

Miriam LaChance

Graduate Student

By the time Miriam LaChance made the commitment to complete a master's degree in english literature, she had already taught english composition for 25 years and had accumulated about 200 graduate units.

"When I enrolled in CSU, Fresno's graduate program, I discovered my units were no longer valid because more than seven years had elapsed since I had taken them," recalls LaChance. "I had to start all over again."

Her first attempt to complete a master's at CSU, Fresno in 1968 was interrupted when she received an offer from the College of Sequoias in Visalia to teach english. "I was very excited about teaching in a junior college and enthusiastically accepted," she says. "But I got so involved with teaching and with raising my family that I had to leave the graduate program. I remember thinking that I didn't want the degree after all . . . but years later, I changed my mind."

LaChance says she is convinced that completing a degree is just the beginning of your education. "It is especially important for teachers to expand their knowledge and be exposed to new ideas, but I think people have a responsibility to keep their minds stimulated and challenged. When my thoughts began to get cloudy, I knew it was time to go back to school!"

Q: Why did you decide to complete your master's degree at CSU, Fresno?

A: I was impressed with the English Department and how the professors seemed to care about their students. I had done my undergraduate work at Berkeley and during my five years there, I had never spoken directly to my professors. If I had a problem in class, I was referred to the professor's assistant. So, when I first came to Fresno in 1968 and observed the professors interacting with students on an individual basis, I was thrilled. I found the same environment still existed when I returned in 1981.

