

Tal August

School of Computing and Data Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,
e-mail: taugust@illinois.edu, web: <https://talaugust.github.io/>

Education

University of Washington	Seattle, WA	Computer Science	PhD	2023
Tufts University	Medford, MA	Computer Science	BS	2017

Professional Experience

- 2024– **Assistant Professor**, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana, IL.
- 2023– **Young Investigator**, Allen Institute for AI, Seattle, WA.
- 2024
2021 **Research Intern**, Allen Institute for AI, Seattle, WA.
- 2019 **Research Intern**, Microsoft Research AI, Redmond, WA.

Peer-reviewed conference papers

- 2024 **Tal August**, Kyle Lo, Noah A. Smith, and Katharina Reinecke. *Know Your Audience: The Benefits and Pitfalls of Generating Plain Language Summaries Beyond the "General" Audience*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2024.
- 2024 Raymond Fok, Joseph Chee Chang, **Tal August**, Amy X Zhang, and Daniel S Weld. *Clarify: Bridging scholarly abstracts and papers with recursively expandable summaries*. In: ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST). 2024.
- 2024 Yue Guo, **Tal August**, Gondy Leroy, Trevor Cohen, and Lucy Lu Wang. *APPLS: A Meta-evaluation Testbed for Plain Language Summarization*. In: Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing. 2024.
- 2024 Yue Guo, Joseph Chee Chang, Maria Antoniak, Erin Bransom, Trevor Cohen, Lucy Lu Wang, and **Tal August**. *Personalized Jargon Identification for Enhanced Interdisciplinary Communication*. In: In Proceedings of Annual Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (NAACL). 2024.
- 2024 Hang Jiang, Xiajie Zhang, Robert Mahari, Daniel Kessler, Eric Ma, **Tal August**, Irene Li, Alex Pentland, Yoon Kim, Jad Kabbara, and Deb Roy. *Leveraging Large Language Models for Learning Complex Legal Concepts through Storytelling*. In: Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2024.
- 2024 Mina Lee, Katy Ilonka Gero, John Joon Young Chung, Simon Buckingham Shum, Vipul Raheja, Hua Shen, Subhashini Venugopalan, Thiemo Wambsganss, David Zhou, Emad A. Alghamdi, **Tal August**, Avinash Bhat, Madiha Zahrah Choksi, Senjuti Dutta, Jin L.C. Guo, Md Naimul Hoque, Yewon Kim, Simon Knight, Seyed Parsa Neshaei, Antonette Shibani, Disha Shrivastava, Lila Shroff, Agnia Sergejuk, Jessi Stark, Sarah Serman, Sitong Wang, Antoine Bosselut, Daniel Buschek, Joseph Chee Chang, Sherol Chen, Max Kreminski, Joonsuk Park, Roy Pea, Eugenia Ha Rim Rho, Zejiang Shen, and Pao Siangliulue. *A Design Space for Intelligent and Interactive Writing Assistants*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2024.

