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Presidential Advisor John Holdren to Speak at UC San Diego

IGCC welcomes Science and Technology Policy director for 5th annual Herb York Memorial Lecture

John Holdren, President Barack Obama’s senior science and technology advisor, will speak at the University of California, San Diego for the fifth annual Herb York Memorial Lecture on Monday, Feb. 29. A keynote event for the [UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation](#) (IGCC), the visit is cosponsored by the School of Global Policy and Strategy and Jacobs School of Engineering.

As director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Holdren oversees large-scale initiatives for the United States that include a comprehensive climate action plan, increasing participation of youth in STEM education and greater overall access to government-held data. His time on campus will be spent discussing how these and other priorities for science, technology and innovation have developed under Obama.

[School of Global Policy and Strategy](#) Dean Peter Cowhey said a greater focus on supporting education in STEM — science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine — was crucial to address global security and economic development.

“Promoting science and technology to our youth today will only help us as a university in the future. The School of Global Policy and Strategy sits at the nexus of STEM and policy, preparing the world’s next leaders to tackle the unique challenges facing a growing, global society,” Cowhey said. “The Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, in turn, is helping to achieve these same goals. We look forward to a lively discussion with John Holdren.”



*John Holdren, White House Science and Technology Policy director.
(Courtesy IGCC)*

Also co-chair of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, Holdren will address specific challenges and opportunities for an increased focus on science and technology, discussing the role of partnerships across public, private, academic and civil-society sectors.

“Given the many challenges facing our global society, I am especially interested in this discussion on research priorities, policies and partnerships,” said Albert P. Pisano, dean of the [Jacobs School of Engineering](#). “Fundamental research often uncovers lines of inquiry that are relevant for industry. These academic-industry pursuits, in turn, reveal new fundamental research challenges with societal implications. The agile research centers program at the Jacobs School is one of the ways we engage with both the public and private sectors to leverage engineering for the global good.”

A central goal of IGCC is to engage with the policy community, stemming from research focused on technology and innovation policy. Holdren was invited to speak by IGCC in part to meet this goal as a leading decision maker in the U.S. government.



IGCC Director Tai Ming Cheung. (Courtesy School of Global Policy and Strategy)

“The theme of the lecture is on science, technology and innovation, and I would like the audience to go away knowing how pivotal the topic is to our country’s prosperity, security and long-term well-being. IGCC is actively engaged in researching these issues for academic and policy relevance,” said Tai Ming Cheung, current director of IGCC and faculty member at the School of Global Policy and Strategy.

Cheung is a longtime analyst of and leading expert on Chinese and East Asian defense, in addition to national security affairs related to the economy, industry, and technology and innovation. Cheung’s book “Fortifying China” was published in 2009 followed by his edited work, “Forging China’s Military Might,” in 2015.

The [Herb York Memorial Lecture](#) is underwritten by the York family to honor the contribution and legacy of Herbert F. York, the founding chancellor of UC San Diego in 1961 and first director of IGCC. He served as director of the institute from 1983 to 1989 and kept an office there until 2000. York died May 19, 2009 at the age of 87.

“We are delighted to welcome Director Holdren to this year’s Herb York Memorial Lecture. Each speaker to date has followed in dad’s footsteps, helping to shape the most pressing issues of the day. Holdren exemplifies this well,” said Rachel York, Herb York’s daughter and longtime supporter of UC San Diego. Like Holdren, Herb York was a presidential advisor on science and technology, and served on the President’s Science Advisory Committee.

“Our father worked on both sides of the national security equation, focusing at first on the nuclear arms race,” Rachel York said. “IGCC has expanded beyond nuclear proliferation to become a major source for analysis — and action — on other crucial national security topics.”

A nuclear physicist, Herb York and IGCC’s original emphasis was on security and nuclear nonproliferation, devoted to the immediate aspects of managing international conflict. That agenda remains, but has broadened over time. IGCC brings scholars together across social- and lab-science disciplines to work on regional security, innovation and national security, development and political violence, emerging threats, and climate change. A multi-campus research unit housed at UC San Diego, IGCC is hosted by the School of Global Policy and Strategy.



Rachel York at the 2015 Herb York Memorial Lecture. (Courtesy IGCC)

“Science, Technology and Innovation: The View from the White House Science Advisor” featuring John Holdren will be Monday, Feb. 29, 5-6:15 p.m. at the Sanford Consortium Auditorium, 2880 Torrey Pines Scenic Dr. near UC San Diego in La Jolla, Calif. Check in and a light reception will begin at 4 p.m. in the auditorium lobby. [Advance registration](#) is highly suggested as a limited number of seats remain for the free lecture.

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