Curtis G. Northcutt

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EDUCATION:

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) (2013-ongoing)

- National Science Foundation GRFP Fellow & MITx Research Fellow
- Teaching Assistant for 6.867 (Grad. Machine Learning) with 500+ students

M.S. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) (June, 2017)

- Thesis: https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/111870
- Classification with Noisy Labels: 'Multiple-Account' Cheating Detection in Online Courses
- Awarded MIT Master's Thesis Morris Joseph Levin Award

Vanderbilt University - *GPA*: 4.0/4.0, *Ranking*: 1 (Valedictorian)

B.S. in both Honors Computer Science and Mathematics (May 2013)

Founder's Medalist for School of Engineering

National Scholarships:

2012 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship (\$7,500)

National Fellowships:

- 2013 NSF GRFP Fellowship (\$126,000)
- <u>USAID Research Innovation Fellowship</u> (\$9,000)

Grants:

Centre for Big Data on EdTech at Beijing Normal University Collaborative Research (\$15,000)

Academic Programs:

- <u>LearnLab Educational Data-Mining Track at</u> Carnegie Mellon University (2015)
- MIT-Imperial Global Fellows Program (2015)
- MIT EECS Start6 Entrepreneurship (2014)
- NSF USAID Research Innovation Fellow (2014)

Areas of Specialization:

- Machine Learning
 - weak-supervision
 - learning with no/noisy labels
 - confident learning
- **Broader Applications**
 - human learning
 - online education

Vanderbilt Scholarships:

- <u>James Geddes Memorial Scholarship</u> (\$28,000)
- Jesse Taylor, Jr. Scholarship (\$90,000)
- Judi Hale Memorial Scholarship (\$500)
- National Science Foundation (NSF) Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) (2011)
- NASA INSPIRE & OLC (2009
- Governor's Scholars (2008)
- UK BEST Engineering Program (2007)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (RESEARCH & INDUSTRY):

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Office of Digital Learning (ODL), edX, MITx

Cambridge, MA | Sept. 2013-(ongoing)

Machine Learning, Ph.D. Candidate in Computer Science, Advisor: Dr. Isaac Chuang

My research focuses on fast, provable, broadly-applicable solns for learning with noisy labels:

- Creator of <u>cleanlab</u>: The only Python package for learning with and finding label errors in datasets.
- Invented Rank Pruning (Paper, Github): state-of-the-art for classification with noisy labels.
- (in progress) Founded **confident learning**: family of theory & algorithms for supervised ML w/ label errors.

Broader Impact (Applications of my rearch in industry and towards improving human learning):

- Invented the <u>CAMEO Detection Algorithm</u> to detect "Multiple Account" Cheating in online courses.
- Numerous deep learning and ML applications with Oculus Research, FAIR, & Amazon Alexa Research.

Oculus Research / Facebook Reality Labs (FRL)

Redmond, WA | May 2018-May 2019

Research Scientist Intern (Artificial Intelligence), Manager: Dr. Richard Newcombe

- Created a new multi-modal AI dataset for machine learning and augmented reality (public release pending)
- (in progress) Developed multi-modal, end-to-end complete-AI models.

Amazon Research: Alexa Machine Learning Team

Cambridge, MA | May 2017-August 2017

Research Scientist Intern (semi-supervised learning | ASR | deep learning), Manager: Dr. Ming Sun

- Created a fast/accurate algorithm to estimate false-positive rates of Alexa model updates, without labeled data.
- Provided a way to train the Alexa "wake-up" model with more data and noisy labels using Rank Pruning.
- Learned skills in ASR (Nemo, Kaldi, representation, modeling) and deep learning.

<u>Facebook Artificial Intelligence Research (FAIR)</u>

Manhattan, New York City, NY | May 2016-September 2016

Research Intern (Machine Learning /Natural Language Processing), Mentor: Dr. Y-Lan Boureau

- Developed and experimented with comment ranking diversification algorithms.
- Added ~800 lines of PHP for online linear algebra / NLP in the backend of <u>facebook.com</u>.
- Technical skills learned: PHP, HACK, Mercurial source control, HIVE SQL, Presto SQL, FB Learner.
- NLP / ML techniques used: Starspace/WSABIE, Deepwalk, Word2Vec, TF-IFD, TSNE, etc.

