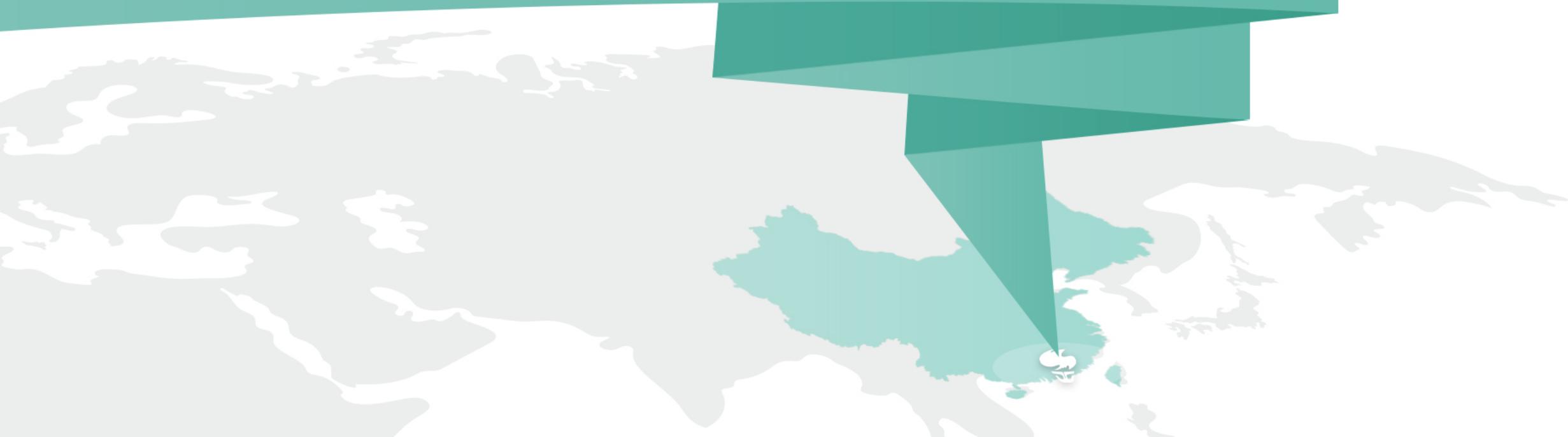


# CS PhD Application in the US

Zhaoxu ZHANG



# Self-Introduction

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教育经历：

- 美国南加州大学 (USC) 计算机科学博士，导师：Prof. William GJ Halfond, 2020年9月至今
- 南方科技大学计算机科学本科，导师：刘烨庞助理教授，2016年9月至2020年7月

曾获荣誉：

- 南加州大学全额奖学金
- 南科大十佳毕业生、国家奖学金、优秀学生一等奖x2等

发表刊物：

- Zhaoxu Zhang, Hengcheng Zhu, Ming Wen, Yida Tao, Yepang Liu, Yingfei Xiong. How Do Python Framework APIs Evolve? An Exploratory Study. In the 27th IEEE International Conference on Software Analysis, Evolution and Reengineering, London, Ontario, Canada, February 2020.

# Content



- 01 What is PhD?**
- 02 CS PhD Application in the US**
- 03 Life as a PhD**

# What is PhD



## Doctor of Philosophy

A PhD is usually required to produce **original research** that **expands the boundaries of knowledge**, normally in the form of a thesis or dissertation.

# What is PhD

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## Doctor of Philosophy

A PhD is usually required to produce **original research** that **expands the boundaries of knowledge**, normally in the form of a thesis or dissertation.

- Isolation 5-7 Years, 3 Papers
- Uncertainty
- “Poverty”

# What is PhD

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## Doctor of Philosophy

A PhD is usually required to produce **original research** that **expands the boundaries of knowledge**, normally in the form of a thesis or dissertation.

- Isolation 5-7 Years, 3 Papers
- Uncertainty
- “Poverty”
- Stronger
- More Job Options
- Freedom

# How to Apply

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# My Application



GPA: 3.82, 6/146

TOEFL: 101

GRE: 323

Reference Letter: SUSTech+UCI

Research:

- First-author Conference Full Paper
- Research Experience in SUSTech and UCI

Offer:

- USC **with Fellowship**
- UW Madison
- UT Austin
- UMass
- Purdue
- UC Irvine **with Fellowship**
- Penn State
- TAMU

Rej:

- UChicago

# Before Application



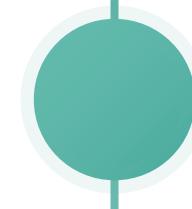
Research  
Experience

GPA

Language



Research Direction; Research Advisor; Summer Research Program; Reference Letter; Paper



Important for PhD or for some professor  
(Major GPA also weights.)



