Warner Diversity and Inclusion Committee Celebrates Five Years

Over the last half decade, Nancy Ares and her Warner School colleagues, who created the Warner Diversity and Inclusion Committee, have been working tirelessly to increase and support the inclusivity of the Warner School community. Since then, the committee's efforts have helped heighten awareness of issues of bias in policies, procedures, culture and climate; uncovered unexamined assumptions of faculty around hires; broadened conversations through the inclusion of Warner staff and students on the committee; and fostered reflective self-examination to help make the School more welcoming and vibrant.

What led the Warner School to form the committee five years ago?
The Warner Diversity and Inclusion Committee was created in 2007 as part of the University of Rochester's Faculty Diversity Officers' (FDOs) efforts to develop strategies that foster the hiring and retention of underrepresented faculty. The FDOs were the impetus to start a formal committee at Warner. Our initial charge was around developing faculty diversity. When you look at the curriculum and projects at Warner, they already give specific attention to diversity and inclusion, so this was a formal setting to parallel the University in terms of structure and policy.

What is the mission of the Warner Diversity and Inclusion Committee?
The committee seeks to blend research and advocacy around issues of social justice, diversity, and inclusion in higher education. Our project is to have Warner be a very inclusive setting that keeps individual and group goals and...
Diversity Committee

experiences around cultural and demographic diversity at the forefront. Additionally, we help the Warner community pay attention to these issues explicitly at all levels, from syllabus development and pedagogy in the classroom to recruitment and retention of faculty.

How has the committee been influential in the Warner School and University communities?

At Warner as well as nationally, we believe that the barriers that prevent underrepresented faculty, staff, and students from representing all constituencies are rooted in systems of power and privilege. As a result, every act that represents an effort to help others can be seen as a form of power. The committee has focused on developing and implementing strategies for facilitating inclusion and diversity at all levels.

What are some of the committee’s most notable successes over the past five years?

We are becoming more and more successful at hiring and retaining faculty of color by paying special attention to what the experiences of faculty of color are in predominantly White institutions. We have been successful at working at unwritten assumptions with tenured faculty by looking at reappointment or tenure cases as well as bringing together faculty, staff, and students to represent all constituencies. Over the 2007-11 academic years, the committee has regularly hosted sessions, including annual Warner lunch hour talks, which foster dialogue among faculty, staff, and students, as well as several faculty forums and 12 professional development sessions for faculty focused on issues of diversity and inclusion in hiring new faculty, so we try to expand the pool at all levels. Since the committee was formed, we have broadened our notion of diversity to extend beyond race and ethnicity to include ability status, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. At the University level, we have influenced the conversations and efforts of the FDOs by helping others to be more aggressive and have a deeper understanding of what issues of diversity and inclusion mean beyond the color of someone’s skin or the language they speak. We’ve helped and encouraged others to also consider and focus on the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of diversity and inclusion.

Why is diversity and inclusiveness so important to education?

The standard line is that a major demographic shift is occurring and we need to be ready to react. The deeper issue for the committee, and I would imagine for most of the School, is that if you look at children, youth, and adults as a whole, they are culturally people—they have cultural histories, practices, morals, and values—and in order for people to be successful and healthy in terms of cultural awareness, learning, and achievement, you need to take all of that into account. It’s important for people so that they are embraced as a whole person, and it’s important to enrich schools more generally. Diversity defined in these terms provides valuable resources for everybody to draw on and opens us up to all different kinds of resources that often get ignored or disregarded.

Why are diversity and inclusion among the foremost issues facing education today and how is Warner preparing to address these challenges?

Part of it is that schools have not adapted or changed in response to the demographic shift. It’s not just the demographic shift alone as we’ve had demographic diversity in schools forever, but schools have been built and run to produce a certain kind of person that’s a very narrow view in comparison to the kinds of people that come to school. That’s hugely problematic for human and individual rights issues and community welfare. Again, we are missing out if we are too narrow in comparison to the kinds of people that come to school. During the 2007-11 academic years, the Warner School was among other academic divisions that hosted workshops at a conference in 2012, themed Power, Privilege, and Difference, and has assisted with planning the University’s official diversity and inclusion conference each year.

