

# Substantive Change Application

## Distance Education – 50% of Students or Courses

**Directions:** Complete each section, keeping narratives concise and direct. Should you have any questions, please contact [substantivechange@accjc.org](mailto:substantivechange@accjc.org) and we will be happy to assist you.

Email completed application to [substantivechange@accjc.org](mailto:substantivechange@accjc.org).

<b>Institution name:</b>	Los Angeles Pierce College				
<b>Address:</b>	6201 Winnetka Avenue, Woodland Hills, CA 91371				
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### Select the type of Distance Education approval:

- 50 percent or more of all the institution’s students enrolled in at least one course offered through distance education

21,658 Total number of students | 17,388 Total number of students enrolled in at least one distance education course (Fall 2023 data)

- 50 percent or more of all the institution’s courses available to be offered in the distance education modality

1,208 Total number of courses in catalog | 330 Total number of courses, not sections, available to be offered in distance education modality (Fall 2023 data)

It is the institution’s responsibility to demonstrate the effect of a substantive change on the quality, integrity, capacity, and effectiveness of the total institution. The substantive change process requires evidence of institutional planning, resource commitment to the proposed change, and evidence that following the change, the institution continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. References to the Accreditation Standards are intended to help provide the institution with a framework for its response, and along with the required documentation, align with federal regulations for accreditation standards<sup>1</sup>. Your thorough responses to the questions below and submission of required documentation will assist ACCJC in making its determination.

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<sup>1</sup> 34 CFR § 602.16(a)

**Describe how the distance education modality is consistent with the mission of the institution (Standard 1.1).**

At Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC), the distance education modality is consistent with the mission. The LAPC mission states that the College provides “quality, inclusive, and innovative academic, technical, and cultural educational opportunities” and “caring, equitable services.” LAPC’s abundance of online courses and service offerings “engage, enrich, and empower” students to make their own choices about how they receive their education ([01 LAPCMissionStatement](#)).

LAPC’s commitment to students and the distance education modality is reflected in the College’s values ([02 LAPCValues](#)). To address students’ varying academic needs, the College’s aims to be student-centered with an emphasis on constant growth to address the changing needs of our students. The distance education modality allows students with work, family, and/or other responsibilities to complete their academic pathway. LAPC’s distance education offers students over 90 areas of study and 183 degree and certificate options, including credit and noncredit. Twelve programs and eight certificates can be earned through all online courses ([03 LAPC 2023-2024Catalog](#)). To ensure quality and innovation, LAPC adheres to the LAPC Regular and Effective Contact Policy, which requires that all instructors facilitate interaction comparable to a regular, face-to-face class.

**Describe how distance education will be integrated into the institution’s regular review of relevant and meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate its progress and inform plans for improvement and innovation (Standard 1.3).**

LAPC integrates discussion of distance education data through the program review process. Relevant and meaningful disaggregated data is presented on interactive dashboards on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) website ([04 OIEWebsiteDashboards](#)). During the program review process, departments must analyze the trends of student completion, retention, and success, and distance education data is incorporated into this analysis. Departments analyze the distance education disaggregated data with the face-to-face modality. This reflection then leads to improvement plans ([05 AnthroData](#); [06 LibraryCPR](#); [07 ChicanoStudiesCPR](#))

**Describe how the distance education modality meets students and curricular needs and promotes equitable student learning and achievement (Standard 2.6).**

The LAPC distance education courses meet students’ curricular needs. All courses, regardless of delivery mode, follow the same curriculum process outlined in Administrative Procedures 4020, and all DE classes follow the Course Outline of Record (COR) and student learning outcomes (SLOs) ([08 AP4020](#)). Additionally, faculty follow the AFT 1521 Faculty collective bargaining agreement, which outlines the expectations that DE classes follow the same requirements as face-to-face classes and outlines that faculty must be trained to teach DE classes ([09 AFT1521Article40](#)). The LACCD also issued important guidance regarding DE instruction. Instructors must take two classes to become DE certified, and instructors must follow the instructor-student contact policy, which requires weekly interaction between instructor and student ([10 DEHandbook](#)).

