

# Saloni Naik

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## EDUCATION

### • University of California, Merced

August 2021 - May 2025

Merced, CA

Graduate

- GPA: 3.942/4.00
- Double Major: Cognitive Science B.S. & Psychology B.A.
- Received Graduation High Honors and Cognitive Science Honors

## EXPERIENCE

### • Cognitive and Information Sciences Honors Program

May 2024 - May 2025

Merced, CA

Advisors: Dr. Rachel Ryskin & Dr. Tyler Marghetis | Honors Scholar

- Conducted independent research on the role of embodied cognition during algebraic tasks under the supervision of Dr. Rachel Ryskin & Dr. Tyler Marghetis
- Utilized eye-tracking technology, to observe participant's scan-paths during algebraic tasks
- Analyzed data in R to develop insights into how people understand algebra
- Completed and received committee approval for honors thesis: "*Algebra Eyes: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*"

### • Language, Interaction, and Cognition Lab

June 2024 - May 2025

Merced, CA

Principal Investigator: Dr. Rachel Ryskin | Undergraduate Research Assistant

- Assisted graduate students and research staff with EEG setup and cleanup, ensuring proper electrode placement and data quality
- Acted as experimenter on a study focusing on pragmatic inferences through language comprehension
- Attended and contributed to weekly lab meetings, discussing research findings, workshops, and tutorials

### • Center for Early Cognition and Language

June 2023 - May 2025

Merced, CA

Principal Investigator: Dr. Rose Scott | Undergraduate Research Assistant

- Acted as experimenter for several different studies, focusing on children's social understanding, and attitudes towards different social categories
- Engaged in several different coding types such as tracking eye movements, transcribing, and interaction tasks
- Prepared consent forms, documents and paperwork for participants
- Contacted and screened participants for study eligibility requirements

### • Marghetis Lab

November 2022 - May 2024

Merced, CA

Principal Investigator: Dr. Tyler Marghetis | Undergraduate Research Assistant

- Acted as a team leader, developing a poster, which was presented at *Cognitive Linguistics Association of North America*
- Acted as experimenter on study focusing on embodied cognition and gesture
- Attended and contributed to weekly lab meetings, discussing research findings, workshops, and tutorials

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- [1] **Naik, S.**, Ryskin, R., & Marghetis, T. (*in preparation*). *Visual exploration of algebraic equations is shaped by mathematical expertise*
- [2] **Naik, S.**, Ryskin, R., & Marghetis, T. (2025). *Mathematics as visual skill: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*. Presented poster at the COGSCI 2025 Theories of the Past, Theories of the Future, July 2025.
- [3] **Naik, S.**, Dohnke, I., Ram, K., Ton, J., Muralidharan, H., Nosrati, S., Niehorster-Cook, L., & Marghetis, T. (2024). *Making sense of time-travel: Dissociation between co-speech gesture and temporal reasoning*. Poster prepared for the conference of the *Cognitive Linguistics Association of North America*, June 2024.

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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### • Robert J. Glushko Prize for Distinguished Undergraduate Cognitive Science Research

May 2025

*University of California, Merced: Cognitive & Information Sciences Honors Committee*

- The Glushko Prize for Undergraduate Research is awarded to a graduating Cognitive Science major in recognition of outstanding research accomplishments.

- Awarded \$1,000 for outstanding undergraduate research in cognitive science through senior honors thesis project: *Algebra Eyes: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*

### • Cognitive Science Honors

May 2025

*University of California, Merced, Cognitive & Information Sciences Department*

- Received Cognitive Science Departmental Honors for my thesis: *Algebra Eyes: Evidence from eye movements during algebraic reasoning*

- Thesis received a grade of an A+ from the UC Merced Cognitive Science Honors Committee

### • Graduation High Honors

May 2025

*University of California, Merced*

- UC Merced Graduates who receive high honors are students who are in the top 6% of the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts

### • Chancellor's Honors List

*University of California, Merced*

- Awarded to students who have a grade point average of 3.5 or above for both semesters in an academic year
- Academic years awarded: 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024

## SKILLS

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### • Languages: English (Native Fluency) & Marathi (Proficiency level)

### • Programming Languages: Python (Beginner) & R (Beginner)

### • Web Technologies: HTML & CSS

### • DevOps & Version Control: GitHub

### • Specialized Area: EyeLink

### • Research Skills: Experimental Design, Statistical Analysis, Survey Design, Literature Review and Scientific Writing

### • Other Tools & Technologies: Qualtrics, SONA, ELAN, Microsoft Office Suite, Slack, Overleaf and G Suite

## LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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### • Secretary

August 2024 - May 2025

*UC Merced: Cognitive Science Student Association*

- Sent professional emails, announcements, and opportunities to members and faculty
- Maintained and organized records, documents, and meeting minutes for reference
- Prepared and submitted official forms, reports, and paperwork to ensure compliance with organizational requirements
- Delivered presentation on topics: Eye Tracking and Electroencephalogram, The Cognitive Science behind Attraction; to facilitate learning and engagement
- Contributed to the successful hosting of our Brain Waves Symposium, by coordinating logistics and event registration

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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### • Volunteer

September 2024 - May 2025

*UC Merced: Community Engagement Center*

- Central Valley Heart and Stroke Walk 2024: Helped with set up, running the refreshments booth, talking with event participants, and clean up
- Cultiva Central Valley: 3rd Annual Zombie Bike Ride: Set up and ran a refreshments booth along bike trail
- Health and Hope: Hygiene Kits for the Unhoused Event: Assisted in assembling hygiene kits for members of the community
- Playhouse Merced: Put together volunteer packets, and handed out raffle tickets

## CERTIFICATIONS

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### • CITI Program: Social/Behavioral Research Course

Issued February 2023