

2021 BOARD NOMINEE

James Allan

Professor and Chair, Information and Computer Sciences
University of Massachusetts Amherst



CRA
Computing Research
Association

Awards and Honors and Year Received

- ACM Fellow, 2021
- ECIR Test of Time Award 2019 (for paper published in 2009)
- SIGIR Test of Time Award 2016 (for paper published 1998)
- Best paper awards, SIGIR 2001 and 2006, ECIR 2019, CHIIR 2017 (student paper)
- Lilly Teaching Fellow, 1999-2000

Involvement in CRA Activities

- CRA Board member, 2018-2021
- CRA Executive committee (Treasurer), 2019-2021
- CRA Snowbird organizing group for 2020 (and 2021)

Other Relevant Experience

- Director/Co-Director of the Center for Intelligent Information Retrieval, 2003-present
- Chair and Past Chair of ACM SIGIR Executive Committee, 2010-2013, 2013-2015
- Associate Editor, ACM TOIS 2002-10 and Elsevier IP&M 2008-10
- General Conference Chair, SIGIR 2009, ICTIR 2015
- PI of NSF Site REU program, 1999-2002

Research Interests

Information Retrieval (search engines)
Controversy/misinformation/disinformation detection
Explainable search
Information Organization

Personal Statement

I have served 8 months as Treasurer of CRA, reorganizing financial Board presentations and starting a shift of reserved funds into more aggressive investments for the long-term benefit of CRA. I would to continue that work. I am also interested in CS education efforts supporting a robust interdisciplinary curriculum, that engage diverse undergraduates, that draw more (and

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more diverse) students into computing degrees, and that aim to retain them through graduation. As Chair at a land-grant institution, I have helped foster such efforts in the context of tight resources and look forward to sharing results with others in similar situations.

James Allan

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Professional Preparation

Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, Mathematics, A.B., 1983.
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, Computer Science, M.S., 1991.
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, Computer Science, Ph.D., 1995.
University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA, Computer Science, Postdoc, 1994-1996

Appointments

2015- Chair of the Faculty, College of Information and Computer Sciences, Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst
2008- Professor, Computer Science, Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst.
2003- Director, NSF State/Industry/University Center for Intelligent Information Retrieval (CIIR), University of Massachusetts Amherst (co-Director to 2021)
2003-2008 Associate Professor, Computer Science, Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst.
1998-2003 Assistant Professor, Computer Science, Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst.
1996-2003 Assistant Director, NSF State/Industry/University Center for Intelligent Information Retrieval (CIIR), University of Massachusetts Amherst.
1996-1998 Research Assistant Professor, Computer Science, UMass Amherst.
1994-1996 Senior Post-doctoral Research Associate, Computer Science, UMass Amherst.

Some sample recent publications:

- Montazerlghaem, A., Rahimi, N. and Allan, J., "Relevance Ranking based on Query-Aware Context Analysis," Proceedings of ECIR 2020, pp. 446-460.
- Rahimi, N., Montazerlghaem, A. and Allan, J., "Listwise Neural Ranking Models," Proceedings of ICTIR 2019, pp. 101-104,
- Kim, Y. and Allan, J., "Unsupervised Explainable Controversy Detection from Online News." Proceedings of ECIR 2019, pp. 836-843
- M. Jang, S. Dori-Hacohen, and J. Allan, "Modeling Controversy within Populations." Proceedings of ACM ICTIR (Theory of Information Retrieval). 9 pages.
- J. Jiang, D. He, D. Kelly, and J. Allan, "Understanding Ephemeral State of Relevance." Proceedings of CHIIR 2017 (CHI for IR), 10 pages. **Best student paper award.**
- W. Kong and J. Allan, "Precision-Oriented Query Facet Extraction." Proceedings of ACM CIKM 2016. 10 pages.
- S. Dori-Hacohen, D. Jensen, and J. Allan, "Controversy Detection in Wikipedia Using Collective Classification." Proceedings of SIGIR 2016, pp. 797-800.
- J. Jiang and J. Allan, "Adaptive Effort for Search Evaluation Metrics." Proceedings of ECIR 2016, pp. 187-199.
- J. Jiang and J. Allan, "Reducing click and skip errors in search result ranking." Proceedings of ACM WSDM (Web Search and Data Mining) 2016, pp. 183-192.

