

Designing Corequisite Pathways for Multilingual Learners

Multilingual Learners of English Professional Learning Seminars

Welcome!

Thank you for attending this session!

Thank you to our grant partners: Ascendium

Texas Success Center, CCSE Student Ready Strategies, WestEd



Presenters



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- Julia Raufman, Community College Research Center (CCRC)
 - Julia is a Research Associate at CCRC where her research focuses on multilingual learner pathways and developmental education reform in community colleges. Her work examines how institutional practices can support equitable pathways to college success.
- Dr. Rosario Torres, Borough of Manhattan Community College
 - Rosario is Professor and Deputy Chair in the Department of Academic Literacy and Linguistics at BMCC. She has designed and developed co-requisite courses that combine credit-bearing courses with ESL, such as Critical Thinking for ESL (CRT 100.6), Language and Culture for ESL (LIN 100.6), and English Composition for ESL (ENG 100.7).

Suggested PD Meeting Norms

- Make equity central.
- Commit to active participation.
- Share talk time and listen for understanding.
- Seek clarification as needed.
- Recognize impact and intent.
- Recognize that everyone has expertise.
- Other norms or revisions as suggested and agreed upon by the group.



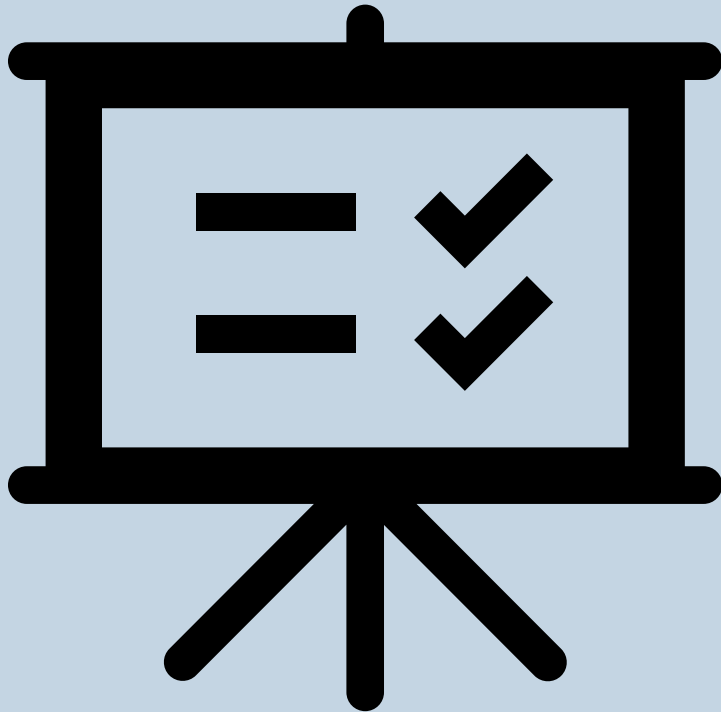
Objectives of this Professional Learning Module



Participants will:

- Understand how corequisite models can support multilingual learners
- Examine institutional examples from CUNY and BMCC
- Identify instructional strategies that support multilingual learners in corequisite and credit-bearing courses

Agenda



1. Context and Research Framing

- Understanding multilingual learners' pathways and the role of corequisite reforms in community colleges.

2. Institutional Design: Corequisite Pathways

- Examining how CUNY and BMCC have developed corequisite courses and acceleration strategies for students transitioning from ESL.

3. Classroom Practices and Instructional Supports

- Exploring instructional approaches, assignments, and assessments that support multilingual learners in credit-bearing courses.

4. Reflection and Discussion

- Considering how these strategies could be adapted to participants' institutional contexts.

Multilingual Learners in Community Colleges

Multilingual learners bring linguistic and cultural assets that support academic learning.

Many enroll in ESL programs with the goal of:

- Entering degree programs
- Pursuing professional and career goals
- Transferring to four-year institutions
- Improving English for workplace and community



Recent Immigrants

Foreign-born students newly arrived in the United States



International Students

Visa-holding students from outside the United States



U.S.-Educated English Learners

U.S. high school graduates classified as English learners



Internationally-Trained Adults

Professionals and adult learners with education from abroad

Note: Categories are illustrative; multilingual learners span all of these and more.

The Path Multilingual Learners Often Walk



Total: 4-6+ years before reaching degree program courses

Pathway friction

Each step = time = risk of stopping out · For adult learners: competing jobs, families, finances — time is not neutral

Key Terms: How We Use Them in This Presentation

ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages — academic preparation courses that are financial aid-eligible and designed to support credit pathway entry.

