Franklin College Switzerland

is pleased to announce the

Spring 2011 Lecture Series

The spring 2011 Lecture Series offers exciting and diverse topics coupled with esteemed speakers who will inspire new perspectives and challenge previous opinions.

Topics include multilingual democracies, global migration, new media technologies and Vodou.

Each lecture will take place on a Tuesday or Thursday evening from 6:30 -7:30 pm in the Franklin College Auditorium.

After each lecture there will be a small reception for participants where the audience can meet the speaker and discuss the evening’s topic.

Please join us for the series.
The lectures are free of charge and open to the public.

For more information on the series or to update your mailing information please contact:
Office of Public Relations, Franklin College Switzerland
Via Ponte Tresa 29, 6924 Sorengo

Consuelo Grieco
Tel: 091 986-3609  Fax: 091 986-3640  Email: cgieco@fc.edu
“Free institutions [i.e., democracy] are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow-feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion, necessary to the working of representative government, cannot exist.” John Stuart Mill wrote these sentences 150 years ago. Many believe that his hypothesis turned into a real prophecy: in recent years a number of multilingual democracies have been facing the challenge of their own breakup: Canada, Belgium, Spain….Yet Switzerland (but also India, South Africa and others) seems to resist this trend. Why do some multilingual democracies succeed and others fail? We will focus on the examples of Belgium and Switzerland and show the powerful role that a careful design of democratic institutions, such as federalism and direct democracy, may play in this context.

Nenad Stojanovic is a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Democracy Studies Aarau (ZDA) and a lecturer at the universities of Zurich and Lausanne. He earned his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Zurich (2008), an M.A. from McGill University in Montreal (2000) and a License from the University of Geneva (1999). He was a visiting student at the London School of Economics (1998) and Sciences Po, Paris (1998-99), and a postdoctoral fellow at the Hoover Chair for Economic and Social Ethics in Louvain (2008), at the Center for Federal Studies of the University of Kent (2009) and at the European University Institute in Florence (2009-2010). His research interests focus on challenges to democracy in multicultural societies, such as group representation, multiculturalism and nationalism, institutional engineering, electoral systems, federalism, models of power sharing, linguistic justice and direct democracy.
Migration is an issue that is most reflective of the times in which we live. With globalization bringing new technologies and deepening international integration and dependency, the movement of goods, services, capital and people has been greatly increased and facilitated. Indeed, the number of migrants has doubled since 1980 alone, standing at more than 200 million people. Furthermore, we no longer live in a world composed strictly of "sending" and "receiving" countries. Today, all nations have migrants leaving from, arriving to and transiting through their territories—south to north, north to north and, increasingly, south to south. In theory, this should facilitate a more coherent form of migration policy and decision making, given that all states have an appreciation of the migration pressures and a longing for better, more manageable approaches and solutions. Yet, the governance model remains almost entirely national.

As a result, a growing number of knowledgeable people deeply engaged with the global migration dossier recognize the importance and necessity of mobilizing global leadership in order to achieve a greater level of international cooperation and collaboration. For many of these experts, it is not a question of whether a discussion of global governance of migration goes forward but rather when and how.

Ambassador Sergio Marchi, a Canadian, is an active participant in the world of international affairs whose professional life has spanned both the private and public sectors. Ambassador Marchi currently serves as a Senior Fellow at the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development in Geneva. He also acts as a Special Advisor to the Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission, headquartered in Geneva. As well, he teaches at the U.S. Webster University, in the International Relations Department, and at the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Affairs in Geneva. In 1999, Mr. Marchi was appointed as Canadian Ambassador to the World Trade Organization and the U.N. in Geneva, where he quickly established his leadership credentials by assuming a number of important posts, including being elected Chairman of the W.T.O. General Council by the 150 member countries. Ambassador Marchi was subsequently nominated by the Canadian government and the U.N. Secretary General to serve as a Commissioner on the U.N. Global Commission on International Migration. He has also served as President of the Canada China Business Council.
Control Freaks: How Technology Shapes the Way We Read, Think and Live.

