

# Omar Yaghi appointed as University Professor

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By Veronica Bartell | College of Chemistry

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During their May 2025 meeting, the University of California Board of Regents formally approved the appointment of Professor Omar M. Yaghi (<https://chemistry.berkeley.edu/people/omar-yaghi>), the James and Neeltje Tretter Professor of Chemistry at the College of Chemistry and co-director and chief scientist of the Bakar Institute of Digital Materials for the Planet (<https://bidmap.berkeley.edu/>) (BIDMaP), as University Professor.

The title of University Professor, the top-level and exclusive academic rank of the University of California, is reserved for scholars of the highest international distinction, and it recognizes individuals whose research, teaching, and service have achieved exceptional impact—both within their disciplines and across the broader academic and global community. There were only 40

University Professors appointed from 1960 to 2018 across 10 UC campuses. Previous UC Berkeley Chemistry professors who received this prestigious title were: Melvin Calvin (Chemistry Nobel 1961), Glenn Seaborg (Chemistry Nobel 1951), Yuan T. Lee (Chemistry Nobel 1986), and Gabor Somorjai.

"I am thrilled that my colleague and friend Omar Yaghi has been honored with a University Professorship, which represents the very best UC has to offer," said Doug Clark, Dean of the College of Chemistry. "Omar epitomizes qualities we all aspire to but seldom achieve: a scientific trailblazer and leading educator, and a global ambassador for the power of research and education to change the world. Indeed, Omar is shaping the world for the better, and I extend to him my heartiest congratulations!"

As a University Professor, Yaghi will be affiliated with the entire University of California system, not just the Berkeley campus. This honorary designation reflects his stature as one of the University's top scholars, and he is encouraged to contribute to UC campuses across the state by guest lecturing, mentoring faculty and students, and engaging in collaborative research.

"I wish you all could have been in the room when this systemwide honor and appointment was discussed by the UC Regents and several Chancellors," said Rich Lyons, UC Berkeley Chancellor. "I was beaming with pride — for our colleague Omar, for our remarkable Berkeley, and for the deep discovery that reminds us all how much we matter."

Yaghi's appointment also reflects his groundbreaking vision for the application of machine learning to accelerate climate solutions and foster global scientific engagement. His proposed initiatives aim to catalyze interdisciplinary research across campuses, strengthen public impact, and build bridges across scientific communities worldwide.

"Omar Yaghi is the perfect scholar to bear the title of University Professor. Not only did he invent the field of reticular materials — materials that can be engineered to have incredible specificity at the molecular level, and which will help the world to address existential challenges in climate change, biomedicine and health, and more," said Jennifer Chayes, Dean of the College of Computing, Data Science, and Society (<https://cdss.berkeley.edu/>). "But he has also recently pioneered the field of Generative AI for Materials, leading to exponential acceleration of the design and synthesis of reticular materials."

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