

# Natalia Zuniga-Garcia

📞 (512) 920-9517 • ✉ nzuniga@utexas.edu • 🌐 nzunigag.github.io

Natalia is a doctoral candidate in Civil Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin. She is interested in the applications of data analytics in transportation engineering and bridging the gap between these areas to provide planning and operations solutions.

## Education

- **The University of Texas at Austin** *Ph.D. in Civil Engineering | Transportation Engineering* May 2020 (*Expected*)
- **The University of Texas at Austin** *M.Sc. in Statistics and Data Sciences (GPA: 3.814)* May 2018
- **The University of Texas at Austin** *M.Sc. in Civil Engineering | Infrastructure Materials (GPA: 3.709)* May 2017
- **University of Costa Rica** *B.Sc. in Civil Engineering (GPA: 8.46/10)* December 2012

## Professional Experience

- **Graduate Research Assistant** *The University of Texas at Austin (Prof.: Randy B. Machemehl, Jorge A. Prozzi)* 2015 - Present
  - Performed statistical modeling of transportation data for several funded research projects.
  - Authored and co-authored more than 20 research reports, journal publications, and conference proceedings.
- **Teaching Assistant** *The University of Texas at Austin - Cockrell School of Engineering*
  - CE 392M Public Transportation Engineering (*Prof.: Dr. Randy B. Machemehl*) Fall 2018
  - CE 367P Pavement Design and Performance (*Prof.: Dr. Jorge A. Prozzi*) Spring/Fall 2016
- **Interim Professor** *University of Costa Rica - Civil Engineering Department* II Semester 2014
  - IC 0810 Diseño Vial (*Geometric Design*) | Led weekly sessions for fourth-year Civil Engineering students.
- **Research Engineer** *University of Costa Rica - Sustainable Urban Development Program (ProDUS)* 2013 - 2014
  - Used Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing in urban development projects.
- **Undergraduate Research Assistant** *University of Costa Rica - ProDUS and LanammeUCR* 2010 - 2012
  - Collaborated in data collection, analysis, and processing for urban planning projects.

## Honors and Awards

- **WTS Diane Woodend Jones Leadership Legacy Scholarship** Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) - International 2018
- **WTS Leadership Legacy Scholarship** Women's Transportation Seminar - Heart of Texas (WTS-HOT) 2018
- **Leadership Collaborative Leader Award** Women in Engineering Program (WEP) - University of Texas at Austin 2018
- **Professional Development Award** Graduate School - University of Texas at Austin 2016
- **Innovation and Human Capital Program for Competitiveness Scholarship** 2015
  - Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Ministry of Science and Technology (Costa Rica)

## Leadership Experience

- Committee Chair: **Women Transportation Seminar** Heart of Texas (WTS-HOT) Professional Chapter 2018 - 2019
- Committee Member: **UT Shuttle Bus Committee** Parking and Transportation Services UT-Austin 2017 - 2019
- Transportation Liaison: **Tenant Advisory Board (TAB)** Housing and Dining UT-Austin 2017 - 2019
- President: **Women in Transportation Seminar (WTS)** UT-Austin Student Chapter 2017 - 2018
- Seminar Series Director: **Graduate Engineering Council (GEC)** Cockrell School of Engineering UT-Austin 2017 - 2018
- Student Member: **Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)** UT-Austin Student Chapter 2017-Present
- Student Member: **Intelligent Transportation Society (ITS)** UT-Austin Student Chapter 2017-Present
- Student Member: **American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)** ASCE Student Chapter 2017-Present

## Mentoring Experience

- **Graduates Linked with Undergraduates in Engineering (GLUE)** Women in Engineering Program (WEP) UT-Austin
  - Mentees: Emily Tyndall (Spring 2019) / Tiffany Tang (Fall 2017) | Winner of the GLUE Participation Award
- **Directed Reading Program (DRP)** Department of Mathematics UT-Austin
  - Mentee: Emily Nguyen (Fall 2018) | Winner of the 2018 Carey Scholarship
- **University Transportation Center Undergraduate Internship (UTC-UI)** Department of Civil Engineering UT-Austin
  - Mentees: Luis Arruti (Summer 2016) / Andres Sanchez (Summer 2015)

