

Meaning & Modality Lab Meeting
Time: March 30, 10:30am-12pm
Location: 2 Arrow St, Room 420

Sandra Wood (University of Southern Maine)

Talk in ASL, voicing in English will be provided.

Title: Multiple *Wh*-Questions in ASL: Focus movement and D-linking

Abstract:

I discuss cross-linguistic strategies for the questioning of multiple *wh*-phrases, exemplified through the relationship between focus movement and D-linking. ASL exhibits an in-situ paradox, by which an object *wh*-phrase is allowed to remain in-situ in a single *wh*-question, but not in a multiple *wh*-question. I show that this in-situ paradox is related to rightward movement of the *wh*-phrase for focus and the inability of D-linked *wh*-phrases to undergo focus movement. Moreover, to understand why this is occurring, I argue that the mechanism of 'unselective binding' allows the *wh*-phrase to remain in-situ. These findings illustrate how ASL fits within the typological framework for the structure of *wh*-questions and how current theoretical approaches for *wh*-questions in the ASL research literature are not able to account for the in-situ paradox.