Research Statement

The vision of my research is to build systems that improve developer productivity through automated debugging and testing of big data analytics. Broadly, I am interested in designing novel tool support for data-centric software development. My approach combines insights from software engineering, distributed systems, and databases. I have also been awarded the Google Ph.D. Fellowship in the sub-field of software engineering.

Education

Ph.D. in Computer Science 2014 – 2020
University of California, Los Angeles
Thesis: Interactive and Automated Debugging for Big Data Analytics

B.S in Computer Science 2010 – 2014
Lahore University of Management Sciences

Employment

Assistant Professor in Computer Science Aug ’20 – Present
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA

Software Engineer, Intern Jun ’19 – Sept 19
Google Inc., Mountain View

Software Engineer Tools and Infrastructure Intern Jun ’18 – Sept 18
Google Inc., Mountain View

Summer Research Assistant Jun ’16 – Sep ’16
NEC Labs America, Princeton NJ

Research Intern May ’12 – Aug ’12
Koç University, Turkey

Awards and Grants

2019-20 Outstanding Computer Science Graduating Ph.D. Student
2019-20 Northrop Grumman Outstanding Computer Science Graduate Student Research Award
Google Ph.D. Fellowship 2017-20 (with 3rd-year extension)
NSF I-Corps Grant (Entrepreneurial Lead) 2018
Gold medal at ACM Student Research Competition at ICSE 2018
SIGMOD Student Travel Award 2017
SoCC Student Travel Award 2017 and 2019
Graduation with Distinction, Dean’s Honor List Award, National Mathematics Olympiad Finalist

Research Track Publications

[P1] HeteroRefactor: Refactoring for Heterogeneous Computing with FPGA ICSE’20
Jason Lau*, Aishwarya Sivaraman*, Qian Zhang*, Muhammad Ali Gulzar,
Jason Cong, Miryung Kim
The proceedings of the 42nd International Conference on Software Engineering. 12 Pages.
(* are equal co-first authors ordered alphabetically by their last names)

[P2] White-Box Testing of Big Data Analytics with Complex User-Defined Functions ESEC/FSE’19
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Shaghayegh Mardani,
Madan Musuvathi, Miryung Kim

[P3] PerfDebug: Performance Debugging of Computation Skew in Dataflow Systems SoCC’19
Jason Teoh, Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Harry Xu, Miryung Kim.

Biplob Debnath, Mohiuddin Solaimani, Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Nipun Arora, Cristian Lumezanu, Jianwu Xu, Bo Zong, Hui Zhang, Guofei Jiang, Latifur Khan. Acceptance Rate: 20.6%
IEEE 38th International Conference on Distributed Computing Systems. 11 Pages.

[P5] Adding data provenance support to Apache Spark
Matteo Interlandi, Ari Ekmekji, Kshitij Shah, Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Sai Tetali, Miryung Kim, Todd Millstein, Tyson Condie.
The VLDB Journal (Special Issue on “The Best Papers of” VLDB 2018). 21 Pages.

Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Matteo Interlandi, Xueyuan Han, Mingda Li, Tyson Condie, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 23.6%

Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Matteo Interlandi, Seunghyun Yoo, Sai Tetali, Tyson Condie, Todd Millstein, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 19%
The proceedings of the 38th International Conference on Software Engineering. 12 Pages.

[P8] Optimizing Interactive Development of Data-Intensive Applications
Matteo Interlandi, Sai Tetali, Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Joseph Noor, Tyson Condie, Miryung Kim, Todd Millstein. Acceptance Rate: 25.1%

Matteo Interlandi, Kshitij Shah, Sai Tetali, Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Seunghyun Yoo, Miryung Kim, Todd Millstein, Tyson Condie. Acceptance Rate: 21.2%

Demonstration Track Publications

[D1] BigTest: Symbolic Execution Based Systematic Test Generation for Apache Spark
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Madan Musuvathi, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 33.3%
The 42nd International Conference on Software Engineering. Research Demonstration Track. 4 Pages.

[D2] BigSift: Automated Debugging of Big Data Analytics in Data-intensive Scalable Computing
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Siman Wang, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 38.8%

[D3] Debugging Big Data Analytics in Spark with BigDebug
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Matteo Interlandi, Tyson Condie, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 34%
The Proceedings of the 2017 ACM SIGMOD/PODS Conference Demonstration Track. 4 Pages.

[D4] BigDebug: Interactive Debugger for Big Data Analytics in Apache Spark
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Matteo Interlandi, Tyson Condie, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 40%
The proceedings of the 24th Joint European Software Engineering Conference and Symposium on the Foundations of Software Engineering. Research Demonstration Track. 5 Pages.

Short/Workshop/Industry Track Publications

[SWI1] Perception and Practices of Differential Testing
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Yongkong Zhu, Xiaofeng Han. Acceptance Rate: 22.2%
The proceedings of the 41th International Conference on Software Engineering Software Engineering in Practice Track. 10 Pages.

[SWI2] Interactive Debugging for Big Data Analytics
Muhammad Ali Gulzar, Xueyuan Han, Matteo Interlandi, Shaghayegh Mardani, Sai Tetali, Tyson Condie, Todd Millstein, Miryung Kim. Acceptance Rate: 30.8%
The 8th USENIX Workshop on Hot Topics in Cloud Computing. 7 Pages.
Teaching Experience

CS130 Software Engineering  
University of California, Los Angeles  
Spring '17 and Fall '15

CS282 Network Centric Computing  
Lahore University of Management Sciences  
Spring '14

CS310 Algorithms  
Lahore University of Management Sciences  
Spring '13

CS340 Databases  
Lahore University of Management Sciences  
Fall '13

Mentoring Experience

Xueyuan Han  
(Undergraduate at UCLA. Currently a Ph.D. student at Harvard University)  
Jan '16 - May '17

Simon Wang  
(Research Intern (CSST) at UCLA. Currently a Masters student at UCSD)  
May'17 - Sep '17

Shaghayegh Mardani  
(Ph.D. student at UCLA)  
Sep '17 - Jun '17

Aishwarya Sivaraman  
(Ph.D. student at UCLA)  
Sep '17 - Jun '17

Jason Teoh  
(Ph.D. student at UCLA)  
Jan '18 - Present

Fabrice Harel-Canada  
(M.S. student at UCLA)  
Apr '19 - Present

Usama Hameed  
(Ph.D. student at UCLA)  
Sep '19 - Present

Service

Journal Reviewer:  Transaction on Software Engineering (TSE 2018)
Student Volunteer:  Co-lead Student Volunteer ICSE 2016
Panelist:  UCLA Computer Science Ph.D. Open-house year 2017 and 2018
Research Host:  UCLA Cross-disciplinary Scholars in Science and Technology 2017

Invited Talks

White-Box Testing of Big Data Analytics  
Google PhD Fellowship Summit '19

Automated Debugging and Testing of Big Data Analytics  
ICSE'18

Automated Debugging in Data-Intensive Scalable Computing  
FSE'18, SoCC'17

Debugging Big Data Analytics in Spark  
Spark Summit'17

Debugging Big Data Analytics with BigDebug  
SIGMOD'17

Interactive Debugger for Big Data Analytics  
FSE'16

BigDebug: Debugging Primitives for Interactive Big Data Processing in Spark  
ICSE'16

Interactive Debugging for Big Data Analytics  
NEC Labs America, 2016

Towards Big Data Debugging in Apache Spark  
Databricks Inc., 2015

Academic References

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