

Rym Zalila-Wenkstern

IFAAMAS Board Candidacy

Rym Zalila-Wenkstern is an Associate Professor at the Department of Computer Science, University of Texas at Dallas (UTD). She holds a Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Ottawa, Canada, a Doctorat de Spécialité in Computer Science, and an Engineering degree in Computer Engineering both from the University of Tunis, Tunisia. Her research projects are sponsored by several organizations including the National Science Foundation, Sandia National Laboratories, Rockwell Collins, Texas Research Alliance, and the US Department of Education. Her work was awarded the Best Demo Award (AAMAS'13) and twice the Best Paper Award (Agent-Directed Simulation 2012, Spring Simulation Multi-Conference 2012). She has served on numerous program committees and several conferences organizing committees including general chair of the International Conference on Software Engineering and Data Engineering (2012) and program co-chair of the IEEE African Conference on Software Engineering (2011, 2012). She co-chaired the AAMAS Demo-track in 2017 and the Engineering Multi-Agent Systems (EMAS) workshop in 2016. Rym served on the AAMAS PC from 2014-2017, on the AAMAS SPC in 2018 and was nominated for the best PC award in 2017. She was also elected to serve on the EMAS Steering Committee in 2017.

Rym is a Software Engineer “by design” and a Multi-Agent System Engineer by “desire and intention.” For many years, before joining the Agent community, she was a researcher in mainstream software engineering and published in the areas of *formal specification and validation, software reuse, software metrics, software model transformation, software visualization, and software engineering education*. Rym’s current interests are in the application and the definition of engineering processes, methodologies, and techniques for the development of agent-based solutions for real-world problems. Given the skepticism towards the agent paradigm in the US, her initial efforts focused on the development of large-scale agent-based simulation frameworks to simulate and validate a variety of realistic societal systems. Recently, the validation of an agent-based traffic management model through her large-scale simulator allowed her to begin the development of the first agent-based traffic prototype in the City of Richardson, Texas. Her agent-based simulation framework is also being used to simulate disaster management for the City of Wellington, New Zealand.

Having been exposed to both fields, Rym believes that Agent-Oriented is a natural successor to Object-Oriented. For the agent paradigm to gain widespread acceptance, it is necessary to develop high impact real-world agent systems. Rym aims at determining ways to entice a new generation of SE researchers to join the MAS field and support the understanding that the various MAS research areas are complementary and not competitive. Her perspective also includes promoting attendance at EMAS and assisting in the definition of critical challenges for the systematic engineering of agent-based systems.