



LREC 2026

Computational Affective Science (CAS) @ LREC 2026

Workshop Proceedings

Editors

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Preface

We are proud to present the first Computational Affective Science (CAS) workshop, a series, and the first dedicated venue, for exploring the intersection of Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Affective Science.

Affect refers to the fundamental neural processes that generate and regulate emotions, moods, and feeling states. Affect and emotions are central to how we organize meaning, to our behavior, to our health and well-being, and to our very survival. Despite this, and even though we are all intimately familiar with emotions in everyday life, there is much we do not know about how emotions work and how they impact our lives. Affective Science is a broad interdisciplinary field that explores these and other related questions about affect and emotions. Since language is a powerful mechanism of emotion expression, there is a growing use of language data and advanced natural language processing (NLP) algorithms to shed light on fundamental questions about emotions. Over the course of the series we hope to explore the many subareas and modalities in which affect is studied.

A common critique of NLP work is the lack of theory. CAS takes an interdisciplinary approach to affective science and aims at bringing together NLP researchers, scientists, and theorists from many research areas, including psychology, sociology, neuroscience, and philosophy. CAS is co-organized by researchers in NLP, Psychology, and Cognitive Science. We foresee this new workshop as an interdisciplinary hub that will foster innovative CAS research.

For this first interaction of the workshop, we invited long and short archival paper submissions, as well as non-archival extended abstracts on a broad range of topics at the intersection of affective science and natural language processing. We received 29 submissions, 19 long papers, 4 short papers, and 6 extended abstracts. Of these, we accepted 23 submissions (79%, plus two additional which withdrew after acceptance due to inability to attend). We are thrilled by the level of participation and quality from submissions, especially with the variety of backgrounds the papers come from. We received 16 submissions from NLP/Computer Science, 6 from Psychology, 4 from Digital Humanities, and 2 from Linguistics backgrounds.

We are excited to award our first Best Paper award to "Beyond Toxic Positivity: Interpersonal Affect Regulation in LLM-Based Dialogue Agents using Discourse Politeness Theory".

CAS is fortunate to have two fantastic keynote speakers: Dr. Katie Hoemann, an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Kansas, and Dr. Jonathan Gratch, a professor of computer science and psychology at the University of Southern California. Dr. Hoemann will give a talk on "The construction of emotional meaning in language"; Dr. Gratch will speak about "Beyond Emotion Recognition: Expressions as Social Action".

We would like to thank the LREC 2026 organizers for their support and providing a venue for our inaugural workshop. We especially thank our program committee, as without their hard work this workshop would not have been possible.

We look forward to continuing this workshop each year and hope to bring more researchers from various disciplines together to tackle the intricacies and challenges of affect.

CAS 2026 Program Chairs

Organizing Committee

Christopher Bagdon, University of Bamberg, Germany
Krishnapriya Vishnubhotla, National Research Council Canada
Kristen A. Lindquist, The Ohio State University, USA
Lyle Ungar, University of Pennsylvania, USA
Roman Klinger, University of Bamberg, Germany
Saif M. Mohammad, National Research Council Canada

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Workshop Program

Saturday, May 16, 2026

14:00–14:10 Opening Remarks

14:10–15:00 Keynote Talk: Dr. Katie Hoemann | The Construction of Emotional Meaning in Language

The experience of emotion is a form of meaning-making: it reveals one's relationship to the circumstances. Often, the emphasis is on the emotions explicitly named or subjective feelings conveyed. In this talk, I argue that we should use a broader set of tools to study emotional meaning in language. I put forward three sets of language features that capture: the contextual features or aspects of experience salient at each moment (attention); the conceptual vantage point which from events are viewed (construal); the evaluation of events along relevant dimensions (appraisal). Using empirical findings, I illustrate how these language features can be used to answer specific questions about emotional meaning-making and how it varies based on situation, person, and culture. This interdisciplinary approach—grounded in socio-, cognitive, and computational linguistics as well as discursive, cognitive, and emotion psychology—seeks to move the field to a higher dimensional, dynamical account of emotional meaning.

Dr. Katie Hoemann is an Assistant Professor and the Dale J. Weary Faculty Fellow of Social Psychology at the University of Kansas, where she directs the Emotions in Context (EMIC) Lab. Katie studies how people experience emotion, and how the ways they make meaning of these experiences can shape motivations, behaviors, and social interactions in each moment. She also looks at how these momentary processes map on to individual and cultural differences in emotion, and how they are predictive of health and well-being. The hallmark of her research is studying emotion in the real-world contexts people navigate in their daily lives. Katie holds a BA in Cultural Anthropology, Spanish, and Linguistics from Northwestern University, an MA in Cognitive Linguistics from Bangor University, and a PhD in Psychology from Northeastern University. She was previously a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Social and Cultural Psychology at KU Leuven.

15:00–15:45 Oral Presentations

16:00–17:00 Poster Session
Room: Poster Area

Quality and Agreement in Multilabel Emotion Annotation: A Case Study and Evaluation Framework

Emily Sofi Ohman and Anna Koufakou

Saturday, May 16, 2026 (continued)

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Rina Sakagami, Emmanuel Ayedoun and Masataka Tokumaru

Saturday, May 16, 2026 (continued)

17:00–17:50

Keynote Talk: Dr. Jonathan Gratch | Beyond Emotion Recognition: Expressions as Social Action

Emotion science increasingly agrees that expressions do not simply reveal internal states. Their meaning is contextual, directed at others, and co-constructed in interaction. Yet most computational approaches to "emotion recognition" still assume the opposite: that expressions encode latent states that can be inferred from morphology or timing alone. This assumption is embedded in common practices (such as training models on decontextualized annotations of presumed internal states) and even in emerging regulations like the EU AI Act, which treats emotion recognition as the recovery of hidden mental properties. My talk argues that the problem is not just methodological but conceptual. While contemporary theories emphasize context and co-construction, they offer little guidance on how to formalize these ideas computationally. What, precisely, counts as context? How do social goals, interactional dynamics, and cultural conventions shape what an expression means? Drawing on work in affective computing and social interaction, I propose a shift from recognizing emotions to modeling communicative behavior. I will illustrate how expressions function within interpersonal processes – negotiation, coordination – and how their meaning emerges through interaction rather than residing in the face or body alone. I conclude by outlining a research agenda for computational models that treat expressions as socially situated actions: specifying the structure of context, capturing co-construction over time, and enabling interactive systems that participate in, rather than merely observe, the creation of meaning.

Dr. Jonathan Gratch is a Research Full Professor of Computer Science and Psychology at the University of Southern California (USC) and Chief Science Officer at USC's Institute for Creative Technologies, but will be transitioning to a Professor of Computing at Vanderbilt University in the Fall. He completed his Ph.D. in Computer Science at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign in 1995. Dr. Gratch's research focuses on computational models of human cognitive and social processes, especially emotion, and explores these models' potential to advance psychological theory and shape human-machine interaction. He is the founding Editor-in-Chief (retired) of IEEE's Transactions on Affective Computing, Associate Editor for Affective Science, Emotion Review, and former President of the Association for the Advancement of Affective Computing (AAAC). He is a Fellow of AAAI, AAAC, and the Cognitive Science Society.

17:50–18:00

Closing Remarks