

# UC Berkeley

## Newsletters

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## Policy Report

### How Long Does It Take English Learners to Attain Proficiency?

One of the most commonly asked questions about the education of language minority students is how long they need special services, such as English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and bilingual education. Under the U. S. Supreme Court's interpretation of the Civil Rights Act in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), local school districts and states have an obligation to provide appropriate services to limited-English-proficient students (in California now referred to as EL or English learner students), but policymakers have long debated setting time limits for students to receive such services.

The purpose of this paper is to pull together findings that directly address this question. This study reports on data from four different school districts to draw conclusions on how long it takes students to develop oral and academic English proficiency. Academic English proficiency refers to the ability to use language in academic contexts, which is particularly important for long-term success in school. Two of the data sets are from two school districts in the San Francisco Bay Area and the other two are based on summary data from reports by researchers in Canada. The data were used to analyze various forms of English proficiency as a function of length of exposure to English.

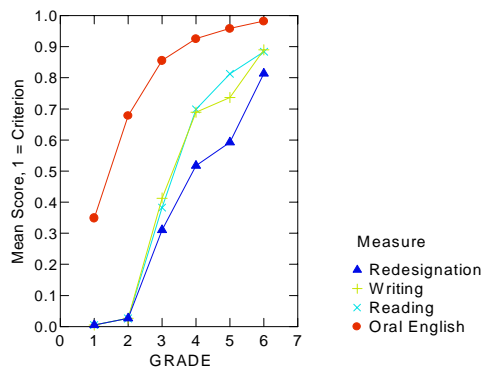
The clear conclusion emerging from these data sets is that even in two California districts that are considered the most successful in teaching English to LEP students, oral proficiency takes 3 to 5 years to develop, and academic English proficiency can take 4 to 7 years (see Figure 1). The data from the two school districts in Canada offer corroboration. Indeed, these estimates of the time it takes may be underestimates, because only students who remained in the same district since kindergarten were included. While critics of bilingual education have claimed that use of the native language delays the acquisition of English (a claim that is without foundation in the academic literature on bilingualism), it is worth noting that only one of the four districts offered bilingual education.

The analysis also revealed a continuing and widening gap between EL students and native English speakers. The gap illustrates the daunting task facing these students, who not only have to acquire oral and academic English, but also have to keep pace with native English speakers, who continue to develop their language skills. It may simply not be possible, within the constraints of the time available in regular formal school hours, to offer efficient instruction that would enable the EL students to catch up with the rest. Alternatives such as special summer and after-school programs may be needed.

The results suggest that policies that assume rapid acquisition of English – the extreme case being Proposition 227 that explicitly calls for “sheltered English immersion during a temporary transition period not normally intended to exceed one year” – are wildly unrealistic. A much more sensible policy would be one that sets aside the entire spectrum of the elementary grades as the realistic range within which English acquisition is accomplished, and plans a balanced curriculum that pays attention not just to English, but to the full array of academic needs of the students.

—KENJI HAKUTA, YUKO GOTO BUTLER AND DARIA WITT  
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

**Figure 1—English Proficiency and Probability of Redesignation as a Function of Grade Level. District A**



NOTE: A score of 1 represents fluent English proficient

NOTE: A copy of this report is available on the UC LMRI website at: <http://lmrinet.ucsb.edu/resdissem.html>.

## **Small Grant Report**

### **How do Preservice Teachers Appropriate Views and Practices About Language and Disability? Mapping a Sociocultural Theory of Teacher Learning About Difference**

As we witness the irrational polarization of California around issues of diversity (e.g., the passage of Propositions 209 and 227), we must enhance our understanding of teacher learning about student diversity. The lives of generations of minority students--the future of California--are at stake. This project aims to strengthen the theoretical basis of the research on preservice teacher learning about student diversity. The theoretical poverty of this research has potentially devastating repercussions, for it can limit the replicability of studies and it can hinder our understanding of the implementation and consequences of pedagogical practices. Thus, we used sociocultural theory to study a neglected aspect of teacher education for diversity that has great importance for California's educational systems: We focused on how different groups of preservice teachers appropriate scientific concepts about social justice, and the influence on how different groups of preservice teachers appropriate scientific concepts about social justice, and the influence of English proficiency and disability in the educational performance of Latino students. Teacher learning was conceptualized as socially rooted, mediated by artifacts, and reflected in an individual's changing participation over time. It was further assumed that learning unfolds in sociocultural communities of practice.

