

UCC Academic elected to the Royal Irish Academy



*Professor Nicholas Canny, President, RIA with
Professor Colin Hill, UCC*

Professor Colin Hill, Professor of Microbial Food Safety, UCC and Principal Investigator, Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre, has been elected a Member of the Royal Irish Academy (RIA). Election to the Royal Irish Academy is the highest honour available to a scholar or scientist working on the island of Ireland.

Professor Nicholas Canny, President of the Royal Irish Academy, said “the Academy's new members are amongst a small group of academics in Ireland that set the international hallmark of excellence in their fields of study.”

Professor Hill's research interest is the molecular biology of food pathogens, and he leads programmes in the Food for Health Ireland research centre. In addition to his distinguished scholarly career, Professor Hill has been a member of the Scientific Committee of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland board since 1999 and was part of the Expert Advisory Group that advised the Government during the 2001/2002 Foot and Mouth crisis.

Many of the faculty at UCC have previously been elected to Membership of the RIA, including Professor Tom Cotter and Professor Máire Herbert. The criterion for election to membership is a significant contribution to scholarly or scientific research as shown in the candidate's published academic work. Membership of the Academy, which is by peer nomination and election, is limited to those scientists and scholars normally resident in Ireland.

About the Royal Irish Academy

The Royal Irish Academy is an all-Ireland, independent, academic body that promotes study and excellence in the sciences, humanities and social sciences. It is the principal learned society in Ireland.

For 224 years membership of the Royal Irish Academy has been keenly competed for, as it is the highest academic honour in Ireland and a public recognition of academic achievement. There are now over 420 Members of the Academy, in disciplines from the sciences, humanities and social sciences. Those elected are entitled to use the designation 'MRIA' after their name.

Among the membership of the Academy are many of Ireland's leading scholars, the best known of whom include: Professor Séamus Heaney, Nobel Laureate; Professor Patrick Cunningham, geneticist and the government's Chief Scientific Adviser; Professor Frances Ruane, economist; Dr Garret FitzGerald, economist and former Taoiseach; and Dr Peter Harbison, archaeologist.

The Academy has also more than 60 distinguished Honorary Members, who in the past have included J.W. Von Goethe, Maria Edgeworth, Albert Einstein and Max Born. Today the Honorary Members include Nobel Laureates, Murray Gell-Mann, Steven Weinberg and Sir Andrew Huxley. Further information can be found on <http://www.ria.ie/>