitoring Achievement and Outcomes

The plan for monitoring the achievement of the desired outcomes as well as student and faculty satisfaction is based on the following components:

- Completion of the 2010-2011 Virtual Valley Program Review
- Departmental Program Reviews
- Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Planning, Evaluation and Annual Reports for the Title V Grant and STEM Grant

Completion of the 2010-2011 Virtual Valley Program Review

The Virtual Valley Distance Education Program Review is scheduled to take place in Fall 2010. This process is part of a five-year cycle. The department begins by making a comprehensive review of the curriculum that is available via distance education. The department will then review its programs (degrees and certificates) in order to assess the success of their students. Working with the Office of Research and Planning, a student survey and student profile will be produced for analysis. Faculty will be engaged in discussions of their programs, utilizing the information from the curriculum review, the student survey and profile, and other relevant documents, e.g., Student Learning Outcomes forms, Department Goals and Objectives. The goal is to identify strengths, challenges, and a plan of action for the next five years. The department will present the document and the "lessons learned" from the review process to the Instructional Programs Committee (IPC).

Completion of the Departmental Reviews

Each department prepares program review as part of a five-year cycle. This planning process includes a component that addresses alternative delivery modes. Faculty provide input regarding student interests and needs in terms of distance education courses.

Student Satisfaction

Multiple measures will be used to establish, assess and evaluate student satisfaction for the all Distance education offerings. As part of the program review process mentioned above, surveys are given to students asking them about what types of distance education courses they are interested in. Parallel assessment instruments will be used for

comparison of distance education and traditional courses. Instructor and course evaluation surveys will be disseminated to a subset of distance education courses as part of regular college-wide assessments. Proposed topics to be added to this survey include:

- Class orientation
- Course content
- Course interaction
- Instructor accessibility
- Technical assistance

Additionally, online courses will be evaluated relative to traditional courses in terms of grade distribution, success, retention and persistence. Student Learning Outcomes would be assessed for courses offered online as well as in traditional format.

Planning, Evaluation and Annual Reports Process for the Title V and STEM Grant

Both the Title V and Title III STEM grants hold planning retreats at least once a year in order to review deliverables, evaluate progress and measure accomplishments to ensure they are supporting the LAVC Virtual Valley distance education program. During these meetings, the grant committee members address the following questions and agenda items:

1. Reflections on the current year of the grant:
   a. What worked?
   b. What did not work?
   c. What needs to be improved?
   d. Are the project activities making a difference?

2. Review of monthly progress reports of the current year of the grant.

3. The **JAR** Test:
   a. **J**: What is **Justifiable**? What is rational? How do the grant activities fit with the grant objectives?
   b. **A**: Is it **Allowable**?
   c. **R**: Is it **Reasonable**?

4. Review of training activities for current grant year.

5. Plan training activities for the following grant year.

6. Plan for deliverables for next grant year, with action plan and timelines.

7. Plans for specific, technological aspects of the grant such as Academic Portal, E-Portfolio, Degree and Certificate Audit System, etc.

Grant members also participate in the annual performance report process. The annual performance report demonstrates whether substantial progress has been made toward meeting the project objectives and the program performance measures. The report consists of four sections:

1. Section 1 – Executive Summary: This section summarizes how the grant enabled the institution to fulfill the legislative intent of the Title V and Title III programs. The summary explores the impact of the grants on the college's capacity to contribute to fulfilling the goals of the legislation; how has the grants helped to carry out the mission of the institution; and challenges that the college faced during the reporting period and/or anticipation in the coming year which may affect its ability to meet the goals of the grants. Included in the summary are the institution's plans to meet these challenges. The summary then explores if the grants have facilitated or contributed to bringing additional resources to the college.

2. Section 2 - examines and measures a wide range of institutional statistics, including the total number of awards and degrees conferred and the college's accreditation.

3. Section 3 - explores the grants' activities in the various focus areas stipulated in the grant proposal. This section involves several process measures, academic quality outcomes, and fiscal stability outcomes.