We used this grant to collect a wealth of data over an entire academic year. We have only begun to reduce and organize this data and although little analysis has been conducted, I outline several intriguing emergent findings. We recruited 13 preservice teachers enrolled in the UCLA Teacher Education Program (TEP). Ten participants were in their 1st year of the program (also called "novices") and three were in their 2nd year (called "residents"). Four novices and one resident were pursuing (or had) a bilingual education credential. Residents worked full time in local schools. Entry and exit in-depth interviews and concept maps were carried out with all participants to gather information about their background experiences, beliefs, conceptualizations and perspectives on teaching, learning, social justice, and latino student learning. We observed novices almost every week in 15 theory/methods courses and field-related activities throughout the year (between 4-6 courses per quarter). Residents were observed in their weekly seminar (a field-related course) throughout the year and in their own elementary school classrooms over a two-quarter period.

Preliminary findings suggest teacher appropriation of scientific concepts is a complex process that begins with the mastery of such notions. We intend to examine how teachers make the transition from mastery to appropriation and how the practices in which participants engage in TEPs facilitate such transition. Similarly, participants' everyday concepts can contradict the scientific notions studied in the TEP; we still need to analyze the consequences of these contradictions for teacher learning. Sometimes participants compartmentalize distinct kinds of scientific concepts and it is not clear whether this tendency reflects participants' attempts to resolve the aforementioned contradictions. Furthermore, we are intrigued

by the co-existence of opposite views on scientific notions within individuals and how such "intra-individual heterogeneity" mediates their processes. We are most interested in elucidating how participants resolve the power issues they wrestle with as they handle the division of labor in their own practice, and in examining the consequences of such process for the formation of their professional identities. We expect this study will contribute to our understanding of how teachers learn to cope with variability in Latino student performance in urban schools.

**--ALFREDO J. ARTILES, UCLA**

#### **THE HUMAN-LANGUAGES PAGE**

<http://www.june29.com/HLP/>

The Human-Languages Page is a comprehensive catalog of language-related Internet resources. The over 2000 links in the HLP database have been hand-reviewed to bring you the best language links the Web has to offer. Whether you're looking for online language lessons, translating dictionaries, native literature, translation services, software, language schools, or just a little information on a language you've heard about, the HLP probably has something to suit your needs.

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#### **GASPAR DE PORTOLA CATALONIAN STUDIES PROGRAM CALL FOR EXCHANGE PROPOSALS**

The Autonomous Government of Catalonia and the University of California at Berkeley are pleased to invite as part of the Gaspar de Portolà Catalanian Studies Program agreement, applications from University of California faculty for scholarly visits to Catalan universities and research institutes.

Contact Gail Stern, University of California, Berkeley - International & Area Studies at (510) 642-2547 for more information.

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## Dissertation Grant Reports

### Perceived Obstacles, Career Attitudes, and Other Characteristic Elements Predicting the Aspiration to Teach for Paraprofessionals

The paraprofessionals who aspire to teach and pursue a college degree program represent a potential source of teachers qualified to work with Limited English Proficient students. Although they have been repeatedly recommended for recruitment into credentialing programs, there is little indication of progress in the recommended direction. In fact, there is sparse information on the paraprofessionals interested in and making an effort to become credentialed. This broadly defines the problem investigated.

This study was based on data from the Los Angeles Unified School District (N=5,296). It used maximum likelihood logistic regression analysis to identify characteristic elements predicting the aspiration to teach. Its purpose was to fill the paucity of research on factors that encourage and deter paraprofessionals from pursuing a credential.

