



Call for Proposals

DEAC 100th Anniversary Conference

April 19-21, 2026

The Salamander | Washington, DC

We are thrilled at the prospect of your contribution to DEAC's Centennial Conference! Your expertise and insights are invaluable as we celebrate 100 years of advancing quality distance education. This milestone event is not only a time to honor our shared history but also an opportunity to shape the future together. We look forward to your ideas and to welcoming you to Washington, DC, for an inspiring and collaborative experience.

Inspiration for the 100th Annual Conference Theme:

DEAC's 100th Annual Conference brings DEAC-accredited institutions and applicants for accreditation together to advance the enduring legacy of distance education and to equip practitioners to enhance educational quality and outcomes in the century ahead.

FREEDOM TO LEARN

For nearly a century, distance education has embodied a revolutionary promise: that learning should transcend the boundaries of place, circumstance, and convention.

When visionary educators founded the non-profit that would become DEAC in 1926, they recognized that quality education could—and should—reach beyond traditional classroom walls to meet learners where they are. This "Freedom to Learn" has been our north star through decades of transformation, from correspondence courses delivered by mail to today's sophisticated digital platforms.

Conference Presentation Tracks:

Inspired by this legacy and intent on envisioning the future of quality distance education, this year's conference seeks to provide participants with learning opportunities in five tracks:



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- * Teaching & Learning with Technology (including AI)
- * Policy, Legislation & Strategy
- * Workforce Development & Return on Investment
- * Academic Excellence & Assessment
- * Leadership & Mission Achievement

Additional topics that provide resources for institutions in carrying out high-quality distance education in compliance with DEAC Standards are also welcome.

Past participants tell us they most appreciate:

- Concrete, actionable, application of DEAC Standards in “must-do” and “pitfalls to avoid” type of examples.
- Resources to stay ahead of legislative/regulatory developments on the horizon (for example, Title II Digital Accessibility and Workforce Pell changes)
- Presentations on digital learning best practices and other technological innovations that are generalizable to multiple platforms/tools rather than one specific technology

About Conference Participants:

DEAC fosters a vibrant community of distance education leaders, innovators, and partners, who have committed to peer review in service of their institutions’ development.

Of the institutional leaders who have attended recent conferences, about two-thirds attend on behalf of schools seeking accreditation and one-third represent DEAC-accredited institutions. Most conference attendees are institutional decision-makers with broad, integrative responsibilities for academic quality, operational excellence, and compliance rather than technical or specialized domains.

Based on DEAC’s unique scope of accreditation, all DEAC institutions operate programs via primarily distance education (51% or more of each program must be delivered online for the institution to be eligible for DEAC accreditation).



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Proposal Instructions & Selection Process:

Interested presenters should download and fill out a [Breakout Session Proposal Form](#) and return it via email to kate.sudarsan@deac.org.

All submissions received by **January 16, 2026**, will be reviewed by DEAC and the Centennial Committee.

Presenters whose sessions are selected will be notified by **February 2, 2026**, and we will ask that you confirm your participation by **February 9, 2026**.

DEAC's Support for Presentations Includes:

- * **Optional Templates:** DEAC will provide slide designs that use DEAC branding and conference-related imagery for presenters who wish to use them. However, since variety makes for memorable lessons, presenters are free to use any template they wish. We will provide guidance on slide dimensions, fonts, and colors that will best suit the space and the provided AV equipment.
- * **Presentation Technology:** In each breakout session room, DEAC provides a presentation laptop, clicker to advance the presentation, large screen, and speaker microphone. If your presentation requires computer-based audio, please be sure to note that in the proposal form where indicated so that your session can be scheduled in a room with full AV equipment and staff.
- * **Electronic Presentation & Handout Sharing:** Presenters will receive a link to upload final presentations no later than **Monday, April 13**, for testing on conference equipment and sharing with participants via the event mobile app. If your session requires a worksheet or handout, it must be provided to DEAC no later than **Monday, April 6** for printing. After that



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date, presenters will need to provide their own printouts or upload a fillable, electronic version of the handout for inclusion in the event app.

- * **Support for Application of DEAC Standards:** DEAC Staff stand ready to support speakers in making concrete connections between their presentation topics and maintaining continuous compliance with DEAC standards. We are happy to meet to discuss issues that are most relevant to DEAC institutions, common pitfalls that come before peer Evaluators and the Commission, and best practices that can be shared, especially but not exclusively for presenters who are not presently associated with DEAC institutions or who have not participated in DEAC processes.

Tips for Submitting Proposals:

- * Individual and panel presentations are equally welcome.
- * Please fill out the form completely to aid the selection committee and streamline the process of moving quickly from proposal to publication of the program. If you are unsure how to respond to any question on the form, please reach out.
- * It is not necessary to incorporate the conference theme directly into your proposed session titles and descriptions (for example, for a conference near a baseball stadium, titling a session “Hitting it Out of the Park.”) While an attention-grabbing title is helpful, clever thematic tie-ins can actually obscure what’s distinctive about your session. Help attendees scan quickly for the best-fitting sessions to attend by being clear and concise about what you will cover.

Thank you for considering offering a session to our DEAC community at this important milestone event! Feel free to reach out to kate.sudarsan@deac.org with any questions.



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