LAPC strives to promote equitable student learning and achievement through its distance education offerings. LAPC is a flagship campus for local Peer Online Course Review (POCR). In March 2021, Pierce became a CVC Local POCR Certified Campus ([11 POCRCertification](#)). POCR aims to help faculty

develop their online courses to meet quality standards developed by the California Virtual Campus - Online Education Initiative (CVC -OEI). The peer-review process focuses on appropriate and effective use of technology to create online courses that are 100% accessible, engaging, inclusive, and visually appealing for students.

In a 2024 LAPC study, the College revealed an overall 5% increase in course success rates after POOCR course alignment. The greatest increases in success rates were among Asian (+8% increase), Black (+8% increase), and Hispanic (+10% increase) students, and students under 20 (+6% increase) and students between 20-24 (+10% increase). Increases of 4% to 25% were seen across all genders. These results illustrate the power of POOCR to increase student success and help close equity gaps ([12\\_POOCRSuccessData](#)).

**Describe how the institution designs and delivers equitable and effective services and programs (e.g., counseling, advising, tutoring, library, etc.) that support students in the distance education modality (Standard 2.7).**

All LAPC student services and programs provide students with online options. For example, services such as the Center for Academic Success (CAS), the Library, and the Counseling Department offer students many virtual services to meet the needs of online students.

The CAS encourages students to call or Zoom with the CAS help desk for guidance on all the online tutoring and workshop opportunities. The CAS offers online, simultaneous tutoring and embedded tutors within an online class. Other services include virtual paper drop-off, where a student “drops-off” a paper and a tutor responds with video feedback within two working days. During the spring 2024 semester, the CAS offered 89 online or hybrid workshops from topics ranging from reading and writing skills to STEM success.

The LAPC Counseling Department offers online students complete virtual counseling services. Students can make virtual appointments for a standard 30–60-minute session, or students can jump into a quick video and live chat for an express, 10-15-minute session. Virtual workshops on subject specific topics are available each month, and student counseling groups, for students who are new to college, are offered twice per month. Finally, students are always encouraged to send email inquiries to the general counseling email address, and the inquiries are answered within two working days.

The LAPC library offers the necessary equipment to complete online courses and offers virtual assistance to students. Students are welcome to check out headphones, chargers, and Surface tablets, and the library has created a “Zoom Zone” to support students participating in asynchronous online courses. Students are always encouraged to phone the library help desk or email inquiries with questions. To ease students’ stress, students may chat with a Librarian 24-hours a day, 365-days a year through the “Chat with a Librarian” function on the library homepage. Students may also make appointments to Zoom with a librarian for more complex questions and assistance. To further assist students with questions about research, the library created a self-enrollable Canvas course with information about research, evaluating sources, and citing sources. Finally, the library has earmarked a portion of the budget for ebooks so that students can request purchases of ebook titles that are not currently available.

The program review process for student services mirrors that of instruction program review process. Disaggregated distance education data is analyzed, and improvement plans are discussed to ensure equitable and effective services ([13\\_AnthroCPRAnnualUpdate](#)).

**Describe how the institution ensures that “regular and substantive interaction” occurs between students and instructors** (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*).

The LACCD Administrative Procedure 4105 establishes the requirements for all distance education offerings ([14 AP4105](#)). Courses must meet the requirements set forth in AP 4105 to be approved, and these requirements include regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors.

The Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee (DEITC), a participatory governance committee that reports to the Academic Senate, set forth a procedure for Regular and Effective Contact. This procedure was ratified by the Academic Senate on May 4, 2020, and instructors are expected to abide by the guidelines to provide DE classes with an appropriate and effective learning environment ([15 LAPCRegularEffectiveContactPolicy](#)). Specifically, the LAPC Regular Effective Contact Policy provides insight on how to use technology to meet Title 5, Section 55204 requirements for instructor contact. This policy is posted in LAPC Faculty Canvas Resources and on the PierceOnline, Instructor Resources page of the Pierce College website. These expectations are also presented in the instructor DE Handbook. The LACCD Vice Chancellor also communicates the expectations related to regular and effective instructor contacts via email communication ([16 ViceChancellorCommunication](#)).

