

THEMISTOKLIS NIKAS

Ph.D. Student in Computer Science

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EDUCATION

Boston University

Boston, MA, USA

Ph.D. in Computer Science

Sep 2023 – Present

- Advisor: Prof. Aaron Mueller.
- Research in mechanistic interpretability and meta-cognition in LLMs; current work on linguistic ambiguity and (un)answerability; prior work in graph algorithms and algorithmic fairness.

University of Ioannina

Ioannina, Greece

B.Sc. & M.Sc. in Computer Science & Engineering (5-year joint degree; 300 ECTS)

Mar 2017 – Mar 2022

- Diploma Thesis: *Fairness in Link Analysis Algorithms*.

PROFESSIONAL AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Teaching Fellow

Jan 2024 – Present

Boston University

Boston, MA, USA

- Course: CS330 - Introduction to Analysis of Algorithms (Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025).
- Led discussion sections, held office hours, and helped design assignments and exams.

Research Associate

Feb 2023 – Aug 2023

University of Ioannina & Pfizer CDI Collaboration

Thessaloniki, Greece

- Developed innovative solutions for detecting healthcare-related misinformation on social media.
- Leveraged machine learning and NLP methods for large-scale data analysis and classification.

Junior Researcher

May 2022 – Jan 2023

Unit of Medical Technology & Intelligent Information Systems (MedLab)

Ioannina, Greece

- Conducted research on probabilistic and ML techniques for synthetic omics generation and virtual population analyses.
- Investigated the relationship between cardiovascular diseases and depression using big-data classification.

Diploma Thesis Research

Apr 2021 – Mar 2022

University of Ioannina

Ioannina, Greece

- Analyzed how to achieve fairness in PageRank with minimal network modifications; performed theoretical and empirical evaluations of fairness-cost tradeoffs.

Teaching Assistant

Feb 2023 – Jun 2023

University of Ioannina

Ioannina, Greece

- Assisted in teaching Object-Oriented Programming; provided support through labs, grading, and student Q&A.

PUBLICATIONS

Minimizing the Cost of PageRank Fairness

Tzimas, S., Nikas, T., Pitoura, E., Tsaparas, P. (WebGraph), 2026

Disentangling Text and Math in Word Problems: Evidence for the Bidimensional Structure of Large Language Models' Reasoning

Calais, P., Franco, G., Tang, Z., Nikas, T., Meira Jr., W., Terzi, E., Crovella, M. (Findings of ACL), 2025

Beyond Accuracy: Understanding the Performance of LLMs on Exams Designed for Humans

Calais, P., Franco, G., Nikas, T., Tang, Z., Crovella, M., Meira Jr., W., Terzi, E. (Preprint), 2025

SKILLS, LANGUAGES & VOLUNTEERING

Programming: Python, R, C/C++, Java, SQL

ML/Tools: scikit-learn, Keras, PyTorch, Matlab, Git

Languages: English (fluent), Greek (native)

Volunteering (TEDxMaviliSquare): Oversaw speaker recruitment, content direction, and workshop organization.