Microsoft Research (MSR) India, Technologies for Emerging Markets Group

Bangalore, Karnataka, India | June 2014-July 2014

Visiting Scientist on Massively Employed Classroom (MEC) project, Mentor: Dr. Bill Thies

- Built an extensible keylogger to store all input events in MSR India's MOOC, MEC.
- Invented Codelogger tool to replay online programming assessments.
- Studied JavaScript key-logging: event handling, capturing and delegation, ACE Editor.

<u>Founder of Reverse Definition Start-up, RevDef</u> $\stackrel{\text{\tiny m}}{}$: Connecting People to the Words They Need

Cambridge, MA | January 2014-(ongoing)

Co-founder with Jonas Mueller and Albert Kim

- Used to find colloquial/scientific terms you forget, choosing titles via descriptions, and semantic compression.
- Outperforms Google Search by 250% on queries in search of a single term via NLP semantic analysis.
- Currently not publically accessible, awaiting legal consultation and an updated development phase.

Founder of MIT4Harvard [™]: MIT Math & Computer Science Expert Tutors for Harvard Students Cambridge, MA | October 2014-March 2016

CEO, founder, and tutor for a computer science and mathematics tutoring company

- Connects MIT experts to Harvard students requiring tutoring services in Math & Computer Science.
- Facilitated 15+ MIT students as expert Computer Science tutors with premium price ranges and services.
- Personally tutored 2 Harvard students over 2+ years (over 50+ non-Harvard students in lifetime).

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Lincoln Laboratory, U.S. Department of Defense

Lexington, MA | June 2013-August 2013

Network Intrusion Detection, Cybersecurity Research, P.I. Joshua W. Haines

- Developed a data-generation tool to characterize performance of a DoD network intrusion detection system.
- Identified errors in the deployed system; Built highly modularized tool for extensibility of new system versions.
- Trained in security networking, Python, Networkx, JSON modules, Apache Tomcat, online algorithms, SQL.

Coursera Researcher with Vanderbilt Mathematic Department

Nashville, TN | January 2013-May 2013

Educational Data-mining and Clustering Analysis Research, Dr. Derek Bruff

- Used Hierarchical Agglomerative Clustering (HAC) to classify student types within the Coursera platform.
- Performed big-data feature extraction of Vanderbilt's Coursera data, resulting in a research paper.
- Trained in SQL, MATLAB, Weka, HAC, SBAC, COBWEB, EM, clustering analysis.

Vanderbilt University EECS Undergraduate Research 2013

Nashville, TN | January 2013-May 2013

Educational Data-mining and Intelligent Learning Environments Research, Dr. Gautam Biswas

- Designed the Indirectly Collaborative LE (ICLE): crowd-sourcing & narrative to teach mathematical induction.
- Developed a model for CBLEs to teach inductive proofs without natural language processing (NLP).
- Studied intelligent tutoring systems (ITS), open-ended learning, cognitive tools and tutors, educational games.

Vanderbilt University EECS Undergraduate Research 2012

Nashville, TN | August 2012-December 2012

Cyber-Physical Security (CPS) Systems AI Research, Dr. Xenofon Koutsoukos

- Described the relationships of CPS against general cyber security to suggest the value of CPS protocols.
- Combined Bayesian Modelling, Hybrid Automata, and Digital Logic for a generalized security model for CPS.
- Published "Generalized Algorithm for CPS Intrusion Detection and Security Robustness via Logical Truth Tables."

Microsoft Corporation, Windows Phone Division,

Redmond, WA | May 2012-August 2012

Technical Program Manager Intern for Windows Phone, Camera and Photos Team, Dr. Eric Bennett

- Created, designed, and specified full-stack implementations of all (3) Microsoft's WP8 third-party camera apps.
- Invented FX Suite, PhotoStrip, Photofuse Jr. apps receiving worldwide acclaim in CNet, Wired, and other media
- Managed 3 PhD and 2 undergrad interns, successfully demonstrating all WP8 APIs for ISVs by our deadlines.
- Selected as a Microsoft Ambassador (50 of 1800 interns selected) and received a full-time job offer.

