

Dr Robert Merrill Boynton elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences

April 28, 1981

Dr. Robert Merrill Boynton, professor of psychology at the University of California, San Diego, has been elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors for any American scientist.

Boynton's election brings UC San Diego's total academy membership to 49 (46 U.S. members plus 3 foreign associates). The ratio of members to total faculty is one of the highest in the country.

In all, 60 new members were elected today (Tuesday, April 28) at the academy's 118th annual meeting in Washington, D.C. Of those elected today, seven were from University of California campuses. In addition to the new UC San Diego member, three were elected from UC Berkeley, and one each from UCLA, UC Santa Barbara and UC San Francisco. Total UC academy membership is now 197.

Boynton is known for his work on how people perceive color and how animal and human visual systems code color.

Born in Evanston, Illinois, in 1924, Boynton joined the UC San Diego Department of Psychology in 1974 after serving as professor of psychology and visual science and chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Rochester. He received an A.B. degree from Amherst College in 1948 and a Ph.D. from Brown University in 1952.

He joined the Rochester faculty in 1952 as assistant professor of psychology and served as director of the Center for Visual Science from 1963 to 1971. He has also served as a guest research worker in the light division of the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington, England, and as a visiting professor of physiology at UC San Francisco.

Boynton is a member of a number of academic and scientific organizations including the American Institute of Physics, the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, Sigma Xi and the Society of Experimental Psychologists. He is also a member of the Optical Society of America and served as president of the Rochester chapter in 1959-60 and as a director at large of the national organization from 1966 to 1969.

He has served as topical editor on color and vision for the Journal of the Optical Society of America since 1977 and on the editorial board of Vision Research since 1979.

The National Academy of Sciences was chartered by President Abraham Lincoln and is an independent group with the responsibility for advising and counseling the federal government on scientific and technical matters.

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