

**Harvard Linguistics Department Colloquium Talk**  
**Speaker: Kristine Yu, UMass Amherst**

**Time:** April 19, Friday 12 – 1:30 pm

**Location:** Emerson 305

**Title:** Revisiting universals of prosodic structure

**Abstract:** A key motivation for introducing the concept of prosodic constituents in the late 1970s and 1980s was their ability to provide generalizations about the domains of phonological patterns. For instance, Hayes and Lahiri (1991) reported that the domain where coronal and voicing assimilation processes apply in Bengali exactly coincides with the domain of a postlexical rising tonal melody---exemplifying how phonological patterns "cluster" on a single prosodic domain. Yet, many prosodic studies on languages across the world in the past couple decades motivate prosodic domains purely as a side effect of proposing an inventory of boundary tones. Are tones "different" from segments in being conditioned by prosodic structure? Here, we assess the evidence for "clustering" of phonological patterns around prosodic constituents, and examine the relation between prosodically conditioned tonal and segmental processes, as well as evidence that lenition/weakening processes occur domain medially rather than at domain edges.