James C. Davis

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Elmore Family School of Electrical and Computer Engineering
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RESEARCH PROJECTS

I study safe and secure software engineering for cyber- and cyber-physical systems. My research is grounded in empirical measurements of the software engineering process, the engineered product, and its usage context.

EDUCATION

Ph.D, Computer Science and Applications 2015–2020
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

B.Sc. Computer Science, B.Sc. Mathematics 2008–2012
Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor Fall 2020-present
Purdue University — Electrical and Computer Engineering

Intern, Microsoft Research (RiSE group: Cloud Security) Summer 2019
Microsoft Research, Redmond, WA — Mentored by Patrice Godefroid

Intern, IBM Research (Storage) Summer 2018
IBM Research, Almaden, CA — Mentored by Deepavali Bhagwat

Graduate Research Assistant 2016–2020
Virginia Tech — Advised by Dongyoon Lee

Software Engineer, IBM (GPFS) 2012–2017
IBM, Poughkeepsie, NY

EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS

[1] **Rolls Royce: Dynamic Analysis of Embedded Firmware**
Co-PI (PI: Aravind Machiry)
Contract with Rolls Royce
2021-2022. $175,000.

[2] **NSF #2107230: OAC Core: Advancing Low-Power Computer Vision at the Edge**
Co-PI (PI: Yung-Hsiang Lu)
US National Science Foundation
2021–2024. Purdue's share: $250,000.

[3] **Unrestricted gift to support research on machine learning reproducibility**
PI (Co-PI: Yung-Hsiang Lu)
Google, LLC
2020. $80,000.

[4] **Unrestricted gift to support research on machine learning reproducibility**

PI (Co-PI: Yung-Hsiang Lu)

Google, LLC

2020. $20,000.

INTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS

[1] **Revamping the CompE Curriculum for Secure Software Engineering**

PI (Co-PIs: Machiry, Torres-Arias, Bagchi)

ECE Agile Reform of Curriculum program, enabled by Elmore Family gift

2021-2022. $150,000.

[2] **Intercultural Engineering Education for Software Engineers**

PI (Co-PI: Kirsten Davis)

Purdue University VEIL Program

2020. $5,000.

REFEREED CONFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

[1] Xu, **Davis**, Hu, Jindal. *An Empirical Study on the Impact of Parameters on Mobile App Energy Usage*. Proceedings of the 29th IEEE International Conference on Software Analysis, Evolution and Reengineering (**SANER'22**).

[2] Barlas, Du, **Davis**. *Exploiting Input Sanitization for Regex Denial of Service*. Proceedings of the ACM/IEEE 44th International Conference on Software Engineering (**ICSE'22**).

[3] Goel, Tung, Hu, Thiruvathukal, **Davis**, Lu. *Efficient Computer Vision on Edge Devices with Pipeline-Parallel Hierarchical Neural Networks*. Proceedings of the 27th Asia and South Pacific Design Automation Conference (**ASP-DAC'22**).

[4] Goel, Tung, Hu, Wang, **Davis**, Thiruvathukal, Lu. *Low-Power Multi-Camera Object Re-Identification using Hierarchical Neural Networks*. Proceedings of the ACM/IEEE International Symposium on Low Power Electronics and Design (**ISLPED'21**).

[5] **Davis**, Servant, Lee. *Using Selective Memoization to Defeat Regular Expression Denial of Service (ReDoS)*. Proceedings of the 42nd IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (**IEEE S&P'21**).

[6] Cha, Wittern, Baudart, **Davis**, Mandel, Laredo. *A Principled Approach to GraphQL Query Cost Analysis*. Proceedings of the 28th ACM Joint European Software Engineering Conference and Symposium on the Foundations of Software Engineering (**ESEC/FSE'20**). ***ACM Distinguished Paper Award***.

[7] Rupprecht, **Davis**, Arnold, Gur, Bhagwat. *Improving Reproducibility of Data Science Pipelines through Transparent Provenance Capture*. Proceedings of the 46th International Conference on Very Large Data Bases (**VLDB'20 Industry track**).

[8] **Davis**, Moyer, Kazerouni, and Lee. *Testing Regex Generalizability And Its Implications: A Large-Scale Many-Language Measurement Study*. Proceedings of the 34th IEEE/ACM International Conference on Automated Software Engineering (**ASE'19**).

[9] Michael, Donohue, **Davis**, Lee, and Servant. *Regexes are Hard: Decision-making, Difficulties, and Risks in Programming Regular Expressions*. Proceedings of the 34th IEEE/ACM International Conference on Automated Software Engineering (**ASE'19**). ***ACM Distinguished Paper Award***.

[10] **Davis**, Michael, Coghlan, Servant, and Lee. *Are Regular Expressions a Lingua Franca? An Empirical Study on the Re-use and Portability of Regular Expressions*. Proceedings of the 27th ACM Joint European Software Engineering Conference and Symposium on the Foundations of Software Engineering (**ESEC/FSE'19**).