ESL

English as a Second Language — community-based adult basic literacy and language services that are typically non-credit-bearing and not financial aid-eligible.

Pathways

The structured sequences of courses and supports that move students from language instruction toward credit-bearing college coursework and credentials.

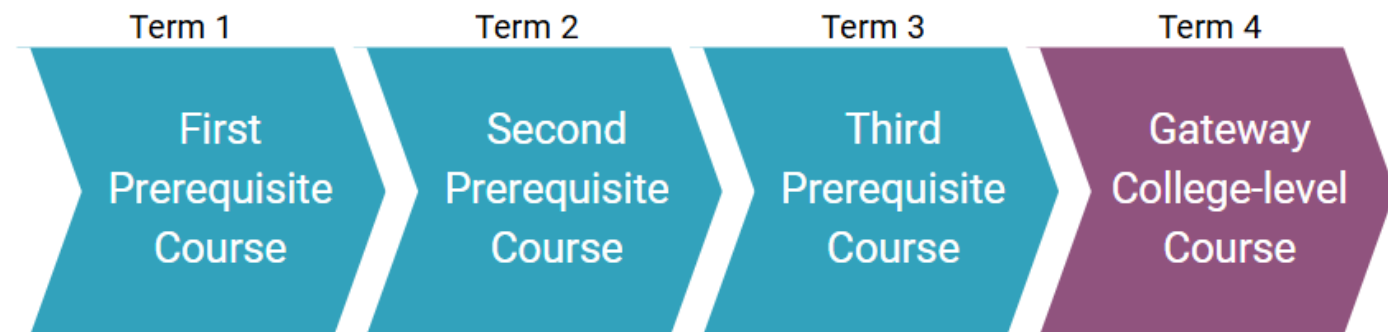
A note on terminology

These terms are used inconsistently across institutions and states. At some colleges, “ESL” refers to all English language instruction — credit and non-credit alike. At others, “ESOL” is used exclusively for academic preparation. In course maps and research literature, the same course type may appear under different labels depending on the institution.

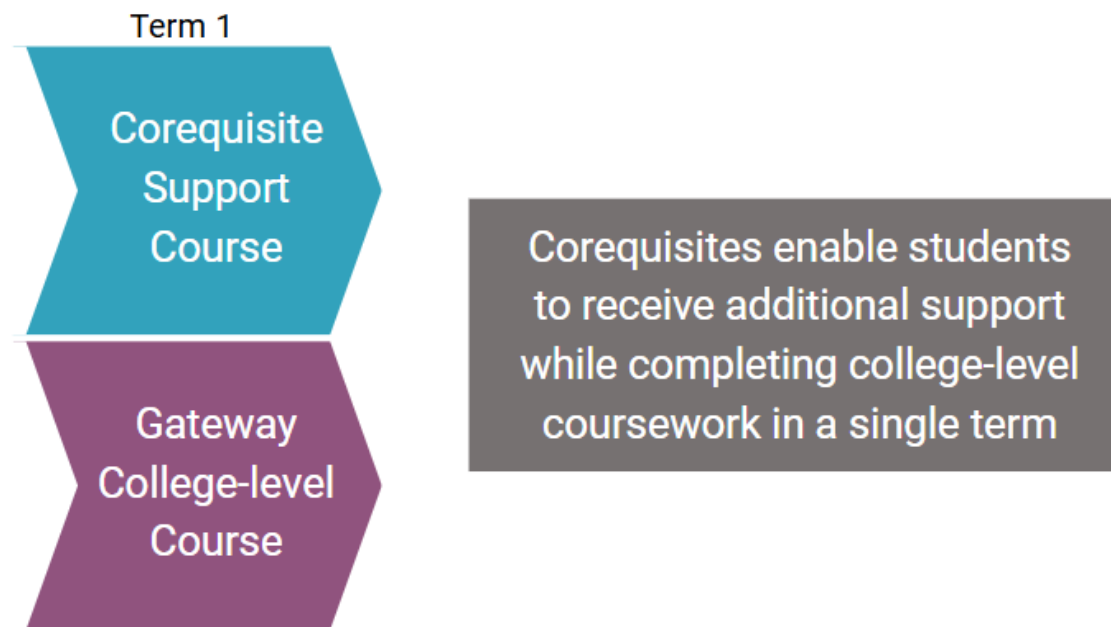
In this presentation, we use **ESOL** for financial aid-eligible academic preparation courses and **ESL** for community-based, non-credit adult literacy services. When citing research or institutional sources that use different conventions, we preserve their language and note the distinction where relevant.

