

NTID Learning Consortium

**Center for Research, Teaching, & Learning
National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Lyndon B. Johnson Building, Room 2483
52 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, New York 14623**

<http://www.rit.edu/~nlcwww>

**Ken Finton
National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Mumford, Bonnie
Failing, Mindi**

The Learning Consortium is a unit of the Center for Research, Teaching & Learning at NTID. Resources that form the consortium includes the NTID Learning Center (NLC) and Self-Instruction Lab (SIL). Educational and instructional elements at the core of the consortium support:

- Tutorial & course work
- Educational workshops addressing skills, knowledge, & attitudes important for success in college and beyond
- ‘Smart classroom’, computer, and multi-media based learning technologies
- Development of signed & spoken language communication
- Distance learning & digital visual communication technology
- Video resource & production facilities for educational purposes

Learning Consortium Committee (LCC)

Committee is made up of faculty members representing each of the centers within NTID as well as their respective academic departments. The LCC is responsible for developing strategic plans, operational procedures, and program evaluation mechanisms for the Learning Consortium, consistent with the Consortium’s guiding mission. The LCC promotes articulation and collaboration between the Learning Consortium and program areas.

Tutorial Services

Specific program areas provide tutorial services to its students. With advance scheduling, faculty members are available within the NLC to provide tutorial services, which stands at about 80 hours each week. Students have the luxury of tapping into this service on either a ‘walk-in’ basis or by appointment.

Smart Classroom

Learners have access to a 'smart classroom', which supports both instructional innovation through incorporating computer and multi-media based technologies, and serves as a site for distance learning innovations. The classroom has 'interface capability' allowing teacher-directed exchange of information from the smart podium to individual computer workstations (or groups of workstations) and from individual workstations to the classroom-wide display.

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing is a technology that allows two or more people at different locations to see/hear each other at the same time, sometimes even sharing computer applications for collaboration. Videoconferencing systems are used for a variety of purposes, including formal instruction (courses, lessons), connection with guest speakers & experts, multi-school project collaboration, professional development activities, meetings and international events. To accommodate different size audiences at NTID, videoconferencing can be accessed from a variety of locations throughout the LBJ building, including large conference rooms, smart classrooms, the Panara Theatre, and the Spoken Language Learning Practice Lab.

Fiber Optic Link

The Applied ComputerTechnology program offers a course in Fiber Optic (FO) Cabling. Students learn how to test the fiber optic connections over a distance, appreciate the value of high bandwidth, use a closed circuit TV (CCTV) for communication, and learn about multi-media & multiplexer fiber applications. A fiber optic link has been established between Carey & LBJ buildings and specifically in the NLC. Eventually, the program expects to set up a computer network between these two buildings using the fiber as a backbone.

Wireless Technology

The NLC has been chosen as a site for a pilot project for wireless technology offered through RIT's Information and Technology Services (ITS). Installation of an access point and other infrastructure needs for connectivity has been completed. We hope to secure foundation grant support for the purchase of a number of wireless laptop computers. We are excited about this new venture into the world of wireless technology. The following is a list of planned objectives, which we hope to achieve with the installation of this wireless technology.

1. The installation will be a Beta test for the possibility of future installations in a classroom environment.
2. Wireless will be used to provide additional network connectivity for
3. (3) classrooms currently configured with only minimal network connections.
4. Provide flexibility for Faculty in how they could potentially conduct their classes in the future by not restricting them to standard classroom configurations.

5. Provide Teacher / Student privacy when working on or tutoring students on assigned projects.
6. Allow for WWW availability throughout the NLC regardless of location. Flexibility is required frequently in roundtable discussions.
7. Provide overflow students with the capability to use loaner laptops and still have network connectivity.
8. Provide flexibility for students who don't want to work in the main 'lab' area.
9. Enhance NLC's ability to make newer technologies available for evaluation.
10. Provide latest and greatest technologies within NTID's main computer 'lab' used by all Faculty and Students. A population of over 1,500.
11. Provide Faculty / Staff with the means for evaluation of wireless technology for possible inclusion in current and/or new class curriculum.

Self-Instruction Lab

This lab is available to support signed & spoken language communication. It serves as an environment for both expressive and receptive practice of these activities within a self-instruction format. The lab offers flexible scheduling to meet learner needs as well as materials and equipment to support individual learning styles.

For purposes of developing their sign and spoken language communication skills, learners have access to state-of-the-art instructional carrels. Each one is equipped with a color TV monitor & VCR. The following equipment also is available in individual carrels: videodisc players, computers (Macs & PC's), audiotape recorders, CD ROM, & DVD players. Learners can use instructional materials in videotape, videodisc, audiotape, CD ROM, & DVD formats. Many of the lab's materials are designed to supplement classroom instruction, but materials may also be used for independent practice and study.

- Learners can use one of the two video production rooms for videotaping themselves individually or in interaction with another person using split-screen technology. The flex cam is available in the SIL for similar purposes.
- The lab offers standardized testing for reading, English language proficiency, speech reading with and without sound and simultaneous communication.
- Faculty and teaching assistants are available to support American Sign Language learning.

Contact Information:

Ken Finton

National Technical Institute for the Deaf

Rochester Institute of Technology

52 Lomb Memorial Drive

Rochester, NY 14623

Email: kwfdis@rit.edu