

Walter Benenson was one of the first experimental nuclear physicists at the original MSU cyclotron lab when he arrived at MSU in 1963. Along with serving as a professor of physics, Benenson took on roles as associate director of the MSU Cyclotron from 1980 to 1982 and associate director of the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory at MSU from 1990 to 1995. Benenson's main research thrust was the search for new isotopes far from stability. He discovered over 60 of these. Benenson switched his appointment first informally and then formally to Lyman Briggs College. In this role, Benenson's major unique contribution to the Lyman Briggs curriculum was developing and updating the very inventive computer-based physics laboratory course. The lab emphasizes modern computer usage for data collection and analysis, along with scientific writing skills, as consistent with the Lyman Briggs stress on writing across all disciplines. He received the MSU Distinguished Faculty Award in 1993 and Distinguished Professor designation in 1997. After Benenson retired in 2008 he has remained active within Lyman Briggs College and offers his support as needed.