

Zeyu (Derek) Zeng

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EDUCATION

Beijing 101 High School	2021.9 - 2024.7
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	2024.8 - present
(Current) GPA: 3.93	Bachelor of Science Program in Physics, Dual degree in Mathematics
(Current) Technical GPA: 3.87	
Courses:	
Fall 2024: MATH 423 (Differential Geometry, A), PHYS 225 (Relativity & Math, A), PHYS 211 (University Physics: Mechanics, A), ESL 111 (Introduction to Academic Writing I, A), HK 110 (Contemporary Health, A), ENG 100 (Engineering Orientation, A)	
Spring 2025: MATH 416H (Abstract Linear Algebra Honor Session, A+), MATH 441 (Differential Equations, A-), MATH 347H (Introduction to Abstract Mathematics Honor Session, A), PHYS 325 (Classical Mechanics I, A), PHYS 214 (University Physics: Quantum, B+), ESL 112 (Introduction to Academic Writing II, A+), MATH 497 (Individual Study, A+)	
Fall 2025 ¹ : MATH 518 (Smooth Manifold), MATH 535 (General Topology), MATH 424 (Honors Real Analysis), PHYS 435 (Electromagnetic Fields I), MATH 492 (Undergraduate Research), Geometry of Quantum Mechanics (Fields Institute Shared Graduate Course), RST 335 (Leisure and Consumer Culture)	

RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

Exploring the Teapot Effect: Microscale Investigations and Mechanistic Analysis	2023.4 - 2023.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research Instructor: Prof. Baoyi ChenStudied the formation and the factor of the teapot effect.S. -T. Yau High School Science Competition Semifinalist.	
Relativistic Corrections to Hadron-Hadron Correlation Function	2023.11 - 2025.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research Instructor: Prof. Baoyi Chen, Prof. Jiaxing ZhaoExamine relativistic corrections to scattering phase shifts and correlation functions using the two-body Dirac equation framework.See arXiv:2506.19240 [hep-ph]	
Undergraduate Research, Schwarzschild-like Metric in Isotropic Coordinates	2025.3 - present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research instructor: Dr. Elena KoptievaDerive the coordinate transformation from the canonical form to the isotropic coordinate.Develop a general method for transforming Kiselev solutions into isotropic coordinates	
Illinois Math Lab Research Project, Arithmetics of Polynomials in Knots Theory	2025.8 - 2025.12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research instructor: Dr. Yi WangStudy the Knots theory by the factorization of Alexander polynomial.	

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

UIUC Undergraduate Research Symposium, Poster Presenter	2025.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Poster named “Derivation of Conformally Flat Metric for Generalized Schwarzschild-like Solutions”	
“The Largest and The Smallest”, SJTU Summer School on Physics, Participant	2025.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivered the presentation named “Gauge Theory of Shallow Water” with collaborators.	

HONORS

S. -T. Yau High School Science Award, Semi-Finalist	2023.9
UIUC James Scholar	2025.2 - present
Dean’s List, Fall 2024, UIUC Grainger College of Engineering	2025.4
Ralph O. Simmons Undergraduate Research Scholarship	2025.4

¹Letter grades are midterm grades for all courses in the current semester.