A hallmark for the committee that has also helped push other units in the University is how we recruit and retain a diverse faculty pool and work toward an inclusive School community. Instead of looking outside to see how we can draw non-dominant people in, we’ve focused our attention on the climate and culture here to look at White privilege as a way to interrogate ourselves and determine what kind of place we are asking people to join. So, rather than asking people to mold to us, we try to understand how White privilege and institutional racism operate to prevent institutions from being inclusive, particularly here at Warner. This critical self-reflection informs the ways we work to change practices, perceptions, and experiences.

What initiatives are on the committee’s agenda?

One of our goals is to increase the visibility of the work of the committee, so we decided to launch a film series that looks at diversity and inclusion as identity work. We’ve helped and encouraged others to also consider and focus on the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of identity, but rather intersecting identities. So, for example, we plan to host four film screenings and panel discussions next year, covering a range of topics and themes, including ability status, culture, and immigration as well as gender expression, indigenous cultures, and sovereignty.

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Warner Diversity & Inclusion Committee Highlights

Establishment: The Warner Diversity & Inclusion Committee was formed in 2007.

Mission: To blend research and advocacy around issues of social justice, diversity, and inclusion in higher education.

Professional Development Offerings: During the 2007-11 academic years, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee conducted 12 professional development sessions for faculty and hosted several sessions addressing issues of whiteness and privilege, including annual faculty/staff/student information meetings at Warner’s Wednesday Lunch Hours and several faculty forums.

New Initiatives: A film series that looks at diversity and inclusion as identity work. The committee’s goal is to host four film screenings and panel discussions a year.

Warner Diversity and Inclusion Committee Members: Nancy Ares, Chair; Laura Diophy; Donna Harris, Associate Director; and US Faculty Diversity Officer for Warner Tomás Boatwright, Assistant Professor, Teaching and Curriculum Committee Member

Previous Diversity and Inclusion Committee Members: Susan Hetherington, Janet Moore, Chris Nardi, and Oliver Champion-Brown

Dana Phillips Swanson
Associate Professor, Counseling and Human Development Committee Member and UR Faculty Diversity Officer for Warner

Tomás Boatwright
Assistant Professor, Teaching and Curriculum Committee Member

Stephanie Waterman
Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership Committee Member

Julia White
Assistant Professor, Teaching and Curriculum Committee Member

Nancy Ares
Chair and UR Faculty Diversity Officer for Warner

Christopher Penders
Committee Member

Warner School of Education
University of Rochester
When the New York State Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) was signed into law in 2010, it was designed to protect students from bullying, harassment, and other forms of discrimination based on perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. When the New York State Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) was signed into law in 2010, it was designed to protect students from bullying, harassment, and other forms of discrimination based on perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. Today, school officials are working to implement the act, which must be in place by July 1, 2012 in all districts across New York State.

Bullying expert Katy Allen, a PhD candidate in human development at the Warner School of Education, says that The Dignity Act will offer schools a way to re-frame their work around bullying and drama. According to Allen, The Dignity Act requires that schools modify and amend their policies and procedures to include harassment, bullying, taunting, and intimidation that merit a certain set of criteria. It also requires that schools adapt the code of conduct to reflect the changes and also put it in their handbooks for students in a way that kids can understand it, appoint a person to manage student complaints, and put it in their handbooks for students in a way that kids can understand it, appoint a person to manage student complaints, and take action to prevent these kinds of behaviors from developing into harassment and bullying.

The most important thing schools can do is to realize that while the code of conduct is important in shaping behaviors, we also don’t want to wait until we have full-blown bullying and egregious harassment going on before we intervene in kids’ social conflict, aggression, or drama,” says Allen. “Ideally if schools could develop a system, procedure, or process for intervening when behaviors are questionable—maybe they are bullying, maybe they feel and look like harassment, but they might not be. We need to help kids modify, adapt, and change their behaviors so that we don’t get to the level of violation of the law.”

Allen stresses the importance of understanding the links between bullying and drama. Bullying, she says, is a behavior that is intentionally harmful, inflicts harm, exploits the balance of power, and is usually repeated. Drama, on the other hand, is a social interaction that is short lived and is characterized by overreaction, exaggeration, prolongation, involvement of extraneous people, and inflated relevance. According to Allen, drama can rise to the level of bullying.

