Current Fellows

The Fellows are distributed among five of UT Dallas’s seven schools, in fields ranging from chemistry to neuroscience and management. Eleven current Fellows hold federally-funded research fellowships, including the National Science Foundation’s Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF GRF), the National Institutes of Health’s National Research Service Award (NIH NRSA) and Blueprint D-SPAN Award, and the Department of Energy’s Office of Science Graduate Student Research (SCGSR) award. Collectively the Fellows have achieved to date more than 100 academic publications, numerous patents, and several spin-out companies. Their research collaborations span the globe, and they have mentored dozens of research trainees.

Alexandra Arteaga
Faculty Host: Danieli B. C. Rodrigues, Ph.D.

Alexandra Arteaga graduated cum laude with a B.S. in biology and a minor in math from UT El Paso in 2010. She earned an M.S. in molecular biology in 2013. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering. As an awardee of the 2019 NIH National Research Service Award Fellowship (F31), her research focuses on making orthopedic implants more successful for diabetic patients.

Amirhossein Azami
Faculty Host: Stuart Cogan, Ph.D.

Amirhossein earned his B.S. in Biomedical Engineering at the Islamic Azad University (2017) and Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering at the University of Arizona (2021). Amirhossein is pursuing a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering at UT Dallas. He will study long term application and stability of neuroprosthetic devices inside the body.

Matthew Bergschneider
Faculty Host: Kyeongjae Cho, Ph.D.

Matthew Bergschneider earned a B.S. in engineering physics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2016. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in materials science at UT Dallas, researching solid state battery materials with ab initio material design and experimental validation.

Federico Bernardoni
Faculty Host: Stefano Leonardi, Ph.D.

Federico Bernardoni earned his B.S. (2014) and M.Sc. (2018) in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Pisa, Italy, with a minor in aerodynamics. In 2018 he presented his Master thesis results on the flow over rough surfaces at iTi Conference on Turbulence VIII held in Bertinoro, Italy, at the 71st Annual Meeting of the APS Division of fluid dynamics held in Atlanta, USA, and in 2019 at DLES12 held in Madrid, Spain. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering. His work is focused on the aerodynamic interactions of wind turbines for large wind-farms control.
Wesley Brigner
Faculty Host: Joseph Friedman, Ph.D.

Wesley Brigner graduated with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Texas at Dallas in the Spring of 2020. He has been working for three years at Dr. Joseph Friedman’s NeuroSpinCompute Laboratory to develop next-generation hardware for machine learning systems and is a full member of the Sigma Xi research honors society. Wesley will continue his work as a Ph.D. student and 2020 NSF Graduate Fellowship recipient.

Avamarie S. Brueggeman
Faculty Host: John H. L. Hansen, Ph.D.

Ava Brueggeman graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville in 2018 with a B.S. in electrical engineering and a minor in computer science. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in electrical engineering. A 2018 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship awardee, Ava studies digital signal processing for improving speech recognition in cochlear implant users.

E. Ammon Butcher
Faculty Host: Suresh Radhakrishnan, Ph.D.

Ammon Butcher earned a B.S. in accounting at Brigham Young University, Idaho, in 2013 and an M.A. in accounting at the Ohio State University in 2015. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in management science, with a concentration in accounting. Ammon is currently interested in analytical research, specifically research that pertains to agency theory, incentives, innovation and disclosure.

Pak Shing “Kelvin” Cheung
Faculty Host: Vladimir Gevorgyan, Ph.D.

Pak Shing earned his B.S. (2015) and M.S. (2018) in Chemistry at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Pak Shing is pursuing a Ph.D. in Chemistry at UT Dallas. He will study visible light-induced transition metal catalysis for the discovery and development of novel organic synthetic methodologies.

Eunsung Choi
Faculty Host: Upender Subramanian, Ph.D.

Eunsung Choi earned a B.A. in Economics at Cornell University (2012) and an M.A. in Applied Statistics at Yonsei University (2021). Eunsung is pursuing a Ph.D. in Management Science (Quantitative Marketing) at UT Dallas.

Nathan Churcher
Faculty Host: Shalini Prasad, Ph.D.

Nathan Churcher graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.S in Biomedical Engineering in 2019. As a LSAMP Bridge to Doctorate awardee, he is pursuing a Ph.D in Biomedical Engineering at UT Dallas investigating the use of electrochemistry and biosensors in the detection of neuropeptides to detect and monitor chronic stress.

Nilanjan Debnath
Faculty Host: Ganesh Janakiraman, Ph.D.

Nilanjan Debnath earned a B.Sc. in Mathematics at St. Xavier’s College, Kolkata (2017) and an M.Sc. in Data

**Haokun Du**  
**Faculty Host: Elena Katok, Ph.D.**

Haokun Du graduated from Sun Yat-sen University in 2019 with Honors (Excellent Dissertation Award and Excellent Graduate Award). His bachelor's degree is Economics (finance concentration). He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in management science with a concentration in operations management, and has research interests in various topics, both traditional areas of OM and interdisciplinary subjects. Currently, his main focus is supply chain management, but he’s always open to possible collaborations.

