

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Julie Cohen

David Morrison Named to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

David Morrison, a professor in both the departments of mathematics and physics and currently chair of the mathematics department, has been elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His selection brings to 34 the number of UC Santa Barbara faculty members who have been named fellows of the academy.

The academy is an independent policy research center that conducts interdisciplinary studies of complex and emerging problems. Since its founding in 1780, the academy has elected leading “thinkers and doers” from each generation, including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin in the 18th century, Daniel Webster and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the 19th century, and Margaret Mead and Martin Luther King Jr. in the 20th century. The current membership includes more than 250 Nobel laureates and more than 60 Pulitzer Prize winners.

“The American Academy of Arts and Sciences is one of the nation’s most prestigious honorary societies, and David Morrison’s election as a member is a well-deserved honor,” said Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “I congratulate Professor Morrison on this outstanding achievement. As a member of the academy, he joins some of the world’s most accomplished leaders from academia, business, public affairs, the humanities and the arts, including 33 other UC Santa Barbara faculty members.”

Morrison works at the interface of geometry and theoretical physics, applying geometric techniques to address questions in string theory and quantum gravity. He uses results and ideas from theoretical physics to suggest new directions of research in mathematics. Among his accomplishments are the description of space-time singularities and topology change in string theory, mathematical ramifications of duality between quantum gravity theories, and other scale-invariant physical theories and foundational work in F-theory (a branch of string theory). Morrison has been at UC Santa Barbara since 2006.

Members of the 2015 class include winners of the Nobel Prize and the Pulitzer Prize; MacArthur and Guggenheim fellowships; and Grammy, Emmy, Oscar and Tony awards. The 2015 class includes University of California President Janet Napolitano; host and co-executive producer of National Public Radio's "Fresh Air" Terry Gross; Nobel-winning physiologist Brian Kobilka; Pulitzer Prize winners Mary Oliver, a poet, and New York Times art critic Holland Cotter; actors Audra McDonald and Christopher Plummer; and singer-songwriter Judy Collins.

"We are honored to elect a new class of extraordinary women and men to join our distinguished membership," said Don Randel, chair of the academy's board of directors. "Each new member is a leader in his or her field and has made a distinct contribution to the nation and the world. We look forward to engaging them in the intellectual life of this vibrant institution."

The new class will be inducted at a ceremony on Oct. 10 at the academy's headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.