Over the past decade, many states and institutions have adopted corequisite models where students enroll directly in college-level English with additional support.

Traditional Prerequisite Model



Corequisite Model



Rigorous evidence shows corequisite reforms improve short-term outcomes

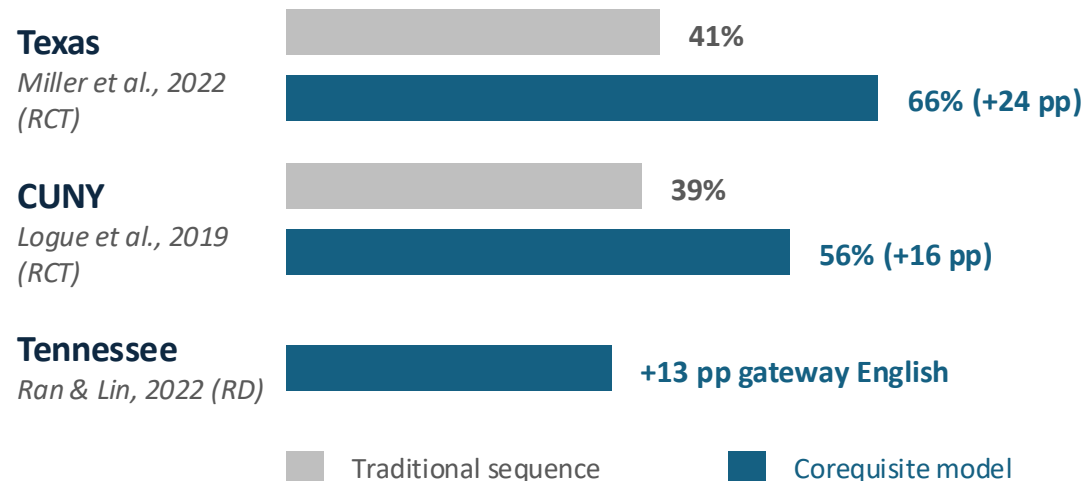
What the evidence does and does not show

General population: Strong and growing evidence base for one-semester gateway course outcomes.

Multilingual learners specifically: Evidence is still emerging — most studies do not disaggregate by EL status.

Longer-term outcomes (degree completion, transfer): Less studied.

GATEWAY COURSE COMPLETION (within one academic year) — GENERAL POPULATION



Note: Texas and CUNY estimates come from randomized controlled trials reporting raw pass rates; the Tennessee estimate is a regression-discontinuity effect for students at the college-readiness margin and is not directly comparable to raw pass-rate differences.

LATINX SUBGROUP FINDING — Coca et al. (2024), Texas Community Colleges

What does this mean for multilingual learners?

Coca et al. (2024) drew on the same Texas RCT as Miller et al. (2022) and found that gateway course completion gains were more pronounced for Latinx students than for non-Latinx peers. Latinx students in corequisites also reported feeling less academically overwhelmed and bored than peers in traditional developmental courses.

Importantly, these findings apply to the general developmental education population — not specifically to multilingual learners or English learners, who are rarely disaggregated in this literature. ML-specific evidence on corequisite outcomes remains emerging.

Sources: Coca et al. (2024); Logue et al. (2019); Miller et al. (2022); Ran & Lin (2022)

Contextualizing the Texas Context

Multiple paths, multiple entry and exit points

Multiple learner experiences and goals

Multiple stakeholders promoting reform

How can ESL/ESOL instructors and administrators who must juggle this multiplicity best support students' successful progression towards their language acquisition and academic goals?

CUNY and BMCC, the Context

- 1. Placement for all incoming ESL students:** Accuplacer Test and/or Proficiency Index from US high schools.
- 2. ESL levels vary across CUNY campuses.** BMCC has three levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. Co-requisite courses exist at the advanced level.
- 3. There are external programs,** such as CLIP and BLIS, which offer intense ESL courses. Students cannot enroll in college classes if they take these programs.
- 4. Co-requisite courses** combine introductory CUNY Gen Ed Courses with ESL: ENG 101, CRT 100, LIN 100.

Pause and Reflect #1

- How knowledgeable do you feel about the pathways and your role as an instructor in the pathways?
- How prepared do you feel to discuss the pathways with your students? With your colleagues or administrators?
- In what ways might current pathway structures at your institutions fail to recognize or use the strengths multilingual students already possess?



