

ACCJC Peer Review Team Bios

TEAM CHAIR - Dr. Rachel Solemsaas, Chancellor, Hawai'i Community College:



Dr. Rachel Solemsaas was appointed chancellor of Hawai'i Community College in 2016. She previously served as the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services at Truckee Meadows Community College in Nevada. Prior to that appointment, she was Vice President for Administrative Services at Bellevue College and Vice President for Finance and Operations at Edmonds Community College, both in Washington. Dr. Solemsaas earned a doctorate of education in higher education with an emphasis on community college leadership from Washington State University and a master's in public administration from the University of Washington. She earned a bachelor of science in accounting from De La Salle University in Manila. Dr. Solemsaas is serving as Board Director for the American Association of Community College. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The association represents nearly 1,200 2-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 12 million students.

VICE CHAIR - Dr. Lloyd A. Holmes, President, De Anza College:



Dr. Lloyd A. Holmes became president of De Anza College on July 1, 2020. He is the college's fourth president since its founding in 1967. Before joining De Anza, Dr. Holmes was vice president of student services at Monroe Community College in Rochester, N.Y., part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system of two- and four-year schools. He also provided statewide leadership in the SUNY system by mentoring other colleges on a student success initiative and serving on a statewide task force on student hunger. Dr. Holmes was previously an administrator at North Shore Community College in Massachusetts, Coastal Carolina University in South Carolina and the University of Mississippi. He has taught graduate and undergraduate students, and worked as a residence hall adviser, financial aid adviser, coordinator of student wellness and alcohol and drug abuse programs, and dean of students. Dr. Holmes grew up in Mississippi, where he earned an associate degree at Itawamba Community College and a bachelor's degree at the University of Mississippi – both in accounting. He continued his studies at the University of Mississippi by earning a master's degree in higher education and student personnel services, followed by a doctorate in educational leadership.

Dr. Wendy Bass, Distance Education Coordinator, Los Angeles Pierce College:



Dr. Wendy Bass has been the Distance Education Coordinator at LA Pierce College for 12 years. Prior to that she was the DE Coordinator at East Los Angeles College. She is also a professor in Child Development. She obtained her Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of California-Los Angeles. As Pierce College's Distance Education Coordinator, Dr. Bass teaches online courses while establishing campuswide pedagogical standards and operational procedures for online instruction. She serves as the chair of the District Academic Senate Online Education and Academic Technology Committee and has co-chaired CVC Consortium for seven years.

Ms. Grace Commiso, Counselor, Bakersfield College:



Grace has a Masters in Social Work from Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey, and has been dedicated to student learning and success in higher education for over 15 years. Grace spent 7 years working for Rutgers University where she developed and implemented a peer mentor program and oversaw the implementation of new student orientation, including advising and registration, before becoming the Assistant Dean of Students managing early alert and student conduct. Grace joined the Bakersfield College team in 2013. In her time at Bakersfield College, Grace has served as the Temporary Assistant Director for EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs, full-time tenure track faculty Counselor with a focus on early alert, and from 2016 to 2019 Grace served as the Dean of Student Success & Counseling. In her tenure as Dean, she was responsible for several student support areas including Academic Support Services, Counseling, Student Conduct, Testing & Placement, and Student Health & Wellness. During that time, Grace also served as co-chair for BC's Guided Pathways Implementation Team, as well as admin lead for the Implementation of Starfish. In 2019, Grace retreated back to faculty where she now serves as a tenured faculty Counselor in the General Counseling Department, with a focus on student success tools such as Starfish. Lastly, Grace is the Faculty Chair for Guided Pathways at BC and has been the Faculty Chair for BC's Accreditation and Institutional Quality committee for the past 4 years.

Dr. Cynthia Gordon da Cruz, Faculty Coordinator of Institutional Research, Chabot College:



Dr. Gordon da Cruz has worked in multiple areas of higher education: student affairs, leadership development, advising multicultural and student advocacy groups, teaching, and research. Previously, she has worked at the Ohio State University, University of Washington, Harvard Graduate School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, and Saint Mary's College of CA. She has taught courses such as Justice, Community and Leadership; Leadership Development; Educational Inequality; College Student Development; and graduate classes in Research Methods and Action Research. Her own research focuses on community-engaged scholarship, antiracism, and critical democratic citizenship. Dr. Gordon da Cruz is proud to call Chabot College home and aims to provide research in support of policies, pedagogies, and cultural practices that maximize student success and support educational equity and justice.

