



Karla D. Kirk

Karla Kirk graduated from Fresno City College (FCC) and now serves as the lead faculty in the African American Studies Program. She is responsible for developing the curriculum for all of the courses in the program and is the primary lecturer for nine of the ten courses.

In addition to having served as the FCC President of Academic Senate for two years, she currently serves as the North Representative for the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, which encompasses 116 colleges. She has also served as the Chair of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Black Caucus, and its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. At FCC, she served on the Student Equity Advisory Committee, Distance Education Advisory Committee, Idle and SYMBBA programs, and was secretary for the African American Faculty and Staff Association. She has also served as faculty advisor for the Pan Afrikan Student Union and the Alpha Gamma Sigma Honors Society.

She relentlessly advocates for increased faculty diversity and uplifts other leaders of color around her. She is frequently invited as a speaker or panelist to campuses throughout the state, to share her expertise regarding equity and fair representation for students and professionals in higher education. Not only is she a product of Fresno City College, but also of the Westside of Fresno, where she has played an instrumental role in the planning of the new West Fresno campus.

Karla strives to open the door of opportunity for other emerging leaders of color. One of her colleagues was awarded a \$4.1 million grant to launch HOPE (Housing Opportunities Promote Education), the first academic support program for the homeless at FCC. With Karla's mentorship and support, the program has grown to over \$67 million with plans for over 350 affordable apartments by the end of 2024 and has grown strong partnerships with both the City and County of Fresno. HOPE is now a model program for the entire state and the nation to combat homelessness.

Karla earned her A.A. in African American studies at Fresno City College, her B.A. in history and her M.A. in world history at Fresno Pacific University.