[11] Wittern, Cha, **Davis**, Baudart, Mandel. *An Empirical Study of GraphQL Schemas*. Proceedings of the 17th International Conference on Service-Oriented Computing (**ICSOC'19**).

[12] Fu, Ghaffar, **Davis**, and Lee. *EdgeWise: A Better Stream Processing Engine for the Edge*. 2019 USENIX Annual Technical Conference (**USENIX ATC'19**).

[13] **Davis**, Coghlan, Servant, and Lee. *The Impact of Regular Expression Denial of Service (REDOS) in Practice: an Empirical Study at the Ecosystem Scale*. Proceedings of the 26th ACM Joint European Software Engineering Conference and Symposium on the Foundations of Software Engineering (**ESEC/FSE'18**). ***ACM Distinguished Paper Award***.

[14] **Davis**, Williamson, and Lee. *A Sense of Time for JavaScript and Node.js: First-Class Timeouts as a Cure for Event Handler Poisoning*. Proceedings of the 27th USENIX Security Symposium (**USENIX Security'18**).

[15] **Davis**, Thekumparampil, and Lee. *Node.fz: Fuzzing the Server-Side Event-Driven Architecture*. Proceedings of the Twelfth European Conference on Computer Systems (**EuroSys'17**).

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

[1] Herbold, Trautsch, Ledel, Aghamohammadi, Ghaleb, Chahal, Bossenmaier, Nagaria, Makedonski, Ahmadabadi, Szabados, Spieker, Madeja, Hoy, Lenarduzzi, Wang, Rodriguez-Perez, Colomo-Palacios, Verdecchia, Singh, Qin, Chakroborti, Davis, Walunj, Wu, Marcilio, Alam, Aldaeej, Amit, Turhan, Eismann, Wickert, Malavolta, Sulír, Fard, Henley, Kourtzanidis, Tüzün, Treude, Shamasbi, Pashchenko, Wyrich, **Davis**, Serebrenik, Albrecht, Aktas, Strüber, Erbel. *A Fine-grained Data Set and Analysis of Tangling in Bug Fixing Commits*. Empirical Software Engineering (EMSE) (**EMSE'21**).

[2] Kazerouni, **Davis**, Basak, Shaffer, Servant, Edwards. *Fast and Accurate Incremental Feedback for Students' Software Tests Using Selective Mutation Analysis*. Journal of Systems and Software (**JSS'21**).

[3] Ozkan, Davis, **Davis**, James, Murzi, Knight. *Expectations and Experiences of Short-Term Study Abroad Leadership Teams*. Journal of International Engineering Education (**JIEE'20**).

REFEREED SHORT PAPERS

[1] Winkler, Agarwal, Tung, Ugalde, Jung, **Davis**. *A Replication of "DeepBugs: A Learning Approach to Name-based Bug Detection"*. Proceedings of the 29th ACM Joint European Software Engineering Conference and Symposium on the Foundations of Software Engineering (**ESEC/FSE'21 Artifact**).

[2] **Davis**. *On the Impact and Defeat of Regex DoS*. **ACM Student Research Competition, 2019-2020 — Grand Finals**. ***Second place, graduate student division***.

[3] **Davis**. *Rethinking Regex Engines to Address ReDoS*. **ACM Student Research Competition, 2019-2020 — ESEC/FSE'19**. ***First place, graduate student division***.

[4] Rupprecht, **Davis**, Arnold, Lubbock, Tyson, and Bhagwat. *Ursprung: Provenance for Large-Scale Analytics Environments*. Proceedings of the 2019 International Conference on Management of Data (**SIGMOD'19 Demo**).

[5] **Davis**, Kildow, and Lee. *The Case of the Poisoned Event Handler: Weaknesses in the Node.js Event-Driven Architecture*. Proceedings of the 10th European Workshop on Systems Security (**EuroSec'17**).

POSTERS

[1] Hornbrook and **Davis**. *An Intercultural Engineering Module for Software Engineers*. 2021 Annual Colloquium for International Engineering Education (**ACIEE'21**).

[2] Vivek, Chinnakotla, Banna, Vegesana, Yan, **Davis**, Lu, Thiruvathukal. *Exemplars for Machine Learning: Towards Software Engineering & Reproducibility*. SIAM Conference on Computational Science and Engineering (**CSE'20**).

TECHNICAL REPORTS

[1] Banna, Chinnakotla, Yan, Vegesana, Vivek, Krishnappa, Jiang, Lu, Thiruvathukal, and **Davis**. *An Experience Report on Machine Learning Reproducibility: Guidance for Practitioners and TensorFlow Model Garden Contributors*. `https://arxiv.org/abs/2107.00821`. 2021.

PATENTS

[1] Davis, **Davis**. *Verification of the Integrity of Data Files Stored in Copy-on-Write (CoW) Based File System Snapshots*. IBM, U.S. patent 11,176,090 B2, granted Nov. 16, 2021.

[2] **Davis**, Davis. *Injection of Simulated Hardware Failure(s) in a File System for Establishing File System Tolerance-to-Storage-Failure(s)*. IBM, U.S. patent 11,023,341 B2, granted Jun. 1, 2021.