**Chance Gammill**  
**Faculty Host: Kenneth Hoyt, Ph.D.**

Chance Gammill earned a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering from The University of Texas at Dallas in 2022. Chance is pursuing a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering, researching 3D-super resolution ultrasound imaging.

**Tuhin Harit**  
**Faculty Host: Vikram Nanda, Ph.D.**

Tuhin Harit has earned a B.Tech in Production Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee in 2009 and an MBA from Indian School of Business in 2016. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Finance, and has research interests in asset pricing and agency problems, largely using empirical methods. Tuhin also has nine years of work experience with firms such as J.P. Morgan, and KPMG and has worked in geographies such as Australia, Africa and Middle East.

**Jianyao “Janelle” He**  
**Faculty Host: Vikram Nanda, Ph.D.**

Jianyao graduated first class honors with a BSc in quantitative finance from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 2019. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in management science, with a concentration in finance. Jianyao is currently interested in asset pricing and behavioral finance.

**Dominique James**  
**Faculty Host: Kenneth Hoyt, Ph.D.**

Dominique James earned a B.S. in biomedical engineering from the University of Rochester in 2019. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering. Her research will focus on using phase-change contrast agents and ultrasound strategies to estimate pressure noninvasively. Applications of this topic may apply to tumor interstitial pressure and/or portal vein hypertension pressure estimation.

**Taek Kang**  
**Faculty Host: Leonidas Bleris, Ph.D.**

Taek Kang earned a B.S. in chemical and biomolecular engineering from the Johns Hopkins University in 2009. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering. Taek’s research focuses on building and studying biological circuits in mammalian cells to decipher the underlying principles that guide their function.
Jinhyun Kim
Faculty Host: Jiyoung Kim, Ph.D.
Jinhyun Kim earned his B.S. (2017) and M.E. (2019) in Material Science and Engineering from Inha University, Korea. He is pursuing his Ph.D. in Material Science and Engineering at UT Dallas, with a focus on atomic layer deposition techniques and in-situ and ex-situ material characterization methods.

Xiuyao Lang
Faculty Host: Kyeongjae (KJ) Cho, Ph.D.
Xiuyao Lang earned a B.S. in Physics at Xiangtan University (2018) and an M.S. in Electronic Science and Technology at Nankai University (2021). Xiuyao is pursuing a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering at UT Dallas.

Melissa Lenert
Faculty Host: Michael D. Burton, Ph.D.
Melissa Lenert earned a B.S. in Biology at Stephen F. Austin State University (2019) and an M.S. in Biotechnology at the University of Texas at Dallas (2019). Melissa is pursuing a Ph.D. in Cognition and Neuroscience. As a recipient of the NINDS D-SPAN F99 fellowship, Melissa studies the role of cellular metabolism in modulating neuroimmune interactions during chronic muscle pain.

Medel B. Lim Suan Jr.
Faculty Host: Dave Dingal, Ph.D.
Medel Lim Suan earned a B.S. in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology from the University of the Philippines – Diliman in 2016. Medel is pursuing a Ph.D. in Bioengineering, researching directed evolution of synthetic proteases.

Zheng Liu
Faculty Host: Vikram Nanda, Ph.D.

Yingdong Mao
Faculty Host: Feng Zhao, Ph.D.
Mao earned a B.S. in applied mathematics and economics from Yunnan University of Finance and Economics in 2015, and an M.S. in mathematical finance from Bentley University in 2017. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in management science, with a concentration in finance. He focuses on asset pricing and risk management.

Ryan Margolis
Faculty Host: Kenneth Hoyt, Ph.D.
Ryan Margolis earned his B.S. in Physics and Industrial Mathematics from West Chester in 2013. He graduated
with his M.S. in Biomedical Engineering in 2018 from Drexel University. He is pursuing his Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering with a focus on image-guided focused ultrasound for improved cancer treatment.

**Shelby Mohr-Allen**  
*Faculty Host: Victor Varner, Ph.D.*

Shelby graduated from Oklahoma State University in 2019 with a B.S in chemical engineering and a minor in biochemistry. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering. Shelby is currently studying lung development, specifically how pressure and other mechanical factors effect lung branching morphogenesis.

**Soroush Mojtahedi**  
*Faculty Host: Vikram Nanda, Ph.D.*

Soroush Mojtahedi earned a B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering at the University of Guilan (2012), an MBA at Sharif University of Technology (2018), and an M.Sc. in Finance with a specialization in Corporate Finance at the Stockholm School of Economics (2021). Soroush is pursuing a Ph.D. in Finance.

**Austin Mordahl**  
*Faculty Host: Shiyi Wei, Ph.D.*

Austin Mordahl graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in Software Engineering from UT Dallas in 2018. As a 2020 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship awardee, his research concerns the automatic detection of bugs and privacy leaks in both desktop and mobile software.