Adapting Corequisites for Multilingual Learners

Standard corequisite models were not designed with multilingual learners in mind. Adapting them effectively requires asking:

How can corequisite courses be designed to:

- build on students' linguistic and cultural assets (*Bunch, 2013; Yosso, 2005*)
- support academic English development alongside college-level content (*Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2014*)
- create access to credit-bearing pathways (*Kanno & Varghese, 2010; Harklau, 2016*)

*The examples that follow represent promising practice —
ML-specific evidence is still growing.*

Intentional design for ML students looks like:

1

Asset-based pedagogy

Treat home languages and prior literacies as resources for academic learning, not deficits to remediate. (*Bunch, 2013; García & Kleifgen, 2018; Moll et al., 1992*)

2

Integrated language + content

Develop academic English through the disciplinary content of the gateway course, not as a separate skills track. (*Bunch et al., 2011; Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2014*)

3

ESL–disciplinary faculty collaboration

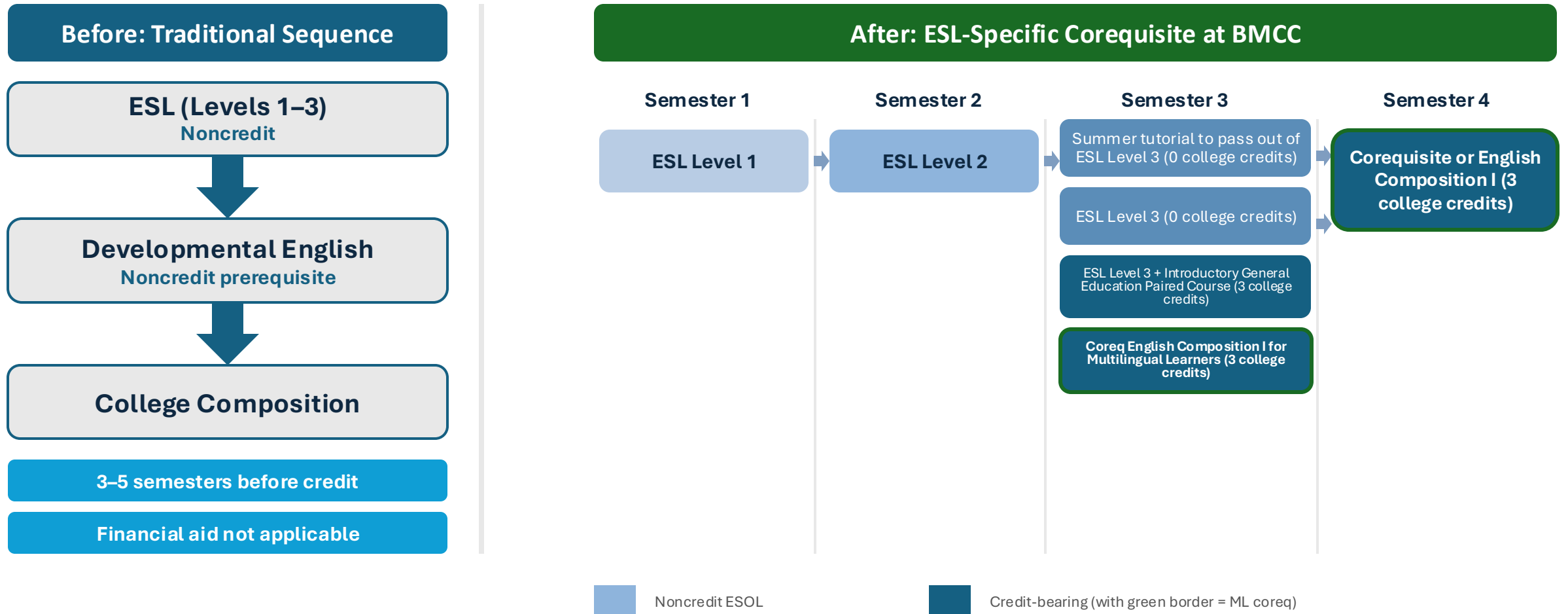
Co-designed or paired instruction with shared planning time across ESL and gateway faculty. (*Hodara, 2015; Raufman et al., 2026*)

4

Aligned placement & advising

MLs are not defaulted into non-credit ESL when corequisite gateway access is appropriate. (*Kanno & Varghese, 2010; Harklau, 2016*)

ESL-Specific Corequisites at BMCC: Before and After



Source: Raufman, Cho, & Lopez Salazar, 2026

Collaborations in and across Departments



1. Departmental Vs. Inter-departmental collaborations: Extensive planification involving numerous meetings, training, pilot courses, and university wide governance to approve co-req courses. Compromises in the the hosting of courses and the selection of instructional faculty.



