

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION (GW-CEEE)  
RECEIVES \$600,000 GRANT TO STUDY THE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE DEMANDS ON  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

**Research Will Help Identify the Academic Language Required in Higher Level Science and  
Mathematics Courses**

**WASHINGTON** - The George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development is pleased to announce that one of its centers, the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education, has received a \$600,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. During the 26-month investigation, the center will work with California and New York state departments of education to identify the academic language necessary for English Language Learners (ELLs) to pursue and excel in higher-level courses in mathematics and science, prerequisites for post-secondary education. The project will identify the specialized language implicit within California's algebra and New York's biology standards, which are referred to in New York as living environment standards. Both New York and California have large ELL populations and needs for academic language resources.

"Courses like algebra and biology are gatekeepers for students to advance in the fields of mathematics and science and are often requirements for high school graduation," said Charlene Rivera, executive director of GW-CEEE. "This project will allow us to examine language required by students to advance in these important areas of study. Using the resources and materials developed from the project, state departments of education can improve their accountability and support systems and become more responsive to English language learners."

Mary Futrell, dean of GW's Graduate School of Education and Human Development and professor of education, said "Through this research, we are hoping to improve the education of middle and high school students whose first language is not English. As a higher education institution, this grant defines and explains our commitment to post-secondary opportunities. By improving students' understanding of language in areas such as math and science, we can make pivotal changes in students' educational futures."

The project team, led by co-principal investigators Charlene Rivera and Kristina Anstrom, along with project director Patricia DiCerbo, will seek to determine major concepts and skills ELLs must know and be able to use to succeed in algebra and biology; the academic language needed to comprehend, discuss, and write about these subjects; the terminology required to learn content skills; and the words and concepts in the two academic disciplines most difficult for ELLs to learn.

The George Washington University's Center for Equity and Excellence in Education is part of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development's Institute for Education Policy Studies. The center's mission is to advance education reform so that all students achieve high standards

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GW's Graduate School of Education and Human Development, ranked among the top 30 graduate schools of education nationwide by *U.S. News & World Report*, offers graduate certificate, master's, education specialist, and doctoral degree programs that prepare students for a variety of leadership roles in diverse education and human services settings in public and private sectors.

Located four blocks from the White House, The George Washington University was created by an Act of Congress in 1821. Today, GW is the largest institution of higher education in the nation's capital. The university offers comprehensive programs of undergraduate and graduate liberal arts study as well as degree programs in medicine, public health, law, engineering, education, business, and international affairs. Each year, GW enrolls a diverse population of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 130 countries.

**For more about GW-CEEE, visit [www.ceee.gwu.edu](http://www.ceee.gwu.edu).**

**To learn more about GW's Graduate School of Education and Human Development,  
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