Tal August

Siebel School of Computing and Data Science, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign,
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Education

University of Washington	Seattle, WA	Computer Science	PhD	2022
Tufts University	Medford, MA	Computer Science	BS	2017

Professional Experience

2024- **Assistant Professor**, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science, UIUC, Urbana, IL.

2023-4 **Young Investigator**, Allen Institute for AI, Seattle, WA.

2021 **Research Intern**, Allen Institute for AI, Seattle, WA.

2019 **Research Intern**, Microsoft Research AI, Redmond, WA.

Peer-reviewed conference papers

2026 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*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2026

2026 Michelle Huang, Violeta J. Rodríguez, Koustuv Saha, and **Tal August**. *Designing Beyond Language: Sociotechnical Barriers in AI Health Technologies for Limited English Proficiency*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2026

2026 Ziheng Huang, **Tal August**, and Hari Sundaram. *TermSight: Making Service Contracts Approachable*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2026

2026 Ziheng Huang, Hari Sundaram, and **Tal August**. *Living Contracts: Beyond Document-Centric Interaction with Legal Agreements*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2026

2026 Yijun Liu, John Gallagher, Sarah Sterman, and **Tal August**. *From Crafting Text to Crafting Thought: Grounding Intelligent Writing Support to Writing Center Pedagogy*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2026

2026 Yiren Liu, Viraj Shah, Sangho Suh, Pao Siangliulue, **Tal August**, and Yun Huang. *Perspectra: Choosing Your Experts Enhances Critical Thinking in Multi-Agent Research Ideation*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2026

2025 Shaily Bhatt, **Tal August**, and Maria Antoniak. *Research Borderlands: Analysing Writing Across Research Cultures*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 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*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2025

2024 Raymond Fok, Joseph Chee Chang, **Tal August**, Amy X Zhang, and Daniel S Weld. *Qlarify: Bridging scholarly abstracts and papers with recursively expandable summaries*. ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST). 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*. Communications of the ACM (CACM). 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 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*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2024

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*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 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 Sergeyuk, Jessi Stark, Sarah Sterman, 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*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 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*. Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP Findings). 2024

2024   Yue Guo, **Tal August**, Gondy Leroy, Trevor Cohen, and Lucy Lu Wang. *APPLS: A Meta-evaluation Testbed for Plain Language Summarization*. Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP). 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*. 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*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 2023

2022   **Tal August**, Katharina Reinecke, and Noah A. Smith. *Generating Scientific Definitions with Controllable Complexity*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2022

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*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2021. *Outstanding Paper*

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?* Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 2021. *Honorable Mention*

2021   David Wadden, **Tal August**, Qisheng Li, and Tim Althoff. *The Effect of Moderation on Online Mental Health Conversations*. The International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM). 2021. *Outstanding Study Design*

2020   **Tal August**, Shamsi T. Iqbal, Michael Gamon, and Mark J. Encarnación. *Characterizing the Mobile Microtask Writing Process*. MobileHCI. 2020

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*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 2020

2020   Amanda Baughan, **Tal August**, Naomi Yamashita, and Katharina Reinecke. *Keep it Simple: How Visual Complexity and Preferences Impact Search Efficiency on Websites*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 2020

2020   **Tal August**, Lauren Kim, Katharina Reinecke, and Noah A Smith. *Writing Strategies for Science Communication: Data and Computational Analysis*. Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP). 2020

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*. Augmented Human (AH). 2019

2019   **Tal August** and Katharina Reinecke. *Pay Attention, Please: Formal Language Improves Attention in Volunteer and Paid Online Experiments*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 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*. 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*. Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 2018

Preprints and workshop papers (lightly or not peer reviewed)

2026 **Tal August**, Andrew Head, Alexa Siu, Elena L. Glassman, Jonathan K. Kummerfeld, Joseph Chee Chang, Lucy Lu Wang, and Marti A. Hearst. *Science and Technology for Augmenting Reading*. CHI 2026 Workshop. 2026

2026 Shuhaib Mehri, Priyanka Kargupta, **Tal August**, and Dilek Hakkani-Tür. *Learning User Preferences Through Interaction for Long-Term Collaboration*. ArXiv. 2026

2025 Hang Jiang, **Tal August**, Luca Soldaini, Kyle Lo, and Maria Antoniak. *Automatic Detection of Research Values from Scientific Abstracts Across Computer Science Subfields*. Arxiv. 2025

2025 Yifan Song, Wing Yee Au, Hon Yung Wong, Brian P Bailey, and **Tal August**. *Personalized Real-time Jargon Support for Online Meetings*. Arxiv. 2025

2025 Yijun Liu and **Tal August**. *From Crafting Text to Crafting Thought: Grounding Intelligent Writing Support to Writing Center Pedagogy*. Proceedings of the Fourth Workshop on Intelligent and Interactive Writing Assistants (In2Writing). 2025. *Best Paper*

2025 Kevin Feng, Tae Soo Kim, Rock Yuren Pang, Faria Huq, **Tal August**, and Amy X Zhang. *On the Regulatory Potential of User Interfaces for AI Agent Governance*. Proceedings of the Third Workshop on Regulatable ML at NeurIPS. 2025. *Contributed talk*

