

Distance Education Committee

Meeting Minutes of March 24th, 2026

Respectfully Submitted by Tejal Naik

Committee Members			
Tejal Naik (Chair)	X	Grace Estrada (ACCC Chair)	X
Maggie Grover (NURS)		Vacant (Classified)	
Bonnie Brown (STEM)	X	Ken Nguyen (CTSS) (Ex. Officio)	
Will Thai (COUNS)		Shashi Naidu (Classified)	
Nicholas Goodwin (At-Large)	X	Vacant (Student)	
Fahmida Fakhruddin (Associate At-large)	X	Angel Fuentes (Div Dean)	
Long Tran (B&W)	X	Ebonnie Berry (MSC) (Ex. Officio)	
Nasreen Rahim (Past DE Chair)	X		
Sara Jacome (LA)	X*		
vacant (SSHAPE)			

Guests
Sylvia Min
Patricia James

* Attended on Zoom

I. Call to Order

Chair called the meeting to order at 3:23 pm

II. Adoption/Approval of Agenda

1st: Fahmida Fakhruddin

2nd: Long Tran

Change order of Discussion items a) and b). Approved unanimously. No abstinence.

III. Approval of minutes

1. Minutes 2-24-25

1st: Fahmida Fakhruddin

2nd: Nicholas Goodwin

No changes. Approved unanimously. No abstinence

IV. Public Comments (3 min per person)

This portion of the meeting is reserved for items not on the agenda. Law does not permit action or extended discussion of items not on the agenda except under special circumstances.

Public Comment 1: Sylvia Min raised the need for a clearer DE certification equivalency pathway for experienced online instructors who completed training at other colleges.

Examples were shared from other institutions that use a coordinator led course walkthrough to determine whether prior training and current course design meet local online teaching expectations.

Public Comment 2: Tejal shared information on the NSF ATE Badging ProSkills grant work

with SRI. The project focuses on recognizing professional skills such as communication, teamwork, and lifelong learning through badges that students can share on résumés and LinkedIn.

DEC Chair Report

Tejal provided an ADA Title II accessibility update and emphasized that accessibility must be designed proactively rather than addressed only after an accommodation request. Discussion included captions, color contrast, accessible mobile content, accessible PDFs, and the growing expectation for audio description when visual information is essential to understanding course content. The Chancellor's office memo give a deadline of April 2026 for California Community Colleges system to align with the Title II update and the expectation that institutions still working toward compliance may need a plan showing how they will get there.

She also shared a ZTC grant update and noted that the fiscal report for 2024-2025 for all three grants – Implementation, Acceleration and Impact has been submitted by our new fiscal lean VP Dickerson. There were some concerns regarding the pathways submitted under implementation grant and they (VP Dickerson and Tejal) will be meeting with the grant coordinator Chad Funk to address them. Remaining grant funds may still be available for faculty who want to create or curate OER. Members were encouraged to let colleagues know about possible small, medium, and large project support. A follow up is still needed on project completion timelines because available funds must be spent this calendar year

V. Information/Discussion items

1. **Nectir AI virtual assistant:** Tejal shared that about 62 people registered for the four hour PDD training on the Nectir AI virtual assistant. Initial feedback was positive. Faculty appreciated that the tool can function as an in-course tutor and that instructors can better control the knowledge sources and responses students receive. The discussion also reflected ongoing interest in giving students a safer, vetted option inside the course rather than sending them to public AI tools with unclear data practice

2. **AI CoP (AI Community of Practice):** Tejal reported that the AI Community of Practice is continuing through a Microsoft Copilot exploration workshop on Zoom and through an asynchronous faculty resource space. The plan is to launch the asynchronous course in the week of April 6, with discussion-based participation and resources focused on topics such as AI ethics, bias, and classroom use.
3. **ADA Title II update & ACMM (Accessibility Capability Maturity Model):** Tejal shared that EVC is exploring participation in the Accessibility Capability Maturity Model cohort through the CCC Accessibility Center. The process would help the college review accessibility practices across courses, websites, documents, flyers, and physical spaces, identify gaps, and build more systematic processes and help align with the new ADA Title II updates. Dean Morgan is taking the lead, and broader campus and district collaboration will be needed.
4. **DE Handbook update sections 1, 2 and 3:** The committee conducted its annual review of the handbook with the goal of improving clarity and completeness rather than making major policy changes. Members noted that the membership section will need updating to reflect the recent ex officio changes.

Members noted that any change to the committee charge must also align with the President's governance handbook and Senate approval practice.

A significant portion of the review focused on clarifying language in section 1 and 2, including DEC role in curriculum review, identifying virtual equivalent components, and updating references to CVC-OEI.

Tejal asked the committee member to review sections 2, 3 and 4 and add comments to the shared DE handbook draft so the review at the next meeting can move more efficiently.
5. **DE certification and Equivalency:** Using a current Art adjunct case as context, the committee discussed whether EVC should create a more formal equivalency or walkthrough process for faculty who have prior online teaching experience or completed training elsewhere. Under the current approach, emergency hires may teach for one semester if they complete DE certification concurrently, but this case highlighted gaps in communication, tracking, and follow up. The discussion also surfaced process gaps affecting associate faculty, including incomplete communication through district email lists and the lack of a current, regularly

refreshed eligibility list. Tejal noted the need for better coordination so adjunct faculty receive timely information about certification requirements and deadlines.

VI. Recognition and Announcements.

Tejal will be attending the [AACCC 2026 conference](#) in Seattle with Dean Angel Fuentes and Nasreen Rahim. They will be presenting at [two sessions](#) at the conference.

VII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:49pm.
