

KU Linguistics Department Celebrates 40th Anniversary, Creates Lecture Series

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LAWRENCE — The Department of Linguistics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas celebrated its 40th anniversary by establishing the annual Frances Ingemann Lecture in honor of the department's founder.

"Frances has been the most influential person in the history of the linguistics department," said Allard Jongman, professor and chair of linguistics. "She started teaching linguistics when she arrived on campus 50 years ago and founded the department 40 years ago. The current department is to a large extent the fruit of her vision and persistence."

Ingemann came to KU in 1957 after earning a doctorate in linguistics from Indiana University and conducting pioneering research at Haskins Laboratories on speech synthesis. Although she formally retired in 2000, Ingemann continues to be an active member of the department, attending every departmental colloquy and traveling to Papua New Guinea to collect data about the Ipili language.

"It is gratifying to see how the linguistics department has grown in size and quality over the years, and I am pleased that the faculty members who have come after me are continuing to strengthen the program, doing innovative research and attracting first-rate students," Ingemann said. "It is nice to know that something you have started is getting better each year."

The establishment of the lecture series by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was announced Oct. 27 at the Mid America Linguistics Conference hosted by KU. On Oct. 25, Ingemann celebrated another milestone, turning 80 years old.

"The exchange of ideas is important for faculty but it is even more important for students who may not have the opportunity to travel to other campuses or professional meetings elsewhere," Ingemann said. "Nothing could please me more than having a linguistics lecture series established here."

The annual Frances Ingemann Lecture will provide the KU community with the opportunity to hear today's major linguists speak about their research.

"The College is thrilled that this lecture series is being established to honor Professor Ingemann while promoting research and scholarship within the Department of Linguistics," said Joseph E. Steinmetz, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

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