

# Haofeng Zhang

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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My primary research interests are in data-driven decision-making and prediction at the intersection of operations research, data science, and machine learning. I am particularly interested in the following fields:

- **Methodologies and theory**
  - **Data-driven decision-making under uncertainty**, including data-driven contextual optimization, sequential decision-making under uncertainty (e.g., bandits and causality), and stochastic optimization under constraints.
  - **Simulation and uncertainty quantification**, including Monte Carlo methods, generative models, model evaluation and calibration, distributional robustness and shift.
- **Applications** in real-world problems, including recommendation systems and generative artificial intelligence.

## EDUCATION

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**Columbia University**, New York City, New York

Department of Industrial Engineering and Operations Research

- Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Operations Research 2024
- Master of Science (M.S.) in Operations Research 2019

**University of Science and Technology of China**, Hefei, China

Department of Mathematics

- Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Mathematics and Applied Mathematics 2017

## PUBLICATIONS & WORKING PAPERS

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Author ordering in most papers is alphabetical as is convention in OR/IE/MS, while exceptions are marked by \*.

### Published papers

- Ziyi Huang, Henry Lam, and **Haofeng Zhang**. Efficient Uncertainty Quantification and Reduction for Over-Parameterized Neural Networks. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)*, 2023.
- Ziyi Huang, Henry Lam, Amirhossein Meisami, and **Haofeng Zhang**. Optimal Regret Is Achievable with Bounded Approximate Inference Error: An Enhanced Bayesian Upper Confidence Bound Framework. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)*, 2023.
- Henry Lam and **Haofeng Zhang**. Doubly Robust Stein-Kernelized Monte Carlo Estimator: Simultaneous Bias-Variance Reduction and Supercanonical Convergence. *Journal of Machine Learning Research (JMLR)*, 24(85):1-58, 2023.

### **New England Statistics Symposium Student Paper Award 2022**

- Ziyi Huang, Yu Gan, Theresa Lye, Yanchen Liu, **Haofeng Zhang**, Andrew Laine, Elsa Angelini, and Christine Hendon.\* Cardiac Adipose Tissue Segmentation via Image-Level Annotations. *IEEE Journal of Biomedical and Health Informatics (JBHI)*, 2023.
- Ziyi Huang, Henry Lam, and **Haofeng Zhang**. Conditional Coverage Estimation for High-Quality Prediction Intervals. *Journal of Systems Science and Systems Engineering* (Invited Paper to the Special Issue on Simulation and AI), 1-31, 2023.
- Haoxian Chen, Ziyi Huang, Henry Lam, Huajie Qian, and **Haofeng Zhang**. Learning Prediction Intervals for Regression: Generalization and Calibration. In *International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS)*, pp. 820-828. PMLR, 2021.
- Henry Lam and **Haofeng Zhang**. Neural Predictive Intervals for Simulation Metamodeling. In *Winter Simulation Conference (WSC)*, pp. 1-12. IEEE, 2021.

- Ziyi Huang, **Haofeng Zhang**, Andrew Laine, Elsa Angelini, Christine Hendon, and Yu Gan.\* Co-Seg: An Image Segmentation Framework against Label Corruption. In *IEEE International Symposium on Biomedical Imaging (ISBI)*, pp. 550-553. IEEE, 2021.
- Ziyi Huang, Yu Gan, Theresa Lye, **Haofeng Zhang**, Andrew Laine, Elsa Angelini, and Christine Hendon.\* Heterogeneity Measurement of Cardiac Tissues Leveraging Uncertainty Information from Image Segmentation. In *International Conference on Medical Image Computing and Computer-Assisted Intervention (MICCAI)*, pp. 782-791. Springer, Cham, 2020.
- Henry Lam and **Haofeng Zhang**. On the Stability of Kernelized Control Functionals on Partial and Biased Stochastic Inputs. In *Winter Simulation Conference (WSC)*, pp. 344-355. IEEE, 2019.

#### ACM SIGSIM WSC 2019 Student Award 2019

#### Papers under review/revision

- Adam N. Elmachtoub, Henry Lam, **Haofeng Zhang**, and Yunfan Zhao. Estimate-Then-Optimize versus Integrated-Estimation-Optimization versus Sample Average Approximation: A Stochastic Dominance Perspective. Under revision in *Operations Research*.

#### Finalist, INFORMS George Nicholson Student Paper Competition 2023

- Henry Lam and **Haofeng Zhang**. Prediction Intervals for Simulation Metamodeling. Under revision in *ACM Transactions on Modeling and Computer Simulation (TOMACS)*.