National Science Foundation REU at University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame, IN | May 2011-August 2011

Experimental Research on Wireless Networking (ERWiN) NSF REU in Computer Science, Dr. A. Striegel

- Developed a C++ application to detect a user's heart rate via webcam, exposing fallacies in previous research.
- Received Second Place in the NSF REU Poster Competition of the 2011 ERWiN REU for my research.
- Learned C++, OpenCV, C#, SSH clients, Digital Signal Processing, Lomb-Scargle Fourier Analysis.

General Electric (GE) Appliances

Louisville, KY | May 2010-August 2010

Engineering Intern, Database Construction and Website Design and Development

- Designed and implemented a website training database for new employees, used by GE for years afterward.
- Recognized by Gen Manager R. Simpson of GE Sourcing & won world 2nd place in GE's REEL Global Contest.
- Learned website design/coding/programming, databases, manufacturing, management, and corporate business.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and ViGYAN Inc.

Langley Base, Newport News, VA | June 2009-August 2009

NASA Inspire Internship, Aerospace Research, Mentor: Norm Crabill (VA Aviation Hall of Fame)

- Conducted aerospace engineering and oscillatory dynamics research.
- Analyzed aircraft implementation ARIS (wind gust mitigation of 90%) and reduced exterior oscillations.
- Trained in JAVAFoil, MATLAB, JAVA, wind-tunnel research, harmonic motion, and vector spaces.

University of Kentucky, Department of Physiology and Neurobiology

Lexington, KY | June 2008-June 2009

Neurobiology Research on Glutamatergic Synaptic Transmission, Dr. Robin Cooper

• Studied the effects of residual intracellular calcium alterations on glutamatergic synaptic transmission.

- Presented at Intel-International Science and Engineering Fair (world); awarded Overall First-Place in Kentucky.
- Trained in dissections, pH solutions, staining cells, cell stimulation, focal electrodes, synaptic transmission, etc.

TEACHING:

TEACHING:

- Teaching Assistant (TA) for 6.867 Graduate Machine Learning at MIT Responsibilities include teaching weekly recitation, grading, planning, developing examination questions, and office hours (Fall, 2017)
- Taught MIT IAP course on Cool Math Proofs Topics included Fermat's Last Theorem, Derangements, Handshaking, 4 color theorem, Banach Fixed Point Theorem, Infinite, Euler's Formula, GCD (Euclidean Algorithm), heuristics (2014, 2015)
- Taught (2) MIT IAP one-day courses in Discrete Math Topics included Induction, Deduction Proofs, Contradiction, Graph Theory, Graph Search Algorithms (BFS, DFS, Dijkstra's, A*), Google maps, Minimum Spanning Tree (Kruskall's, Prims), 6 Color Theorem / 4 Color Theorem, Inclusion-Exclusion Principle, Hats (Derangements) Problem, Alpha Beta Pruning on Trees (2014, 2015)
- Vanderbilt VUceptor Co-Instructor with a faculty member of seminar course for first-year students (2010)
- Vanderbilt Students Volunteering for Science Taught hands-on science experiments in poor schools(2010)

TUTORING:

- Founded MIT4Harvard [™] Tutoring MIT math & CS expert tutors for Harvard students (2013-ongoing)
- Mathematics Tutoring with Prof. Rittle-Johnson Studied cognitive theory of "How Children Learn Math," and tutored struggling students in Nashville Metro Public Schools (2013)
- Mathematics Tutor Created for-profit STEM, CS, ACT/SAT tutoring business (2008-ongoing)
- Employee of Vanderbilt Child and Family Center Taught simple tasks to toddlers (2009)

GUEST LECTURES:

- Mathematics Guest Lecturer for Lafayette High School (annually) "Discrete Mathematics: How Mathematicians Formally Prove Things" Taught induction, contradiction, and logical deduction. (2012, 2013)
- CS Guest Lecturer for The Vanderbilt School for Science and Math "How Google Maps works: Theory and Application" Taught algorithms to advanced high school students in Metro Nashville Public Schools (02/28/13)