- 2024 Kyle Lo, Joseph Chee Chang, Andrew Head, Jonathan Bragg, Amy X Zhang, Cassidy Trier, Chloe Anastasiades, **Tal August**, Russell Authur, Danielle Bragg, Erin Bransom, Isabel Cachola, Stefan Candra, Yoganand Chandrasekhar, Yen-Sung Chen, Evie Yu-Yen Cheng, Yvonne Chou, Doug Downey, Rob Evans, Raymond Fok, Fangzhou Hu, Regan Huff, Dongyeop Kang, Tae Soo Kim, Rodney Kinney, Aniket Kittur, Hyeonsu Kang, Egor Klevak, Bailey Kuehl, Michael Langan, Matt Latzke, Jaron Lochner, Kelsey MacMillan, Eric Marsh, Tyler Murray, Aakanksha Naik, Ngoc-Uyen Nguyen, Srishti Palani, Soya Park, Caroline Paulic, Napol Rachatasumrit, Smita Rao, Paul Sayre, Zejiang Shen, Pao Siangliulue, Luca Soldaini, Huy Tran, Madeleine van Zuylen, Lucy Lu Wang, Christopher Wilhelm, Caroline Wu, Jiangjiang Yang, Angele Zamarron, Marti A Hearst, and Daniel S Weld. *The Semantic Reader Project: Augmenting Scholarly Documents through AI-Powered Interactive Reading Interfaces*. In: Communications of the ACM (CACM) (2024).
- 2024 Li Lucy, **Tal August**, Rose E. Wang, Luca Soldaini, Courtney Allison, and Kyle Lo. *Evaluating Language Model Math Reasoning via Grounding in Educational Curricula*. In: Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (Findings). 2024.
- 2023 **Tal August**, Lucy Lu Wang, Jonathan Bragg, Marti A. Hearst, Andrew Head, and Kyle Lo. *Paper Plain: Making Medical Research Papers Approachable to Healthcare Consumers with Natural Language Processing*. In: ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI) (2023).
- 2023 Jackson Stokes, **Tal August**, Robert A Marver, Alexei Czeskis, Franziska Roesner, Tadayoshi Kohno, and Katharina Reinecke. *How Language Formality in Security and Privacy Interfaces Impacts Intended Compliance*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (2023).
- 2022 **Tal August**, Katharina Reinecke, and Noah A. Smith. *Generating Scientific Definitions with Controllable Complexity*. In: Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2022.
- 2021 Amanda Baughan, Nigini Oliveira, **Tal August**, Naomi Yamashita, and Katharina Reinecke. *Do Cross-Cultural Differences in Visual Attention Patterns Affect Search Efficiency on Websites?* In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (2021).
- 2021 Elizabeth Clark, **Tal August**, Sofia Serrano, Nikita Haduong, Suchin Gururangan, and Noah A. Smith. *All That's 'Human' Is Not Gold: Evaluating Human Evaluation of Generated Text*. In: Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics. 2021.
- 2021 David Wadden, **Tal August**, Qisheng Li, and Tim Althoff. *The Effect of Moderation on Online Mental Health Conversations*. In: The International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM) (2021).
- 2020 **Tal August**, Dallas Card, Gary Hsieh, Noah A Smith, and Katharina Reinecke. *Explain Like I am a Scientist: The Linguistic Barriers of Entry to r/science*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2020.
- 2020 **Tal August**, Shamsi T. Iqbal, Michael Gamon, and Mark J. Encarnación. *Characterizing the Mobile Microtask Writing Process*. In: MobileHCI (2020).
- 2020 **Tal August**, Lauren Kim, Katharina Reinecke, and Noah A Smith. *Writing Strategies for Science Communication: Data and Computational Analysis*. In: Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP). 2020.

- 2020 Amanda Baughan, **Tal August**, Naomi Yamashita, and Katharina Reinecke. *Keep it Simple: How Visual Complexity and Preferences Impact Search Efficiency on Websites*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (2020).
- 2019 **Tal August** and Katharina Reinecke. *Pay Attention, Please: Formal Language Improves Attention in Volunteer and Paid Online Experiments*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2019.
- 2019 Tomoki Shibata, Alena Borisenko, Anzu Hakone, **Tal August**, Leonidas Deligiannidis, Chen-Hsiang Yu, Matthew Russell, Alex Olwal, and Robert JK Jacob. *An Implicit Dialogue Injection System for Interruption Management*. In: Augmented Human (AH) (2019).
- 2018 **Tal August**, Nigini Oliveira, Chenhao Tan, Noah Smith, and Katharina Reinecke. *Framing Effects: Choice of Slogans Used to Advertise Online Experiments can Boost Recruitment and Lead to Sample Biases*. In: Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW) (2018).
- 2018 Manuel Nordhoff, **Tal August**, Nigini A Oliveira, and Katharina Reinecke. *A Case for Design Localization: Diversity of Website Aesthetics in 44 countries*. In: Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (2018).

Preprints and Workshop Papers (lightly or not peer reviewed)