#### Working papers

- Ziyi Huang and **Haofeng Zhang**. Bayesian Bandit Algorithms with Approximate Inference in Stochastic Linear Bandits.
- Ziyi Huang, Henry Lam, Amirhossein Meisami, **Haofeng Zhang**, Jie Zhang, and Yunfan Zhao. Calibration of Deep Bayesian Bandits via Off-Policy Evaluations.
- Ziyi Huang, Henry Lam, and **Haofeng Zhang**. Validating Stochastic Simulation Models via Maximum Mean Discrepancy.
- Ziyi Huang, Hongshan Liu, **Haofeng Zhang**, Fuyong Xing, Andrew Laine, Elsa Angelini, Christine Hendon, and Yu Gan.\* Push the Boundary of SAM: A Pseudo-label Correction Framework for Medical Segmentation.

## **FUNDING & SELECTED AWARDS**

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Supports from the following funding sources are gratefully acknowledged:

- Cheung-Kong Innovation Doctoral Fellowship 2021-2023 (covering tuition and stipend, approximately \$160K in total)

The following awards are gratefully acknowledged:

- Finalist, INFORMS George Nicholson Student Paper Competition 2023
- NeurIPS Scholar Award 2023
- New England Statistics Symposium Student Paper Award 2022
- ACM SIGSIM WSC 2019 Student Award 2019
- Graduation Thesis Award 2017
- Undergraduate Research Award 2016

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

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- **Co-Session Chair:** WSC 2022, INFORMS Annual Meeting 2021
- **Reviewer:**
  - Journals: Applied Probability Journals, INFORMS Journal on Computing, Journal of Machine Learning Research, Management Science, Operations Research, SIAM Journal on Optimization.
  - Conferences: AISTATS, IJCAI, ISBI, NeurIPS.

## SELECTED INVITED TALKS

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### Estimate-Then-Optimize versus Integrated-Estimation-Optimization versus Sample Average Approximation: A Stochastic Dominance Perspective

- INFORMS Optimization Society Conference (Houston TX, 03/2024), INFORMS Annual Meeting (Phoenix AZ, 10/2023), Purdue Research Symposium on Operations (West Lafayette IN, 09/2023), International Conference Stochastic Programming (Davis CA, 07/2023), SIAM Conference on Optimization (Seattle WA, 06/2023).

### Doubly Robust Stein-Kernelized Monte Carlo Estimator: Simultaneous Bias-Variance Reduction and Supercanonical Convergence

- New England Statistics Symposium (Storrs CT, 05/2022), INFORMS Annual Meeting (Anaheim CA, 10/2021).

### Validating Stochastic Simulation Models via Maximum Mean Discrepancy

- INFORMS Annual Meeting (Indianapolis IN, 10/2022).

### Learning Prediction Intervals for Regression: Generalization and Calibration

- ICML Workshop on Distribution-Free Uncertainty Quantification (Baltimore MD, 07/2022), INFORMS Annual Meeting (Virtual, 11/2020).

### On the Stability of Kernelized Control Functionals on Partial and Biased Stochastic Inputs

- INFORMS Annual Meeting (Seattle WA, 10/2019).

## OTHER EXPERIENCE

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### Data Science Intern at Adobe Inc.

*05/2022 - 08/2022*

- Enhanced the personalized recommendation system by conducting the following: 1) Built calibration modules for model and hyperparameter selection. 2) Embedded off-policy evaluation/optimization approaches into adaptive designs of bandit algorithms. 3) Assessed performance of the proposed framework in the presence of several practical issues, including low click-through rates, approximate Bayesian inference, changing action sets, and delayed feedback.

### Data Science Intern at Adobe Inc.

*05/2021 - 08/2021*

- Built a new personalized recommendation system at Adobe by conducting the following: 1) Implemented and compared multiple contextual bandit algorithms. 2) Proposed robust, effective, and computationally efficient deep-learning-based Bayesian bandit algorithms. 3) Developed fundamental tools to analyze Bayesian bandit frameworks with theoretical justifications on the algorithm performance in the presence of approximate Bayesian inference.

### Research Assistant & Teaching Assistant at Columbia University

*2018 - 2024*

- As a teaching assistant on the following graduate-level courses: Introduction to Financial Engineering (Fall 2020); Quantitative Risk Management (Spring 2020); Credit Risks & Credit Derivatives (Fall 2019); Applications Programming for Financial Engineering (Spring 2019, Fall 2018)

## SKILLS

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- **Programming Languages & Software:** Python (including PyTorch, TensorFlow, Keras, SciPy, scikit-learn, Numpy, Matplotlib); R; C; MATLAB; SQL; LaTeX