



## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

### Ovid Jyh-Lang Tzeng '73g

**To Ovid Jyh-Lang Tzeng for his research into the scientific studies of language and his contributions to the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan).**

An internationally recognized scholar, Ovid Jyh-Lang Tzeng is a leading pioneer in cognitive neuropsychology studies and is renowned for his extensive analysis of cognition and the memory system. Since 2008, Tzeng has been one of the key leaders in the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan), serving as a minister without portfolio of the Executive Yuan, the country's highest administrative organ. As such, he is a key adviser to Taiwan's president and oversees Taiwan's Ministry of Education, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Office of Tourism, and a portion of the National Science Council.

Prior to accepting the minister without portfolio position, Tzeng served as the minister of education and as chancellor of the University System of Taiwan.

His academic experience is far reaching. Following his graduation from Penn State with a doctoral degree in educational psychology, Tzeng was an assistant professor at Ohio State University. He

then joined the University of California, becoming a full professor in 1980. In 1990, Tzeng returned to Taiwan and joined the National Chung Cheng University as a professor. At National Chung Cheng University, he became chair of the department of psychology and director of the Center for Research in Cognitive Science, then dean of the College of Social Sciences. Later, he served as vice president and president for National Yang-Ming University and chancellor for the University System of Taiwan, which integrates the top four universities of Taiwan.

"At Penn State, I was transformed intellectually from a Taiwanese country boy into a dedicated scientist of human memory," Tzeng said. "I was so lucky to meet my mentor, Dr. Charles N. Cofer, who planted the seed of intellectual power in me and gave me the opportunity to unfold the mystery of the brain-mind relationship from the perspective of neurolinguistic studies across different writing systems."

Tzeng has been a well-respected researcher throughout his career. His research has focused on the speech recording process during reading, human

information processing, bilingual speech perception, orthography and the reading behaviors of dyslexics, and aphasia, or loss of ability to process speech. Tzeng is known particularly for his extensive research on the memorial process of reading behaviors across writing systems, and in recent years, he established a research platform for cognitive neuroscience in Academia Sinica to pursue cutting-edge research in visual information processing using various brain-imaging core facilities.

"We use very sophisticated brain scanning to visualize the evolution of human civilization in terms of how our brain circuits are organized and reorganized as a consequence of learning to read different scripts," Tzeng said. "Writing and reading are the greatest achievements of mankind, and in my research, I was able to trace the neuropathways of mapping our educated eyes to our educated brain from a biological evolutionary perspective."

Among his many honors, Tzeng was elected an academician of Academia Sinica, the most prominent academic institution in Taiwan—and from 2002 to 2006 he served as the organization's vice

president; was honored to become a member of the Academy of Science for Developing World (TWAS) in 2010; and was recognized as a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science in 2003. Tzeng also received the Golden Language Award at the 2009 International Conference on Applied Linguistics & Language Teaching, and Taiwan's National Award of Distinguished Scholarship.

Tzeng is the consulting editor for many journals and serves on the advisory councils for the International Association for the Studies of Attention and Performance, and the National Science Council of Taiwan.

Active in the Penn State community in Taiwan, Tzeng participates in most alumni activities held in Taiwan and is currently working with Taiwan's minister of education to initiate a joint research program between the Penn State College of Education and the College of Education at Taiwan Normal University.

Tzeng lives in Taiwan with his wife, Daisy L. Hung, who he married at Penn State's Eisenhower Chapel. They have one son, Stanley Hung.