- 2025 K. J. Kevin Feng, Kevin Pu, Matt Latzke, **Tal August**, Pao Siangliulue, Jonathan Bragg, Daniel S. Weld, Amy X. Zhang, and Joseph Chee Chang. *Cocoa: Co-Planning and Co-Execution with AI Agents*. In: Arxiv. 2025.
- 2025 Hang Jiang, **Tal August**, Luca Soldaini, Kyle Lo, and Maria Antoniak. *Automatic Detection of Research Values from Scientific Abstracts Across Computer Science Subfields*. In: Arxiv. 2025.
- 2025 Priyanka Kargupta, Ishika Agarwal, **Tal August**, and Jiawei Han. *Tree-of-Debate: Multi-Persona Debate Trees Elicit Critical Thinking for Scientific Comparative Analysis*. In: Arxiv. 2025.
- 2025 Yijun Liu and **Tal August**. *From Crafting Text to Crafting Thought: Grounding Intelligent Writing Support to Writing Center Pedagogy*. In: Proceedings of the Fourth Workshop on Intelligent and Interactive Writing Assistants (In2Writing 2025). 2025.
- 2025 Tianjiao Yu, Vedant Shah, Muntasir Wahed, Kiet A. Nguyen, Adheesh Juvekar, **Tal August**, and Ismini Lourentzou. *Uncertainty in Action: Confidence Elicitation in Embodied Agents*. In: Arxiv. 2025.
- 2023 Zejiang Shen, **Tal August**, Pao Siangliulue, Kyle Lo, Jonathan Bragg, Jeff Hammerbacher, Doug Downey, Joseph Chee Chang, and David Sontag. *Beyond Summarization: Designing AI Support for Real-World Expository Writing Tasks*. In: Proceedings of the 2nd Workshop on Intelligent and Interactive Writing Assistants (In2Writing 2023) (2023).
- 2022 Narshion Ngao, Zeyu Wang, Lawrence Nderu, Tobias Mwalili, **Tal August**, and Keshet Ronen. *Detecting Urgency in Multilingual Medical SMS in Kenya*. In: Proceedings of the Association for the Asia Chapter of the Computational Linguistics (AACL), Student Research Workshop (2022).

- 2020 **Tal August**, Maarten Sap, Elizabeth Clark, Katharina Reinecke, and Noah A Smith. *Exploring the Effect of Author and Reader Identity in Online Story Writing: the StoriesInTheWild Corpus*. In: Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics, First Joint Workshop on Narrative Understanding, Storylines, and Events (NUSE) (2020).

Service

Member	Graduate Admissions Committee 2024-2025
SAC	NAACL 2025
AC	CHI 2025
PC	CHI 2019-24, CSCW 2021/22, ACL/ARR 2021-2025, ICWSM 2022, UIST 2025
Organizer	CSE Interactive Systems Seminar
Organizer	DUB Retreat Organizing Committee
Organizer	DUB Doctoral Colloquium
Reviewer	ACL Student Research Workshop 2020/21
Reader	UW Pre-Application Mentorship Service (PAMS), 2021/22
Reader	PhD Program Admissions (CSE) 2020/21

Awards

In2writing Best Paper	2025
ACL Outstanding Paper	2021
CHI Best Paper Honorable Mention (Top 5%)	2021
ICWSM Outstanding Study Design Paper	2020
Twitch Research Fellowship	2020
UW Endowed Fellowship in Computer Science & Engineering	2018
Tufts Phi Beta Kappa	2017
Tufts Audrey Butvay Gruss Science Award	2017
Tufts Priscilla N. Dunne Prize in Psychology	2017
Tufts Dean's List	2013-2017
Participant on Tufts Innovates! Grant	2016
Tufts Entrepreneurial Leadership Grant	2015

Invited Talks and Panels

2025	[Invited Talk] "AI for Science Communication: Adapting to Different Stakeholders", NLP Group, EPFL
2024	[Invited Talk] "AI for Science Communication: Adapting to Different Stakeholders" TSB Distinguished Speaker Series, Northwestern
2024	[Invited Talk] "AI for Science Communication: Adapting to Different Stakeholders" Summit on Responsible Computing, AI, and Society, Georgia Tech
2024	[Panelist] "Introductions and Brainstorming Ideas for HCI Panel" Reflections and Projections, UIUC
2024	[Panelist] "Forms of Fraudulence in Human-Centered Design Panel" Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, CHI2024
2024	[Invited Talk] "Communicating Science with Different Stakeholders Using Language Models" University of Washington Behavioral Innovations Core

- 2023 [Panelist] "Research Methods in HCI" CS 598, Seibel School of Computing and Data Science, UIUC
- 2023 [Panelist] "Job Markets for a PhD" NLP group, University of Washington
- 2021 [Invited Talk] "Language as Design" University of Washington Doctoral Colloquium
- 2021 [Invited Talk] "Language as Design" University of Washington Center for Informed Public
- 2019 [Invited Talk] "Adapting Language in Online Experiments" University of Washington Computer Science Colloquium