Allen offers the following tips to school administrators, teachers, and parents to help combat these problems—not just with The Dignity Act, but in general—before they escalate and become serious bullying violations:

For Schools

• Prevention begins with helping kids to realize that some of the typically mean behavior that they engage in is not acceptable.
• Develop schools that are truly caring communities. Set the bar very high for interpersonal respect in terms of how we treat one another, and model those types of behaviors to students. If adults are dismissive of kids in any way, or fail to treat them with respect, it sends the message to students that it’s okay to treat others this way.
• Have your ducks in a row. Before educating students about the law and how students are going to be expected to treat their peers, nail down your policy and design a procedure that is user friendly and can be used consistently across the board.
• Steer away from punishment. Punishment does not usually work in instances of bullying, and that’s often difficult for adults to grasp, as we live in a world where we’ve been taught if you punish bad behaviors, they will stop. However, in the case of bullying these behaviors will not stop. Instead, these behaviors often go further underground, which can make things more dangerous.
• Have good social radar. The biggest challenge for teachers today is not so much being able to define bullying, but rather assessing the meaning of kids’ social interactions. In other words, teachers need to work harder at paying attention to how kids are interacting with each other and asking questions, such as “What did I just see?” and “What did that mean?” Delicately inquire about what is going on. Cell phones have afforded kids the ability to distance themselves even more from teachers. You not only have to be paying attention to the looks on students faces when they are talking to each other, but when they are reading messages on their phones.
• Stop the behavior. Whenever you see something hurtful going on, you need to step in. A target is not going to admit in front of his/her aggressor that this was hurtful interaction, so you need to be skillful and talk to kids separately.
• Form strong positive relationships with students. Your goal should be more about giving students support to help them change their behaviors, learn how to behave appropriately, how to handle empathy, and how to solve a problem without it escalating into hurtful names where it can begin that slide toward bullying.
• Lastly, schools need to be mindful that one-shot educational programs, such as motivational speakers or testimonials from victims, do not change behavior. They raise awareness and trigger sympathy, but the effects are temporary. In isolation, programs of this nature do not solve the problem of bullying in schools.

For Parents

• Don’t tell children to ignore bullying. If your child comes to you and says, ‘I’m being bullied’—whether it’s really bullying or it’s just conflict that’s escalated beyond their ability to control and manage—don’t tell them to ignore it, because they’ve already tried and this has failed.
• Be a good listener and ask sensitive and thoughtful questions. Don’t be over reactive. As soon as parents overreact, kids shut down and stop telling us what’s going on in their lives.
• Take a breather from the cell phone and computer. If bullying involves social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, or text messaging, encourage your child to shut off the cell phone for a day or take a break from the Internet. This is not meant to be a punishment, but rather a way to give your child a break, let the dust settle, get his/her emotions under control, and think about what’s next.
• Ask to see evidence of cyberbullying. If the hurtful interactions are taking place over the Internet, or through cell phone text messages, e-mail, or Instant Messages (IM), ask to see it and then make copies of the evidence.
• Use the same Internet tools that your child uses. There are a lot of great web resources for parents to learn how to use and navigate through various social media sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.
• Give your kid a chance for amnesty. If your child is having problems, give him/her a chance to talk about it without fear of any kind of punishment or consequence. When you establish a relationship with your child—one that assures them that you are their ally and advocate and, within a certain range of boundaries, you’re not going to punish them—they will come and admit to you that they’ve made some bad choices that may have produced some egregiously bad behaviors from other kids. Communication with your child is key!
• Go to the school if your child is not safe or is afraid to attend to school.

Allen, who received a master’s degree in education from the University of Rochester and a bachelor’s degree in English education from Canisius College, also serves as a consultant and trainer for schools that are trying to deal with issues of bullying and aggression. She has been helping educators to reduce bullying and aggression in schools since 1995, when she first launched her company Impact Training & Evaluation, Inc. She currently focuses her own research on how students and school staff members understand bullying in a high school context. Allen, who successfully defended her PhD dissertation “Students’ and Staff Members’ Understanding of the Features, Forms, and Functions of Bullying in a High School” in March, will graduate May 19.

