

Norma Kehdi, PsyD
Senior Director
Accessible Education Center

I am interested in joining the UO Senate for an opportunity to be part of and contribute to the discussions that shape the academic landscape of the University. I began my position as the Sr. Director of the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at the UO in July 2022, returning to my alma mater after nearly 20 years! I have worked in higher education for almost a decade, in both private and public institutions, and a community college, in various positions in counseling centers and disability support offices. I have taught a master's level course, guest lectured, co-authored a book chapter, and have additional published contributions. Because of these varied experiences, I believe I have a unique lens on student and faculty experiences, both in and out of the classroom.

My service to the university in the time I've been here has involved being a Founding Member of the UO Equity and Inclusion Community of Practice, participating in the Inclusive Teaching Task Force, and being on the Climate Survey Action Committee. I hope to increase my involvement in order to contribute to a comprehensive effort for UO to be a campus where every aspect of the university experience is fully accessible for students without barriers or bias, and without the need for adaptation or specialized design. I have desires for UO to lead by example in fostering a campus climate that is fully inclusive of students with disabilities, welcoming to all students, and ensures that students with disabilities feel that they belong and are valued here, and I believe that being part of the Senate will contribute to that goal.

If I am elected to the UO senate, I hope to give voice to issues of accessibility, inclusivity, and equity, which universally impact the educational experience for our students. My background, my personal journey in education, and my work with students with disabilities have developed a framework that informs my work: there are barriers to education for many different groups of people, including individuals with disabilities, but also BIPOC, first-gen, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and there is immense educational and cultural value that comes from having these diverse identities on our campus and in our classrooms. If elected, I would be a strong advocate for these student populations, as well as bring a lens on the importance of student, staff, and faculty well-being, and collaboration and communication between instructors/departments and student service areas. I believe it is crucial for the Senate to have representation of the AEC, and the division of Undergraduate Education and Student Success, to continue to work toward inclusivity at the UO, as well as academic excellence and engagement, access, and success of our students.