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*. Proceedings of the 2nd Workshop on Intelligent and Interactive Writing Assistants (In2Writing). 2023

2022 Narshion Ngao, Zeyu Wang, Lawrence Nderu, Tobias Mwalili, **Tal August**, and Keshet Ronen. *Detecting Urgency in Multilingual Medical SMS in Kenya*. 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*. First Joint Workshop on Narrative Understanding, Storylines, and Events (NUSE). 2020

Invited talks and panels

2025 [Invited Talk] "Communicating knowledge with interactive and personalized language", Amazon–Illinois Center on AI for Interactive Conversational Experiences (AICE) Symposium, UIUC

2025 [Invited Talk] "Scaffolding Expertise through language", Allen Institute for AI, Seattle

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" Technology and Social Behavior Distinguished Speaker Series, Northwestern University

2024 [Invited Talk] "AI for Science Communication: Adapting to Different Stakeholders" Summit on Responsible Computing, AI, and Society, Georgia Institute of Technology

2024 [Panelist] "Introductions and Brainstorming for HCI" Reflections|Projections, UIUC

2024	[Panelist] "Forms of Fraudulence in Human-Centered Design Panel" Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, CHI 2024
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, Siebel 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

Mentorship

Current PhD students

2025–	Michelle Huang, Co-advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2025–	Indu Panigrahi, Advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2025–	Lechen Zhang, Advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2024–	Ziheng Huang, Co-advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2024–	Yijun Liu, Advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2024–	Yiren Liu, Committee Member, School of Information, UIUC
2024–	Yifan Song, Co-advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC

Current undergraduate and masters

2024–	Alice Fan, Undergraduate, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2024–	Leo Luo, Masters, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
2024–	Sneha Sundar, Undergraduate, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC

Former mentees

2025	Priyanka Kargupta, PhD UIUC
2025	Keyang Xuan, Masters UIUC
2024-5	Tianjiao Yu, PhD UIUC
2024	Shaily Bhatt, AI2 intern, PhD CMU
2024	Lucy Li, AI2 intern, PhD UC Berkeley School of Information (Now: Postdoc at UW, then Assistant Professor at University of Wisconsin Madison CS)
2023	Raymond Fok, AI2 intern, PhD UW (Now: Senior Applied Scientist at Microsoft AI)
2023	Yue Guo, AI2 intern, PhD UW, Medical Education and Biomedical Informatics (Now: Assistant Professor at UIUC School of Information)
2023	Kevin Feng, AI2 intern, PhD UW
2023	Hang Jiang, AI2 intern, PhD MIT (Now: Postdoc at MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab)
2023	Zejiang Shen, AI2 intern, PhD MIT
2022-23	Rock Yuren Pang, PhD UW
2022-23	Jackson Stokes, Undergraduate UW (Now: Co-founder at TrainLoop)

2021-23   Narshion Ngao, Masters JKUAT (Now: Senior Data Manager at CHAIN)
2021-22   Blarry Wang, Masters UW (Now: Software Engineer at Microsoft)
2021   Anita Silva, Undergraduate UW
2020-21   Amanda Baughan, PhD UW (Now: Researcher at Maincode)
2019-20   Lauren Kim, Undergraduate UW (Now: Software Engineer at Meta)
2018-19   Aishwarya Nirmal, Masters UW (Now: Senior Software Engineer at Airbnb)

Service

Member   Graduate Admissions Committee 2024-25
SAC   NAACL 2025
AC   CHI 2025-26, ARR 2026
PC   CHI 2019-24, CSCW 2021-22, DIS 2024, UIST 2025, ACL/ARR 2021-25, ICWSM 2022,
PC   ACL Student Research Workshop 2020-21, EMNLP System demonstrations 2025
Reviewer   Nature Scientific Reports
Lab Lead   UIUC Trick or Research 2024-25
Organizer   CSE Interactive Systems Seminar
Organizer   DUB Retreat Organizing Committee
Organizer   DUB Doctoral Colloquium
Reader   UW Pre-Application Mentorship Service (PAMS), 2021-22
Reader   PhD Program Admissions (CSE) 2020-21
Lab Lead   CSE Engineering Discovery Days 2019

Awards and grants

NAACL In2Writing Best Paper	2025
Outstanding Instructor	2024-25
Allen Institute for AI gift funding ($100k)	2024
ACL Outstanding Paper	2021
CHI Best Paper Honorable Mention (Top 5%)	2021
ICWSM Outstanding Study Design Paper	2021
Twitch Research Fellowship	2020
UW Endowed Fellowship in Computer Science & Engineering	2018
Phi Beta Kappa	2017
Audrey Butvay Gruss Science Award	2017
Priscilla N. Dunne Prize in Psychology	2017
Entrepreneurial Leadership Grant	2015

Teaching

2026   Human-Language Model Interaction, Spring [Planned]
2025   Language, Interfaces, and Communication, Spring
2024   Language, Interfaces, and Communication, Fall
2021   Science Communication Seminar, Fall
2020   Natural Language Processing Capstone, Spring [TA]
2019   Introduction to Human-Computer Interaction, Fall [TA]
2018   Societal Aspects of Design, Fall [Course Developer]