

# Michael J. Benedik

Vice Provost and Regents Professor of Biology

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## BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Michael Benedik began his academic career as an Assistant Professor of Biology at Texas A&M in 1985 before moving to the University of Houston 1989 where he joined the Department of Biology and Biochemistry and remained for 15 years. In 2004 he rejoined the Department of Biology at Texas A&M as a full Professor.

He served on the TAMU Faculty Senate from 2005-2012 and was elected Speaker of the Senate in 2011. He also served as the Faculty Ombuds Officer until he was appointed as the Dean of Faculties and Associate Provost in 2012. In 2015 he was appointed the Vice-Provost for Texas A&M University. While continuing to serve as Vice Provost, he was named Chief International Officer for Texas A&M in 2018. As the vice-provost he serves as an advisor to the Provost and President and provides leadership for campus-wide initiatives in concert with university and college leadership. He currently facilitates multi-college interdisciplinary curricular programs, academic strategic planning, and cross-campus initiatives.

Dr. Benedik did his undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago and obtained his Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics from Stanford University in 1982. He was named a Regents Professor in 2012, and was the International Professor for Africa from the American Society of Microbiology in 2010 during which time he lectured extensively in Lagos, Nigeria. He has taught numerous undergraduate and graduate courses in microbiology, genetics, biochemistry and biotechnology.

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## RESEARCH

Dr. Benedik's research focused on using molecular biology and genetic tools to study and engineer bacteria. One major thrust of his research was developing novel microbial approaches for the biotechnology industry as applied to environmental bioremediation. An example of this work is the genetic engineering of proteins useful to remove the highly toxic chemical cyanide released in waste water after industrial and mining use.

A second area of research is the antibiotic resistance and tolerance to antimicrobials developed by bacteria, especially with dormant cells. The project aims to understand the signals that lead to the dormant state and eventually to develop therapeutic interventions that can "wake" these bacteria before antibiotic therapy ceases.

Dr. Benedik has mentored 35 graduate students, postdocs and visiting scientists. He has served as PI or co-PI on over \$6M in external research grants and published over 100 scientific papers and chapters.