The findings were, at both the elementary and junior/senior high level, that males, between the ages of 19 and 29, were more likely to aspire. Additionally, at the elementary level only, paraprofessionals were less likely to aspire if they had young children, no or low competence in a non-English language, and had been in the district for more than five years. Paraprofessionals were asked why they wanted to be a paraprofessional. The common response was that they "wanted to be a teacher." Furthermore, for both school levels, the CBEST was an important predictor of aspiration, and the need for better literacy skills was not a perceived obstacle. Even though grants and loans were positive predictors, money was still considered an obstacle to aspiration by elementary respondents. Examining the five ethnic categories individually, White and Black respondents were less likely to aspire; Mexican Americans, Central or South Americans, and Asians were more likely to aspire. However, in the logistic regression algorithm, none of the three linguistic minority groups were more likely to aspire when compared to White respondents, who, for the most part, did not aspire.

--Candace Kelly, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Barbara



Kelly

### Toward an Equitable NAEP for English Language Learners: What Contextual Factors affect Math Performance?

This study examines the validity of the national math assessment, known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), for English language learners or students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Secondary analyses of two existing CSE/CRESST datasets were conducted. Data samples were comprised of predominately Hispanic, 8th grade English language learners in southern California. Descriptive and hierarchical linear modeling analyses suggest that several variables influence NAEP math performance. Quantitative analyses were supplemented by informal interviews with a small sample of middle school math teachers.



Huie Hofstetter

In both studies, students' English reading proficiency and level of math class significantly predicted test performance, even after controlling for key student background and classroom-level variables. When these variables were held constant, differences in test performance between LEP and non-LEP students were no longer evident. Several proposed test accommodations for LEP students were also examined: Modified English, Spanish Translation, Glossary, Extra Time, and a combination of the Glossary and Extra Time. The data suggest that, after controlling for key confounding variables, selected test accommodation formats have potential for "leveling the playing field" between students with limited English proficiency and their more English fluent counterparts.

Analysis of cross-level interactions in the final analytic model suggest that specific test accommodations may benefit LEP students under certain testing conditions. Students tend to perform better on a NAEP math test where the language matches their language of math instruction. More specifically, LEP students who received math instruction in Spanish were more likely to score higher if the language of the math test was also Spanish, rather than English. This effect was more profound for students in lower-level math classes. Additionally, LEP students who received an Extra Time accommodation benefited more than with other test accommodations, especially students in higher-level math classes. These findings suggest that no single math test accommodation benefits all LEP students.

The data suggest that accommodations yield only nominal effects for LEP students, and that accommodation effects vary by level of math class and language of math instruction. Additional methodological complexities arise as the test formats are no longer standardized. Nonetheless, findings may be used to inform the development and interpretation of the NAEP for English language learners, as well as other large-scale, standardized content based assessments.

--Carolyn Huie Hofstetter, Ph.D. University of California, UCLA

#### UC LMRI has redesigned its website:

<http://lmrnet.ucsb.edu/>

*Our new website now includes:*

- copies of all recent grant report abstracts
- PDF versions of all publications
- new items listed on the main page



## **New Bilingual Fellowships for 1999-2000**

Ten new Bilingual Education Graduate Fellowships were awarded to UCLA and UC Santa Barbara for 1999-2000. These fellowships are in addition to the 21 continuing fellowships awarded to these campuses and to UC Davis for 1999-2000, bringing the total number of fellowships on the three campuses to 31.

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### **UC LOS ANGELES**

#### **Kimberly Barraza Lawrence**

After having lived and studied in Spain and Mexico, I began my career as an elementary bilingual instructor and have spent the last five years as a secondary foreign language teacher. While teaching Spanish in Orange County, I helped to organize second language learning camps for high school students and was recognized as the county's outstanding foreign language teacher. I have also been involved with teacher mentoring through U.C. Irvine's Project COACH helped to pilot communicative classroom projects. These projects have come together in a teacher manual of interactive lessons for the Spanish classroom, entitled *Todo lo mio*. Now, as a first year Ph.D. candidate in the Urban Schooling division of UCLA's Graduate School of Education, I hope to further investigate various bilingual education constructs and the impact second language learners have on the instructional methodologies in all content areas.