4. Section 4 - reports on project status, budget summary, and budget narrative.

Finally, both grants require outside evaluations annually by an outside evaluator. The Title V grant was evaluated on May 5, 2008, for the 2007-2008 project year. The evaluator's report indicated that LAVC was supporting the Virtual Valley Distance Education Program in an appropriate manner and meeting the objectives of the grant. Continued yearly evaluations will occur. The STEM grant will undergo its external evaluation in the Fall of 2009 and then again in Summer 2010.

E. Internal/External Approvals

Statement Regarding Approvals

In a meeting with the Dean of Academic Affairs responsible for the Virtual Valley Distance Education Program and the Distance Education Coordinator on September 9, 2008 the Vice President of Academic Affairs first brought up the need to submit a substantive change proposal. This requirement was also discussed at an earlier Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Campus Distance Education Committee meeting on April 12, 2007. A draft of the proposal was reviewed by the Campus Distance Education Committee and forwarded to the Technology Committee, IPC Committee, College Council, Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate for input and approval.

Los Angeles Valley College: ACCJC Substantive Change Proposal 2009

Upon approval from all the shared governance committees, the report was sent to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees approved the Substantive Change Proposal for LAVC at its meeting on December 2.

Evidence of Meeting Legal Requirements

There are no legal requirements for this change.

Evidence of Governing Board Action

Sixteen copies were sent to approval for the LAVC Board of Trustees meeting on December 2, 2009. The Board of Trustees approved the Substantive Change Proposal for LAVC.

F. Evidence of Fulfilling Eligibility Requirements

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) last visited LAVC in March 2007. LAVC continues to meet eligibility requirements for accreditation in the following areas:

1. AUTHORITY

Los Angeles Valley College is a public two-year community college operating under the authority of the State of California, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District. This authority has existed continuously since 1949 with accreditation status regularly renewed.

2. MISSION

The college reviews its educational mission statement on a regular basis. It is approved by the Board of Trustees and is published in the catalog, schedule of classes, college website, Student Handbook, and College Council agendas. The mission was revised in 2006 to reflect our college-wide student learning outcomes (SLOs)and focus on student success. Program review, annual goals, and grant requests are linked to the college mission.

The expansion of the Virtual Valley Distance Education Program is clearly in alignment with the college's mission statement regarding access to education.

3. GOVERNING BOARD

The eight member Board of Trustees for the Los Angeles Community College District is an independent policy making body, which is responsible for seeing that all of its nine colleges implement their stated missions. The board is charged with ensuring the quality, integrity, and financial stability of its colleges. Seven board members are elected at large by voters in the city of Los Angeles for four-year terms. Terms are staggered, with three members chosen in one election and four members elected two years later. A student member is elected annually – serving June 1 through May 31 of each year – by students throughout the district. The board president and vice president are elected by fellow members for one-year terms. Board members may not be currently employed by the district. An ethics policy mandates impartiality and integrity in all decisions made by Board Members.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dr. Susan Carleo was appointed as the president of LAVC in May 2009. Her full-time responsibility is to serve as the Chief Executive Officer of Los Angeles Valley College, and she is given the authority to administer board policies. She does not serve on the district governing board.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

LAVC has 23 administrators, including the president, vice presidents, deans, associate deans, and classified administrators. They were hired through an open, competitive employment process by hiring committees and the Personnel Commission and were selected on the basis of their training and experience. The administrative staff meets frequently with the college president and work diligently to support the college mission.

The college has sufficient administrative staff to provide oversight of and necessary support for distance education courses and programs. The Dean of Academic Affairs overseeing the distance education program has been involved in the planning process for the expansion of the program and has worked with governing committees regarding program decisions.

6. OPERATIONAL STATUS

Los Angeles Valley College is a comprehensive college that meets the varied educational needs of our community. We offer a wide range of academic and vocational programs leading to degrees and certificates, transfer to four-year colleges and universities, job training, career advancement, personal enrichment, and lifelong learning. The college has been in continuous operation since 1949.

7. DEGREES

Our college offers programs leading to 47 AA and AS degrees, 55 occupational certificates, and one non-occupational competency certificate. Significant portions of our academic programs lead to a degree. Many of our courses satisfy requirements for either

majors or general education, and the majority of our student population is enrolled in these courses.

