

Professor Melford E. Spiro, Department of Anthropology, named as the first recipient of the campus' Presidential Chair by UC President David Saxon

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Professor Melford E. Spiro of the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, San Diego has been named the first recipient of the campus' Presidential Chair by University of California President David S. Saxon.

Spiro will occupy the chair, created by a \$250,000 endowment from the President's office, for a period of five years, beginning September 1.

According to Saxon, "Presidential Chairs are offered to distinguished members of the University's faculty and are intended to encourage new or interdisciplinary program development or to enhance quality in existing academic programs.

"Funds have been provided to support instructional activities, research or other creative activities which Prof. Spiro may wish to undertake in the anthropology department," Saxon said.

The UC Board of Regents, at its July 1981 meeting, approved the establishment of a fund to support one Presidential Chair at each of the nine UC campuses.

UCSD Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson, who nominated Spiro for the honor, called the anthropologist, "one of the most distinguished contemporary anthropologists.

"He is a major contributor to modern personality psychology, to methodological issues germane across the social sciences, and to those areas in which the interpretations of social science are of major importance to the general intellectual climate of our time. In the subdiscipline of psychological anthropology, his colleagues regard him as unquestionably the most distinguished scholar," Atkinson said.

Spiro graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1941 and earned his Ph.D. in anthropology from Northwestern University in 1950.

Following an academic career which took him to Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Connecticut, the University of Washington and the University of Chicago, Spiro came to UCSD in 1968 to found the Department of Anthropology. He served as its chair from 1968-71.

He is the author of numerous articles and eight books based on his field research in Micronesia, Israel and Burma.

Earlier this year, Spiro was named to the National Academy of Sciences. He has been a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences since 1975 and is a former president of the Society for Psychological Anthropology.

Among his other many honors, Spiro also includes a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1976-77, an Einstein Fellowship at the Israel Academy of Science and an Excellence in Teaching Award from the Chancellor's Associates at UCSD.

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