Faculty, both in-person and online, are evaluated according to union contractual guidelines to ensure quality instruction, and these guidelines outline regular, substantive, and systematic contact between instructor and student ([09 AFT1521Article40](#))

**Describe how the institution authenticates students in distance education courses** (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*).

LACCD Administrative Procedure 4105 provides guidelines for Distance Education (DE) classes ([14 AP4105](#)). This procedure outlines the District’s responsibility in authenticating or verifying a student’s identity. The methods of authentication or verification include secure credentialing/login and password, proctored examinations, or new or other technologies that verify student identification.

Moreover, the district applies application filters through the California Community Colleges application portal, CCCApply, to identify potentially fraudulent students. When students are identified through these filters, they are prevented from being loaded into the college SIS and receive a message directing them to verify their identity with our local Admissions and Records Office either in-person or in a live Zoom meeting. If they fail to verify their identity, they are not permitted to enter the district SIS to register in courses. In addition to these measures, the district regularly runs algorithms on the students within our SIS to identify potentially fraudulent students. If a student within our SIS is identified as potentially fraudulent, a hold is placed on their account that blocks them from adding classes, and they receive a message directing them to verify their identity with our local Admissions and Records Office either in-person or in a live Zoom meeting. If they fail to verify their identity, the hold on their account is upgraded so that they are denied access to the SIS and removed from their classes.

**Describe how the institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.1).**

LACCD has established recruitment and hiring procedures based on a shared responsibility of faculty, classified staff, and administrators to participate effectively in all phases of the hiring process, including job descriptions that meet programmatic needs and institutional mission. All hired personnel meet the minimum qualifications, non-U.S. degree equivalency, have been thoroughly screened, interviewed in accordance with all EEO requirements, and the responsible hiring manager checks all references under the supervision of the college vice president.

Locally, LAPC adheres to all LACCD policies and procedures, and the College has instituted its own practices related to mission driven job posting, faculty recruitment, and specific LAPC hiring procedures.

LACCD, in Administrative Procedure 4105, indicates that the same standards of course quality are applied to distance education courses as are applied to in-person courses. LAPC ensures that faculty are trained in appropriate use of technology before they become certified to teach online. Prior to teaching online, all new online instructors must complete two courses: Introduction to Canvas and Introduction to Online teaching. Completion of these courses assures the integrity of teaching in the online environment.

All courses, regardless of delivery mode, follow the same curriculum process outlined in Administrative Procedures 4020, and all DE classes follow the Course Outline of Record (COR) and student learning outcomes (SLOs) ([08 AP4020](#)). Additionally, faculty follow the collective bargaining agreement, which outlines the expectations that DE classes follow the same requirements as face-to-face classes and outlines that faculty must be trained to teach DE classes.

The LAPC Distance Education Handbook underscores the College's commitment to providing inclusive, quality, and innovative DE courses and outlines the LAPC policies on DE certification and instructor-student interactions ([10 DEHandbook](#)). To ensure quality online classes, LAPC requires that a faculty member who has not taught a DE class in five years must be re-certified. Furthermore, LAPC is an official Peer Online Course Review campus, which was developed by the California Virtual Campus – Online Education Initiative (evidence). This program encourages and assists faculty to create quality online courses.

The College supports distance education through the LAPC DE office, PierceOnLine, which provides a plethora of online trainings opportunities to keep faculty abreast of new technologies as well as to remind faculty of existing technology options. To facilitate growth and maintain excellence, the College ensures that the PierceOnLine office has a qualified staff. The Office has one full-time DE coordinator and two full-time support staff members.

