



University of Maryland, College of Information Studies

Welcome to the Doctoral Program Open House

October 24, 2023



Hello!



Jessica Vitak (jvitak@umd.edu), she/her
Director of the PhD Program, Associate Professor

Joel Chan (joelchan@umd.edu), he/him
Assistant Director of the PhD Program, Assistant Professor

Emily Dacquisto (emilyd@umd.edu), she/her
PhD Program Coordinator

Ph.D. in Information Studies (est. 1969)

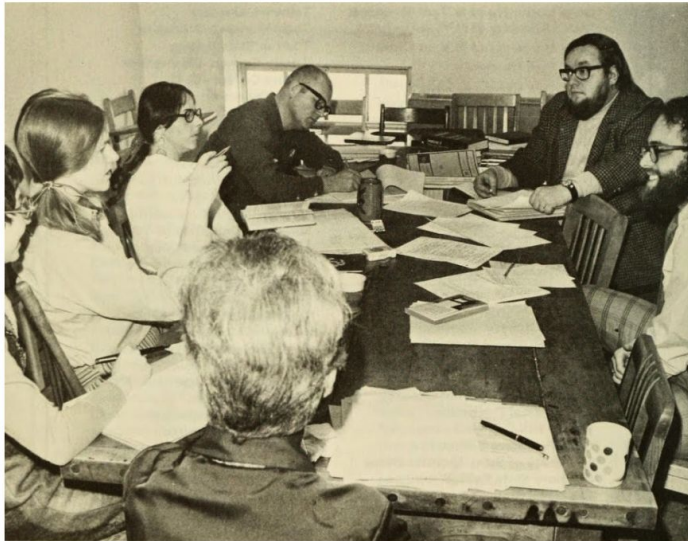


Photo from the UMD Archives.

SLIS doctoral seminar lead by Dr. Edward Olson, 1972.

NOVEMBER 1968

THE UNIVERSITY SENATE APPROVES THE PROPOSAL FOR A PH.D. PROGRAM WITHIN SLIS

The first doctoral students start in 1969.



Ph.D. in Information Studies (est. 1969)

82 students currently enrolled as of Summer 2023

- 65% female; 30% male; 5% non-binary
- 76% full-time; 24% part-time
- 62% domestic; 38% international

118 students have graduated as of Summer 2023

- Time to degree completion: 5.5 years (last 10 years)
- Placement
 - Tenure-track academic positions (e.g., Clemson, Penn State, George Mason)
 - Teaching- and Research-focused academic positions
 - Industry (e.g., Meta, Google, Capital One, IBM)
 - Postdoc, consulting, government, etc.

Our Ph.D. Alumni have acquired opportunities across the world and developing a global community at the iSchool.

Listed below are all alumni of the UMD iSchool's Ph.D. Program, by decade, including their year of graduation, first job placement post-graduation, dissertation title (and link to the dissertation where applicable), and their faculty advisor(s).

Ph.D. Alumni 2020 - Present	 
Ph.D. Alumni 2010 - 2019	
Ph.D. Alumni 2000 - 2009	
Ph.D. Alumni 1990 - 1999	
Ph.D. Alumni 1980 - 1989	
Ph.D. Alumni 1970 - 1979	

Xiaoyun Huang

- Year of Graduation: 2022
- First Placement: UX Researcher at VIDAA
- Dissertation: Variations in Individuals' Social Media Self-Presentation Across Time, Account, and Platform & How Audiences Perceive the Variations
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jessica Vitak

Alisha Pradhan

- Year of Graduation: 2022
- First Placement: UX Researcher at Facebook
- Dissertation: A More-than-human Perspective on Older Adults' Use of and Participation in Designing Emerging Technologies
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amanda Lazar

Andrea Batch

- Year of Graduation: 2022
- First Placement: Economist at Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Dissertation: Situated Analytics for Data Scientists: Implementation and Evaluation
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Niklas Elmqvist

Emma Dixon

- Year of Graduation: 2022
- First Placement: Assistant Professor, School of Computing, Clemson University
- Dissertation: Investigating The Use Of Everyday Technology and Ways To Improve Its Accessibility For People With Mild To Moderate Dementia
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amanda Lazar

<https://ischool.umd.edu/academics/phd-information-studies/>



PhD Admissions

EXPLORE

Admissions

Career Paths

Curriculum

Expertise Areas

PhD Alumni

Request More Information

Scholarships, Fellowships, and Grants

Tuition & Fees

STUDENT SERVICES

Advising

Forms

Graduation & Commencement

Handbooks & Policies

New Students: Next Steps & Orientation

Registration

STUDENT RESOURCES

Career Resources & Events

Financial Aid for Current Students

Safety, Health, Emergency & Childcare
Resources

Student Ambassadors Program

Student Organizations

Tutoring, Tech & Accommodation Resources

UMD Scholarship Management Tool

Admissions – Doctor of Philosophy in Information Studies (PhD)

<https://ischool.umd.edu/academics/phd-information-studies/admissions/>

HOME / PHD INFORMATION STUDIES

Admission to the iSchool's graduate programs is through the University of Maryland Graduate School, with supplemental program-specific application criteria and materials as described below. The University of Maryland's Graduate School accepts applications through its **TerpEngage** application system.

If you still have questions, please contact us at ischoolphd@umd.edu.

Completed applications are reviewed by an admissions committee in each graduate degree program. The recommendations of the admissions committee are submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School, who will make the final admission decision. Students seeking to complete graduate work at the University of Maryland for degree purposes must be formally admitted to the Graduate School by the Dean.

Application Deadline

The final deadline for all applications to the INFS PhD program is

Friday, December 8, 2023.