For more information about The Dignity Act, visit: www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/.
Curry, Hs., French Present at Linguistics Conference

Kiyama Publishes Article in the Journal of Higher Education
Judy Marquez Kiyama, assistant professor, co-wrote an article published in the March/April 2013 issue of the Journal of Higher Education. The article “A Critical Agency Network Model for Building an Integrated Outreach Program” (Kiyama, J.M.A., Lee, J.J., & Broadus, C.G.) considers a distinct type of college outreach program that integrates student affairs staff, academic administrators, and faculty across campus. The authors find that social networks and critical agency help to understand the integration of these various professional roles after a critical agency network model of enacting change.

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David Hursh, associate professor, gave the closing keynote address at the Committee on Teaching About the United Nations Conference held in Atlanta, Ga. In March, Hursh participated in a symposium on “Using YouTube with a Multisector Approach: Lessons from New Orleans” and presented the following: “The Acquisition and Use of Evidence-Based Discriminatory.” Exploiting the Space Between: Social Networks, Trust, and Urban School District Leaders; and “Understanding Regional Educational Policy: A Comparative Analysis of Omaha, Minneapolis, and Rochester’s Interdistrict Arrangements.”

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The Warner School and the Rochester City School District (RCSD) have launched a two-year certification program to prepare urban school leaders. The collaboratively designed Clinically Rich Urban School Leadership Program will equip candidates to provide focused instructional leadership that is tailored to the city’s urban setting.

The new program, a 27-credit-hour Advanced Certificate leading to New York State Certification in School Building and District Leadership, will allow K-12 teachers in the RCSD to earn a K-12 administrative certification over two years, part-time, while holding a full-time teaching position.

“We are pleased to partner with the University of Rochester’s Warner School to offer this opportunity to our teachers,” says city schools Superintendent Bolgen Vargas. “We know that strong school leadership is essential in improving our schools.”

Over the next few weeks, scholarships will be awarded to 12 qualified teachers who are interested in planning for a career as an instructional leader. These scholarships will cover 55 percent of tuition costs for qualified teachers.

“This partnership provides a unique opportunity for Rochester City School teachers to work directly with both successful RCSD administrators and University faculty as they learn how to effectively inspire and sustain positive change,” says Mary Rapp, who directs the K-12 School Leadership Program at Warner School.

“Instructional experiences will serve as the core of the program that begins with a mentorship facilitated by a team of RCSD administrators and University faculty. As part of the mentorship, students’ classroom projects will be considered within specific Rochester contexts, allowing students to work with current data, problems, and issues within their community.

The program coursework, developed and delivered by Warner faculty members who are recognized nationally for scholarship in teaching and educational leadership, will prepare urban school leaders who have the knowledge, tools, and experiences necessary to provide leadership in their schools and to both support and challenge school faculty as they improve their practice. Coursework will integrate curricular and instructional leadership, strategic planning, financial, material, and human resource management; law and legal issues; organizational design; and data-based school improvement plans.

The inaugural cohort begins May 2012, allowing students to complete the program by summer 2014. Qualifying applicants include tenured RCSD teachers who hold a master’s degree and permanent or professional certification in classroom teaching or pupil personnel service.

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Program Allows RCSD Teachers to Earn K-12 Administrative Certification While Teaching Full Time

Mary Rapp, director of Warner’s K-12 School Leadership Program

This summer, local middle school students are invited to partake in a new summer camp at the University of Rochester involving creative and non-fiction writing. The Genesee Valley Writing Project (GVWP) at the Warner School of Education will host Young Writers Summer Camp, a weeklong youth writing camp open to students entering sixth through eighth grades, from August 6 to 10 on River Campus.

Young Writers campers will have the opportunity to learn and improve their prose and writing skills as well as meet others who are interested in writing. They will participate in innovative writing activities involving fanfiction, anime, multimedia tools—in addition to traditional pen and paper—and non-fiction writing activities including memoir, travel writing, nature writing, and personal essays.

“Enrolling students in this new summer camp for writing will be an excellent way to foster the talents of aspiring and budding young writers,” says Professor Joanne Larson, who directs the local Writing Project. “Young people who have demonstrated interest and aptitude in writing, as well as those who simply have a passion for writing, will come away from this week with confidence and inspiration to continue developing their writing skills.”

