
John Tangney, Ph.D.



Director, Human and Bioengineered Systems Division Office of Naval Research

Dr. John Tangney is Director of the Human and Bioengineered Systems Division in the Warfighter Performance Department of the Office of Naval Research (ONR) in Arlington, Virginia. He serves as the senior focal point within ONR for discovery and invention investments in human and bio-inspired autonomous systems for affordable improvements in Naval mission effectiveness. Dr. Tangney oversees research and technology development in cognitive systems, natural intelligence, tutoring systems, realistic training, social media analysis, computational neuroscience, and robotics – in support of current and envisioned Naval capabilities.

Dr. Tangney entered the Senior Executive Service in January 2007 after 22 years in the Civilian Service. He served as a Program Manager at the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, responsible for basic research on human performance, biological information processing, information fusion, and other related topics. In this role, he initiated basic research programs in auditory pattern and speech recognition, cognitive science and decision making, neural networks, computational neuroscience, spatial orientation, team decision-making, information fusion, and socio-cultural modeling, among others.

As Director for Laboratory Management in the Office of the Secretary of Defense on detail during 1998–1999, Dr. Tangney was responsible for policy and oversight of the research and development laboratories and centers in the Department of Defense.

While serving as Deputy for Research in the Secretary Air Force Directorate of Science and Technology, April 1994 through October 1995, Dr. Tangney was responsible for oversight and monitoring of the Air Force basic research portfolio, avionics, and other elements of the Air Force Science and Technology program.

Dr. Tangney was appointed Director, Division on Human Behavior and Performance, during 1990 while on sabbatical at the National Research Council. He was responsible for several committees that considered and reported on policy-relevant research related to current issues in human factors, training, vision, hearing, AIDS, and alcohol and drug abuse.

He received a Ph.D. in Cognitive Science from the State University of New York at Buffalo, specializing in models of auditory and visual pattern recognition and cognitive processes. He

Updated 6-12

also holds an M.A. in National Security Studies from the National War College, Ft. McNair, Washington, D.C.

He was recognized by the International Neural Networks Society in 1990 for outstanding leadership in neural network computing and, in 2012, received the Biomedical Wellness Leadership Award from the SPIE Defense, Security, and Sensing chapter.