**Fateme Najafkhani**  
*Faculty Host: Professor Hongbing Lu, Ph.D.*

Fateme Najafkhani earned a B.S. (2018) and M.S. (2021) in Material Engineering at the University of Tehran. Fateme is pursuing a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering at UT Dallas. She will work on synthesis, characterization, and modeling of polymeric aerogels with focus on Multiphysics simulations.

**Manifa Noor**  
*Faculty Host: Kyeongjae Cho, Ph.D.*

Manifa Noor earned a B.S. in Materials and Metallurgical Engineering (2017) and an M.S. in Glass and Ceramic Engineering (2020) from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. Manifa is pursuing a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering, researching next generation energy storage materials.

**Eleanor Paul**  
*Faculty Host: Joseph Pancrazio, Ph.D.*

Eleanor Paul earned her B.S. in Biomedical Engineering at George Washington University (2021) and is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering at UT Dallas.

**Peter D. Reyntjens**  
*Faculty Host: William G. Vandenberghe, Ph.D.*

Peter Reyntjens earned a B.S. in electrical engineering at KU Leuven, Belgium, in 2016, and an Erasmus Mundus dual-degree M.S. in nanoscience and nanotechnology from KU Leuven, Belgium, and Chalmers Technical
University, Sweden, in 2018. He is pursuing a joint Ph.D. in materials science at UT Dallas and Imec/KU Leuven. Peter’s research is in the field of spintronics, looking for new materials that can be used for memory storage.

**Mónica Rivas**  
**Faculty Host: Vladimir Gevorgyan, Ph.D.**

Mónica Rivas was born and raised in Bogotá, Colombia. She received her B.S. in Chemistry with a Biochemistry track from the University of Central Florida. In 2017, she joined the Gevorgyan group at the University of Illinois at Chicago as a PhD student, and later at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her work has focused on the development of mild and selective C(sp$^3$)–H functionalization methods. In collaboration with the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, and as an F31 NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award Individual Predoctoral Fellow (NIGMS), she will be exploring ways of diversifying radiochemistry toward practical approaches for the synthesis and application of imaging agents.

**Arun Kumar Rout**  
**Faculty Host: Ganesh Janakiraman, Ph.D.**

Arun Kumar Rout earned a B.Tech. in mechanical engineering from Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur in 2007, and an MBA from Indian School of Business in 2013. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in management science with a concentration in operations management, and has research interests in the renewable energy sector with focus on policy decisions. Arun also has eight years of work experience with Schlumberger, The Boston Consulting Group, and a startup.

**Thomas J. Smith**  
**Faculty Host: Joseph Pancrazio, Ph.D.**

Thomas Smith earned his B.S. in Neuroscience at the University of Pittsburgh (2019) and is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Cognition and Neuroscience from UT Dallas. His research interests involve neural interfaces and neurotechnology surrounding energy harvesting devices and the deleterious effects of bionics.

**Minh H. Tran**  
**Faculty Host: Baowei Fei, Ph.D.**

Minh earned a B.S. in Electrical Engineering with a Minor in Computer Science from University of Wyoming in 2020. He is pursuing a PhD in Bioengineering, looking for new ways to diagnose diseases using biomedical imaging. Beyond science, he enjoys the visual arts of drawing and photography.

**Alyssa Vellucci**  
**Faculty Host: Justin Ruths, Ph.D.**

Alyssa Vellucci earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from The University of Texas at Dallas in 2021. Alyssa is pursuing a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering with a focus in Dynamic Systems and Control.

**Josh Wiedemeier**  
**Faculty Host: Kangkook Jee, Ph.D.**

Josh Wiedemeier earned a B.S. in Computer Science (2020) and an M.S. in Computer Science with a Cybersecurity focus (2022) from the University of Texas at Dallas. Josh is pursuing a Ph.D. in Computer Science, researching systems security and data driven security.
Isaac Wright
Faculty Host: Fabiano Rodrigues, Ph.D.

Isaac Wright earned a B.S. in Physics from the University of Texas at Dallas (2022). Isaac is a 2022 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship winner and is pursuing a Ph.D. in Physics.

Jiadi “Kevin” Xu
Faculty Host: Umit Gurun, Ph.D.

Kevin earned a B.S. in material chemistry and a B.Econ. in finance at Nankai University in 2013, and an M.S. in finance at Syracuse University in 2015. Pursuing a Ph.D. in management science (finance concentration), he focuses on asset pricing, investment, and portfolio management.

Zhaokun Xue
Faculty Host: Vijay Mookerjee, Ph.D.

Zhaokun Xue earned a B.A. in Mathematics and Economics (2021) from the University of Texas at Austin. Zhaokun is pursuing a Ph.D. in Information Systems.

Zehan “Allen” Zhao
Faculty Host: Zhiqiang Eric Zheng, Ph.D.

Allen Zhao earned a B.S. in information management from the University of International Business and Economics in 2015, and an M.S. in management science and engineering from Tsinghua University in 2018. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in management science with a concentrating in information systems. Allen is interested in helping business utilize the power of information technology, and applying state-of-the-art technologies in business environments.