

Speaker: **Jane Grimshaw**
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Title: **Constraints in Conflict**

Date: Monday, October 22, 2007
Time: 4:00pm
Place: 101 Rosenfeld Hall (Temple & Grove Sts.)

Abstract:

Comparative theories of grammaticality select among alternatives. In OT, this is done by evaluating the alternatives ('candidates') in terms of a universal set of constraints, and thus determining the optimum/a. Grammatical candidates violate whatever constraints prefer alternative candidates.

In this theory economy of structure/representation is a theorem, following from conflicting constraints on the structure of phrases. No economy constraints need to be stipulated. Constraint conflict entails that there is no perfect phrase, and that smaller structures contain fewer imperfections than larger ones. How can economy be derived in linguistic theories without constraint conflict? It can't. Formulations of economy in the literature all encode conflict, even if this is hidden in the formulation.