Jabari Kwesi

Department of Computer Science

Duke University

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Research Interests

Human-Computer Interaction; Human-Centered Design in Emerging Digital Technologies; Social, Regulatory, and Economic Aspects of Security and Privacy; Statistical Modeling of Security and Privacy Behaviors

Education

2023–In Progress **Ph.D. in Computer Science**, *Duke University*, Durham, NC

Advisor: Pardis Emami-Naeini

2019–2023 **B.S. in Computer Science**, *Duke University*, Durham, NC

Awards and Honors

2025 **Scholarship Grant to attend USENIX Security**

2024 **National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF GRFP)**, *National Science Foundation*

2024 **Alfred P. Sloan Scholarship**, *Duke University*

2023 **GEM Fellowship**, *The National GEM Consortium*

2023 **University Ph.D. Fellowship**, *Duke University*

Experience

2023–Present **Graduate Research Assistant**, *Interdisciplinary Security, Privacy, and Interaction Research Lab (PI: Dr. Pardis Emami-Naeini)*, Durham, NC

○ Conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews and advanced thematic analysis to isolate specific security and privacy concerns related to conversational artificial intelligence technologies

○ Designed a randomized vignette study on security and privacy controls for conversational agents; applied advanced statistical modeling to quantify impacts on user willingness and trust

○ Built an end-to-end research pipeline spanning a 300+ app audit, vignette surveys, and short-form qualitative analysis to identify user engagement with conversational agents for mental health; currently integrating quantitative results with qualitative user insights to inform privacy-by-design defaults

Summer 2023 **Research Intern**, *MIT Lincoln Laboratory*, Lexington, MA

○ Integrated multi-modal radar and text embedding models with ballistic missile defense tasks using industry-standard machine learning libraries

○ Adapted semantic association techniques from existent social science literature to produce a novel methodology for detecting and quantifying text bias in neural networks

2022–2025 **Researcher**, *Duke University*, Durham, NC

○ Worked as a research assistant on a team led by Dr. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Dr. Nicki Washington, and Dr. Shaundra Daily investigating the perceptions of race among computer science undergraduates

○ Conducted advanced quantitative analysis in developing an eight-factor model to systematically evaluate the relationships between demographics and racial perceptions, based on a survey with 600+ respondents

○ Developed, maintained, and distributed survey instruments and interview protocols to quantitatively and qualitatively measure the racial perceptions of computing undergraduate students and their effects

Publications

Conference Proceedings

C5 **Jabari Kwesi**, Jiaxun Cao, Riya Manchanda, and Pardis Emami-Naeini. Exploring User Security and Privacy Attitudes and Concerns Toward the Use of General-Purpose LLM Chatbots for Mental Health. *To Appear at the 34th USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security'25)*

C4 **Jabari Kwesi** & Henry Bell, Hiba Laabadli, and Pardis Emami-Naeini. "Is it always watching? Is it always listening?" Exploring Contextual Privacy and Security Concerns Toward Domestic Social Robots. *arXiv*

C3 **Jabari Kwesi**, Morgan Bernstein, Reagan Razon, Andre Barajas, Brean Prefontaine, Victoria Callais, Shaundra Daily, Alicia Nicki Washington. Student Understandings of Race and Racial Bias in Computing Environments. *In Proceedings of the 2025 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition*

C2 Fatima Fairfax, **Jabari Kwesi**, Elyse McFalls, Reagan Razon, Alexandra Thursland, Crystal Peoples, Shaundra Daily, Alicia Nicki Washington, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Brean Prefontaine. Work in Progress: The Role of Student Backgrounds in Understanding Racial Disparities in Computing. *In Proceedings of the 2024 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition*

C1   Fatima Fairfax, Elyse McFalls, Alex Rogers, **Jabari Kwesi**, Alicia Nicki Washington, Shaundra Daily, Crystal Peoples, Helen Xiao, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva. Work in Progress: A Novel Approach to Understanding Perceptions of Race among Computing Undergraduates. *In Proceedings of the 2023 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition*

Talks & Presentations

2025   **Exploring User Security and Privacy Attitudes and Concerns Toward the Use of General-Purpose LLM Chatbots for Mental Health**, *USENIX'25*

2025   **"Think of Them as Somebody Who's Not Able to Hold a Secret": Emerging Security and Privacy Concerns in LLM-based Mental Health Support**, *46th Annual Minority Health Conference*, University of Chapel Hill

2023   **Work in Progress: The Role of Student Backgrounds in Understanding Racial Disparities in Computing**, *ASEE'23*

2023   **Understanding Perceptions of Race Among Computing Undergraduates**, *Duke University*

Selected Teaching Experience

2024   **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, *Duke University*
COMPSCI 226: User Research Methods

2023   **Teaching Assistant**, *Duke University*
COMPSCI 216: Everything Data

2022   **Teaching Assistant**, *Duke University*
COMPSCI 216: Everything Data

Media Coverage

2025   **Trinity Communications**, *Dangerous Helpers: Understanding the Privacy Trade-Offs of AI Mental Health Support*