2. Instructional Faculty (credit-bearing subject and ESL expertise). Share instructors across departments to secure instructors with both foundations, the content matter and ESL.



3. Accountability (students' progress, departmental exams, institutional assessment). **Inter-departmental collaborations to develop** standardized assessments to satisfy qualifications for content and ESL; screening of learning outcomes and assessments per school year; faculty observations and survey evaluations.

BMCC CO-REQS, Curriculum Design

Outcomes and Assessments

- Co-req courses are essentially content courses, not ESL courses: ENG 101 for ESL students, CRT 100 for ESL students, etc.
- Main goal is to match Gen Ed and ESL outcomes and assessments, but not to merge them. They remain separate.
- Examples: Patterns, idea development, control and organization (ESL); central thesis and main idea development (ENG); detection and construction of arguments and fallacies (CRT); language structure and language development (LIN).

BMCC CO-REQS, Curriculum Design

The Content

- **Language Use Vs. Language Ability:** integration of form and function, understanding the nature of communicative language and defining language ability in such a way that our assessment will elicit language performance that is characteristic of language performance outside the classroom. This is the basis for the development of class materials, assignments and evaluations
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Sensible selection of complex content topics for ESL students
- **Evaluation:** Content assessment 65% via instructor's design, and language assessment 35% via departmental exam.

BMCC CO-REQS, Curriculum Design

The Classroom

- Language needs: Students take a writing diagnostics test during their first class.
- Information survey to screen students' needs regarding cultural sensitivity and content choices.
- ESL methodology: structured, communicative, and student-centered techniques that maximize students talk time
- Supplemental Instruction (SI) tutors: assignation of tutors to help instructors in their classes under a “to-do” plan guided by the instructor.

Pause and Reflect #2

- What types of collaboration exist between ESOL and disciplinary faculty at your institution?
- What barriers exist to implementing corequisite models?
- How do we know when students are sufficiently proficient in their language development for academic purposes at the college level? Is it possible for an ESOL student to master the content matter but not the language?

Strategies for Success



Ongoing faculty support (paid and voluntary pre-and post-teaching meetings, trainings, workshops)



Student support (ESL Lab, SI tutors, student clubs)



Extracurricular activities (field trips, social and cultural events, local publications of students work).

From Your Classroom Outward

Where you can act — in your classroom, in your department, and in the institution around you.

INSTRUCTOR

In your classroom, you can...

- 1 Learn what students bring.** A 5-minute survey to surface multilingual students' linguistic and literacy assets.
- 2 Name the academic moves.** Surface the implicit academic moves an assignment expects, and model them.
- 3 Build low-stakes practice.** Ungraded writing before high-stakes tasks lowers the cost of trying.

DEPARTMENT

In your department, you can...

- 1 Connect with a paired colleague.**
Talk with the ESL or English faculty teaching the paired section to align one assignment or vocabulary set.
- 2 Bring student work to the table.**
Share an anonymized writing sample at a department meeting, hallway conversation, or email thread to calibrate expectations together.
- 3 Surface asset-based language.**
Review department syllabi, rubrics, and prompts for deficit framing of multilingual students; propose small revisions where you have authorship.

INSTITUTIONAL

Across the institution, you can...

- 1 Ask for disaggregated data.**
Request that institutional research disaggregate gateway and corequisite outcomes by ML status. Even when access varies, asking signals demand.
- 2 Contribute to program review and accreditation.**
Submit input to program review, accreditation cycles, or strategic planning surveys — usually open to all faculty regardless of appointment.
- 3 Connect to networks beyond the college.**
Engage state ESL associations, regional AE collaboratives, or system-level CoPs that welcome contingent faculty and bypass internal hierarchy.

Pause and Reflect #3

- What instructional strategies have you used to support multilingual learners in credit-bearing courses?
- What challenges arise when teaching students with varying levels of academic English?
- What kinds of supports would help instructors feel more prepared?



For resources for this module or to access additional Professional Learning Modules from this series, please visit the TOT Resource Hub housed on the Texas Success Center Website

Thank you!

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