RESEARCH ADVISOR:

- MIT EECS <u>SuperUROP</u> Undergraduate Advisor <u>Ruth Park</u> (2015-2016)
- MIT EECS <u>UROP</u> Undergraduate Advisor <u>Abhinav Venigalla</u> (2017)

PUBLICATIONS:

All publications available <u>here</u>. Three highlights are:

Curtis G. Northcutt, Tailin Wu, Isaac L. Chuang. (2017). <u>Learning with Confident Examples: Rank Pruning for Robust Classification with Noisy Labels</u>. *Uncertainty in Artificial Intelligence (UAI)*, August 2017. [arXiv]

Curtis G Northcutt., Andrew Ho, Isaac L Chuang. (2016). <u>Detecting and preventing "multiple-account" cheating in massive open online courses</u>. *Computers & Education*, September 2016. [<u>arXiv</u>]

Curtis G. Northcutt, Kimberly Leon, Naichun Chen. (2017). <u>Comment Ranking Diversification in Forum Discussions</u>. *Learning at Scale (L@S)* April 2017.

RESEARCH, TALKS, & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

- October 21, 2018. Egocentric Communications. Talk. Oculus Research / Facebook Reality Lab (FRL), Redmond, WA
- **2. August 29, 2017. Rank Pruning: Robust Classification with Noisy Labels.** Talk. Microsoft Research Machine Learning, Redmond, WA.
- 3. **August 14, 2017. Rank Pruning: Robust Classification with Noisy Labels.** Talk. University of Sydney (Tao and Li group), Sydney, Australia.
- 4. August 12, 2017. [invited] Learning from Confident Examples: Rank Pruning for Robust Classification with Noisy Labels. Poster (1-minute flash talk). Uncertainty in Artificial Intelligence Conference (UAI), Sydney, Australia.
- 5. August 8, 2017. Fast, Cheap, and Accurate: Prediction of Alexa Wake-Word False Accept with Noisy ASR-generated Labels. Talk. Amazon Research Alexa Team, Cambridge, MA.
- 6. **August 2, 2017. Rank Pruning: Robust Classification with Noisy Labels.** Talk. MIT Office of Digital Learning Lab, Cambridge, MA.
- 7. **July 28, 2017. Rank Pruning: Robust Classification with Noisy Labels.** Talk. University of Washington, Dept. of Computer Science and Engineering, Seattle, WA.
- 8. **July 27, 2017.** A First General Solution for Classification with a Fraction of Wrong Labels. Poster. Amazon Machine Learning Research Symposium, Seattle, WA.
- 9. **July 25, 2017. Rank Pruning: Robust Classification with Noisy Labels.** Talk. Oculus Research, Redmond, WA.
- 10. June 7, 2017. Rank Pruning for Classification with Noisy Labels. Talk. Amazon Alexa Machine Learning Wake-word Brown Bag, Cambridge, MA.
- 11. May 8, 2017. Classification with Significantly Mislabeled Training Data. Talk. ML Tea MIT's Machine Learning Seminar, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.
- 12. April 30, 2017. [invited] Measuring Assessment Authenticity in Open Online Learning. Talk. 2017 National Conference on Measurement in Education (NCME 2017), San Antonio, TX.
- 13. April 22, 2017. [invited] The Challenges of Openness versus Value in Massive Open Online Courses. Talk. Emerging Challenges in Digital Higher Education, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- 14. **April 20, 2017. [invited] Comment Ranking Diversification in Forum Discussions.** Poster. 2017 ACM Learning@Scale (L@S) Conference, Cambridge, MA.
- 15. April 18, 2017. Practical Cheating Detection in MOOCs using Classification with Significantly Mislabeled Training Data. MIT EECS Masterworks 2017, Poster. Cambridge, MA.
- 16. February 1, 2017. Multiple-Account Cheating Detection and Forum Diversification in Online Courses. Poster. MIT Festival of Learning, Cambridge, MA.
- 17. December 8, 2016. Comment Ranking Diversification in MOOC Forum Discussions. Poster. Graduate Natural Language Processing (NLP) Final Presentations, Cambridge, MA
- 18. **September 25, 2016. [invited] Detection and prevention of cheating in MOOCs.** Talk. Speaker at AI With the Best Conference, Virtual Online Conference.
- 19. April 20, 2016. Practical Cheating Detection in Massive Open Online Courses. MIT EECS Masterworks 2016, Poster, Cambridge, MA.
- **20.** March 23, 2016. [invited] Detection and prevention of "multiple account" cheating in MOOCs. Lecture at Centre for Big Data on Technology-Mediated Education, Beijing Normal Univ, Beijing, China.
- **21. January 20, 2016. Inference of prerequisite structure in online courses.** Office of Digital Learning MITx Fellows Research Group, NE₃₅ Grand Central Station, Cambridge, MA.