Students can sign up for one or both camp sessions. The first session, “Writing Outside the Lines: Creative Writing and Digital Media,” will take place from 9 a.m. to Noon and the second session, “Writing My Life: Explorations in Nonfiction,” will run from 1 to 4 p.m. Both sessions will take place on the University of Rochester’s River Campus in the Interfaith Chapel, River Level Room.

Young Writers is a youth writing enrichment activity of the GVWP—sponsored by and housed at the Warner School. Writing Project teacher consultants, select New York State certified school teachers who have undergone the training of the GVWP, will teach writing activities involving creative and non-fiction writing, will come away from this week with a $25 non-refundable application fee and course-related expenses and materials, is $175 per session, $350 for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Brochures and registration forms are available by contacting the Warner Center for Professional Development and Education Reform by phone or e-mail at (585) 275-2616 and mbeyer@warner.rochester.edu or visiting www.warner.rochester.edu/news/events/story/9199.

Marian Wright Edelman Visits the Freedom School

Left: Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund, speaks at Rochester’s NEAD/CDF Freedom School at a breakfast co-hosted with the Warner School for community partners and leaders.

Below: Edelman was introduced by University of Rochester student Stephen Christopher Norwood ’12, a teacher at the Freedom School.

New Youth Writing Camp Open to Local Students

Genesee Valley Writing Project to Host Summer Camp for Aspiring Writers

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Kathryn Douthit, associate professor and chair of counseling and human development, was awarded the 2011 Ally of the Year Award, presented by the Warner School LGBTQ & Allies SIG in November. The award was presented by doctoral students Elaine Casquarelli, chair, and BJ Douglass, former co-chair, of the LGBTQ & Allies SIG. Douthit has been an ongoing and vital ally in support of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning) issues in education and counseling at the Warner School. As chair of the counseling and human development department, she has utilized her role in many important ways, through modeling for others, as well as mentoring students. She has supported LGBTQ and ally students in their projects, proposed research efforts related to LGBTQ issues, and fostered education about LGBTQ concerns in education, counseling, and human development. Along with being an ongoing supporter of the LGBTQ SIG activities, she also supported the development of the new course, titled LGBTQ Issues in Education and Human Development, and helped lobby for its inclusion as a permanent part of the Warner curriculum.

"As a feminist, Kathryn understands the role gender and sexuality play as a core part of our human development, and sees the importance of LGBTQ issues as a diversity and social justice issue that intersects with and informs other social justice issues," explains Douglass and Casquarelli. "To that end, she is supporting LGBTQ research at Warner as an important educational issue. She also understands that bringing an ally means being an activist, and means standing up for those marginalized in the field of education and higher education in general."

"At our request, Kathryn has been generous and open to continue and expand the LGBTQ curriculum at Warner as part of the day-to-day curriculum. We are thrilled to have such an important leader, ally, and activist as a member of our Warner community," adds BJ Douglass.

Douthit Receives LGBTQ Ally of the Year Award

Diversity Committee

at listening—to all kinds of voices. And, we have to hold our feet to the fire and continue to change for the future. As a committee, individually and collectively, we need to continue to involve students and staff and at the University level we need to continue the collaborations and share our successes in this area.

I think the work of the committee is one way to keep our growing reputation as an advocate and partner in the community, where we can be seen as not stepping away from difficult issues. And, the most pervasive impact we can have on the community is to prepare all of our graduates—teachers, counselors, and administrators—to bring these same values to their careers and do well in sort of the ‘Warner mission’ of life.

Looking ahead, what do you hope to accomplish in the future? One of our more practical goals is to do a careful analysis of the curriculum across the School and look at where these issues are being addressed in classes. If we take a look at our work, we will be able to identify patterns and see where we are going and how we can incorporate and integrate issues like this. We did some work on addressing diversity and inclusion in the classroom and we’ve had workshops on micro-aggressions and managing difficult emotions in the classroom when tough issues come up, so we have looked at classroom practices, but in terms of the actual content of what we are teaching, we haven’t done that yet. This will be a future move. Another goal is to broaden the notion of diversity and inclusion. We need to pay more attention to ability status both in terms of awareness, like through film series and workshops, and helping faculty look at their own teaching and what they do or what they can do.

