



UC Davis Center for AI & Experimental Futures  
UC Davis AI Center in Engineering

# CSS Escape 2026: Experiments around AI Futures Engineering



This Conference highlights the innovative work of Computational Social Science (CSS) scholars in the UC Davis community. It is hosted by the [UC Davis DE CSS](#) and co-sponsored by the [UC Davis AI Center in Engineering](#) and the [UC Davis Center for AI and Experimental Futures \(CAIEF\)](#), which are offering \$2,000 in prize money for the best AI research presented. Each of the main sessions consists of 7-minute lightning talks, followed by a 25-minute Q&A with the authors of the presented studies.<sup>1</sup>



10:00 – 10:15: Coffee & Greetings

10:15 – 11:20: Session 1: **Computational Content Analysis**

**Antoinette Banks** (PhD Candidate, School of Education): **Racially Differentiated Linguistic Patterns in IEP (Individualized Education Program) Documents**

**Patrick Wade** (PhD Student, Dpt. of Sociology): **The Logic(s) of a Dissent: Federal Reserve Decision-Making**

**Eleveny Chen** (PhD student, Dpt. of Communication): **Mapping Construct Operationalization Practices for Communication Theories**

**Jason Singson** (PhD Student, Dpt. of Public Health Sciences): **Sensemaking During Law Enforcement Use-of-Force**

**Christine Pan** (PhD Student, Dpt. of Sociology): **Misdirected Pronatalist Policy Regimes?**

---

<sup>1</sup> Speakers are expected to practice their timed 7 minute (!) lightning talk and are invited to bring not more than 5 slides (on their your own laptop, ready to plug in, memory stick, or link sent to [hilbert@ucdavis.edu](mailto:hilbert@ucdavis.edu) by Thursday night). Speakers are also welcome to prepare additional slides of Figures and Tables and Supporting Material to facilitate Q&A follow-up discussions during the subsequent 25-minute mingling.

Friday, Feb. 20, 2026, Stonegate Country Club, 919 Lake Blvd, Davis, CA 95616.

11:20 – 12:25: Session 2: Computational Models & Tools

**John Rundle** (Distinguished Prof., Dpts. of Physics and Geology): **QuakeGPT: Nowcasting Earthquakes**

**Edgar Andrade-Lotero** (Postdoctoral Scholar, Dpt. of Communication): **Cultural evolution of power dynamics between workers and managers in a collective foraging task**

**Mark Reedy** (PhD Candidate, Dpt. of Political Science): **Vectors of Cooperation, Vectors of Conflict**

**Ke Liu (Koko)** (PhD student, Dpt. of Com.): **Misinformation Correction & Information Avoidance ABM**

**Rachael Kee** (PhD Candidate, Dpt. of Communication): **A Year in the Making: Introducing Inoxyty**

12.25 - 13.45: LUNCH BREAK (with games & lake boat ride options)

13.45 – 14.00: Practical showcase: UC Davis Social Media Victims Legal Work

14:00 – 15:05: Session 3: Media & Public Discourse

**Salman Khawar** (PhD Student, Dpt. of Communication): **Image Framing Project**

**Dongdong Zhu** (PhD student, Dpt. of Communication): **Female Politicians in the EU: Visual Represent.**

**Hiral Arora, Qiyuan Tan & Shashwat Mahalanobis** [Undergraduate Researcher]: **Moltbook Dynamics**

**Ashley Hanmore** (Undergraduate Researcher): **Sex, Drugs & LLMs: LGBTQ+ Adolescents & Sexual Health**

**Chaeun Ko** (PhD Student, Dpt. of Communication): **Relational News Delivery on Social Media**

15:05 – 16:00: Session 4: AI Interactions

**Sai Datta Mikkilineni** (PhD Candidate, Communication & Information Sciences, U. of Alabama): **Does LLM Feedback Shape Humans' Self-Disclosure?**

**Pablo Rodriguez** (Graduate Student; GG Computer Science): **Mapping the Hallucination Horizon**

**Paavana Shankar** (Undergraduate Researcher, Dpt. of Communication): **AI Integration In Medical Care for Menopause**

**Mobina Noori** (PhD student, GG Computer Science): **Diagnosing Authority–Norm Conflict in AI Decision Systems**

16:00 – 17:05: Session 5: Ethics of AI

**Michael Rogers** (Web Developer): **Loneliness, AI Companionship, and Relational Goods**

**Dongdong Zhu** (PhD student, Dpt. of Communic.): **Whose Morality? Ideological Asymmetries in LLMs**

**Ayushi Kishore** (Undergraduate Researcher, AI Ethics Lab): **AI and Moral Reasoning**

**Alex Lau** (PhD Student, Dpt. of Philosophy): **The Interesting Gap in AI Companions for Older Adults**

**Jack Jacobs** (AI Ethics Lab, Dpt. of Philosophy): **Griefbots and the Prudential Goods of Grief**

17.05 - 18.00: Happy Hour (and buffer for [[unlikely, but theoretically possible]] delays)

Option to **get dinner** and **continue Happy Hour** ‘across the street’ at [www.SuperOwlBrewing.com/](http://www.SuperOwlBrewing.com/)

There is **no registration fee; coffee/tea, snacks, lunch, and reception are provided.**

*We are looking forward to an inspiring day full of intriguing research ideas!*

<https://CSS.UCDavis.edu> & <https://engineering.ucdavis.edu/artificial-intelligence> & <https://caief.ucdavis.edu/>