**Describe the institution's fiscal resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.4).**

Provide a budget showing evidence the institution has the capacity to maintain distance education. LAPC supports and sustains the distance education modality through fiscal resources. The LAPC DE Office PierceOnLine consists of a team of qualified professionals who work tirelessly to meet DE students' needs. The team consists of one 1.0 FTE distance education coordinator and two full-time

support staff professionals. We have a team of faculty supporting faculty with training and the College Peer Online Course Review (POCR). LAPC has plans to add an ADA specialist to the team.

<b>Distance Education Annual Budget</b>	<b>Salary/Total</b>
1 Distance Education Coordinator (1.0 FTE)	\$ 274,400
1 Online Multimedia Specialist (1.0 FTE)	\$ 199,580
1 Online Technical Support Assistant (1.0 FTE)	\$ 132,256
Instructional Equipment and Supplies	\$ 70,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 676,236</b>

*Professional Development Coordinator*

A staff member (1.0) runs the professional development program at the college, plans training sessions, oversees the training center used for most of the sessions, and publicizes the workshops and training opportunities. Numerous hour-long workshops are available throughout the year which provide interactive and hands-on sessions, giving faculty practical strategies to implement in classes

*Professional Development Instructor Special Assignment*

A faculty member (0.4 release time) coordinates faculty professional development, some of which is related to distance learning.

LAPC also makes use of the district-provided fiscal support that employs District DE Staff who conduct professional learning activities. There are many workshops and webinars taught on a rotating basis by DE certified trainers from all nine District colleges throughout the year.

**Describe the institution’s physical resources including, if applicable, equipment and supplies, to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.8).**

The PierceOnLine space houses the majority of the physical resources that support and sustain the distance education modality. The Distance Education Coordinator and the Distance Education Support Staff have dedicated offices, which allow space for faculty to meet for individualized training and instruction. The PierceOnLine space also consists of a large conference room for group workshops.

The LAPC library provides students with access to computers to ease any student stress related to computer access. The library houses 104 computers in the computer lab for students to use; the Associated Student Organization (ASO) provides eight computers for students; the Center for Academic Success (CAS) provides an open computer lab with twenty computers while the CAS Writing Center has 25 computers for student use.

All faculty and staff at LAPC have access to a desktop or laptop computer, a monitor, keyboard, and docking station. LAPC has 150 Owl intelligence systems, which allow for easy in-person and remote participation for meetings and courses.

Requests for additional equipment and supplies by departments are made through the program review process.

**Describe the institution's technology resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.9).**

LAPC's homepage provides valuable information to support distance education students. Students have access to key areas in Student Services, and these services are available in-person as well as online: Academic Counseling & Advisement; Admission & Records; Athletics; Bookstore; Business Office; CalWORKs; Career Center; Center for Academic Success; Dream Resource Center; EOP&S/CARE/CAFYES; Financial Aid; First Year Experience; Honors; Transfer Program; International Student Services; L.A. Promise/Outreach; Library; Office of Special Services/DSPS; Program for Accelerated College Education (PACE); Program Mapper; Student Health Center; Student Success and Support; Transfer Center; Umoja; Veterans Resource Ctr./FA & GI Bill.

PierceOnLine provides ample resources to students as well as faculty. The PierceOnLine homepage links students and staff to valuable and comprehensive resources ([17 PierceOnLineWebsite](#)).

The CVC-OEI Online Network of Educators provides faculty training and professional development on the basics of Canvas, the fundamentals of course design, and the principles of quality virtual instruction through courses, webinars, articles, videos, and more. The CVC-OEI Online Ecosystem gives guidance on how to integrate tools such as virtual tutoring, counseling, and proctoring into courses.

The LAPC Online Help Desk team provides direct support to students and faculty who need help with the online learning platform. Students have 24/7 support through the Canvas Chat feature.

Computers are provided to each full-time faculty member and a computer station is available for adjuncts.

