Junkins Named Founding Director of Institute Designed to Attract Preeminent Scholars

COLLEGE STATION – Dr. John L. Junkins, distinguished professor in Texas A&M University’s Department of Aerospace Engineering in the Dwight Look College of Engineering, has been named founding director of the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS). Since May 2011, Junkins has served as interim director of TIAS. The institute was established to attract preeminent scholars from across the nation and abroad to engage Texas A&M faculty and students in ways intended to enhance the University’s intellectual climate and to deepen educational experiences.

"As a highly regarded and renowned scholar and academic leader, Dr. Junkins is a natural fit to take the helm of an initiative so important to advancing Texas A&M’s continued rise among the nation’s top public research universities," said Texas A&M President R. Bowen Loftin. "Already, he has been invaluable in guiding the development of TIAS in its inaugural year."

TIAS will announce its first round of Faculty Fellows in fall 2012. The Fellows, selected through a faculty-led nomination process, will hold appointments for up to a year. It is anticipated that when TIAS is fully funded, 25 TIAS Faculty Fellows will be appointed each year, joining the University’s Nobel Laureates, Fields Medal Laureates, National Academy members and internationally recognized intellectual leaders across a wide range of disciplines. Endowments are also in place to support 20 Ph.D. researchers who will team with the Faculty Fellows.

Junkins holds the Royce E. Wisenbaker Chair in Engineering and also has been named a Regents Professor at Texas A&M. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and the International Academy of Astronautics and serves as a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and the American Astronautical Society. He has received more than a dozen national and international honors, including the Lifetime Achievement Medal from the International Conference on Computational Engineering Sciences.

In addition to research contributions to fundamental engineering science and to over a dozen space missions, in a span of three decades Junkins has acquired and led more than 80 externally sponsored research projects totaling over $40 million. His work has been funded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Department of Defense and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

Prior to joining Texas A&M in 1985, he held academic appointments at the University of Virginia (1970-1977) and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (1977-1985), following four years as an engineering scientist with McDonnell Douglas Astronautics Company. Junkins received a bachelor’s degree from Auburn University and master’s and doctorate degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).
Authorized by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents in December 2010, TIAS aims to enrich the educational experience and advance research productivity by combining the resources of a major tier-one research institution with distinguished faculty, deepening the intellectual climate at Texas A&M, in the state of Texas, and beyond.

**About research at Texas A&M University:** As one of the world’s premier research institutions, Texas A&M is a leader in making significant contributions to the storehouse of knowledge in many fields, including rigorous scientific and technological disciplines. Research conducted at Texas A&M represents an annual investment of more than $689 million; the university ranks 20th among all U.S. universities and third nationally for universities without a medical school, according to the National Science Foundation. Research at Texas A&M creates new knowledge that provides basic, fundamental and applied contributions resulting in many cases in economic benefits to the state, nation and world. To learn more, visit [http://vpr.tamu.edu](http://vpr.tamu.edu).

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