## Notable Research Projects

---

- **Transit in the Context of New Transportation Paradigms (D-Stop)** Jan. 2019 - Present  
With Dr. Natalia Ruiz-Juri, Heidi W. Ross, and Dr. Randy B. Machemehl
  - Cleaning and mining of data from more than 2 million dock-less bikes and scooters trips in Austin, Texas.
  - Use of spatial statistical models to evaluate the impact of dock-less scooters on public transportation demand.
- **Evaluation Ride-Sourcing Search Frictions and Driver Productivity** Jan. 2018 - Aug. 2018  
With Dr. Randy B. Machemehl, Mauricio Tec, Dr. James G. Scott, and Dr. Natalia Ruiz-Juri
  - Cleaning and mining of data from more than 1.5 million ride-sourcing trips, collected by an Austin based e-hailing company.
  - Used big data statistical models to assess ride-sourcing search frictions, driver productivity, and demand density.
- **First-Mile-Last-Mile Collector-Distributor System using Shared Autonomous Vehicles (SAVs)** Jan. 2019 - Present  
With Dr. Kara M. Kockelman and Khrisna Murhy Gurumurthy
  - Use agent-based simulation (MATSim) to evaluate operations impacts of using SAVs as a collector-distributor transit system.
- **Evaluation of the Multimodal Performance of Arterial Corridors (HDR)** Jun. 2017 - Dec. 2017  
With Dr. Randy B. Machemehl, Heidi W. Ross, and Dr. Natalia Ruiz-Juri
  - Processing and mining of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) data, such as Bluetooth, AVL, APC, and GTFS, using R.
  - Assessed bicycle, pedestrian, and transit performance in arterial corridors to evaluate the multimodal level of service.
- **Work Zones Traffic Analysis for Freeway Maintenance Projects (TxDOT)** Jan. 2017 - Present  
With Dr. Randy B. Machemehl and Nabeel A. Khwaja
  - Use microsimulation software (TSIS-CORSIM) and ITS information to assess traffic impact of work-zones in Dallas, Texas.
- **Economic Analysis of Pavement Preservation Techniques (TxDOT)** Mar. 2016 - Aug. 2016  
With Dr. Jorge A. Prozzi and Dr. Andre de Fortier Smith
  - Implemented a stochastic life-cycle cost analysis of pavement preservation techniques, using a Monte Carlo simulation in MATLAB, with information from more than 14,000 construction projects in Texas highway network.
- **High-Definition Field Texture Measurements for Predicting Pavement Friction (USDOT)** Jan. 2016 - Dec. 2016  
With Dr. Jorge A. Prozzi and Dr. Christian Claudel
  - Developed Multiple Linear Regression models to predict highway friction using transportation infrastructure data.
  - Implemented signal processing techniques (such as linear filters) in Python's SciPy, to enhance pavement texture characterization.

## Working Papers

---

4. Gurumurthy, K.M., K. Kockelman and **N. Zuniga-Garcia**. First-Mile-Last-Mile Collector-Distributor System using Shared Autonomous Mobility. Working Paper.
3. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, N. Ruiz-Juri, N. Florez-Morcote, H.W. Ross, and R.B. Machemehl. Evaluation of the Multimodal Performance of Arterial Corridors. Working Paper.
2. Tec, M., J.G. Scott, and **N. Zuniga-Garcia**. Large-Scale Spatiotemporal Density Smoothing with the Graph-fused Elastic Net: Application to Ride-sourcing Driver Productivity Analysis. Working Paper.
1. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, M. Tec, J.G. Scott, N. Ruiz-Juri, and R.B. Machemehl. Modeling Ride-Sourcing Trips Demand Using Mixture Models for Dynamic Spatial Poisson-Point Processes. Working Paper.