+ Admission Requirements & Steps

+ Tips and Recommendations for iSchool PhD Applicants



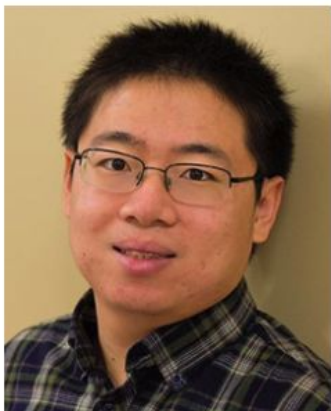
Copied from the iSchool Doctoral Admissions page (previous slide)

– Tips and Recommendations for iSchool PhD Applicants

1. *Identifying key faculty* – It's a good idea to reach out to the faculty that you want to work with because they will most likely review your application. An awareness of the research being done in the iSchool and a readiness to talk about how you could add to it is incredibly beneficial. Additionally, drawing connections between your own research interests and the work of specific faculty demonstrates that you are familiar with the iSchool and can offer a detailed proposal for why you would be a good addition to the program. Search through [our directory](#) to find faculty that are accepting PhD students.
2. *Contacting faculty* – It can be helpful to get in touch with potential advisors before you apply. They can tell you directly whether or not they're looking to take on new PhD students and whether or not your research interests are a good match with theirs. However, as individual faculty members do not make admissions decisions on their own, they cannot answer whether an applicant will be accepted or not before they apply.
3. *Recommendation letters and TOEFL scores* – Make sure you give your recommenders plenty of time to write and submit their letters and, if you're an international student, make sure you give yourself plenty of time to take the TOEFL and send in your scores. We cannot review incomplete applications, so it is essential that these are submitted on time.
4. *Holistic application review* – There is no one single factor that determines a successful application. The iSchool takes a holistic approach to reviewing applications, meaning that we take into account several factors (e.g., personal statement, faculty match, transcripts, recommendation letters, TOEFL scores, etc.) rather than only a few factors when making admissions decisions. Additionally, it is not individual faculty members that make admissions decisions. Instead, admissions decisions are made as a collective iSchool community.
5. *General timeline for application review* – Once the application deadline has passed on December 10th, the iSchool faculty and staff spend the next several weeks reviewing applications. During this time, some faculty might ask the applicant for an interview as part of their deliberation. Around the end of January through early February, the iSchool makes its first round of admissions recommendations to the Graduate School. The Graduate School then makes final admissions decisions and applicants are notified via email, usually around the end of February through early March. The iSchool usually makes a second round of admissions recommendations around early to mid April and all application decisions are made by the end of April.

Directory

HOME / ABOUT / DIRECTORY



Wei Ai

Assistant Professor

✉ aiwei@umd.edu

🌐 <https://aiwei.me/>

Dr. Wei Ai joined the UMD iSchool and **UMD Institute for Advanced Computer Studies** (joint) in January 2020 as an assistant professor in data science. New developments in data science are opening the doors to world-changing social applications. Dr. Ai's research focuses on harnessing this potential of data science, particularly around machine learning and data mining algorithms. With a background in computer science, economics, and information science, Dr. Ai is creating end-to-end data science pipelines that have real-world applications. He utilizes industrial partnerships, stakeholder collaborations, and hands-on field experiments to develop tangible applications that promote social good. In recent work, Dr. Ai designed and deployed an innovative recommender system on the world's leading ride-sharing platform, DiDi. Benefiting millions of users, Dr. Ai's recommender system is helping DiDi to achieve its mission of solving global transportation, environment, and employment challenges. Dr. Ai's research has been published in top journals and conferences, including PNAS, ACM TOIS, WWW, and ICWSM.

ACCEPTING PHD STUDENTS

☑ This faculty member is currently accepting Ph.D. students

CURRENT RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Machine learning
- Data mining algorithms
- End-to-end data science pipelines that have real-world applications



Funding

We provide 5 years of guaranteed funding for full-time students through TA- or RA-ship, provided that you maintain a good academic standing. Current stipend rates are shown in the table on the right.

A 20 hours/week TA- or RA-ship comes with up to 10 credits of tuition remission. A 10 hours/week TA- or RA-ship comes with up to 5 credits of tuition remission.

Students with a TA- or RA-ship are also eligible to enroll in the University Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) or the Maryland State Employee Health Insurance Plan.

20 hours/week	9.5 Month	12 Month
PhD Pre-candidacy	29,939	37,817
PhD Post-candidacy	32,157	40,619
10 hours/week		
PhD Pre-candidacy	14,969	18,908
PhD Post-candidacy	16,078	20,309



Timeline

Average time to degree is 5.5 years; most students finish within 4 to 6 years



<https://ischool.umd.edu> → academics → doctoral program → handbooks and policies



Handbook



Read the latest version carefully and thoroughly.

— PhD Student Handbooks



- **Doctoral Program Handbook 2022-2023 and 2022-2023 Doctoral Graduate Outcomes Assessment (DGOA) Forms**
- 2021-2022 Doctoral Student Handbook
- 2020-2021 Doctoral Student Handbook
- 2019-2020 Doctoral Student Handbook
- 2018-2019 Doctoral Student Handbook
- 2016-2017 Doctoral Student Handbook



Doctoral Students Research Awards (DSRA)

Funding to assist the current iSchool PhD students' research

Up to \$1500 to cover costs associated with students' research

May receive the award more than once (max: \$3000 awarded while enrolled)

EXPLORE

[Admissions](#)

[Career Paths](#)

[Curriculum](#)

[PhD Alumni](#)

 [PhD Funding Resources](#)

[Recruiting Areas](#)

[Request More Information](#)

[Tuition & Fees](#)



Q&A

Please reach out to ischoolphd@umd.edu with any questions you may have.