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#### **Mariana Pacheco**

Mariana Pacheco has begun a Ph.D. program in the Division of Urban Schooling in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA. Her interest in education is in understanding the educational experiences of Latino English Language Learners in California. She is planning to conduct research that will positively impact the quality of opportunity and help ensure equal access, at all levels, for Latino students. She has spent the last several years teaching. In the spring of '97, she received her bilingual teaching credential and M.Ed. at UCLA. Having been a product of Bilingual Education herself, she chose to teach in a second grade bilingual classroom for two years and held a bilingual reading teacher position for one year.



### **Glenda Alemán Catalán**

As the first U.S. born daughter of immigrant parents from Colombia and Guatemala, issues of educational equity for Latinos has become the focal point of my research interests. These issues include access to culturally inclusive curricula and native language instruction that supports and validates Latino children's identity. I am also concerned with improving teaching practices to promote women's performance in school and challenge traditional patriarchal stereotypes. My educational experiences include working as a two-way immersion bilingual teacher in an inner-city elementary school of the Los Angeles Unified School District for three years. I am currently a first year doctoral student in Urban Education at UCLA, and a graduate student researcher studying language acquisition of English language learners.



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### **UC SANTA BARBARA**

#### **María J. Alvarez-Chamorro**

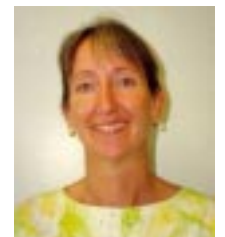
I am the daughter of two extremely supportive Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrants who received less than three years of formal education and have spent their lives as migrant workers in the agricultural fields of California. Despite their limited educational background, my parents taught me how to read in Spanish by the time I was four years old. With Spanish literacy as my educational basis, I eventually graduated from UCLA with a BA in Psychology/Women's Studies, became a bilingual teacher in South Central Los Angeles, and after teaching for five years became convinced that the socio-emotional needs of low SES immigrant and minority children are extremely neglected within public education. Thus, I am presently pursuing a doctoral degree in Counseling, Clinical, School Psychology in order to help create and disseminate new knowledge which will, I hope, facilitate appropriate socio-emotional educational interventions with these populations.



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#### **Nancy O'Rode**

I am currently pursuing a doctoral degree in the Educational Psychology program at UC Santa Barbara and am serving as a graduate researcher with Project PRIME, a Local Systemic Change Initiative mathematics reform project in Oxnard, California. Project PRIME's goal is to double the number of minority students in advanced mathematics courses. The project fosters a strong parent network and encourages parents to take a leadership role at their children's schools. My Master's Thesis examined the problem-solving and mental computation strategies of language-minority and English-speaking



students using widely divergent mathematics curricula in two school districts. This work was presented in a paper I gave at the American Educational Research Association meeting in Montreal last April.

I have a California teaching credential and have taught middle school bilingual science courses as well as mathematics classes at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. My husband and I have been fortunate to experience the cultures of the Pacific Islands, Spain, and Africa while teaching overseas for many years.

### María K. Denney

Over the past decade, María K. Denney has demonstrated a dedicated commitment to the Latino population in the Fields of Communication and Special Education. Before returning to graduate school, María developed and provided Early Intervention services at Santa Barbara Cottage Children's Hospital to Latino families and their premature infants and children at risk or with disabilities. María is a third year doctoral student in Educational Psychology with an emphasis in Human Development and Disability at the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Santa Barbara. María is a Graduate Research Assistant to Drs. George and Joanne Singer on *The Family Centered Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Model Demonstration Project for Young Children with Disabilities*.

María received her Bachelors Degree in Spanish from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at UCSB in 1989. After graduation, María was a Research Associate for Dr. Federico Subervi-Velez and Dr. Juan Vicente Palerm at the Center for Chicano Studies at UCSB to assist the State of California to communicate with the State of California's Spanish-speaking population during emergencies.

