

Omar J. Torres



Dr. Omar J. Torres brings 25 years of distinguished leadership within the California Community Colleges system. Grounded in the tenets of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Dr. Torres champions participatory governance and honors the contributions of students, faculty, staff, and administrators while promoting the transformative potential of community colleges to advance generational prosperity, workforce advancement, and student success.

Dr. Torres has held administrative roles at De Anza College as president and College of the Canyons as assistant superintendent/vice president of instruction, associate vice president of instruction, and instructional dean. He began his career as a part-time instructor at Los Angeles City College before becoming a tenured full-time faculty member at Moorpark College.

Throughout his administrative career, Dr. Torres has managed a \$150 million annual budget; secured over \$130 million in grants, federal appropriations, and foundation donations; expanded course offerings for dual enrollment, justice-impacted, noncredit, and baccalaureate students; achieved full districtwide accreditation reaffirmation with no areas of deficiency as accreditation liaison officer; and launched a new Advanced Technology Center. Under his leadership, De Anza College was named among the nation's top 200 community colleges eligible for the 2027 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, and College of the Canyons earned the national 2021 Bellwether Award in the Instructional Programs and Services category, recognition from California's Campaign for College Opportunity in 2022 and 2023, and the 2024 Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement.

Beyond his campus service, Dr. Torres has contributed to public policy and regional economic development. Statewide, he served as president of the California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers board and represented the group on Consultation Council, the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee (5C), and CCLC's Advisory Committee on Legislation. He also led the statewide ALIVE (Advancing Leadership Institute for Instructional VPs in Equitable Education) training program, preparing deans of color and allies to become chief instructional officers.

Locally, Dr. Torres served on the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Cupertino, the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley Board, and the Foothill-De Anza Foundation Board, advocating for community colleges as engines of equity and economic mobility.

Dr. Torres earned his Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership from the University of La Verne, M.S. in Chemistry from UCLA, and B.S. in Chemistry from Texas A&M University. He is an internationally recognized co-author of two best-selling textbooks, "Introduction to General, Organic and Biochemistry" and "An Introduction to Physical Science," used by institutions worldwide.