

Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson chosen to receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Adelphi University, New York, during commencement ceremonies

May 5, 1983

University of California, San Diego Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson has been chosen to receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Adelphi University, New York.

Atkinson will accept the degree during commencement ceremonies at the University, located in Garden City, Long Island, on May 22. It will be the eighth honorary degree Atkinson has received.

In a letter to Dr. Atkinson, Adelphi President Dr. Timothy Costello, said:

"We are, of course, very much aware of your position of leadership on the field of higher education as Chancellor of the University of California, San Diego and your prior distinguished role in the National Science Foundation, but we are especially pleased to honor Adelphi by giving recognition to your work as a psychologist and scientist."

Atkinson has been Chancellor of UCSD since July 1, 1980. Prior to that, he spent three years as director of the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C.

He began his academic career at Stanford University in 1956 after military service in the U.S. Army. Except for three years at UCLA and one year at the University of Michigan, he remained on the Stanford faculty until 1975. In addition to his position as Professor of Psychology at Stanford, he also held faculty appointments at various times in the School of Engineering, the School of Education, the Institute for Applied Mathematics and Statistics and the Institute for Mathematical Studies in the Social Sciences.

His research in experimental psychology and applied mathematics has been concerned with problems of memory and cognition. He transformed intuitive ideas about the nature of human memory into an explicit theory that was formulated in mathematical terms.

This theory has been the basis for much of the current research on memory and has played an important role in specifying correlates between brain structures and psychological phenomena, in explaining the effects of drugs on memory and in providing techniques for optimizing learning.

Atkinson's research on memory and cognition led him to an interest in the more applied problems of instruction and learning in the classroom. He developed one of the first computer-controlled systems for instruction, which served as a prototype for the commercial development of computer-assisted instruction. An important application of his work has been the teaching of reading and language arts under computer control to elementary school children. He is the co-founder of the Computer Curriculum Corporation located in Palo Alto, California.

His scientific contributions have resulted in election to the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, the Institute of Medicine, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Education. He has been a Fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, a

Fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation, a recipient of the Distinguished Research Award from the Social Sciences Research Council and the Thorndike Award of the American Psychological Association. He has been awarded honorary Doctor of Science degrees by seven American universities, holds honorary memberships in several foreign societies and academies and a mountain in Antarctica (78 degrees 39' S.L., 85 degrees 30' W.L.) has been named in his honor.

Atkinson has written more than one hundred and forty scientific articles and has authored or co-authored nine books. Prominent among the latter is *Introduction to Psychology*, co-authored with his wife, Rita, and E. R. Hilgard of Stanford University; it is now in its eighth edition. The general text is one of the most successful books in the history of college publishing and has been translated into seven languages, including French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian. The Soviet Academy of Sciences recently translated and published a collection of scientific papers by Chancellor Atkinson. Entitled *Human Memory and the Learning Process*, this volume of collected papers supplements two other books of his that have been translated into Russian and published by the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

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