



OCC Selects Michelle Grimes Hillman as New Vice President of Instruction

The Coast Community College District Board of Trustees approved Michelle Grimes-Hillman as the new Vice President of Instruction at Orange Coast College at its meeting of Dec. 9, 2020. Grimes-Hillman was selected following an extensive nationwide search, and will begin her new role on January 11, 2021. She replaces Kevin Ballinger, who retired in June.

“We are thrilled to welcome Michelle Grimes-Hillman to Orange Coast College,” says President Angelica Suarez. “Michelle brings a wealth of experience as an equity-minded instructional leader both at the local and statewide level. Her deep roots as a former faculty member, faculty leader and instructional administrator provide her with a strong foundation to advance OCC’s mission of academic excellence and student success.”

Grimes-Hillman had dedicated her professional life to serving students in the California Community Colleges. As a former first-generation community college student, she has made it her life’s mission to champion academic opportunities that transform the educational experiences of students inside and outside the classroom.

Grimes-Hillman brings to Orange Coast College nearly 20 years of teaching and faculty leadership experience, and more than eight years of administrative experience in the California community colleges, statewide organizations, and private industry. She comes to OCC from Long Beach City College (LBCC), where she has served as Dean of Academic Affairs, overseeing a number of programs including curriculum, adult education, dual enrollment, guided pathways, and enrollment management, as well as, serving on the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Institutional Effectiveness Partner Resource Teams supporting other colleges in their operational effectiveness.

Prior to her work at LBCC, Grimes-Hillman was a tenured classroom faculty at Mt. San Antonio College where she served as a local senate president and curriculum chair. Her experience also includes being elected to the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges as a member of the Executive Committee where she led efforts with accreditation, guided pathways, and served in a number of leadership positions including co-chair of the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum.

“I have always appreciated Orange Coast College as the premier educational beacon in Orange County,” says Grimes-Hillman. “I’m excited to continue the great work of OCC and work with faculty to promote equitable outcomes for all student groups.”

Grimes-Hillman earned a Bachelor’s Degree in General Psychology and a Master’s Degree in Experimental Psychology from California State University, Fullerton, and was honored as the CSUF Psychology Department’s Alumna of the year in 2004. She also received the prestigious John & Susanne Roueche Excellence Award from the League of Innovation in 2018.

