

Dr. Melford E. Spiro and Dr. Daniel Steinberg elected to membership in National Academy of Sciences

April 27, 1982

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

They are Dr. Melford E. Spiro, professor of anthropology, and Dr. Daniel Steinberg, professor of medicine in the School of Medicine. Their election brings UCSD's total academy membership to 56 (53 U.S. members plus 3 foreign associates). The ratio of 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 the San Diego campus," Dr. Richard Atkinson, UCSD chancellor, said. "The list of honors and awards, highlighted today by the election of Melford Spiro and Daniel Steinberg to the National Academy of Sciences, is a great testimony to the quality of the people that are associated with UCSD."

In all, 60 new members were elected today (Tuesday, April 27) at the academy's 119th annual meeting in Washington, D.C. Of those elected, eight were from University of California campuses. In addition to the two new UCSD members, four were elected from UC Berkeley and two from UC Santa Barbara. Total University of California academy membership is now 206.

Spiro, who joined the UCSD faculty in 1968, is the founder of the Department of Anthropology on the campus and served as its first chairman from 1968 to 1971. He has conducted anthropological field work in Thailand, Burma, Israel and Micronesia and with the Ojibwa Indians in Wisconsin.

In October 1980 Spiro was honored with the Excellence in Teaching award by the UCSD Chancellor's Associates for his anthropology courses that were called "rigorous, hard and heavy in the work and intellectual response expected, but invariably praised by his students."

Spiro received a B.A. degree from the University of Minnesota in 1941 and a Ph.D. from Northwestern University in 1950. He taught at Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Connecticut, the University of Washington and the University of Chicago before joining the San Diego campus.

He is recognized as one of the two or three most eminent thinkers and researchers in the field of cultural anthropology in general and in psychological anthropology in particular. He has completed formal psychoanalytic training for its use in intensive anthropological research, a task which has allowed him to broach new areas of research. He has explored social behavior from the Israeli kibbutzim to South Seas atolls and human nature as expressed through belief in supernaturalism and manifestations of the Oedipus complex in Burma.

Steinberg, a metabolic and rare disease specialist well known for his diabetes and lipid research, was one of the key medical investigators recruited for the UCSD School of Medicine faculty when the institution was founded.

He joined the faculty of the UCSD School of Medicine in 1968 as professor of medicine and head of the Division of Metabolic Disease and Program Director of Basic Sciences in Medicine. He had served as chief of the

Laboratory of Metabolism at the National Heart Institute for six years and had served at the institute for 17 years prior to coming to San Diego.

Steinberg received a B.S. degree in 1941 from Wayne University in Detroit and an M.D. from the Wayne University College of Medicine, graduating Summa cum Laude in 1944. In addition, he holds a Ph.D. with distinction in biological chemistry from the Harvard Medical School.

He currently heads a National Institutes of Health specialized center of research at UCSD. The projects under his direction include laboratory and clinical research into new methods of treatment and patient care. Among the investigations in progress are the causes of elevated cholesterol levels and related diseases, lipid-related inherited diseases and the body's defenses against atherosclerosis.

Steinberg has received extensive awards for his research activities and has served in key posts on many national research councils and advisory boards. He has achieved recognition by the international medical community for his definitive investigative work on cholesterol and related lipid disorders as well as his established history of excellence in the field of metabolic research.

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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