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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Writer Richard Rodriguez To Kick Off New 'Provocative Perspectives' Series at Cal Poly Oct. 23**

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Writer-editor Richard Rodriguez will be on campus Oct. 23 to kick off "Provocative Perspectives," a new speaker series created by Cal Poly to address issues related to "free expression, diversity, student success and campus community."

The series will bring a total of four renowned professionals representing varying fields in academia and the media to Cal Poly during the academic year to carry on "conversations on student success, intellectual freedom and diversity," according to Vice President for Student Affairs Cornel Morton.

Rodriguez, an editor at the Pacific News Service syndicate, will present "The Browning of America: Race, Religion and Ethnicity in an Erotic Age" in Chumash Auditorium at 7 p.m. The talk is free and open to the public. That day he will also give a breakfast presentation and hold a question-and-answer session for faculty and staff members, as well as meet with students during a luncheon.

Rodriguez is a regular contributor to the Sunday Opinion section of the Los Angeles Times and to Harper's magazine. He has written numerous articles that have appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The American Scholar, Time magazine, Mother Jones magazine and the New Republic. He is also an essayist on the PBS "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" program.

He is the author of three books: "Hunger of Memory" and "Days of Obligation: An Argument with My Mexican Father," and his latest, "Brown, The Last Discovery of America."

He has won the George Foster Peabody Award for his "NewsHour" essays on American life, the Frankel Medal from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the International Journalism Award from the World Affairs Council of California.

"This is the first speaker in an exciting new series that will bring differing perspectives from notable and accomplished individuals on a variety of topics vital to Cal Poly," said Vice President Morton. "I expect that this series will contribute significantly to our interests in creating more conversations on campus related to issues of diversity and free expression."

Additional speakers in the series include Roger Wilkins, the Robinson Professor of History and American Culture at George Mason University, on Jan. 15; Robert O'Neil, law professor and director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression and an authority on the First Amendment, on March 4; and Nikki Giovanni Jr., internationally known poet, writer, commentator, activist and educator, on April 8.

The speakers will meet with faculty and staff members and students, as well as give presentations open to the public.

The first "Provocative Perspectives" is sponsored by Cal Poly's Division of Student Affairs; the President's Office; the Cal Poly Foundation; Sigma Omega Nu, a Latina interest sorority; the Council on University Citizenship; Pride Alliance; the Ethnic Studies Department; and Student Life and Leadership's Multicultural Center. La Cuesta Inn in San Luis Obispo is providing accommodations for Rodriguez.

For more information, contact Pat Harris, series organizer, at 756-2582 or [pharris@calpoly.edu](mailto:pharris@calpoly.edu).

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(NOTE TO EDITORS: For a photograph or to arrange an interview with Rodriguez, please call Pat Harris at 756-2582.)

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