## Journal Publications

---

5. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, M. Tec, J.G. Scott, N. Ruiz-Juri, and R.B. Machemehl. Evaluation of Ride-Sourcing Search Frictions and Driver Productivity: A Spatial Denoising Approach. arXiv preprint arXiv:1809.10329. Under review for publication.
4. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, and J.A. Prozzi. (2019). High-Definition Field Texture Measurements for Predicting Pavement Friction. Transportation Research Record, 0361198118821598.
3. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, H.W. Ross, and R.B. Machemehl. (2018). Multimodal Level of Service Methodologies: Evaluation of the Multimodal Performance of Arterial Corridors. Transportation Research Record, 0361198118776112.
2. Kouchaki, S., H. Roshani, J.A. Prozzi, **N. Zuniga-Garcia**, and J.B. Hernandez. (2018). Field Investigation of Relationship between Pavement Surface Texture and Friction. Transportation Research Record, 0361198118777384.
1. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, W. Martinez-Alonso, A. de Fortier Smit, F. Hong, and J.A. Prozzi. (2018). Economic Analysis of Pavement Preservation Techniques. Transportation Research Record, 0361198118768515.

## Technical Reports

---

3. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.** and J.A. Prozzi. (2016). Contribution of Micro- and Macro-Texture for Predicting Friction on Pavement Surfaces. Center for Highway Pavement Preservation (CHPP) Report UTA No. 3-2016.
2. Smit, A. de Fortier, M. Trevino, **N. Zuniga-Garcia**, P. Buddhavarapu, and J.A. Prozzi. (2016). Selection and Design of Quiet Pavement Surfaces. Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Report FHWA/TX-16/0-6819-1.
1. Pujol-Mesalles, R., J. Agueros-Velverde, and **N. Zuniga-Garcia** (2014). Elaboración de auditorías de demanda y cálculo de parámetros operativos del servicio de transporte remunerado de personas, modalidad autobús - Interlineas. Report prepared for Autoridad Reguladora de Servicios Públicos (ARESEP), San José, Costa Rica.

## Theses

---

3. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.** (2018). Spatial Pricing Empirical Evaluation of Ride-Sourcing Trips Using the Graph-Fused Lasso for Total Variation Denoising (Master's Thesis Report). The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, United States.
2. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.** (2017). Predicting Friction with Improved Texture Characterization (Master's Thesis). The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, United States.
1. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.** (2012). Propuesta de una metodología para la evaluación del desempeño de tratamientos superficiales en laboratorio (Licentiate's Thesis). University of Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica.

## Magazine Publications

---

1. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.** and J.A. Prozzi (2018, Sept.). Análisis probabilístico del costo del ciclo de vida de técnicas de preservación de pavimentos. *Revista Asfalto y Pavimentación*, VIII(30), 23-31.