María's Masters Thesis examines Mexican parents' beliefs and goals of infant care and development for their premature and low birth weight infants. Her research interests are grounded in the experiences of immigrant families with children at risk or with disabilities, bilingual language development and Early Intervention.

### Mari Elena Minjarez

I am a second year PhD student in the Clinical/Counseling/School Psychology program with an emphasis in School Psychology and Interdisciplinary Human Development. Currently, I am evaluating the PASS program in Ventura that focuses on alternatives to suspension for middle school students. In addition, I am in the process of helping the Fighting Back program in Santa Barbara write a proposal to receive funding for a Latina Mentoring program. I am also working as a school psychology intern at both Santa Ynez High School and El Puente Continuation High School in Santa Barbara. At both of these sites, I have the great opportunity of working with diverse populations and researching alternative assessment tools that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. I am most interested in working with at-risk students that are struggling with the impact of limited language proficiency and cultural discrimination and segregation.

After obtaining my PhD, I plan to work as a School Psychologist and eventually go on to an administrative position. At that level, I hope to focus on implementing school programs that cater to the needs of the diverse population in California.

I am very proud to be a recipient of the Bilingual Fellowship and a member of the group of students receiving this award. We will make a great impact on the future of our children.

### Gabrielle Anderson

My long term goal is to serve language minority children as a school psychologist. Growing up in a diverse community in San Diego, many of my peers were English Language Learners and were the children of immigrants. During my undergraduate career at UC Berkeley I served as a research assistant at San Francisco General Hospital working with Spanish-speaking immigrants who were suffering from Major Depression. I was also active in the Berkeley schools conducting media awareness workshops and tutoring sixth graders through the Break The Cycle Program. After graduating from UC Berkeley in 1995, I spent four years in the Teach For America Program teaching bilingual fifth grade in Pasadena, California and assisting the Long Beach Unified School District with School psychology research. I selected UC Santa Barbara for my graduate studies because of the faculty and student commitment to meeting the needs of minority children and their communities.

### Beth Yeager

Beth Yeager is a 5th grade teacher at McKinley Elementary School in Santa Barbara as well as a doctoral student in Teaching and Learning in the Graduate School of Education, UCSB. She has been working with linguistically diverse students at both the preschool level and the upper intermediate level for all of her teaching career, including 27 years as a bilingual teacher in a bilingual classroom. Having been involved in a research partnership as a teacher with the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group at UCSB for 9 years, she is now eagerly and actively pursuing an advanced degree that will allow her to further explore the issues of diversity and equity of access to academic curriculum.

### UC LMRI Annual Call for Proposals

UC LMRI will fund four types of proposals in 2000:

- **Small Research Grant Proposals** (\$5,000 to \$15,000 for one year)
- **Dissertation Research Grant Proposals** (\$7,500 Maximum for one year)
- **UC/CSU Collaborative Research Grant Proposals** (\$25,000 for one year)
- **Teacher-Research Grant Proposals** (\$1,000 for one year)

Small research grants and dissertation research grants are similar to prior years. The UC/CSU Collaborative Research Grant is a new type of grant that is designed to stimulate collaborative research between faculty in the University of California and the California State University. The Teacher-Researcher grant is a new type of grant designed to stimulate California schoolteachers to undertake action research projects under the mentorship of a University of California faculty member. All proposals are due *February 1, 2000*. Applications available on line at <http://lrmrnet.ucsb.edu> or contact LMRI office at (805) 893-2250 or [lmri@lrmrnet.ucsb.edu](mailto:lmri@lrmrnet.ucsb.edu).

**Call for Papers**

**18TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SPANISH  
IN THE UNITED STATES**

University of California, Davis

April 7-9, 2000

Cecilia Colombi, Confence Chair

**530-752-1244**

cmcolombi@ucdavis.edu

**Publications**

**Effective Instruction for English Language Learners  
(March, 1999)**

California is rethinking the content of instruction of ESL students, along with the preparation and qualifications of ESL teachers, in light of the recently enacted "Unz Initiative," Proposition 227. In November, the CSU Institute for Education Reform (IER) and the California Education Policy Seminars (CEPS) co-sponsored a forum on Effective Instruction for English Language Learners. This document represents a summary of the forum's presentations and the subsequent discussion. Available on the web at:

<http://www.csus.edu/ier/materials.html>.

