

## UCGAL News Release

05 January 2011



### **New Council to promote public understanding of Linguistics**

Twelve learned societies have grouped together to form a new body to promote public understanding of linguistics, and to advance the discipline in UK higher education.

The new body is called the **University Council of General and Applied Linguistics**. UCGAL is chaired by Prof Ros Mitchell of the University of Southampton, and the other officers are Dr Rachael Knight, Secretary (City University) and Prof Kris Spelman Miller (University of Winchester). The member associations of UCGAL are:

- Association for French Language Studies
- British Association for Applied Linguistics
- British Association of Academic Phoneticians
- British Association for Clinical Linguistics
- Forum for Germanic Language Studies
- Henry Sweet Society
- Linguistics Association of Great Britain
- Philological Society
- Poetics and Linguistics Association
- UK Cognitive Linguistics Association
- University Council of Modern Languages
- CILT/ National Centre for Languages

This is a time of uncertainty and change for research and teaching in the humanities and social sciences. UCGAL will provide a coherent voice to argue the case for linguistics in higher education policy, and will support the member associations in demonstrating its relevance to a range of 21<sup>st</sup> century social challenges.

### **UCGAL Launch Event: The impact of Linguistics**

A launch event for UCGAL will take place on Thursday 27 January 2011 from 5-7 p.m., in the Reading Room of the British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH.

Linguistics is the systematic study of human language, and it contributes to our understanding of the mind, as well as the interpretation of social interaction and of culture. The launch event will focus on the social impact of linguistics, with short presentations from a panel of three experts:

**Prof Peter Austin** (School of Oriental and African Studies) will speak about the significance of linguistic research for understanding and sustaining endangered languages and related cultural diversity.



*Peter Austin holds the Marit Rausing Chair in field linguistics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and is Director of the Endangered Languages Academic Programme, training field linguists in the methods needed for language documentation. He is editor of 1000 Languages: the Worldwide History of Living and Lost Tongues (Thames & Hudson, 2008).*

**Dr Terry Lamb** (University of Sheffield) will speak about the contribution of linguistic research to education, and in particular how linguistic research underpins the teaching of English as well as other languages in our increasingly diverse and multilingual society.



*Terry Lamb is Director of Teaching in the School of Education, University of Sheffield, and President of the Federation Internationale de Professeurs de Langues Vivantes. His research interests include UK multilingualism and language learning autonomy. He is co-author of Pedagogy for Autonomy in Modern Languages Education (Authentik, 2008)*

**Prof Alison Wray** (Cardiff University) will consider how linguistics contributes to our understanding of human thought and memory, and how it sheds light on the role of memorised set phrases in communication by and with people with Alzheimer's disease.



*Alison Wray is Research Professor in the Centre of Language and Communication Research, Cardiff University. Her research interests include formulaic language, language profiling, language loss, and language evolution. She is the author of Formulaic Language: Pushing the Boundaries. (Oxford University Press, 2008)*

The presentations will be followed by questions and general discussion, and then by a drinks reception in the Burlington/ Cornwall suite.

### **Further information and contacts**

More information about UCGAL can be found on our website at [www.linguistics.ac.uk](http://www.linguistics.ac.uk) , or by contacting Ros Mitchell at [R.F.Mitchell@soton.ac.uk](mailto:R.F.Mitchell@soton.ac.uk)

To reserve a place at the launch event please contact Dr Sarah Rule, Humanities/ Modern Languages, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ. Email:

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