- Foley, J. and Allan, J., "Retrieving Time from Scanned Books," Proceedings of the 37th European Conf. on Information Retrieval (ECIR 2015), Vienna, Austria, March 29 - April 2, 2015, pp. 221-232.
- Dori-Hacohen, S. and Allan, J., "Automated Controversy Detection on the Web," Proceedings of the 37th European Conference on Information Retrieval (ECIR 2015), Vienna, Austria, March 29 - April 2, 2015, pp 423-434.
- Aktolga, E. and Allan, J., "Sentiment Diversification With Different Biases," Proceedings of the 36th Annual ACM SIGIR Conference (SIGIR 2013), July 28-August 1, 2013, Dublin, Ireland, pp. 593-602.
- Feild, H., Allan, J. and Jones, R., "Predicting Searcher Frustration," Proceedings of the 33rd Annual ACM SIGIR Conference (SIGIR 2010), pp. 34-41.
- Yi, X. and Allan, J., "A Comparative Study of Utilizing Topic Models for Information Retrieval," Proceedings of ECIR'09: 31st European Conference on Information Retrieval, LNCS 5478, pp.29-41.

Activities:

- Board member and Treasurer of Computing Research Associates, 2018-2021
- Professional community service such as being general PC co-chair of ACM CIKM 2018; co-chair of ACM SIGIR's ICTIR (Int'l Conf. on Theory of Information Retrieval) 2015; Chair of SIGIR organization, 2010-2013; General co-chair for SIGIR (SIG Information Retrieval) 2009 conference; Program co-Chair for SIGIR (SIG Information Retrieval) 2004 and General and program chair, Human Language Technology Conference, HLT '01.
- Research community leadership such as proposing and administering the Common Core track for TREC 2017, the Million Query Track for TREC 2007, and the High Accuracy Retrieval from Documents (HARD) track for TREC 2003-2005; being Area coordinator for all detection research funded by the DARPA TIDES program through conclusion in 2004; Chairing TDT evaluation program for TDT 2000-2004 evaluations; and leading a JHU CLSP NSF workshop called Topic Based Novelty Detection in 1999.
- Publication-related support such as service as being cs.IR moderator for arxiv; on the editorial board for Foundations and Trends in IR; Associate editor for Elsevier's Information Processing and Management (IP&M), 2008-2010; and Associate editor for ACM Transactions in Information Systems (TOIS), 2002-2010.
- PI for three-year NSF REU Site project, 1999 – 2001. Provided opportunities for undergraduates (seven to ten students per summer) to collaborate with faculty, researchers, and graduate students on information retrieval and organization technologies research projects during each 10-week summer session.

Graduated PhD students and last known affiliations

Ron Papka, Bank of America Merrill Lynch; Anton Leuski, USC; Victor Lavrenko, Human Longevity; Ramesh Nallapati, Amazon Web Services; Hema Raghavan, LinkedIn; Ron Bekkerman, Cherre; Fernando Diaz, Google; Giridhar Kumaran, Indeed.com; Ao Feng, Lenova; Mark Smucker, Univ. of Waterloo; Ben Carterette, Spotify; Matt Lease, Univ. of Texas at Austin; Niranjan Balasubramanian, SUNY Stony Brook; Xing Yi, Rulai; Henry Feild, Endicott College; Marc Cartright, Google; Elif Aktolga, Apple; Jeff Dalton, Univ. of Glasgow; Etham Can, SAS Inc.; Weize Kong, Google; Shiri Dori-Hacohen, AuCoDe; John Foley, Middlebury College; Myungha Jang, Facebook (23 total)

Graduate and Postdoctoral Advisors

PhD advisor was Prof. Gerard Salton at Cornell University. (Prof. Salton is deceased.)

Postdoctoral advisor was Professor Bruce Croft at the University of Massachusetts Amherst