

Three faculty members elected to the National Academy of Sciences

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THREE UCSD FACULTY ELECTED TO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Three University of California, San Diego professors have been elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors for any American scientist.

They are Joseph Kraut, professor of chemistry; George N. Somero, professor and chairman of marine biology at Scripps Institution of Oceanography; and Russ E. Davis, professor of oceanography at SIO.

Their election brings UCSD's total academy membership to 49 (48 U.S. members plus one foreign associate). The ratio of academy members to total faculty is one of the highest in the country.

"I am extremely proud of the continued recognition given to the faculty of UCSD," Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson said. "This is a great testimony to the quality of the people that are associated with this institution."

In all, seven new University of California members were elected at the academy's 125th annual meeting in Washington, D.C., bringing the system-wide total to 239. In addition to three new UCSD members, two each were elected from the Berkeley and Davis campuses.

Kraut, one of the early members of the UCSD faculty, joined the Department of Chemistry in 1962 after nearly a decade on the faculty of the University of Washington. He earned a bachelor's degree from Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA; received his Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the California Institute of Technology in 1954; and served a postdoctoral fellowship at the Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology at Cambridge University, England.

His research focuses on the relationship between the three-dimensional structure of proteins and their biological functions, information that is key to the field of rational drug design.

In addition to his appointments in the Marine Biology Research Division at SIO, Somero holds the John Dove Isaacs Chair in Natural Philosophy. He earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Carleton College in Northfield, MN, and received his Ph.D. in biology from Stanford University in 1967. After serving two postdoctoral fellowships at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Somero came to UCSD in 1970.

Somero's primary research interests are the physical and chemical mechanisms that enable marine organisms to adapt to their environment. He has been especially interested in the adaptations of deep-sea organisms, including the unusual species found at hydrothermal vents, and has spent much of his research career at sea.

Davis has been associated with SIO since 1967, when he became an assistant research geophysicist at the San Diego branch of the UC Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics. He was appointed to the Scripps faculty in 1968. Both his bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and his Ph.D. from Stanford University were in chemical engineering.

Davis is a physical oceanographer whose research emphasis is upper ocean currents and their response to winds. He is a member of the steering committee for the World Ocean Circulation Experiment and is considered an expert in the design of oceanographic instruments and at-sea experiments.

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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