

The Department of Linguistics
is pleased to present

Juliet Stanton

MIT

speaking on

**Constraints on the Distribution of Nasal-
Stop Sequences: An Argument for Contrast**

Thursday, February 9, 2017

1:30 PM

Location: HUM 2 - Room 259

Abstract:

It has been argued that certain typological generalizations regarding the distributional properties of nasal-stop sequences can be explained by explicitly referencing contrast (e.g. Herbert 1977, 1986; Jones 2000). This work explores the hypothesis that *all* generalizations regarding the distribution of nasal-stop sequences can be explained by explicitly referencing contrast, and presents results of multiple cross-linguistic studies designed to test that hypothesis. I show first that taking into consideration cues to the contrast between oral and nasal vowels allows us to accurately predict generalizations regarding the distribution of allophonic nasal-stop sequences (i.e. those that are not phonemically contrastive with other segment types). Following this, I show that taking into consideration cues to the contrasts between nasal-stop sequences and their component parts (nasals and stops) allows us to accurately predict generalizations regarding the distribution of phonemic nasal-stop sequences (i.e. those that are phonemically contrastive with other segment types). Broadly, the results presented here contribute to a larger body of evidence that constraints on contrast are a necessary component of the phonological grammar.