Through the expansion of the Virtual Valley Distance Education Program, LAVC will be able to offer 43 Associate Degrees and 4 Certificates in which at least 50% of degree requirements can be completed through a mode of distance or electronic delivery.

8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

In determining our degree and certificate programs, the college considers student demand and need, course objectives, University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) requirements, advisory committee recommendations, and needs related to industry and business. Program review, faculty evaluation, and curriculum review ensure that our courses and programs are of high quality and rigor. All of our degree programs are two academic years in length. Students are evaluated based on attainment of the course objectives stated in the course outline of record. We are transitioning toward incorporating measurable SLOs at the program level and regularly assessing them.

9. ACADEMIC CREDIT

Academic credit is given in semester units, based on the Carnegie Unit value system and Title V minimum standards. One credit hour of work is equivalent to one hour of lecture, two hours of laboratory with homework, or three hours of laboratory without homework per week based on a term of 18 weeks. Required course content and objectives are established by the discipline's faculty, approved by the Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, and continuously reviewed and revised through the program review process. Faculty evaluations ensure that instructors are teaching within the bounds of the course outline of record. The credit awarded for each course and the time that the course meets per week are specified in the catalog and schedule of classes. The award of credit is the same for both online course and for sources offered through other methods of instruction.

10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

The college has established and published seven college-wide SLOs, which are expected outcomes for all students completing our programs. The Student Services division has identified SLOs for all its departments and is working on assessments. All disciplines in academic departments are developing program level and course level outcomes and assessments over the next few years. Currently, student success is measured by faculty based on the successful completion of course objectives that are clearly stated in the course outline of record. All courses, regardless of mode of delivery or location, follow the same course outline of record. Programs and degrees offered online must meet the same standards as courses, programs and degrees offered by traditional methods.

11. GENERAL EDUCATION

Los Angeles Valley College has developed a curriculum of General Education (GE) requirements for students in all degree programs. These general education requirements ensure a breadth of knowledge consistent with the philosophy of general education on campus and with Board Rules. The Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum for UC transfer and the GE Certification for CSUs are described in our catalog and schedule of classes.

Academic Plan A degree programs require a minimum of 30 semester units and Academic Plan B programs require a minimum of 18 semester units of General Education in Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, Language and Rationality, and Health and Physical Education. Information competency, computer competency, critical thinking, and cultural diversity are key components of many courses in these five areas, and ethnic studies are offered in at least one of the required areas. Graduates must demonstrate competence in mathematics, reading, and written expression through completion of selected courses with a grade of "C" or better or by examination. Student learning outcomes are currently being developed at the program level through the program review process.

12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The college abides by the policy on academic freedom stated in LACCD Board Rules (BR 1204.12 adopted in February 2006) and Article 4 of the LACCD/Los Angeles College Faculty Guild agreement, which states, "The Faculty shall have the academic freedom to seek the truth and guarantee freedom of learning to the students." Our Academic Senate adopted the AAUP statement on faculty ethics and academic freedom, which is in our Faculty Handbook. Our revised Vision Statement reads, "Los Angeles Valley College is a beacon for teaching and learning, research, creativity, collaboration, and the free exchange of ideas in a climate of openness and respect." Our campus maintains an environment of intellectual freedom and independence. Online courses promote the same standards of academic freedom as face-to-face classes.

13. FACULTY

Our college employs 203 full-time faculty and 285 adjunct faculty. The faculty ranks are sufficient to maintain an average class size of 34, as mandated in the LACCD/Los Angeles College Faculty Guild agreement. The agreement's articles on evaluation and the Faculty Handbook set forth faculty responsibilities, which include making appropriate contributions to the department/discipline and evaluating student performance.

Qualified full and part time instructors who meet or exceed the minimum qualifications for their disciplines develop and teach online courses. These instructors must complete the desginated training for teaching online and demonstrate competencies per the AFT agreement.

14. STUDENT SERVICES

The college offers many programs that serve the general student body (Academic Counseling, Orientation, Financial Aid, Student Health Center, Career/Transfer Center, and Child Development Center) as well as specialized services designed for certain student populations (Disabled Students Programs and Services, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services, Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education, Bridge to College for California High School Exit Exam non-completers, the Woodbury/LAVC Connection, Puente, TRiO/Student Support Services, the Transfer Alliance Program). These services support student learning and assist students in completing educational goals.

