



New Faculty Hires:



Will Merrill

Assistant Professor
(Ph.D. New York University)
NLP, deep learning, formal language theory,
complexity theory



Nicholas Tomlin

Assistant Professor
(Ph.D. UC Berkeley)
NLP, ML, AI, computational cognitive science
and linguistics, multi-agent learning, HCI



Gary Hoppenworth

Research Assistant Professor
(Ph.D. University of Michigan)
Graph Theory, Graph Algorithms, Graph Data
Structures



Nikolaos Tsilivis

Research Assistant Professor
(Ph.D. New York University)
Computational and statistical aspects of
learning with Large Language Models



Brian DuSell

Research Assistant Professor
(Ph.D. Notre Dame)
Natural language processing, AI, formal
languages and neural architectures



Orin Levy

Research Assistant Professor (Spring 2027)
(Ph.D. Tel Aviv University)
Theory and applications of ML including
Reinforcement Learning and Online Learning

By the numbers (Fall 2026):

- Ph.D. students: **34**
- Research Assistant Professors: **9**
- Tenured and tenure-track faculty: **14**

Research Highlights:

- Students Tianchong Jiang, Jingtian Ji, Xiangshan Vincent Tan, Prof. Matt Walter, Ph.D. alum Jiading Fang, RAP alum Anand Bhattad, and collaborators won a **Best Paper Award at ICRA 2026**.
- Student Melissa Dutz, Prof. Avrim Blum, Ph.D. Alumna Han Shao, and collaborators won a **Best Paper Award at FORC 2026**.
- Student Ju-Chieh Chou, RAP alum Jiawei Zhou, and Prof. Karen Livescu won a **Best Student Paper Award at ASRU 2025**.
- Prof. Matt Walter received a **2026 AAAI Classic Paper Award**.
- Student Emily Chang received an **NSF Graduate Fellowship**, and student Nimit Joshi received an **Apple Scholars in AIML Ph.D. Fellowship**.
- TTIC faculty and students published in major AI and Theory research venues including 3DV, AAAI, ACL, AISTATS, ALT, APPROX, ASRU, CCC, COLT, CoRL, CSLaw, EC, ECCV, FOCS, FORC, ICCV, ICLR, ICML, ICRA, Interspeech, IROS, Math of OR, Medinformatics, NeurIPS, S&P, SIGGRAPH, SIGMETRICS, SODA, and STOC.
- TTIC hosted summer workshops on robotics, symbolic-neural learning, differential privacy, sublinear algorithms, learning-driven algorithms, and machine-aided proofs.
- TTIC members engaged in a wide range of outreach activities including a partnership with Hyde Park Academy, a robotics internship program, and children's coding and STEM clubs.
- TTIC faculty received significant funding awards from NSF, ONR, the Simons Foundation, Coefficient Giving, Schmidt Sciences, TRI, and a variety of corporate sponsors. TTIC is also a proud member of the NSF TRIPODS Institute for Data, Econometrics, Algorithms, and Learning (IDEAL).

2026 Ph.D. Graduates:

Congratulations to 2026 Ph.D. graduates Jiahao Li (advised by Greg Shakhnarovich), Shengjie Lin (advised by Matt Walter), Xiao Luo (advised by Jinbo Xu), Keziah Naggita (advised by Avrim Blum and Matt Walter), Max Ovsiankin (advised by Yuri Makarychev), Kavya Ravichandran (advised by Avrim Blum), Pedro Savarese (advised by Michael Maire and David McAllester), Ziwei Xie (advised by Jinbo Xu), and David Yunis (advised by Matt Walter)!

Research Assistant Prof. Placements:

- Kanishka Misra is an Assistant Professor at UT Austin.
- Anand Bhattad is an Assistant Professor at Johns Hopkins.
- Santhoshini Velusamy is an Assistant Professor at the University of Waterloo.
- Derek Reiman is a Research Faculty member at the University of Chicago.