

Laura Biester

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Computer Science and Engineering Expected 2023
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Adviser: Dr. Rada Mihalcea
GPA: 4.0

Bachelor of Arts, Computer Science June 2016
Carleton College, Northfield, MN
GPA: 3.85

EXPERIENCE

Instructor September 2019 - Present
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Primary instructor for EECS 198, Discover Computer Science. Responsibilities include weekly lectures, grading, curriculum/assignment design, and managing a team of two undergraduate teaching assistants.

Graduate Student Research Assistant September 2018 - Present
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Research assistant for Dr. Rada Mihalcea, focusing on natural language processing and computational social science. My current project focuses on applying NLP and machine learning techniques to data from students at the University of Michigan. From the data, we hope to be able to build a profile of students using numerous factors that may predict their academic success and mental health.

Software Engineer August 2016 - August 2018
Pinterest, San Francisco, CA
Worked primarily on large scale storage systems on top of MySQL and HBase. Projects include an inconsistency detection framework for distributed graph databases, and sharding strategies/implementation for advertiser data.

Computer Science Prefect April 2014 - March 2016
Computer Science Department, Carleton College
Spent three terms as a prefect for Mathematics of Computer Science and two terms as a prefect for Data Structures. Responsibilities included preparing worksheets and leading twice-weekly study sessions for 10-40 students (depending on the class), in addition to providing 1-1 tutoring for students as requested.

Computer Science Grader April 2016 - June 2016
Computer Science Department, Carleton College
Graded three assignments per week for 30 students in Mathematics of Computer Science, the introductory discrete mathematics course for computer science majors.

Software Engineering Intern June 2016 - September 2016
Gumroad, San Francisco, CA
Worked on a feature to allow creators to display their Gumroad page on their own domain, and a feature to auto-populate metadata for mp3 files.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

NextProf Pathfinder

September 2019

Workshop to prepare 1st and 2nd year PhD students in engineering to build a competitive CV for a career in academia.

Midwest Speech and Language Days

May 2019

Poster presented: "The Applicability of Embeddings to Location Time Series Data"

SERVICE

AI4All

July 2019

Developed a NLP project and provided guidance for seven high school students as they learned Python and completed the project.

Girls Encoded

September 2018 - Present

One of five organizers of the "Explore CS Research Program," which aims to introduce students from underrepresented backgrounds to computer science research. Reviewed applications, assigned faculty mentors to students, and answered ongoing questions from students.

Computer Science Student Departmental Advisor

September 2015 - June 2016

Chosen as one of two student departmental advisors by CS faculty. Advised students each term on picking classes, and organized a weekly "CS at the Tavern" social event.

Lovelace Board Member and Chair

January 2015 - June 2016

Was a member of the board of Carleton's women in CS group. Helped to organize weekly lab sessions, dinners, and Carleton's first diversity in CS workshop.

Girls Who Code Volunteer Instructor

January 2015 - June 2016

Spent an hour each week teaching middle school girls at Northfield Middle School to code, using code.org and Scratch.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming Languages: Java, Python, Ruby, C, Javascript

Web Technologies: HTML, CSS, Ruby on Rails, Flask

Data: Hadoop, Hive, SQL, HBase, Vitess

HONORS AND AWARDS

Phi Beta Kappa

Magna Cum Laude

Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers Engineering Fellow

Grace Hopper Conference Scholarship Recipient

Tapia Conference Scholarship Recipient