15. ADMISSIONS

Los Angeles Valley College maintains an "open door" admission policy consistent with its mission statement, the Education Code, Title V of the California Code of Regulations, and the statewide mission for California Community Colleges. Enrollments in online courses follow the same status and Board policies as traditional courses.

16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Our library maintains a significant collection of books, current periodicals and journal subscriptions, and other resources. Through its subscription to InfoTrac, the library provides access to over 20 online resources. These research tools are available to users 24 hours a day from any computer on or off campus.

Our college provides 30 campus labs, including open computer labs, tutoring services, and departmental labs focusing on the needs of students in particular disciplines.

The proposed Academic Resource Center scheduled to open in January 2011, will provide a centralized location for the Distance Education Trainer, Distance Education Coordinator and Virtual Valley Help Desk increasing visibility and ease of access.

17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The college prepares an annual operation plan that documents its financial resources and allocation of resources to support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. College governance structures and the budget and planning process ensure that the college mission is considered in all financial decisions. The district funding structure assures the college's financial stability.

The college has made a commitment to fund the development and offering of courses via online delivery to the same extent as traditional courses. To this end, resources for the expansion of the Virtual Valley Distance Education Program have been allocated from the college's Program 100 operating budget, as well as the Title V and STEM grant. Faculty governance committees have been involved in the planning and use of these resources.

18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Annual financial audits are conducted by externally contracted certified public accountants. The Board of Trustees reviews these audit reports on an annual basis. The financial audit and management responses to any exceptions are reviewed and discussed in public sessions.

19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The college systematically evaluates its programs through the regularly recurring cycle of program review. Data in reports and surveys gathered by the college Office of Research and Planning is used to assess our effectiveness and plan for the future. Information on our effectiveness, compiled in our Fact Book and Effectiveness Manual and other research reports, is distributed throughout the college and made available to the public via the Research and Planning website. We rely on our college mission, goals, and master plans to guide our planning efforts. Through shared governance and program review we assess progress toward achieving our stated goals and make decisions through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. As discussed in previous sections, The Virtual Valley Distance Education Program is involved in the planning process through:

- The Campus Distance Education Committee
- The Technology Committee
- The Educational Master Plan
- The Curriculum Committee

20. PUBLIC INFORMATION

Los Angeles Valley College publishes an annual catalog, which includes extensive general information about the college, regulations and policies affecting students, and requirements for attending, graduating, and transferring. It refers readers to locations, such as the Compliance Office, where other policies may be found. The catalog is carefully checked for accuracy and updated, when necessary, on the college website.

21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The college and the District Board of Trustees hereby affirm by signatures of official representatives that Los Angeles Valley College has consistently adhered to the eligibility requirements, standards, and policies of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. The college describes itself 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 accrediting responsibilities. All disclosures by the college are complete, accurate, and honest.

G. Evidence of Fulfilling Accreditation Standards

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A. Mission

The increase in distance education course delivery supports the college mission and is aligned with the purposes, character, and student population**.** The student body of LAVC includes many working adults with a variety of family obligations. The opportunity to take all or part of their required courses online greatly increases the opportunity for them to further their progress towards graduating or transferring to a university.

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

As part of the planning for the expansion of the distance education program, LAVC engaged in a continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. Efforts included course surveys taken by the online instructor at the conclusion of the individual course, general campus surveys to faculty regarding their technological needs, general student surveys identifying high demand online courses. In addition, the Campus Distance Education Committee meetings on a monthly basis to address operational and procedural issues related to the online course delivery system.

The Educational Master Plan supports this change and specifically called for the college to increase the number of online courses offered. To date there are over 100 approved online classes in over 36 different subject areas. The distance education program grew from 106 FTES in 2007 to 135 FTES in 2008. We are projecting a 10% increase in FTES per year based on the variety of courses and number of sections. If accomplished, the college would reach a target of 212 FTES in 2012 for distance education. At the same time, the distance education program is striving to meet or exceed retention rates and succession rates found in face-to-face classes. The institutional researcher is gathering data to assess our efforts. Moreover, the campus has participated in an annual survey conducted by the district to gather information related to student satisfaction and overcoming barriers found in distance education courses. The institution is using these and other documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.

