LING 52400 Phonology Seminar (Sign Language phonology)
3-6pm Tuesday (Rosenwald 208)
Professor Diane Brentari (dbrentari@uchicago.edu)
Office Hours: 1:30-3:00 Tuesday
Please let me know if you plan to come to office hours.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A primary goal of this seminar is to propose fresh ways to advance the types of research questions posed in phonology using the accumulated knowledge of sign language phonology as a basis. Discussions will focus on how the knowledge of both language types helps us to see theoretical contributions to the field from a new perspective. This seminar will also cover foundational topics in sign language phonology – features, feature geometry, the segment, the syllable, prosodic structure – as well as a range of methodological and theoretical considerations for comparing signed and spoken languages. No prior knowledge of sign language is assumed.

GRADING

40% paper (abstract due 10/31; paper due 12/10); 20% class participation; 20% chalk discussion postings; 20% oral presentation of project;

As part of the class participation requirement, for each week's readings, please contribute one post to the relevant discussion forum on Chalk by Monday, midnight (100 words). Please respond to one of these prompts (your posting may be independent or can add to a comment made by another student). Start with week 2’s readings, whose comment will be due Monday of week 2, and continue.

-- Which of the three readings was the most convincing (or most interesting) & why?
-- Which of the three readings was the least convincing (or least interesting) & why?

NOTE: Student discussion leaders should prepare a handout or PPT primarily for the articles each week with an asterisk in front. Your PPT must be submitted (by e-mail to me) by midnight of the Sunday night prior to date when you are leading discussion.

READINGS

Required Readings:
The other articles available on the Chalk site.

Supplemental text for those new to Sign Languages:

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Week 1: a historical perspective
**Week 2: feature geometry and autosegments**
Ladd, R. (2014). ch. 1, ch. 6

**Week 3: features, segments**
*Guest Lecture: Kate Davidson, 1st part of class*
Brentari, Ch. 5, 7

**Week 4: syllables and prosodic weight**

**Week 5: frequency and complexity**
*Guest Lecture: Iris Berent, 1st part of class*
Abstract for papers due at Friday, midnight, Oct. 31, 2014.

**Week 6: morpho-phonemics vs. phonetic induced change**


Week 7: duality of patterning in phonology; acquisition


Ladd, R. (2014). ch. 5


Week 8: nonmanuals & prosody


Week 9: rhythm


Week 10: Presentations

Final paper due midnight December 10, 2014. No late papers, no incompletes. Please send your paper as a .pdf to me as an e-mail attachment.