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 Chao Zhang, Yiren Liu, Lunyiu Nie, Jeffrey M. Rzeszotarski, Yun Huang, and **Tal August**. *From Words to Widgets for Controllable LLM Generation*. ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST). 2026

2026 Yijun Liu, Yifan Song, John R. Gallagher, Sarah Sterman, and **Tal August**. *FOXGLOVE: Understanding Goal-Oriented and Anchored Writing Feedback from Experts and LLMs on Argumentative Essays*. Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP). 2026

2026 Shuhaib Mehri, Priyanka Kargupta, **Tal August**, and Dilek Hakkani-Tür. *Learning User Preferences Through Interaction for Long-Term Collaboration*. Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP). 2026

2026 Keyang Xuan, Pengda Wang, Chongrui Ye, Haofei Yu, **Tal August**, and Jiaxuan You. *SocialVeil: Probing Social Intelligence of Language Agents under Communication Barriers*. Conference on Language Modeling (COLM). 2026

2026 Yifan Song, Wenxuan Wendy Shi, Brian P. Bailey, and **Tal August**. *Who Plays Which Role When? Communication Role Dynamics for Peer Recognition and Team Performance Prediction*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL). 2026

2026 Yifan Song, Wing Yee Au, Hon Yung Wong, Brian P. Bailey, and **Tal August**. *ParseJargon: Personalized Real-time Jargon Support in Online Meetings*. Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics, Demo track (ACL Demo). 2026

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. ***Best Paper (top 1%)***

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. ***Honorable Mention (top 5%)***

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, Robin Kar, 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 R. 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. ***Honorable Mention (top 5%)***

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 (top 5%)***

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, selected***

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 Tianjiao Yu, Vedant Shah, Muntasir Wahed, Kiet A. Nguyen, Adheesh Sunil Juvekar, **Tal August**, and Ismini Lourentzou. *VOiCE: Verbalized Confidence Improves Reasoning in Open-Ended Embodied Environments*. Arxiv. 2026

2026 Lechen Zhang, Jiarui Liu, and **Tal August**. *Re-Centering Humans in LLM Personalization*. Proceedings of the 2nd Workshop on Lifelong Agents (LLA) at COLM. 2026. ***Outstanding Paper***

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 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) at NAACL. 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

In submission

2026 James Eschrich, Yijun Liu, David Zhou, John R. Gallagher, **Tal August**, and Sarah Sterman. *The Modular Word Processor: A Convivial Malleable Interface for Designing Personal Writing Techniques*. Under review at CHI. 2026

2026 Ziheng Huang, Hari Sundaram, and **Tal August**. *Vibe Lawyering: Investigating and Reimagining How Legal Laypersons Use AI Systems for Access to Justice*. Under review at CHI. 2026

2026 Indu Panigrahi and **Tal August**. *"I don't know what I don't know": Exploring the Benefits and Challenges of AI in Interdisciplinary Research*. Under review at CHI. 2026

2026 Yifan Song, Ziwei Gong, Jiateng Liu, Shunan Guo, Xiang Chen, Haoliang Wang, Victor S. Bursztyn, **Tal August**, and Brian P. Bailey. *Deliberate Before Revise: Role-Guided Multi-Agent Design Critique Synthesis*. Under review at CHI. 2026

2026 Lechen Zhang, Jiarui Liu, and **Tal August**. *Re-Centering Humans in LLM Personalization*. Under review at ICLR. 2026

2026 Alice L. Fan, Sneha Sundar, Indu Panigrahi, and **Tal August**. *Measuring Fidelity and Certainty in Human-Written and Machine-Generated Scientific Citations*. Under review at NAACL. 2026

2026 Jiateng Liu, Yifan Song, Ziwei Gong, Rushi Wang, Yifan Shen, Yu Shen, Victor S. Bursztyn, Saayan Mitra, Ankit Shah, **Tal August**, Heng Ji, and Stefano Petrangeli. *Co-Evolving Human–AI Design Spaces for Collaborative Image Generation*. Under review at NAACL. 2026

2026 Indu Panigrahi and **Tal August**. *Explain Like I'm 5 or Whatever I Choose: Evaluating the Interactive Potential of Language Model Responses*. Under review at NAACL. 2026

Invited talks and panels

2026 [Invited Talk] "Communicating knowledge with interactive and personalized language", SIGAIDA, UIUC

2026 [Invited Talk] "Communicating knowledge with interactive and personalized language", Data Explorers, UIUC

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

2025 [Panelist] "LLM Evaluation and Benchmarking", 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

Awards

Amazon–Illinois Center (AICE) gift funding ($90k)	2026
COLM LLA Workshop Outstanding Paper	2026
CHI Best Paper	2026
CHI Honorable Mention	2026
CHI Honorable Mention	2026
ARR Outstanding AC	2026
NAACL In2Writing Best Paper	2025
Outstanding Instructor	2024-25
Allen Institute for AI gift funding ($100k)	2024
ACL Outstanding Paper	2021
CHI Honorable Mention	2021
ICWSM Outstanding Study Design Paper	2021
Twitch Research Fellowship ($10k)	2020
UW Endowed Fellowship in Computer Science & Engineering	2018
Phi Beta Kappa	2017

Mentorship

Current PhD students

2026– Yoshee Jain, Co-advisor, Siebel School of Computer and Data Science, UIUC
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– 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

Former mentees

2024-6 Sneha Sundar, Undergraduate, UIUC
2025 Shuhaib Mehri, PhD UIUC
2025 Yiren Liu, PhD UIUC, (Now: AI engineer at ZOOM)
2025 Priyanka Kargupta, PhD UIUC
2025 Keyang Xuan, Masters UIUC (Now: PhD at UT Austin)
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: Assistant Professor at University of Wisconsin Madison CS)
2023 Raymond Fok, AI2 intern, PhD UW (Now: Senior Applied Scientist at Microsoft)
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: Assistant Professor at Northeastern)
2023 Zejiang Shen, AI2 intern, PhD MIT
2022-23 Rock Yuren Pang, PhD UW (Now: Senior Applied Scientist at Microsoft)
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 (Now: Machine Learning Engineer at Expedia)
2020-21 Amanda Baughan, PhD UW (Now: Researcher at Maincode)
2019-20 Lauren Kim, Undergraduate UW (Now: Senior Software Engineer at Meta)
2018-19 Aishwarya Nirmal, Masters UW (Now: Senior Software Engineer at Airbnb)

Teaching

2027 Reading with AI; Spring [Planned]
2026 Language, Interfaces, and Communication; Spring
2026 Human-Language Model Interaction; 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]

Service

Paper Chair	Human-AI Interaction Conference (HAIC) 2026
Member	UIUC AI Credentials Task Force 2026
Member	Graduate Admissions Committee 2024-26
SAC	ARR 2025-6
AC	CHI 2025-26, ARR 2025-26, NeurIPS 2026
Reviewer	CHI 2019-24, CSCW 2021-22, DIS 2024, UIST 2025-6, ARR 2021-26, ICWSM 2022,
Reviewer	ACL SRW 2020-21, EMNLP System demonstrations 2025
Reviewer	Nature Scientific Reports
Lab Lead	UIUC Trick or Research 2024-26
Reader	UW Pre-Application Mentorship Service (PAMS), 2021-22
Reader	PhD Program Admissions (CSE) 2020-21
Organizer	CSE Interactive Systems Seminar 2019
Organizer	DUB Retreat Organizing Committee 2018
Organizer	DUB Doctoral Colloquium 2019
Lab Lead	CSE Engineering Discovery Days 2019