Broad based planning occurs on a regular basis and allows input by appropriate constituencies. The Campus Distance Education Committee is comprised of faculty and administrators representing faculty, administrative and student viewpoints. Monthly Departmental Council meetings allow for input from the department chairs. In addition, the technology committee reviews distance education activities on a monthly basis.

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services

A. Instructional Programs

LAVC has demonstrated that the instructional program in this alternate mode of delivery addresses and meets the mission of the institution and upholds its integrity. Students responding to surveys conducted by the campus and the district ask for more distance education courses. Currently 8% of our student population is taking an online course. With the expansion of our program through this substantial change, we will offer 43 degrees through distance education classes as well as 4 certificates.

LAVC is assessing progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes in distance education classes in the exact manner that it assesses student learning outcomes for face to face classes. The online courses utilize the same learning outcomes as any face-to-face courses, programs, certificates, and degrees. The application of these outcomes is verified in the curriculum approval process.

The college engages in a continual process to improve the distance education program. Student surveys are conducted periodically including questions to assess the quality and needs of the distance learning program. Student focus groups are formed to discuss the needs of the online students and what the college can do to improve the effectiveness of the distance education program.

The distance education program at LAVC in terms of its online delivery system and mode of instruction is compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students. Every course offered online goes through an extensive curriculum approval process that evaluates the effectiveness of the course proposal. LAVC assures the quality and improvement of the distance education program in the exact same way as the face to face courses. These include:

- The approval process of the courses examines the initial quality of the course.

- All faculty offering an online course are trained in the learning management system and the introduction in online pedagogy.

- Continual training is offered in online course design and development.

- A mentor program allows all new instructors to be matched up with experienced online instructors to develop their courses.

- A sample course, best practices course is posted to demonstrate quality online course presentation strategies.

- Department chairs evaluate online instructors and their courses in an ongoing basis using an evaluation tool developed by the college.

The delivery mode and teaching methodologies reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of students. The training programs of the college introduce these methodologies to faculty offering online courses.

Through periodic program review, LAVC evaluates all distance education courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance. The review process uses the exact same evaluation tools developed by the College and the Los Angeles Community College District for face-to-face classes.

Students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about distance education courses and programs through our extensive web site. This website provides a wide range of information for students on distance education courses, distance education policies and procedures, transfer and graduation policies. The college is also developing a student portal that will increase students' ability to create schedules, receive online advisement, and learn about transfer information and graduation requirements.

The Virtual Valley Website and all publications dealing with our distance education program represent distance education with integrity. Instructors provide their students with letters that describe the course, expectations and skills needed to successfully complete the course. It is also made clear that these classes are just as rigorous, or even more so, than face-to-face classes. All the policies on academic freedom and student academic honesty are published in the college catalogue and schedule of classes which are also posted online and easily accessible to students.

B. Student Support Services

The college currently provides students online support for financial aid, college advisement, and tutoring. All catalog, scheduling, course descriptions, information on degrees and transfer requirements are online and available for student access. Students have full capability to apply for admission, register for classes, purchase textbooks, request grades and transcripts online. Online students have access to orientation, counseling (inc. specialized services, such as Veterans, International Students, etc.), assessment, matriculation information, financial aid, scholarships, etc.

The Etudes classroom management system allows for accommodations for disabilities. All assignments can be modified to reflect the individual needs of the student including more time on a test and more opportunities to complete an assignment.

C. Library and Learning Support Services

The Virtual Valley Distance Education Program provides library services for online students and access to educational materials. The library and its resources are all online. Librarians have been "embedded" into distance education courses to provide specific guidance in research and developing projects for distance education courses. The "Introduction to the Library and Research" courses are offered online and taught by a librarian who has been trained and certified for Distance Education instruction.

Access to learning support services is available for distance education students. The tutoring center offers distance education tutoring with fully trained and certified online instructors. In addition the Writing Center offers virtual support services.

