Leonardo Blas

Ph.D. student in Computer Science
University of Southern California

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Research Interests

Computational social science, language models, social agents, simulated societies.

Education

2029	Ph.D. in Computer Science, **University of Southern California**
2022	B.S. in Computer Engineering, **San José State University**
2021	Study abroad semester, **Yonsei University**
2020	Transferred to San José State University, **Foothill College**

Publications

Leonardo Blas, Luca Luceri, Emilio Ferrara. Unearthing a Billion Telegram Posts about the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election: Development of a Public Dataset. arXiv.2410.23638.

Research Experience

02/24 – 08/24	**Research Software Engineer**, University of Southern California Advisor: Prof. Emilio Ferrara Researched the social media misinformation surrounding the 2024 presidential elections. Developed a distributed Telegram scraper with state-of-the-art rates of 50M messages per week.
06/23 – 02/24	**Researcher**, San José State University Advisor: Prof. Stas Tiomkin Researched the impact of self-driving cars on traffic flow in virtual environments. Developed an online traffic simulator to connect clients and deploy self-driving cars.

Industry experience

06/22 – 08/22	**Software Development Engineer Intern**, Amazon Designed and implemented a Python asynchronous API for a REST distributed system. Automated an Elasticsearch cluster cloning process, saving 20 minutes per request.
06/21 – 08/21	**Area Manager Intern**, Amazon Managed over 100 Associates to process up to 65,000 packages for daily deliveries. Developed a reward-based coaching plan, increasing a process' productivity by 30%.

Community Service

04/18 – 12/22	**SF Bay Area Book Depot Manager**, Human Library Organization

Organized events where human Books share their story to challenge stereotypes. Managed 40 volunteers and coordinated events for organizations like eBay and Google.

09/20 – 09/22 **Charles W. Davidson College of Engineering Representative**, Associated Students of San José State University
Organized career-building and mental health activities for the student body. Gave an engineer's perspective on topics like diversity and invasive online proctoring.

05/19 – 06/20 **President**, Associated Students of Foothill College
Proposed, lobbied, campaigned, and fundraised $19K for Measure G, securing $898M. Mediated the allocation of $200M to housing for homeless and low-income students. Managed a project to increase student worker wages, resulting in a $3.35/hr increase.

02/15 – 08/17 **Sargento Mayor**, Cuerpo de Bomberos del Distrito Nacional
Supported the fire and paramedic brigades.

Teaching Experience

04/19 – 06/19 **Instructional Assistant**, Foothill College
Tutored students in elementary statistics during lectures.

01/19 – 04/19 **English Tutor**, Foothill College
Led one-on-one English language tutoring sessions.

Awards

2024 Adobe Digital Academy Scholar