Online tutoring is available via the Center for Academic Success (CAS) and via Net Tutor, which connects students with a real, live tutor at their moment of need. Students can also access NetTutor asynchronously by submitting questions and returning later for tutor feedback.

**Describe how the institution's decision-making structures support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality (Standard 4.3).**

LAPC's decision-making structures, such as shared governance committees and program review, support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality.

The Technology Committee (TC), composed of students, faculty, staff, and administrative representatives, represents a participatory governance committee entrusted with the responsibility of defining and evaluating LAPC technology needs. This committee reports to the Pierce College Council (PCC), and this body works to craft and support the Technology Master Plan. While the District organizes most technology services and personnel, the College collaborates with the District on local technology needs related to distance education.

In addition to the TC, the Distance Education, and Instructional Technology Committee (DEITC) works to improve equitable outcomes for students in the distance education modality. The DEITC is a sub-committee of the Academic Senate and works to set guidelines associated with technical and instructional support and design including personnel, services, software, training, and equipment to assure the successful use of educational technology and to improve the quality of the Distance

Education Program. DEITC's DE handbook outlines LAPC and District policies related to distance education and instructor best practices ([10 DEHandbook](#)).

Departments' program review process also illustrates the College's commitment to improving student outcomes in the distance education modality. Departments and Programs outline short- and long-term goals and ask for funds, such as technology requests, and analyze disaggregated distance education data. Department program reviews are then reviewed by the Vice Presidents and Deans of the divisions to further discuss plans for improvement.

### Required Documentation

Provide a hyperlink or include documentation for each item below. Be sure to provide a clear, descriptive name for each document.

- Documentation of the institution's advertising and recruitment policies, demonstrating alignment with the [Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment](#).
- Policies/processes for student complaints, demonstrating how the institution communicates process to students and handles complaints with due process.
- Documentation of institution's implementation of the required components of the Title IV Program (if applicable), including:
  - Findings from any audits and program/other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
  - Evidence of timely corrective action taken in response to any Title IV audits or program reviews

See [Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV](#)

### Supporting Evidence

**Please provide any evidence that supports the narrative above as separate files. Please link evidence where appropriate in the narrative. Do not embed evidence files into the application.**

### Evidence List

Number and Title of Evidence
<a href="#">01 LAPCMissionStatement</a>
<a href="#">02 LAPCValues</a>
<a href="#">03 LAPC 2023-2024Catalog</a>
<a href="#">04 OIEWebsiteDashboards</a>
<a href="#">05 AnthroData</a>
<a href="#">06 LibraryCPR</a>
<a href="#">07 ChicanoStudiesCPR</a>
<a href="#">08 AP4020</a>
<a href="#">09 AFT1521Article40</a>
<a href="#">10 DEHandbook</a>



<a href="#">11_POCRCertification</a>
<a href="#">12_POCRSuccessData</a>
<a href="#">13_AnthroCPRAnnualUpdate</a>
<a href="#">14_AP4105</a>
<a href="#">15_LAPCRegularEffectiveContactPolicy</a>
<a href="#">16_VlceChancelorCommunication</a>
<a href="#">17_PierceOnLineWebsite</a>

**Evidence List for Required Documentation**

<b>Number and Title of Evidence</b>
<a href="#">RD01_LAPC2024-2025Catalog</a>
<a href="#">RD02_LAPCWebsite</a>
<a href="#">RD03_StudentGrievance</a>
<a href="#">RD04_StudentRights</a>
<a href="#">RD05_MatriculationCompliant</a>
<a href="#">RD06_StudentDisciplineExample</a>
<a href="#">RD07_AcademicDishonestyForm</a>
<a href="#">RD08_UnsatisfactoryNotice</a>
<a href="#">RD09_StudentCompliantProcessNarrative</a>
<a href="#">RD10_StudentCompliantProcessWebsite</a>
<a href="#">RD11_USDE-EligibilityCertification</a>
<a href="#">RD12_FinAidAppeal</a>
<a href="#">RD13_ExtAuditpgs12-18</a>