What’s been your experience being the first diversity chair at Warner and University Faculty Senate, why are you here? It has been a way to live my politics and commitment to social justice in diversity and inclusion in a way that impacts practice. All of my research is around this, too, so it gives me another venue to work on so that my research, teaching, and service are all lined up together with my Warner colleague Dena Phillips Swanson. I really appreciate being involved in the University Faculty Diversity Officers group, to learn what other divisions in the University are doing, help push us all forward, and position Warner at the forefront. We’ve been able to get our work out there and that’s been satisfying to represent the School.

Bibliography of Readings:
To view a bibliography of readings used by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, visit www.warner.rochester.edu/pages/files/diversitybib.pdf.

"Lynn’s book was the first to take a close look at the second generation of American college women," states Stewart Weaver, professor of history and department chair. "Rather than focus on conventional issues of access and attendance, it situates women’s higher education in a broad social context and thus makes a distinctive and important contribution to the larger history of the Progressive Era."

"I was lower in her honor on Feb. 23. The history department is planning a scholarly colloquium in her honor next fall.

Former Warner School Professor Lynn D. Gordon Dies at 65

Lynn D. Gordon, professor emerita of history at the University of Rochester and a scholar of gender, education, ethnicity, and diplomacy, died Feb. 9 after a long struggle with cancer. She was 65.

A respected teacher, generous mentor, and an intellectual with unusually wide-ranging interests, Professor Gordon won for her pioneering study of women in higher education at the turn of the century. She was a valued member of both the Warner School of Education, where she served as associate dean and director of graduate studies, and the Department of History, where she taught a wide range of courses on the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. By all accounts, she was a woman of exceptional warmth who reached out to others far beyond the call of duty.

"Lynn had tremendous intellectual curiosity, and not in a superficial way," says Celia Applegate, professor of history who was her friend and colleague for decades. "She read every page of everything, from fiction to in-depth studies. She was a constant inspiration for rethinking of my teaching and research. It was her love of knowledge, her enthusiasm for knowledge, that she was all about.

"She had tremendous dignity and presence as a teacher and brought a kind of seriousness without pretentiousness to the classroom," added Professor Applegate, who team-taught three seminars with Professor Gordon. "I loved teaching with her. She also possessed an unutterable sense of humor to explain complicated issues with straightforward simplicity, says Professor Applegate, a talent Professor Gordon applied both to the classroom and to her scholarly writing.

She was a teacher who “put you through your paces,” agrees Tara McCarthy, assistant professor of history, who completed her doctoral studies with Professor Gordon in 2005. “She was a woman who had accomplished so much but managed to stay so accessible,” says Professor McCarthy.

Professor Gordon recognized the importance of female mentors for women in academia and she excelled at that role, says Professor McCarthy. Her most defining characteristic, and the one that endeared her to many, was “she was the sort of person that if you took you in,” says Professor McCarthy. “She was that person that a lot of people went to.” She opened her personal life to students far beyond the call of duty.

Professor Gordon is survived by her husband, Harold, daughter, Abigail (Chris) Bock, and son, Samuel B. Wechsler. The University flags were lowered in her honor on Feb. 23. The history department is planning a scholarly colloquium in her honor next fall.

Former Warner School Professor Lynn D. Gordon Dies at 65

A founding member of the Susan B. Anthony Center for Women’s Studies and director of the University’s Gender and Society Group (1994-2000), Professor Gordon was instrumental in bringing the prestigious Berkshire Conference on the History of Women to the University in 1999. She also was active in a variety of professional organizations, including the History of Education Society, the Spencer Foundation, the Berkshire Conference, the American Educational Research Association, the American Studies Association, and the Organization of American Historians.

A graduate of Barnard College, Professor Gor- don earned her master’s and doctorate in history from the University of Chicago. She taught at Bowdoin College, Northern Illinois University, and Princeton University before joining the faculty of the Warner School in 1983, where her husband, Harold Wechsler, in later years also had an appointment. Six years later, while still on the Warner faculty, Professor Gordon began teaching in the history department, where she became a full-time member in 2007. After 27 years at the University, she retired in June 2011 and was appointed Professor Emeritus of History.

