COVID-19 planning and new Regents Professors on ABOR agenda

University Communications
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The Arizona Board of Regents will review the state universities' operations plans for fall and discuss principles for COVID-19 planning during this week's meeting, which will be held virtually.

The meeting, which had been scheduled to take place at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, has been moved online to adhere to recommended health and safety precautions amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It is ABOR's second virtual meeting since classes moved online in mid-March.

The board also is expected to approve the appointments of five new Regents Professors from the University of Arizona.

Under ABOR policy, the rank of Regents Professor can be awarded only to full professors with exceptional achievements that have brought them national or international distinction. This highest of faculty ranks can be awarded to no more than 3% of the total of tenured and tenure-track faculty members.

The nominees being considered by the board are:

Robertta Díaz Brinton
Director of the Center for Innovation in Brain Science
Member of the BIO5 Institute

Brinton is an internationally recognized neuroscientist whose research on Alzheimer's disease has led to critical insights into the causes of the disease, as well as innovative therapies to treat it. She has led the Center for Innovation in Brain Science at the University of Arizona since 2016.

"The caliber, innovation and impact of Brinton's research and community outreach have been recognized repeatedly throughout her career," according to board materials. She received the national Presidential Citizens Medal for her decades of STEM education in inner-city schools in Los Angeles. She was presented with the Prize for Excellence in Alzheimer's Drug Discovery in 2017 from the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation and received the Scientist of the Year award from that same foundation in 2015.

Brinton, who was elected to the National Academy of Inventors in 2017, serves on multiple national institutes and panels and in 2019 was appointed to the Advisory Committee to the Director of the National Institutes of Health.

Her research has been funded with grants from state and federal agencies, including the
National Institutes of Health, and funding from industry and private foundations. Research awards at the Center for Innovation in Brain Science under Brinton's directorship have totaled more than $71 million since the center's inception in 2016. In 2019, Brinton received a $37.5 million NIH grant to determine the effectiveness of allopregnanolone as a treatment for individuals with early-stage Alzheimer's who carry the genetic risk factor for the disease.

**Judith K. Brown**  
**Professor in the School of Plant Sciences**  
**Member of the BIO5 Institute**

Brown works in the complex framework at the intersection of biology and society, focusing on viruses and bacteria transmitted by insect vectors to agriculturally important plants, especially the geminiviruses and the whiteflies that transmit them. She was the first to use a "gene gun" to inoculate genomes of these viruses, the first to estimate the size of the whitefly genome, and among the first to sequence the genome of the sweet potato whitefly.

She also was the first to study whitefly-transmitted plant diseases in Arizona and has become the world's primary expert on emerging plant viruses that infect cotton, recently discovering in the southeastern U.S. cotton-growing region two viruses that are endemic to Africa and Asia. As a response, she is currently using gene silencing to develop cotton plants endowed with geminivirus/whitefly resistance.

In collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service in Miami and Mars Inc., Brown's research group in 2018 started developing molecular tools that growers could use to spot infected cacao trees in Africa before they show symptoms.

Every year, the Plant Virus Diagnostic Laboratory she established in 1990 receives and identifies approximately 10,000 samples of pathogens from all over the world. The Arizona and California departments of agriculture rely on her group to support quarantine efforts to limit the spread of diseases. As coordinator for the National Plant Diagnostic Network, she works with state and national agencies to protect the agriculture sector.

Brown has been recognized with numerous international and national awards. She is a fellow in the American Phytopathological Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She also was given the Frederick L. Wellman Award, the highest honor given by the Caribbean division of the American Phytopathological Society.

**Peter Chesson**  
**Professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**

Chesson's pioneering studies on the impact of environmental variability introduced a paradigm change into ecological thinking, according to board materials. Chesson has established a classification of coexistence mechanisms that has had profound effect on environmental issues and the management of natural populations. Peers and other researchers from around the world consider Chesson one of the most influential theorists and original thinkers of his era.

Chesson tests his ideas in the field, collaborating with experimentalists. His work has stimulated many first-rate experimentalists to explore his theory and, as a result, it has had very broad effect on the field. His seminal and highly influential 2000 review article in *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* has received more than 4,000 citations. His *Trends in Ecology and Evolution paper from 2002*
has been cited more than 2,000 times. As a result of his close connection with experiments and fieldwork, he has maintained a laboratory, the Chesson Lab [5], which has been home to a generation of young and diverse colleagues from graduate students to postdoctoral fellows.

Chesson has served the Tucson community as a member of the Pima County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission and as president of the Tucson Mountains Association, where his expertise in ecology has played an important role in regional land-use decisions.

**Jeff Greenberg**
Professor in the Department of Psychology

Greenberg developed a unique conceptual framework called terror management theory in order to address the psychological conflict between the self-preservation instinct and the realization that death is inevitable and unpredictable. The conflict results in terror, which then can be managed by embracing cultural beliefs or systems that counter the biological reality with forms of meaning and value.

"TMT provides today's most comprehensive account of human motivation. TMT not only drives contemporary theory and research in social psychology, but also influences research in an array of scientific, scholarly and translational disciplines," according to board materials.

Greenberg's work has brought him many honors and awards. He is a fellow of both the Society for Personality and Social Psychology and the Society of Experimental Social Psychology, and the recipient of a Presidential Citation from the American Psychological Association and of the Lifetime Career Award from the International Society for Self and Identity.

Greenberg has a history of significant professional accomplishments in research and scholarship, with more than 300 scientific publications, including three books, an additional three edited volumes, and a successful textbook. The former president of the International Society for Self and Identity, Greenberg has worked as an editor for Social Psychology [6] and has served on various committees for the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

**Connie W. Woodhouse**
Professor in the School of Geography and Development

Woodhouse is the world's foremost authority on the use of tree-ring science, or dendrochronology, to understand the variable flow of river systems on time scales from years to millennia. "Her research has fundamentally changed the public's understanding of natural climate variability in determining the availability of freshwater resources in semi-arid regions," according to board materials.

Woodhouse pioneered connecting results from dendrochronology to the information needed by public officials, policymakers and stakeholders to improve both planning and prediction in the face of expected changes to future demand for water. She was one of the first scientists to describe and classify the widespread existence of past "megadroughts" ? periods of continuous and severe aridity more intense and prolonged than anything in the instrumental climate record.
Woodhouse pioneered new methods and perspectives for reconstructing and understanding variability in hydroclimatology. In 2016, she received the José A. Boninsegna Frontiers in Dendrochronology Award from the Tree-Ring Society.

"Woodhouse's research has changed the way the world understands and plans for drought, changes in river flow and future challenges to freshwater resources. Working at the boundary of science and public policy decision-making, Woodhouse has created new ways for scientific discovery to lead to innovation in practice," according to board materials.

A list of all of the University's Regents Professors [7] is available on the provost's website.

Other items on the agenda [8]:

- The University of Arizona seeks to add two new programs for implementation in the 2020-21 academic year - a Bachelor of Science in game design and development and a Bachelor of Arts in games and behavior.
- The board will vote on adopting enterprisewide performance metrics and strategic forecasts.

The meeting will be livestreamed [9]. For technical assistance, send an email to ABOR Tech Support [10]. To provide a written submission for the call to the audience, members of the public must complete this form [11].

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