

Princeton University

Honors Faculty Members
Receiving Emeritus Status



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Frank Niels von Hippel



Frank von Hippel, a nuclear physicist, retires this year as a professor of public and international affairs at Princeton University after more than three decades of research, activism, and government service on issues of nuclear weapons security and arms control.

In 1975, Frank co-founded what is now Princeton's Program on Science and Global Security within the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and, in 1989, the journal *Science & Global Security*, whose editorial board he chairs.

Frank received his B.S. in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1959 and a D.Phil. in theoretical physics in 1962 from the University of Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. For the following ten years, his research was primarily in theoretical elementary-particle physics, and he held research positions at the University of Chicago, Cornell University, and Argonne National Laboratory, and served on the physics faculty at Stanford University.

In 1974, Frank's interests shifted to "public policy physics." He spent a year as a resident fellow at the National Academy of Sciences, where he organized the American Physical Society's study on light-water reactor safety. He was then invited to join the Princeton research staff in 1974 and in 1983 was appointed to the teaching faculty at Princeton at the rank of professor.

Frank has worked on policy proposals relating to the control of plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) for more than three decades, including initiatives to end the production of plutonium and HEU for weapons (Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty); the use of highly enriched uranium as a reactor fuel (the Global Threat Reduction Initiative); and plutonium separation from spent nuclear fuel.

From 1983 to 1991, while Frank was chairman of the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) and the FAS Fund, he partnered with

the Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace and Against the Nuclear Threat (chaired by Evgenyi Velikhov) to help provide technical support for Mikhail Gorbachev's initiatives to achieve a Comprehensive Test Ban, and the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces and Strategic Arms Reductions Treaties.

From 1993 to 1994, he served as assistant director for national security in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and played a major role in developing what is now called the International Nuclear Materials Protection and Cooperation Program.

In 2006, Frank co-founded and is currently co-chair of the non-governmental International Panel on Fissile Materials, which includes experts from 17 countries and develops proposals for initiatives to reduce global stocks of plutonium and HEU and the numbers of locations where they can be found.

Von Hippel's awards include the American Physical Society's (APS) 2010 Leo Szilard Lectureship Award for "outstanding work and leadership in using physics to illuminate public policy in the areas of nuclear arms control and nonproliferation, nuclear energy, and energy efficiency"; the American Association for the Advancement of Science's 1994 Hilliard Roderick Prize for Excellence in Science, Arms Control, and International Security; a MacArthur Foundation Prize Fellowship (1993); and the 1977 APS Forum Award for Promoting the Understanding of the Relationship of Physics and Society with Joel Primack for their book, *Advice and Dissent, Scientists in the Political Arena* (1974).

The American Institute of Physics has published a collection of his articles in its "Masters of Modern Physics" series under the title *Citizen Scientist* (1991).