

EREA Mentors and Projects for Academic Year 2025-2026:

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Moya Bailey's [Digital Apothecary Lab](#): The Digital Apothecary is a hybrid digital and physical lab dedicated to combining ancient and new technologies in an effort to produce processes and projects that aid those most marginalized in society. It is a place for applied research that goes beyond theory.

Noshir Contractor's [Human AI Teaming \(HAT\)](#): The HAT project aims to collect new data and analyze existing data to study human-AI collaboration in small teams of multiple humans and artificial intelligence agents. The position will entail: 1) Working with Qualtrics surveys; 2) Validating interactions generated by LLMs of AI teammates; 3) Organizing materials and coordinating with members of the research team and PIs.

Nicholas Diakopoulos's [Benchmarking LLMs for investigative journalism](#): Student will help build a benchmark to test how accurately large language models answer journalists' questions on massive document dumps. The position will entail: collecting and curating newsworthy datasets, designing and running evaluation tasks, and scoring model outputs. Ideal for students interested in investigative journalism, NLP, and hands-on research methods and impact.

Susan Dun's [Visual Communication in Informed Consent Forms](#): This project supports efforts to increase underrepresented groups' participation in research studies by using visual communication techniques to improve understanding of informed consent forms. The student will help develop AI generated images that depict common concepts from consent forms to assess their comprehension and believability.

Rayvon Fouché's [Podcast: Black Athletes and Radical Protest](#): The project is a six-episode podcast examining the evolving relationships between Black athletes and varying forms of protest from the 1960s to the current day. Students working on the project will contribute to the research, creative, and production activities of the podcast.

Yingdan Lu's [Audio-as-Data for Social Science Research](#): This project aims to explore how large-scale audio data—encompassing various auditory forms such as speech, music and ambient noise—can be systematically collected, processed, and computationally analyzed for social science inquiries. The student will assist with data analysis, methods validation, and literature review, and gain hands-on experience with cutting-edge computational methods.

Yingdan Lu's [Global Large Language Models Values Benchmarking Project](#): This project proposes a systematic, comparative study to examine LLM sociopolitical values and perspectives on international conflict, climate change, public health, and migration. The project will ultimately inform AI governance, enhancing transparency, and fostering inclusive AI systems that reflect diverse global perspectives.

Erik Nisbet's [Social Media Platforms and Support for Political Violence in the 2024 Election](#): Students will learn about conducting literature reviews, data wrangling and cleaning, LLM-supported text analysis, computational text and LLM-supported text and video analysis, network analysis, statistical analyses, machine learning, panel analysis related to violence and contemporary elections.

Michelle Shumate's [Building Effective Multi-Sector Collaboration Networks to Address Social Needs](#): The student will support the development of a playbook for referral networks of health and human service organizations. This research will involve reading critically, synthesizing research, writing for various audiences, and publicity.

COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS:

Vidya Krull's [Efficiency of Audiological Service Delivery](#): Research factors that impact the efficiency of audiological service delivery in an academic clinic setting. A prospective quality improvement study will use value stream mapping of clinician and patient workflows to identify bottlenecks, propose and implement solutions, and index the efficacy of interventional approaches.

Bonnie Martin Harris's [Exploring swallowing frequency and impairment in Parkinson's Disease](#): Students will gain experience in research methods related to the evaluation and treatment of swallowing disorders related to Parkinson's disease. Students will acquire and interpret data from physiologic signals, build and maintain datasets, learn the basics of statistical analysis and coding, and assist with literature review and abstract preparation

Mariah Morton-Jones's [Blood Lactate as a Biomarker of Vocal Function](#). This project blends speech and exercise science to test new ways of measuring vocal strength as people age. Students gain hands-on skills in acoustic and aerodynamics voice analysis, metabolic measures, data collection and manuscript preparation; building tools to keep voices strong for life.

Elizabeth Norton's [Studying parent-child language interactions with coding and AI](#): This project will leverage AI tools to create parent language transcripts and analyze them using software employed in research and speech-language pathology practice. The work will be primarily from videos but there are opportunities to assist with data collection with families as well.

Adrian Rodriguez Contreras's [Impact of Hypoxic Exposure on Nervous System Development in Neonatal Rats](#): How exposure to low oxygen levels may affect neonates is not well understood. The project examines neurodevelopment in rat strains with a mutation on a synaptic protein involved in memory and learning. We will be performing behavioral and physiological measurements including, video recording, audio recording, pulse oxymetry, and auditory brainstem responses to gather data.

Pam Souza's [Communication in older adults with hearing loss and cognitive impairment](#): The focus of this project is dyadic communication between an older adult with hearing loss and mild cognitive impairment and their primary communication partner. We are comparing over-the-counter hearing aids and communication strategies training to see if they improve communication.

Marisha Speights's [The Science of Sound: Tracking How Children's Speech Develops](#): This project introduces students to speech signal processing by extracting and analyzing acoustic features from child speech recordings. Students will visualize developmental trends, compare across groups, and interpret findings, gaining skills in coding, statistics, and clinical research translation.

Adriana Weisleder: [Early Language Development & Bilingualism](#): Longitudinal study of language development in Spanish-English bilingual toddlers, involving behavioral coding of gestures and other communicative behaviors, as well as understanding parental beliefs, concerns, and practices in raising bilingual children.