The relationship between mental experience and the physiology of the brain and body is perhaps the most exciting and challenging question in all of science. Investigation of the mind and how it is related to the rest of the physical universe necessarily brings us face-to-face with concepts like spirit and soul. Rather than avoid these concepts, this presents an opportunity to consider them as objects of precise definition and empirical investigation. Surprising? Impossible? You decide.

-David Presti

David Presti, Ph.D. is a neurobiologist and cognitive scientist at the University of California in Berkeley, where he has taught in the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology since 1991. He studied math, physics and chemistry as an undergraduate, and holds two separate doctoral degrees in molecular biology and biophysics from the California Institute of Technology and in clinical psychology from the University of Oregon. Described as a “god among teachers” by his students, he teaches more undergraduates than any other professor at UC Berkeley. Some classes taught by Professor Presti include Brain, Mind and Behavior, Drugs and the Brain, and an advanced course in Neurochemistry. Since 2004, he has taught neuroscience to Tibetan monastics in India as part of an evolving dialogue between scientists and contemplative practitioners inspired by the Dalai Lama.