

Leonardo Blas

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Ginsburg Hall, Room #403J, Los Angeles, CA 90089

Research Interests

LLM psychology, social agents, simulated societies, computational social science.

Education

2029	Ph.D. in Computer Science, University of Southern California
2022	B.S. in Computer Engineering, San José State University

Publications

- [1] **Leonardo Blas**, Diya Saraf, Tanishq Salkar, Nora Adadurova, Luca Luceri, Emilio Ferrara. Large-scale detection of multilingual coordinated activity on Telegram. *npj Complexity*, 2025.
- [2] **Leonardo Blas**, Luca Luceri, Emilio Ferrara. Unearthing a Billion Telegram Posts about the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election: Development of a Public Dataset. *Proceedings of the ACM on Web Conference 2025 (WWW '25)*.
- [3] Amin Banayeezade, Ala N Tak, Fatemeh Bahrani, Anahita Bolourani, **Leonardo Blas**, Emilio Ferrara, Jonathan Gratch, Sai Praneeth Karimireddy. Psychological Steering in LLMs: An Evaluation of Effectiveness and Trustworthiness. Preprint, 2025.
- [4] Patrick Gerard, Luca Luceri, **Leonardo Blas**, Emilio Ferrara. Cross-Platform Narrative Prediction: Leveraging Platform-Invariant Discourse Networks. Preprint, 2025.

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%.

Teaching Experience

- 08/25 – 05/26 **Teaching Assistant**, University of Southern California
DSCI 550: Data Science at Scale.
- 04/19 – 06/19 **Instructional Assistant**, Foothill College
MATH 10: Statistics.
- 01/19 – 04/19 **English Tutor**, Foothill College
Led one-on-one tutoring groups for the Pass the Torch program.

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.

Awards

- 2024 Adobe Digital Academy Scholar