

Dr. Verónica E. Valdez
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Bio

Dr. Valdez has over twenty years of experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse programs, teachers, students, families, and communities in several states across the U.S. As a Professor in the College of Education's Department of Education, Culture, and Society, Dr. Valdez teaches and supervises undergraduate and graduate courses related to the English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement as well as graduate courses related to bi/multilingual language and literacy education policy and practices. She is also the Principal Investigator/Project Director for the *Advancing Pathways toward Equity and eXcellence with Educators of Multilingual Learners* (APEX) Project. APEX is a five-year (2021-2026) U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, National Professional Development Award offering professional and academic pathways to build the capacity of district personnel and multilingual families and communities educating multilingual learners in Utah.

A critical language scholar, Dr. Valdez is committed to social justice, equity, and diversity and holds an asset-based perspective toward students, families, and communities that recognizes their cultural wealth and individual agency. She situates herself within a critical sociocultural framework that understands multilingualism and literacies as socially mediated processes that are not separate from the broader social, cultural, historical contexts or the dynamics of power in which they occur. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on four interrelated and often overlapping strands: **language learning efforts** that foster multilingualism/biliteracy in school and out-of-school contexts; **educational language policy and planning** and its equity impact on multilingual learners designated as English learners (MLs); **Latina/o/x and education**; and **teacher education & practices** that promote the values of multilingualism, multiculturalism, and social justice across educational settings.