Standard III: Resources

A. Human Resources

The college assures the integrity and quality of online education by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience. Only instructors who have gone through an certification training program in the college's classroom management system which includes beginning course design are allowed to be instructors of a distance education course. The negotiated district-union bargaining agreement requires that only trained instructors will be offered a distance education course.

The college ensures that appropriate training and continued professional development is available for distance education instructors. Initial training in the Course Management System and introduction to course design is required by the bargaining agreement. In addition, the college sponsors a Technology Festival (TechFest) that provides instructors training in use of a variety of programs such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel, web design and additional software as requested which can be utilized in their distance education courses.

The college sponsors specific training sessions for just the distance education faculty on advanced techniques and features of distance learning including the tools used in the classroom management system as well as teaching and learning strategies. A full time Distance Education trainer and Instructional Designer not only coordinate the courses, but also offers one-on-one help in distance learning instruction and course design. Instructors learn to integrate multimedia (video, audio, animations) while learning best practices. These tools are enabling our faculty to deliver instruction in more relevant ways that our students will understand and positively respond. The increased level of interactive instruction will motivate students to learn, and result in enhanced satisfaction levels of students taking online courses.

A yearly on campus Technology Festival is presented over a three day period that provides close to 40 technology and distance education courses. A yearly three day Great Online Teachers retreat is conducted allowing instructors to offer examples of quality instruction and course improvement. Funding is offered for instructors to attend distance education and technology conferences such as TechEd, ETUDES, @One and others.

B. Physical Resources

The college has made significant contributions to the support the online program in providing a wide variety of physical resources. A help desk is located in an on campus computer lab and is open five days a week. The Distance Education Trainer, the Distance Education Coordinator, and the Instructional Designer all have their own offices

including space for faculty to work on their own classes. A digital studio is available for faculty and equipment is loaned out for individual projects. The college also maintains a Professional Development Center which sponsors programs and provides a training facility for distance learning programs. The campus is wired for WiFi connections enabling a variety of settings for distance education training opportunities.

C. Technology Resources

As a result of recommendations made in the LAVC Technology Plan and Educational Master Plan, the college has invested in tech support, hardware, and software to support the distance education program. The college's excellent and highly trained technology support maintains a wide variety of technology which is not only resides at the college, but also a collection of hardware and software that can be checked out to distance learning educators to work on their individual projects. The hardware includes laptops, video cameras and podcast equipment. Funding has been made available for the development of a student portal to assist in communicating to students, online advisement, online tutoring and e portfolios. Appropriate maintenance and upgrading of technology infrastructure and equipment is supported by the LAVC IT department as well as through contracts with outside vendors.

To ensure the effective application of information technology for students, LAVC currently offers a self directed online series of lessons that provide students with the experience needed to become proficient enough to successfully complete their online course.

D. Financial Resources

LAVC has committed considerable financial resources to support the distance education program. Program 100 currently provides the majority of funding needed for the Etudes Course Management System as well as partial funding for the Distance Education Coordinator. The college is continuing to develop its infrastructure with $7 million dollars generated over 5 years through a Title V and Title III STEM grant. This money has gone to support certain distance education positions including the Distance Education Trainer and Instructional Designer, equipment for faculty and students and professional development for the faculty.

As part of the budget analysis conducted for human and financial resource sustainability when grant funding is no longer available, the college has committed to using Program 100 funds to institutionalize the positions of the Distance Education Coordinator as well as the Distance Education Trainer. Program 100 will also continue to provide full funding for the Etudes Course Management System.

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The college follows an effective governance plan to guarantee that viewpoints from all constituents are represented and discussed. Proposals originate from a variety of committees including the Technology Committee, Campus Distance Education Committee, College Council, Curriculum Committee, Student Services, and Departmental Council. Campus constituents from student services, academic affairs and administrative services are part of the Title V and Stem Grant Management Team.

B. Board and Administrative Organization

To date, the Board and the District have not adopted any policies specifically on distance education. However in June 2009 a task force has been developed with representatives from the district office, academic senate, and specific campuses to identify best practices that can be shared throughout the colleges.