NAOMI S. BARON,
Professor of Linguistics at American University, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

New media technologies such as computers, iPads and mobile phones offer a wealth of innovative ways to gather information, interact with other people and share with the world the fruits of our own production (from status reports on Facebook to novels that we “publish” online). These technologies also heighten our ability to control the ways we communicate; as well, they exert control over us.

Professor Baron will talk about the notion of control regarding how undergraduates use mobile phones and how they read. The data on mobile phones are drawn from a three-year cross-cultural study she conducted in Sweden, the U.S., Italy, Japan and Korea in which she surveyed both usage patterns and attitudes towards mobile phones. The data on reading derive from Professor Baron’s current research on student preferences for reading textual material in hard copy or reading the same texts on digital media such as computers or e-readers: reading onscreen versus in hard copy. This evening you will hear about both of these projects.

Naomi S. Baron is Professor of Linguistics at American University in Washington, D.C. After graduating with a Ph.D. in Linguistics from Stanford University, she taught at Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, Emory University and Southwestern University before coming to American University.

A Guggenheim Fellow, a Swedish Fulbright Fellow, and former president of the Semiotic Society of America, Professor Baron is the author of seven books and over 75 articles and book chapters. In the context of her research, Professor Baron has appeared on television and radio (including Good Morning America, ABC News 20/20, CNN, MSNBC, the PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer, Voice of America, the Diane Rehm Show, Morning Edition, All Things Considered, BBC Radio and Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Radio). Among the print media in which she has been quoted are the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, Fortune, the Economist and Wired Magazine.
Across the religious landscape of the world, three is consistently a sacred number. A belief inherited from the Fon people of West Africa considers twins to be metaphysically powerful; in Haitian Vodou, the child born immediately after the twins, the Dosou/Dosa, Marasa Twa is regarded as having an equally complex relationship with the invisible world. The third edition of Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn, is Marasa Twa, and the culmination of three decades of scholarship that offer a deeper revelation and initiation into the konesans/knowledge of Vodou. Each of the three editions marks an epistemic shift in our understanding of the religion and exhibits a greater openness and disclosure of Vodou, once secretive and persecuted, now increasingly gaining acceptance and recognition in some circles. A year after January 12, 2010 earthquake, Vodou provides some counterbalance to this moment of indescribable devastation and resultant despondency among those who continue to mourn their dead and care for the living. Haiti is now a sacred ground.

Dr. Claudine Michel earned an M.A. and a Ph.D. in International Education from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is currently Professor in the Department of Black Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and served as Director of the Center for Black Studies Research from 1996-2002 and again from 2005-2009. She formerly served as Chair of the Department of Black Studies and Acting Chair of the Department of Chicana/o Studies. Her research has appeared in many scholarly journals and academic venues. Dr. Michel is the author of Aspects Moraux et Educatifs du Vodou Haitien and a forthcoming book, Offerings: Continuity and Transformation in Haitian Vodou. She co-edited, among other volumes, Haitian Vodou: Spirit, Myth and Reality and Vodou in Haitian Life and Culture: Invisible Power. Also forthcoming are an anthology on Haitian-American author Edwidge Danticat, Crossing Waters and Re-Membering, and two co-edited volumes, God in Every Woman: Gender, Power and Politics in Haitian Vodou and Dokité Gede, Struggles of Life and Death in Haiti. She is editor of the peer-reviewed journal on Haiti, The Journal of Haitian Studies, published by the UCSB Center for Black Studies Research for the Haitian Studies Association, and also serves on their board of directors.

Dr. Michel is a member of the new UC Haiti initiative developed by the ten UC campuses in response to the January 12, 2010, earthquake and has served as a chief consultant for the Direct Relief International community grants program developed after the quake.