## Conference Proceedings

---

15. Gurumurthy, K.M., K. Kockelman and **N. Zuniga-Garcia**. First-Mile-Last-Mile Collector-Distributor System using Shared Autonomous Mobility. Under review for presentation in *Automated Vehicles Symposium*, Orlando, FL, July 2019.
14. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, H.W. Ross, and R.B. Machemehl. Evaluation of the Multimodal Performance of Arterial Corridors. Accepted for presentation in *Transportation Planning Applications Conference (TRBAppcon)*, Portland, OR, June 2019.
13. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, M. Tec, J.G. Scott, N. Ruiz-Juri, and R.B. Machemehl. Evaluation of Ride-Sourcing Search Frictions and Driver Productivity. 98th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2019.
12. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, and J.A. Prozzi. High-Definition Field Texture Measurements for Predicting Pavement Friction. 98th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2019.
11. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, M. Tec, J.G. Scott, N. Ruiz-Juri, and R.B. Machemehl. (2018). Evaluating Spatial Pricing in Ride-Sourcing Systems: A Graph Fused Lasso Denoising Approach. 2018 Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ, November 2018.
10. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, H.W. Ross, and R.B. Machemehl. (2018). Multimodal Level of Service Methodologies: Evaluation of the Multimodal Performance of Arterial Corridors. 97th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2018.
9. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, S. Kouchaki, H. Roshani, J.A. Prozzi, and J.B. Hernandez. (2018). Field Investigation of Relationship between Pavement Surface Texture and Friction. 97th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2018.
8. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, W. Martinez-Alonso, A. de Fortier Smit, F. Hong, and J.A. Prozzi. (2018). Economic Analysis of Pavement Preservation Techniques. 97th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2018.
7. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, A. de Fortier Smit, and J.A. Prozzi. (2018). Predicting Friction with Improved Texture Characterization. 97th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2018.
6. Prozzi, J.A., **N. Zuniga-Garcia**, and A. de Fortier Smit. (2017). Cuantificación de la macro- y micro-textura del pavimento para la estimación de fricción. XIX Congreso Ibero Latinoamericano del Asfalto (CILA), Medellín, Colombia, November 2017.
5. Prozzi, J.A., **N. Zuniga-Garcia**, and W. Martinez-Alonso. (2017). Análisis estocástico del costo del ciclo de vida de técnicas de preservación de pavimentos. XIX Congreso Ibero Latinoamericano del Asfalto (CILA), Medellín, Colombia, November 2017.
4. Martinez-Alonso, W., **N. Zuniga-Garcia**, A. de Fortier Smit, and J.A. Prozzi. (2017). Life-Cycle Cost Analysis of Pavement Preservation Techniques in Texas. 96th Annual Meeting the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2017.
3. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, A. de Fortier Smit, M. Trevino, P. Buddhavarapu, and J.A. Prozzi. (2016). Laboratory Design of Quieter Asphalt Surfaces. 95th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, January 2016.
2. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, A. de Fortier Smit, M. Trevino, P. Buddhavarapu, and J.A. Prozzi. (2015). Laboratory Design of Quieter Asphalt Surfaces. 27th Annual Road Profile Users' Group (RPUG) Meeting, Raleigh, NC, November 2015.
1. **Zuniga-Garcia, N.**, and F. Elizondo-Arrieta (2013). Propuesta de una metodología para la evaluación del desempeño de tratamientos superficiales. XVII Congreso Ibero Latinoamericano del Asfalto (CILA), Antigua, Guatemala, November 2013.

## Skills

---

**Languages** English (*Full professional proficiency*) | Spanish (*Native proficiency*) | Portuguese (*Elementary proficiency*)  
**Programming Languages** *Intermediate proficiency*: R | MATLAB, *Basic proficiency*: Python | SQL  
**Software Packages** ArcGIS | AutoCAD | TSIS-CORSIM | SPSS | SAS | MS Office | L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

## Certifications

---

<b>Graduate Certificate in Engineering Education</b>	<i>Cockrell School of Engineering, UT Austin</i>	May 2020 ( <i>Expected</i> )
<b>Advanced Teaching Preparation Certificate</b>	<i>Faculty Innovation Center, UT Austin</i>	Fall 2018
<b>Inclusive Classrooms Leadership Certificate</b>	<i>Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, UT Austin</i>	Nov. 2018
<b>40-Hour Basic Mediation Certificate</b>	<i>Cockrell School of Engineering, UT Austin</i>	July 2017

## Other Activities

---

Peer Reviewer of Journal Articles: **Transportation Research Board (TRB)**

Friend of a Committee: **TRB's ABJ80** (Statistics) and **AFD90** (Pavement Surface) **committees**

Selection Committee: **20017-2018 Travel Grant** Graduate Engineering Council (GEC), UT Austin

Panelist: **Graduate School Panel** Women in Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering (WCAE), UT Austin (Feb. 2019)

## Volunteer Experience

---

<b>Graduate and Industry Networking (GAIN)</b>	Graduate Engineering Council (GEC) UT-Austin	Feb. 2019
<b>Explore UT - Cockrell School of Engineering</b>	UT-Austin Open House	Mar. 2017-2019
<b>Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day (Girl Day)</b>	Women in Engineering Program (WEP)	Feb. 2017-2019
<b>13th/14th Annual Gala</b>	Women Transportation Seminar - Heart of Texas (WTS-HOT)	May. 2017/Apr. 2018
<b>Keep Austin Beautiful Adopt a Street Clean-Up</b>	Capital Area Section of ITE (CAS-ITE)	Oct. 2017