California Community Colleges

SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY:
Scaling Playlab (January 2026)

This webinar discussed the Playlab pilot and plans to begin expanding access across the system. Guest presenters included Dr. Christyna Serrano of Playlab, Fabiola Torres of Glendale Community College, and Scott James of Santiago Canyon College.

What is the Playlab Pilot Program?

- Playlab is a technology non-profit organization supporting educators and students in learning how to create artificial intelligence (AI) tools to fit their needs.
- The Playlab pilot professional learning community allows participants to develop and customize their own AI bots to support student learning and handle administrative tasks. Workshops help faculty, staff, and students understand the possibilities and risks of AI.
- One goal of the pilot effort has been to understand how AI can be leveraged to create accessible and universal design for learning (UDL) environments that can improve the learning environment for students with variable learning disabilities.
- Playlab provided the use of their AI free of charge for the pilot program.

What is the Vision for Expanding the Pilot?

- Playlab is partnering with the Chancellor's Office to build systemwide AI literacy through capacity-building. The focus is on developing technical, ethical, and governance literacies around the use of AI to support Vision 2030 goals.
- The partnership began in Fall 2024 with a professional learning community model involving over 400 college administrators, faculty and staff. Participants have created more than 200 AI tools, and 97% report a positive experience with using Playlab. The pilot project demonstrated readiness, confidence, and a shift among participants from being AI consumers toward a more creator mindset.
- The goal now is to move from experimentation toward sustained, campus-owned capacity, with more college faculty and staff moving from training and individual experimentation to implementation and reuse of tools and a shared infrastructure. The project will move from centralized delivery by Playlab and the Chancellor's Office toward a train-the-trainer model and distributed leadership, to achieve local ownership and statewide coherence in the use of AI tools. To date, 210 participants have done "train-the-trainer" sessions, and 75 have earned a badge preparing them to lead professional learning communities to expand the efforts systemwide.

How Have Pilot Colleges Used Playlab to Develop Custom Tools?

- Faculty and staff across colleges are successfully designing AI solutions to address local instructional, student support, and operational needs.
  - Wanda Butterly, an instructional technologist at Las Positas College, developed ComplyBot to help faculty and staff at her college develop online content that meets accessibility standards. They can upload non-accessible content into the bot, which then creates HTML code to quickly remediate the content to comply with the standards. The bot works for Canvas content as well as Word and PDF documents. This application is available to people at other colleges through Playlab, and can be easily adapted.
  - Carlos Guerrero at Los Angeles City College designed an assignment-specific bot to provide students with guidance for completing a semester project. He reported that using Playlab to develop the bot pushed him to really think about prompt design, anticipating the struggles students might have and how to address them. He indicated that the Playlab AI helped him to come up with means of supporting students with his bot that would mirror his asset-based approach in the classroom.
- These are only two of the many examples of ways participating faculty and staff have used Playlab in and out of the classroom.
- Playlab is responsive to enhancement requests received from users of their tools. One new feature Playlab developed in response to such a request allows users to get feedback from the Playlab AI on how students or other users are interacting with the bots they create. This feature, and the responsiveness that led to its development, is not available with other AIs (e.g., Google Gemini, ChatGPT).

How Can Other Colleges Get Involved with Playlab?

- Some pilot colleges have found the Playlab AI so useful that they invested resources to maintain access to the tool and supports beyond the pilot. The outcome of the initial pilot and this demonstrated interest by colleges in continued use led the Chancellor's Office to invest modest resources in 2025-26 to begin systemwide expansion efforts.
- Participating in a Playlab training can help college faculty and staff learn how to gain access and make the best use of the tool. The Chancellor's Office is focused on ensuring this is a field driven solution, with plans for communication and guidance to eventually expand access systemwide.
- Certified trainers are now helping Playlab develop asynchronous versions of their training sessions, which will be made available through California Virtual Campus for faculty and staff who cannot attend scheduled sessions. Watch for communications about the CVC trainings when they become available.