Dr. Don Miller, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Rio Hondo College:



Dr. Don Miller is the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Rio Hondo College and also serves as past President of the California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers (CCCCIO). During his time at Rio Hondo, he has been responsible for all aspects of Academic Affairs at the College and his current efforts focus on student equity-focused strategic enrollment management (SEM), cross-institutional professional development efforts, and shared governance collaboration intended to lead the College into its future post-pandemic. Dr. Miller previously served as VP of Instruction at College of Alameda, Interim President, and as prior to COA was Dean of Arts Letters and Social Sciences at Las Positas College. Before becoming a full-time administrator, he was a university Spanish faculty member for twenty years and department chair for 8.5 years.

Dr. David Williams, Vice President, Academic Affairs and ALO, Solano Community College:



Dr. Williams is the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Solano Community College (SCC). He is most proud of his work with corrections education and in promoting equitable teaching practices and removing systemic barriers to student success. He serves as the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) at SCC. He is the statewide Chief Instructional Officers Diversity Advocate. Dr. Williams previously served as a dean at Folsom Lake College (FLC), where he oversaw various divisions including Visual & Performing Arts, Language & Literature, and Social & Behavioral Sciences. He was also the first Dean of Institutional Research at the college and was the campus Equity Officer. Prior to his administrative career, he was a Professor of Theatre History and Film, teaching at Texas Tech University, American River College, Cosumnes River College, and UC Berkeley. He has been an adjunct and full-time faculty member as well as a classified professional and classified manager at various institutions. He holds a Ph.D. in Theatre History from UC Davis.

Dr. Kelly Hall, Executive Vice Chancellor of Business and Financial Services, San Diego Community College District:



As Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance and Business Services for San Diego Community College District, Dr. Hall is responsible for developing an annual operating budget that this year stands at \$992 million; overseeing the district's fiscal audit and compliance programs; ensuring timely submission of reports required by local, state and federal regulations; and representing the SDCCD on local, state and national committees. Prior to her work with the San Diego District, Dr. Hall served as Assistant Superintendent/Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs at Southwestern College. Dr. Hall began her California community college career in 2003 as an adjunct professor at College of the Desert in Palm Desert, later becoming a tenured faculty member, faculty chair of Business and Accounting, Academic Senate President and Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Arts & Media. Prior to College of the Desert, Dr. Hall served as Chief Financial Officer for Western Railroad Supply in San Bernardino. A community college transfer student, she has a Ph.D. in organization and management along with a master's degree in corporate management and a bachelor's degree in business administration. She is also a Certified Public Accountant.

Dr. Tracy Huang, Director of Districtwide Research and Institutional Effectiveness, San Mateo County Community College District:



Director, Districtwide Research and Institutional Effectiveness, San Mateo County Community College District. Dr. Tracy Huang is Director of Districtwide Research and Institutional Effectiveness for the San Mateo County Community College District. Dr. Huang oversees and coordinates districtwide research, including areas assessment, student matriculation, student course success and completion, district performance indicators, and districtwide strategic metrics. In addition, she supports the annual financial audits of the district's data for the Student Centered Funding Formula, data submission for IPEDS, and annual Perkins and Strong Workforce reporting. Dr. Huang also teaches statistics for social sciences and psychological methods at Chabot College.

Dr. Richard Rams, Vice President of Student Services, Citrus College:

Dr. Richard Rams (“Rick”) is currently in his 19th year of service in the California Community College system. Rick’s higher education experience began at the University of Kansas, where he served as a Financial Aid Counselor and Assistant Director of Financial Aid. In 2003, Rick launched his community college career in Southern California when he became the Financial Aid Director at Golden West College in Huntington Beach and later served as the Vice President of the California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators Association (CCCSFAAA). In 2006, Rick was selected as the Dean of Student Support Services at Cypress College. One of Rick’s greatest accomplishments while at Cypress was developing the services offered at the Veterans Resource Center and working with the veteran-students behind the iconic \$16 million Veterans Resource Center that opened in Spring 2020 along with a renovated Student Activities Center (SAC). In 2013, Rick was invited to accept the additional duties as Dean of Kinesiology in Athletics in 2013. For those who know and work with Rick, his philosophy of Athletics administration and approach to Athletics excellence was highly influenced by his time working at the University of Kansas. Rick also served as the President of the Orange Empire Conference (OEC) from 2015-2017 where his responsibilities included the coordination and facilitation of administrative meetings, legislation, and policy issues among member institutions. After nearly 15 years serving as Dean at Cypress College, Rick was selected to serve as Vice President of Student Services at Citrus College in February 2021. As Vice President of Student Services, Rick serves as the Chief Student Services Officer designing and supporting programs and services to prepare students for success in their postsecondary goals and to succeed in their personal lives as well. In addition to Rick’s service in higher education, he is currently serving his second, four year term as an elected Trustee of the Buena Park Library District where he has served as the Board President since 2019.

