

Psychology professors win regional awards

By Lacey Korevec
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Recently, two of Rider's professors of psychology, Dr. Michael Epstein and Dr. Gary Brosvic, were awarded two out of the six awards for their posters on the Immediate Feedback Assessment Technique (IF AT).

The IF ATs, developed by Epstein and Brosvic, are a scratch-off testing technique that allows students to learn from their mistakes while taking exams by immediately showing them the correct answers.

"Dr. Brosvic and I have developed a model of dealing with uncertainty on multiple choice examinations. It looks at the role of feedback and the type of feedback and how it effects students learning for later testing," said Epstein.

One poster, "Effects of Immediate versus Delayed Feedback on Retention of Test Materials," won at the New England Psychological Association (NEPA), while the other, "(IF AT): A Test that Assesses while it Teaches," won at the Eastern Psychological Association Conference (EPA).

"The particular posters are based upon a given study," Epstein said. "One of them was kind of a recap of the work that had been done testing the effectiveness of the IF AT. The other one was the use of the IF AT as a tool in studying the impor-

tance of the timing of feedback on student learning.

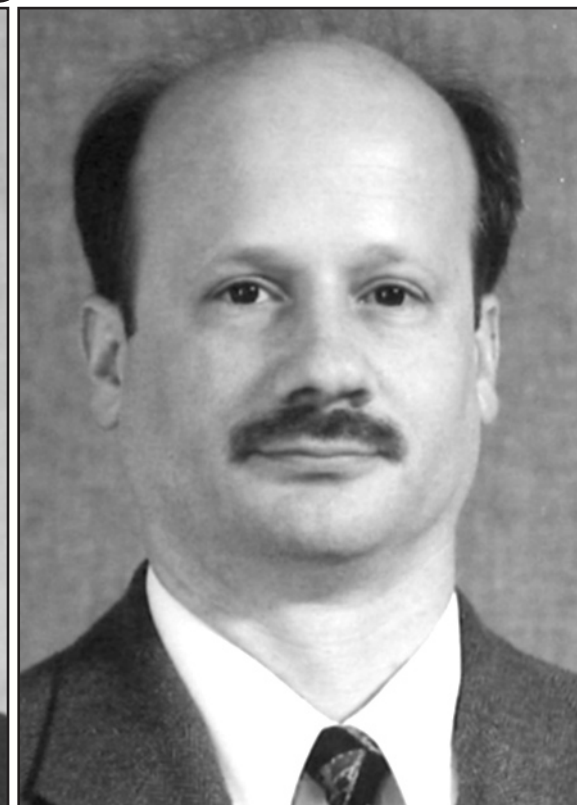
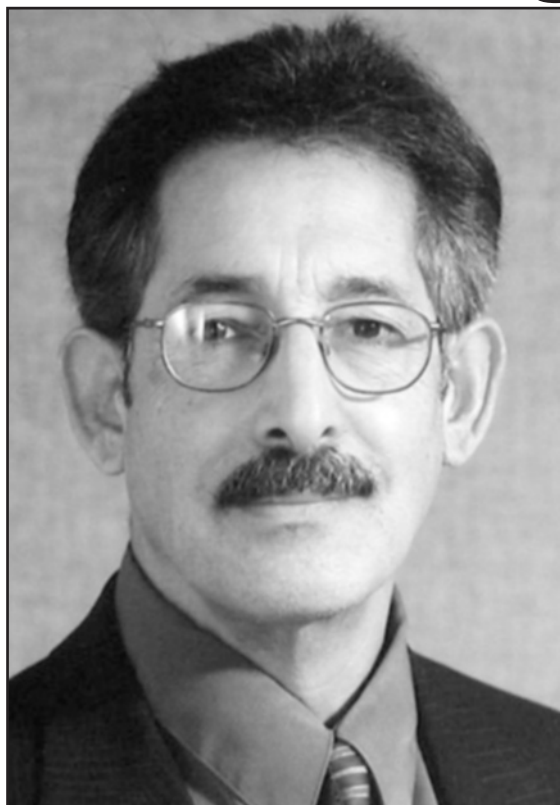
According to Epstein, the honors came as a shock as they were unaware of the judging.

"I didn't realize there was even a competition going on so I wasn't in it to win an award," he said.

"People went through them and said, 'this is good, and of all the stuff here, you know, the gimmicky things, this is what we're supposed to be doing professionally. We're supposed to be working on telling people how to learn things and finding new ways to do things in the classroom,'" said Brosvic. "Basically we're just happy to have found something that works."

According to Brosvic, meeting with teachers after receiving an exam grade is the best way for students to learn from their mistakes; however, very few students actually do that.

"The goal was to find a way that you could do that as part of a testing process. It takes one teacher to one student and nobody's got that, no matter what district you're in," he said. "[Using the IF AT test form] is not as good as having the teacher there but it's very close and the goal was never to replace a teacher with the form. The goal is the ability to give the teacher the form to use in the classroom."



Dr. Michael Epstein (left) and Dr. Gary Brosvic (right) won two regional awards for research they conducted on the Immediate Feedback Assessment Technique (IF AT).

Aside from the awards, Epstein said that the tests have had their own success. Not only are they being used in several different departments within Rider, but they are also spreading throughout the United States.

"The success has been far greater than I had ever really thought it would be," he said. "It's been adopted by several textbooks, it's being used by some publishers in their textbooks, the forms are being used all over the country in different universities and colleges, and a

lot of public schools are using it. Even the State Police are using it in Tennessee and West Virginia for their training and testing programs."

According to Brosvic, the IF AT is especially beneficial to children.

"I got into this because when you work with children, particularly children with disabilities, one of the best things you can do is give them immediate feedback on what they're doing," Brosvic explained. "We are fiddling now with the ability to use the IF AT to work

with kids on social skills."

The research for the IF AT began about five years ago and is likely to continue for many years to come, said Epstein.

"We now have shown, rather conclusively, its effectiveness as a learning device, but now we're using it also as a tool to investigate other issues in psychology," he explained. "There are a wealth of questions to be asked and researched and data to be collected. I see no end to this."