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"Lynn’s book was the first to take a close look at the second generation of American college women," states Stewart Weaver, professor of history and department chair. "Rather than focus on conventional issues of access and attendance, it situates women’s higher education in a broad social context and thus makes a distinctive and important contribution to the larger history of the Progressive Era."

At her death, Professor Gordon was near- ing completion of the definitive biography of the American journalist Dorothy Thompson, whom Time magazine recognized in 1939 as the second most influential woman in America after Eleanor Roosevelt. Her work on Thompson fueled a growing interest in American foreign policy, in Nazism and the Holocaust, and in the history of the Middle East, interests that evolved into new history courses at Rochester.
New Book Aims to Improve Student Achievement in Mathematics

Choppin Collaborates on Book Exploring Equitable Classroom Practices in Mathematics

The words spoken, heard, written, and read in mathematics classrooms help to shape students’ understanding of what mathematics is and its place in the world. A new book, co-edited and co-authored by Jeffrey Choppin, associate professor of mathematics education at the Warner School of Education, explores the connection between the language used in mathematics classrooms and the opportunities to learn math.

Choppin collaborated with Beth Herbel-Eisenmann of Michigan State University, David Wagner of the University of New Brunswick, and David Pimm of the University of Alberta, to edit Equity in Discourse for Mathematics Education: Theories, Practices, and Policies (Springer, 2012). The book includes 13 chapters authored by over 15 leading education researchers.

The work from this book builds from an international conference held in 2008 in Rochester, N.Y., where 35 scholars and practitioners from six countries, spanning both hemispheres and four continents, discussed research on a range of classroom practices that may broaden the range of students who participate and learn mathematics with meaning. The conference, funded by the National Science Foundation, brought together top scholars known for their work in equity or on discourse in mathematics learning contexts.

“In an effort to close the achievement gap in math, this international conference brought together research on the most promising practices for teaching mathematics to students from diverse backgrounds,” says Choppin, who co-hosted the four-day conference. “By addressing issues of culture, diversity, and equity, we created this book to highlight classroom practices that expand student participation in mathematics classrooms.”

The book, which was written for mathematics educators and researchers, investigates connections between equity—providing opportunities for all students to participate in meaningful ways—and discourse, a range of practices including verbal communication, writing, reading, listening, and other forms of interaction, that together help students develop competency in mathematical practices.

Choppin, Herbel-Eisenmann, Wagner, and Pimm, together with a group of top research scholars in the interrelated fields of discourse and equity contributing chapters, provide a set of scholarly resources that show the interrelatedness of classroom discourse practices and equitable opportunities to learn mathematics. The book builds from a diversity of perspectives to show how discourse practices in a range of linguistic and geographic contexts provide (or deny) openings for all students to develop mathematical competencies and dispositions.

While every chapter relates to interactions among and opportunities for all students to learn in mathematics classrooms, the authors have emphasized discourse and equity differently. The first part of the book includes examples of work that starts from an orientation to equity and the second half of the book includes examples starting with a discourse orientation. The third set of chapters connects the research to policy implications.

As noted in the book, discourse practices warrant the attention of mathematics educators because discourse is the primary medium of education. In recent years, the themes of discourse and equity have been widely explored in mathematics education literature, though not often together.

“When discourse and equity have been explored together, the goal has typically been to propose ways to increase access to participation in dominant mathematically-based discourse practices, such as argumentation,” explain the book’s co-ed-

The book also contains a chapter, co-authored by Warner School faculty member Donna Harris, that offers insight into equity, mathematics reform, and policy. This chapter focuses on existing policy contexts that have the potential to limit student access to valued forms of discourse and, as a result, impede the development of equitable learning opportunities.

Choppin is a mathematics educator, directing the mathematics teacher education program at Warner. In addition to investigating issues on equitable classrooms practices in mathematics, he also focuses his research on the ways teachers develop the capacity to use innovative curriculum materials and what they learn in the process, particularly with the ways that students reason around mathematical concepts.

For additional information about Equity in Discourse for Mathematics Education, visit Springer Publishing at www.springerpub.com.