TOFEL>100, GRE>320

# Before Application



Research  
Experience



## Research Direction & Research Advisor

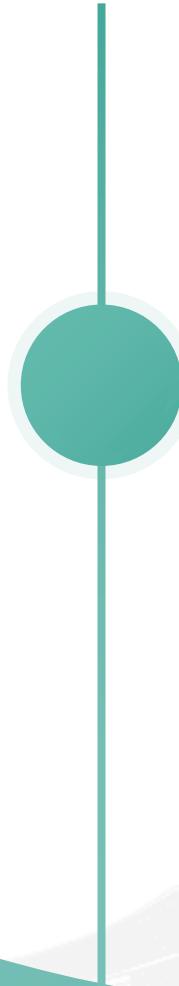
《中国计算机学会推荐国际学术会议和期刊目录》

- Personal page: publication, student
- Personal appointment
- Try in advance

# Before Application



Research  
Experience



## Summer Research Program

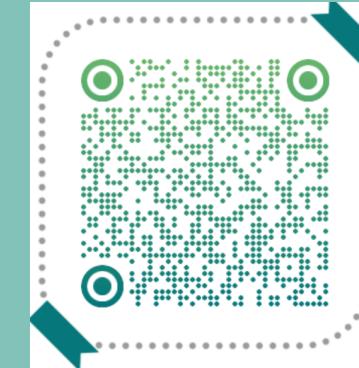
- SRP choice in SUSTech
  - CSST @ UCLA
  - UCInspire @ UCI
  - VSRP @ KAUST
- Goal
  - Reference letter
  - Return offer

# Before Application

Research  
Experience

## Reference Letter

- Strong letter / good letter / normal letter / ..
- Has connection?
- Famous?



How to get a high-quality  
reference letter?

# During Application

选校，套磁  
Oct. - Dec.



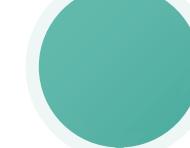
- PhD选校即选导师
- 海套定位
- 学术套+Connection确定最终列表

文书准备、网申  
Oct. - Dec.

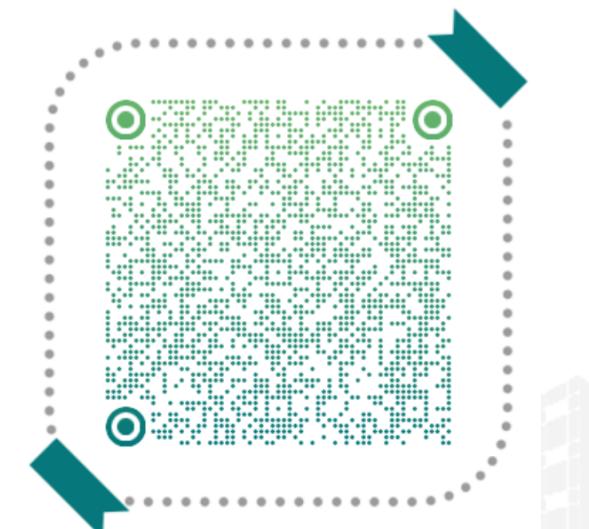


- 是否需要报中介?

再次套磁、面试  
Dec. - next Feb.



- 走心学术套
- 面试经验参考南科大飞跃手册  
-计算机系-15级谢丹宁分享



# During Application

选校, 套磁  
Oct. - Dec.

## 选校

- 选导师关注点: 科研方向, 学术能力, 个人风格
- 挖掘Connection: coauthor, lab mates, advisor, etc
- 关注个人主页: publication, alumni, open for new PhD
  - 注意pub是否是自己的工作 (自己一作或学生一作)
- 常用网站
  - USNews CS Best School
  - CSRanking
  - Grantnoma

# During Application

选校, 套磁  
Oct. - Dec.

## 套磁

- 选校前海套为定位, 选校后学术套为面试
- 海套邮件
  - 表达兴趣
  - 展示能力: GPA, 相关经历, paper等
  - 结语+cv附件
- 学术套邮件
  - 仔细阅读喜欢的论文, 提出自己的看法, 约面试

# SUSTech Application



《南科大飞跃手册》

<https://sustech-application.github.io/2020-Fall/#/>

# Difference in PhD Study



## Independence

## In-depth



# Last Words



1. 优雅即高效
2. Notion
3. 多积累日常英语
4. 好好学做饭
5. 学会自己做决定
6. 想到了就立马去做
7. Email: zhaoxu.zhang.1@gmail.com

# Last Words



Thanks,  
Question?