- 22. September 23, 2015. [invited] Detection and prevention of "multiple account" cheating in MOOCs. Office of Digital Learning Brown Bag Lunch Talk, NE₃₅ Grand Central Station, Cambridge, MA.
- **23. July 7**, **2015. Detection and prevention of "multiple account" cheating in MOOCs.** Private presentation to Dave Pritchard's group at MIT. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. MA.
- **24.** May 18, 2015. [invited] Anomalous response patterns among MITx & HarvardX learners on edX. Privately presented to Harvard/MIT faculty, including Deans & Vice Provosts. HarvardX, Cambridge. MA.
- **25.** January 15, 2015. [invited] How to start up a start-up: creating RevDef. MIT Start6 Welcome Speaker, Blade, Boston, MA.
- 26. March 6, 2015. IFACAs (Inhumanly Fast Adjacent Correct Answers): automated bot detection in MOOCs. HarvardX, Cambridge, MA.
- **27. January 15, 2015. [invited] How to start up a start-up: Creating RevDef.** MIT Start 6 Welcome Speaker, Blade, Boston, MA.
- 28. December 9, 2014. <u>SemanticTextDB</u> When natural language processing (NLP) meets databases, MIT Stata Center, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab (CSAIL), Cambridge, MA.
- **29. September 19, 2014. [invited] Breaking the glass ceiling: transcending socioeconomic expectations through MOOCs.** Frontiers in Development Conference, Ronald Reagan Building, Washington D.C.
- 30. August 4, 2013. Data generation for characterizing the performance of a DoD network intrusion detection monitoring system. 2 presentations.
 - a. Group 51 Cybersecurity Summer Presentations, MIT Lincoln Laboratory, B Building, (Aug. 4, 2013)
 - b. Summer Student Presentation, MIT Lincoln Laboratory, S Building, Lexington, MA (Aug. 2, 2013)
- **31. July 14, 2012. Lens construction to demonstrate Windows Phone 8 camera API.** Windows Phone 8 Intern Poster Competition, Microsoft Corporation, Building Studio, Redmond, WA.
- 32. Aug. 5, 2011. Webcam-based heart rate detection via facial photoplethysmography. 2 presentations.
 - a. Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium, University of Notre Dame (Aug. 5, 2011)
 - b. Notre Dame Collegiate Competition of the 2011 ERWiN NSF REU (Aug. 5, 2011) 2nd place
- 33. August 3, 2010. [invited] Tree-structured database for General Electric (GE) employee online training. Presented to Richard Simpson, General Manager of Sourcing for GE, Louisville, KY.
- 34. August 8, 2009. Wind gust mitigation with Active Ride Improvement Project (ARIS). NASA INSPIRE Final Presentation at Langley Research Center (LRC), NASA LRC Auditorium, Hampton, VA.
- 35. May 12, 2009. Kinetics of the vesicle fusion pore regarding the physiological function at the neuromuscular junction of crayfish. Poster/Oral Presentation. 4 presentations.
 - a. Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, Reno, Nevada (May 12, 2009)
 - b. KY Science and Engineering Fair, Eastern KY University (April 04, 2009) 1st place overall
 - c. Bluegrass Society for Neuroscience, Univ. of KY (March 18, 2009)
 - d. Central KY Regional Science and Eng. Fair, Univ. of KY (March 7, 2009) 1st place category

AWARDS & SOCIETIES:

SCHOLARSHIPS:

- 2013 NSF GRFP Fellowship (\$146,000) premier graduate fellowship by the National Science Foundation (2013)
- USAID Research and Innovation Fellowship (\$9000) awarded to aid MSR in developing India (2014)
- 2012 National Goldwater Scholarship (\$7500) premier undergraduate award in STEM (2012)
- James Geddes Memorial Scholarship (\$28,000) selective academic scholarship; only 10 awarded (2011-2012)
- Jesse Taylor, Jr. Scholarship (\$90,000) selective award for academic excellence and need (2010-2012)
- Judi Hale Memorial Scholarship (\$500) awarded to one student for academic excellence (2009)

COMPETITION AWARDS:

- Founder's Medalist, Vanderbilt University School of Engineering awarded for first honors, valedictorian of graduating class (2013)
- Vanderbilt Arts & Science College Scholars Program highest academic program, 3% acceptance (2010)
- First Place in 2011 ICPC ACM Local Programming Contest at Vanderbilt (2011)
- Kentucky Colonel commissioned by governor of KY (highest civilian honor in KY) (2008)
- Rensselaer Medalist Awarded to the top math student at Lafayette H.S. (2009)
- Second Place in Vanderbilt Commons Quiz Bowl (2010)
- Second Place American Chemical Society Exam Kentucky (2009)

RESEARCH & INDUSTRY AWARDS:

- MIT Master's Thesis Morris Joseph Levin Award MIT faculty-judged thesis award (2016)
- First Place Overall in Intel KY State Science and Eng. Fair (also first in local and regional) (2009)
- REEL Intern Global Competition Finalist top 3 team in the world for GE recruitment video (2010)
- Second Place in the Collegiate Poster Competition of the ERWiN National Science Foundation REU (2011)
- American Physiological Society Best Presentation Award -glutamate synaptic transmission research (2009)

HONORARY SOCIETIES:

- Tau Beta Pi
- Pi Mu Epsilon
- Order of Engineer
- ACM Student Member

ACTIVITIES & LEADERSHIP:

- MIT Graduate Residential Advisor Full-time GRA for MIT fraternity Nu Delta (2015-ongoing)
- MIT EECS Start6 Entrepreneurial Program Founded RevDef, pitched to Andreessen Horowitz (2014)
- 2014-15 MIT EECS Visiting Committee Student Advisory Board Decided 2015 (EECS) changes needed
- MIT EECS Basketball Team Integral part of MIT graduate EECS intramural team (2013-ongoing)
- MIT EECS Graduate Student Association Athletic Chair Managed EECS grad intramurals (2014-2015)
- MIT Outing Club Hiking Trip Leader Experienced outdoorsman for White Mountains Natl. Forest (2014-)
- MIT Outing Club Winter Trip Leader Lead official 10-person subzero day expeditions for MIT (2015)
- Certified in Wilderness First Aid Trained in CPR, anaphylaxis, assisted breathing, hypothermia, etc. (2014)
- President of Tau Beta Pi, Vanderbilt Chapter Most selective Eng. Honor Society in U.S. (2012-2013)
- Selection Committee Member for Ingalls Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Served Vanderbilt faculty award selection committee. Only 1 Engineering student selected (2013)
- Microsoft Ambassador Mentored Vanderbilt students in CS and promoted values through events (2012-2013)
- Vanderbilt Residential Adviser (RA) Advised 40 Vanderbilt students in Blakemore House (2012)
- V-Squared Mentor for VU Engineering Mentor and unofficial advisor to first-year students (2011-2013)

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- Spanish Basic Proficiency
- Programming Languages SQL, Python, JavaScript, PHP, C++, LISP, Java, MATLAB, HTML, CSS, etc.
- Experience with C#, XNA, VHDL, MIPS, Ruby, Perl, R, LabVIEW, Prolog, Stata, etc.

OTHER PROJECTS:

SemanticTextDB — PostgreSQL database with integrated NLP models trained online (2014)

- database for document-storage/retrieval
- automated curation and structure discovery

- automatically-inferred latent features including semantics, topics, sentiment, eloquence, etc.
- https://github.com/jwmueller/SemanticTextDB