



Robert J. Zimmer

GRFP Recipient: 1970

Undergraduate Institution:
A.B. 1968, Brandeis University

Graduate Institution:
Ph.D. 1975, Harvard University

Graduate Field of Study:
Mathematics

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Current Position:
President of the University
of Chicago, and Professor of
Mathematics

RESEARCH INTERESTS //

A specialist in ergodic theory, Lie groups and differential geometry, Robert J. Zimmer is the author of two books, “Ergodic Theory and Semisimple Groups” (1984) and “Essential Results of Functional Analysis” (1990), as well as more than 80 mathematical research articles. He is the originator of the “Zimmer program” as it is now known, to understand the actions of semi-simple Lie groups and their discrete subgroups on compact manifolds, in particular the relationship of the acting group to the topology and invariant geometric structures of the manifold. There are many mathematicians around the world who have contributed to this program.

AWARDS/ HONORS //

- Member, National Science Board (2011)
- Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science
- Honorary Doctorate Degree, Tsinghua University, Beijing

POSITION PROFILE //

Zimmer became President of the University of Chicago in 2006, having been a faculty member in the Mathematics Department there from 1977-2002. He served as the Provost of Brown University from 2002-2006, before returning to Chicago. Prior to leaving for Brown, he held several administrative positions at the University of Chicago, including Chairman of the Department of Mathematics, Deputy Provost, and Vice President for Research and for Argonne National Laboratory. As president of the University of Chicago, he also oversees the University of Chicago Medical Center, the management of Argonne National Laboratory and Fermilab for the U.S. Department of Energy, the University's facilities in Beijing, London, Paris, Singapore, and Luxor, the University's Laboratory Schools, the University of Chicago Press, and 4 charter school campuses on the South Side of Chicago.