[3] **Davis**, Rupprecht, Bhagwat, Arnold, Sawdon. *Performing Hierarchical Provenance Collection*. IBM, U.S. patent 10,891,174 B1, granted Jan. 12, 2021.

[4] **Davis**, Davis. *File Metadata Verification in a Distributed File System*. IBM, U.S. patent 10,678,755 B2, granted Jun. 9, 2020..

[5] Davis, **Davis**. *Testing of Lock Managers in Computing Environments*. IBM, U.S patent 10,061,777 B1, granted Aug. 28, 2018.

[6] **Davis**, Davis, Knop. *Detection of File Corruption in a Distributed File System*. IBM, U.S. patent 10,025,788, granted Jul. 17, 2018.

COURSES DESIGNED

ECE 461 – Software Engineering Fall 2021
Purdue University

ECE 595 – Advanced Software Engineering Spring 2021
Purdue University

COURSES TAUGHT

ECE 461 – Software Engineering Fall 2021
Purdue University

ECE 595 – Advanced Software Engineering Spring 2021, Spring 2022
Purdue University

ECE 368 – Data Structures Fall 2020
Purdue University

Vertically Integrated Project: Open-Source TensorFlow Software Fall 2020–present

Purdue University

Vertically Integrated Project: SafeRegex Fall 2020, Spring 2021
Purdue University

CS 3114 – Data Structures and Algorithms Fall 2019
Virginia Tech

CS 1064 – Introduction to Programming in Python Spring 2019
Virginia Tech

Rising Sophomore Abroad Program (Track Leader) Spring 2018, Spring 2019
Virginia Tech

PHD AND MASTER'S STUDENTS

Wenxin Jiang	PhD	Spring 2021–present
Paschal Amusuo	PhD	Fall 2021–present
Dharun Anandayuvaraj	PhD	Fall 2021–present
William Maxam	MS	Fall 2021–present
Geoffrey Cramer	MS	Fall 2021–present

INVITED TALKS

Challenges in Global Software Development 2021
University of Wisconsin–Stout

Regexes Awry: Characterizing and Defeating Regex-based Denial of Service 2020
Clemson University CS department colloquium

Regex-based Denial of Service 2020
Clarkson University CS department colloquium

Regexes are Hard: Qualitative and Quantitative Perspectives 2019
NC State CS department colloquium

The Dangers of Copy/Pasting Code 2019
Episode of the Podcast "The Secure Developer": `https://tinyurl.com/DavisResearchPodcast`

Regexes in the Wild 2019
Virginia Tech department seminar

Academic Perspectives on Node.js 2018
Node.js Collaborator Summit, Vancouver

International Engineering Annual, 2015–2019
Rising Sophomore Abroad Program, Virginia Tech

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Fall 2021: Teaching–Recognized for high student evaluation scores (∼100 faculty in College of Eng.)	2021
ASE 2021 Distinguished PC Member Award	2021
VIP Outstanding Team Mentor Award, Purdue TensorFlow Team	2021
ACM Distinguished Paper Award, ESEC/FSE 2020	2020
Outstanding Graduate Student Service Award, CS@VT	2020
Second place, Grand Finals of the ACM Graduate Student Research Competition	2020
First place, Graduate Student Research Competition, ESEC/FSE 2019	2019
ACM Distinguished Paper Award, ASE 2019	2019
ACM Distinguished Paper Award, ESEC/FSE 2018	2018
Microsoft Security Researcher Acknowledgments (Regex DoS)	2018
Pratt Fellowship, Virginia Tech College of Engineering	2017–2019
Davenport Fellowship, Virginia Tech College of Engineering	2019
Graduate Fellow, VT Academy for Global Engineering	2019–2020
IBM Significant Contributor Award (Node.js)	2018
IBM Poughkeepsie's New hire of the month	2014
Frederica Clarkson Award	2012
Clarkson University's Outstanding Senior (x2): Mathematics, Computer science	2012
Clarkson University Phalanx Commendable Leadership	2011

ACTIVITIES AS A REFEREE

Judge, CSAW'21 Best Paper Competition	2021
Member, ASE Program Committee	2021
Member, ICSE Demonstrations Committee	2021
Member, ESEC/FSE Artifact Evaluation Committee	2020, 2021
Reviewer, ACM Transactions on Software Engineering (TSE)	2020–present
Reviewer, Springer Empirical Software Engineering (EMSE)	2020–present
Member, CGO Artifact Evaluation Committee	CGO 2019

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Committee member, Purdue ECE Undergraduate Curriculum Committee	2020-present
President, Virginia Tech CS Graduate Student Council	2018–2019
Organizer, Virginia Tech Systems Reading Group	2017–2020

SHORT COURSES AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

Effective College Teaching (Brent & Felder) 2020

Intercultural Pedagogy Grant Training Program, Purdue CILMAR 2020

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Member, Association for Computing Machinery

Member, IEEE