

Maria Valentini

maria.valentini@colorado.edu | (218) 966-9905 | Seeking internship May 2026

EDUCATION

University of Colorado

Ph.D. Computer Science & Cognitive Science; GPA: 3.97

Boulder, CO

Aug 2022 – May 2027 (projected)

College of St. Scholastica

B.S. Mathematics & Computer Information Systems; GPA: 3.85, GRE: 331

Duluth, MN

Aug 2018 – May 2022

EXPERIENCE

University of Colorado

Graduate Research Assistant | Profs. Katharina von der Wense & Eliana Colunga

Boulder, CO

Aug 2022 – present

- Conducted and published research on natural language processing to several major conferences
- Worked collaboratively with faculty members and another graduate student to acquire and maintain grant funding
- Mentored three undergraduate students in conducting and publishing their own research

Graduate Teaching Assistant | Profs. Tom Yeh & James Dykes

Aug 2022 – present

- Independently instructed class sections with 40-50 students
- Developed and graded assignments, projects, and exam questions
- Held weekly office hours and interview grading sessions for over 900 students

College of St. Scholastica

Undergraduate Research Assistant | Prof. Tom Gibbons

Duluth, MN

Jan 2019 – May 2022

- Conducted and presented research on applications of data analytics
- Assisted CIS faculty in various projects with tasks such as researching, programming, and maintaining lab equipment

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant | Prof. David Vosen

May 2020 – Dec 2020

- Assisted in the development of coursework and facilitated course management technology
- Graded assignments and exams
- Held weekly office hours over Zoom

Digi-Key

Data Science Intern

Thief River Falls, MN

May 2021 – Aug 2021

- Used Python, R, and SQL to analyze company data and generate actionable insights
- Helped improve the website's product recommender system
- Developed machine learning models to generate a 52-week sales forecast for use by marketing and sales executives

PUBLICATIONS

Valentini, M., Wright, T., Marashian, A., Weber, J., Colunga, E., & von der Wense, K. (2025). Measuring Contextual Informativeness in Child-Directed Text. *Proceedings of the 31st International Conference on Computational Linguistics*.

Xie, W., **Valentini, M.**, Lavering, J., & Correll, N. (2024). DeliGrasp: Inferring Object Properties with LLMs for Adaptive Grasp Policies. *8th Annual Conference on Robot Learning*.

Weber, J., **Valentini, M.**, Wright, T., von der Wense, K., & Colunga, E. (2024). Evaluating LLMs as Tools to Support Early Vocabulary Learning. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, 46(0).

Valentini, M., Weber, J., Salcido, J., Wright, T., Colunga, E., & Kann, K. (2023). On the Automatic Generation and Simplification of Children's Stories. *Proceedings of the 2023 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing*.

Hall, T., **Valentini, M.**, Colunga, E., & Kann, K. (2022). Generate Me a Bedtime Story: Leveraging Natural Language Processing for Early Vocabulary Enhancement. *Proceedings of the Second Workshop on NLP for Positive Impact*.

AWARDS, SKILLS, AND INTERESTS

Awards and Honors: NSF GRFP Honorable Mention (2024), CEAS Dean's Future Leadership Fellow (2022), Graduate School Diversity Fellow (2022), Chi Alpha Sigma Honor Society (2021), Grace Hopper Celebration Scholar (2020), Tapia Conference Scholar (2020), Academic All-Conference Athlete (2019-2022), ITA Scholar Athlete (2019-2022), Clare Boothe Luce Research Scholar (2019), Dean's List (2018-2022), National Merit Scholar (2018)

Research Interests: NLP for education, computational psycholinguistics, large language models

Skills: Python, HuggingFace, computational linguistics, LLM finetuning, Java, SQL, C#, C++