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University of California  
**Linguistic Minority Research Institute**  
South Hall, Room 4722  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-3220

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- *Bilingual Fellow Recipients*
- *UC LMRI Conference 2000*



*Call for Papers*

## SCHOOL REFORM AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

**Annual Conference**  
**May 12-13, 2000**

**Hyatt Regency Irvine**  
**Irvine, CA**

The UC Linguistic Minority Research Institute (UC LMRI) 2000 Annual Conference will focus on recent school reforms and how they impact the teaching of English learners (ELs). In the last few years California has embarked on an ambitious school reform effort designed to improve the performance of California students and schools. Although some of these reforms—which include class size reduction, new curriculum standards including standards for English Language Development (ELD), and the elimination of social promotion—are just beginning to impact schools, they are all likely to affect the teaching and achievement of English-language learners. The UC LMRI is soliciting papers and presentations that can provide useful and timely research information on the challenges of teaching English learners in this period of widespread and systemic school reform. Papers and presentations on all other areas pertaining to the learning and schooling of English learners are also welcome. Possible topics include:

- How have teachers and schools responded to recent standards and frameworks (e.g., English, English Language Development, Math) when applying these to the instruction of ELs?
- How have schools and districts addressed shortages of qualified teachers prepared to work with ELs?
- How have ELs responded to the increased academic emphasis and high stakes testing?
- How do families and peers promote the academic development of ELs?

The conference is being co-sponsored by the California Policy Research Center and the California Department of Education, Language Policy and Leadership Office.

Faculty, graduate students, and other researchers are cordially invited to submit abstracts of possible presentations (**100-150 words**) to the 2000 UC LMRI Conference Program Committee. If interested, please complete the form provided on the reverse side of this call. Edit abstracts carefully as the information provided on the proposal form will be used in the conference program. If you would like to make a group presentation, a primary contact must be specified. Please note that it is the responsibility of the primary presenter to convey all presentation information to each additional presenter.

For consideration, please submit **three hard copies** of your proposal to UC LMRI headquarters **postmarked no later than February 1, 2000**. Fax, email, and messages are not accepted. Acceptance notices will be sent by March 1, 2000. For additional information regarding conference participation, registration or attendance, please contact the UC LMRI at:

**University of California**  
**Linguistic Minority Research Institute**  
**South Hall, Room 4722**  
**Santa Barbara, CA 93106-3220**

**voice: 805-893-2250**

**fax: 805-893-8673**

**email: [lmri@lmrinet.ucsb.edu](mailto:lmri@lmrinet.ucsb.edu)**

**Web: <http://lmrinet.ucsb.edu/confs/lmri00>**

Note: All UC participants are encouraged to apply for travel funds from their local Committee on Research under the rubric of Intercampus Research Funds.



# PRESENTER PROPOSAL APPLICATION FORM

UC LMRI ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MAY 12-13, 2000

HYATT REGENCY IRVINE, IRVINE, CA

FOR CONFERENCE STAFF USE ONLY

PROPOSAL # \_\_\_\_\_

DATE RECEIVED \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 1, 2000**

PRESENTER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

CO-PRESENTERS:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_

1. PRESENTATION FORMAT: •PANEL SYMPOSIUM •LECTURE •HANDS-ON •GROUP INTERACTION  
•DEMONSTRATION

2. AUDIENCE: •COLLEGE PROFESSORS •POLICYMAKERS •ADMINISTRATORS •TEACHERS •OTHERS

3. AUDIO VISUAL NEEDS: •PROJECTOR •VCR •OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF PRESENTATION (AS IT WILL APPEAR IN THE PROGRAM)

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION:

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NEATLY AND RETURN TO:  
UC LINGUISTIC MINORITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
SOUTH HALL ROOM 4722  
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93106-3220