

Priscilla Nelson

Nelson joined NJIT as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs in 2005. Prior to joining NJIT, she was with the National Science Foundation (NSF) for 11 years in several successive positions, culminating in her role as senior advisor to the director of NSF. While with NSF, she received the Director's Award for Integrative Collaboration four times, the Director's Award for Meritorious Service in 1997, and the Director's Award for Superior Accomplishment in 1999.

Nelson was a professor of civil engineering at the University of Texas at Austin from 1983 through 1996. Her recognitions include: the Case Studies Award from the U.S. National Committee for Rock Mechanics (NAE, 1988), the Basic Research Award from the U.S. National Committee for Rock Mechanics (NAE, 1993), election to The Moles, an association of the heavy construction industry (1995), and induction into Tau Beta Pi as an Eminent Engineer (2007). In 2008, she received the Kenneth Andrew Roe Award from the American Association of Engineering Societies.

Further, Nelson is a Distinguished Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), former president of the Geo-Institute of ASCE, and a lifetime member, Fellow and first president of the American Rock Mechanics Association. She is an elected Fellow and serves as the current Chair of the Engineering Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). She was a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, appointed by President Clinton in 1997 and reappointed in 2000.

Nelson holds three earned advanced degrees including master's degrees in geology from Indiana University, and in structural engineering from the University of Oklahoma. In 1983, she received her PhD in geotechnical engineering from Cornell University. Nelson resigned her position as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at New Jersey Institute of Technology, effective November 28, 2008, to pursue the university's special projects related to international program development.

“Dr. Nelson, who numbers among the world’s foremost geotechnical engineering experts, enjoys a national and international reputation in geological and rock engineering. Her forte is design and construction of underground facilities and tunnels,” said Robert A. Altenkirch, PhD, president of NJIT.