

# Provost's Grants Jump Start Projects

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Rochester Institute of Technology has awarded Provost's Learning Innovations grants to two research projects related to improving learning for deaf students. Rico Peterson of the Department of American Sign Language and Interpreting Education and Simon Ting of the Instructional Design and Evaluation Department received grants. Both are affiliated with the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), one of RIT's eight colleges.

Peterson will use his \$19,000 grant to develop the country's first curriculum in how to learn American Sign Language (ASL). By studying learning strategies in adults, deaf culture, comparative language features of English and ASL, phonology (phonetics and phonemics of language), and limitations of the language classroom, Peterson and colleagues Christine Monikowski and Leslie Greer hope to teach students how to be more effective and independent learners. Their course will include online learning modules that contain lectures on CD-ROM or videotape, selected readings, exercises, and an evaluation.

Ting's \$17,750 grant is to create a suite of authoring tools for developing Web-based courseware. The tools will enable instructors to create Web-based instruction with interactive multimedia capabilities, giving learners a large degree of control over how to interact with course materials on the Web. Special tools will allow educators of deaf students to embed sign language video in Web browsers to supplement text and graphics.

Provost's Learning Innovations grants allow individuals to develop pilot programs that later can be fully implemented through federal or state grants.

For more information about the ASL grant, contact Peterson at [477dept@rit.edu](mailto:477dept@rit.edu). For more information about the authoring tools grant, contact Ting at [sktnmp@rit.edu](mailto:sktnmp@rit.edu).