

Alexander James Wallar

Email: alex@wallar.me , Website: <http://wallar.me>
Last Updated: June 7, 2015

SUMMARY

I am studying Computer Science at the University of St Andrews in Scotland and will be graduating in June 2015. I am a student contractor at the Naval Center for Applied Research in Artificial Intelligence at the Naval Research Laboratory and a research assistant at in the Computational Robotics Laboratory at the Catholic University of America. Starting September 2015, I will be a Ph.D. candidate in the Distributed Robotics Laboratory at MIT.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Starting September 2015
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, Massachusetts

Will be working under the supervision of Dr. Daniela Rus as part of the Distributed Robotics Laboratory working on algorithms for multi-agent surveillance and persistent monitoring. Receiving the School of Engineering Lemelson Presidential Fellowship and the Office of the Dean of Graduate Education Diversity Fellowship.

B.Sc. (Honours) Computer Science September 2012 – June 2015
University of St Andrews St Andrews, Scotland

Direct entry into second year. First class honours degree (expected).

Dissertation Title: Generating Safe Trajectories in Stochastic Dynamic Environments by Leveraging Information About Obstacle Motion.

International Baccalaureate Diploma September 2011 – June 2012
George Mason High School Falls Church, Virginia

Extended Essay Title: To What Extent Can Numbers of Different Bases be Used to Hide Information Effectively?

EXPERIENCE

Student Contractor January 2015 – Present
Naval Research Laboratory Washington DC, USA

Working as part of the Distributed Autonomous Systems Group at the Naval Center for Applied Research in Artificial Intelligence developing algorithms for multi-agent surveillance and persistent monitoring. Also developing middlewares that provide abstractions for controlling multi-agent systems

Undergraduate Research Assistant August 2013 – Present
The Catholic University of America Various Locations

Working as part of the Computational Robotics Laboratory developing algorithms for swarm manipulation that seek to enable a group of unmanned aerial vehicles to provide surveillance over a given region. Also creating path planning algorithms for swarms that generate paths through cluttered dynamic environments.

Research Intern May 2014 – August 2014
Naval Research Laboratory Washington DC, USA

Was selected as part of the Naval Research Enterprise Internship Program. Worked as part of the Distributed Autonomous Systems Group at the Naval Center for Applied Research in Artificial Intelligence and developed algorithms for surveillance of risk sensitive areas by a team of UAVs.

Research Assistant February 2014 – October 2015
School of Computer Science, University of St Andrews St Andrews, Scotland
Worked with Dr. Juan Ye to develop computer vision techniques to produce haptic feedback from two dimensional images.

Research Assistant September 2013 – June 2014
School of Psychology, University of St Andrews St Andrews, Scotland
Configured a novel experimental setup that involves three active-shutter 3D displays of different sizes that can be viewed simultaneously through beam splitters.

Research Intern May 2013 – August 2013
University of Notre Dame Notre Dame, USA
Was selected as part of the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates program. Developed web applications for concussion detection. Also developed a framework for in browser eye tracking and gaze prediction.

High School Research Intern July 2012 – August 2012
The Catholic University of America Washington DC, USA
Created an interface for controlling an iRobot Create using voice commands spoken to an Android enabled device. Also developed algorithms for swarm path planning that enabled a group of robots to move from an initial configuration to a goal configuration.

AWARDS

Fellowships & Grants

- School of Engineering Lemelson Presidential Fellowship, MIT
- Office of the Dean of Graduate Education Diversity Fellowship, MIT
- Symposium Series on Computational Intelligence Travel Grant, IEEE

Academic Prizes & Recognition

- Best Paper Award Nominee, Symposium Series for Computational Intelligence, IEEE
- Dean's List, University of St Andrews
- Best Poster Prize, University of Notre Dame

Hackathons

- Second place, KCL Tech Society HackKing's Hackathon
- Finalist, Barclays Openminds Hackathon
- First place, J.P. Morgan Code for Good Hackathon
- Second place, University of Edinburgh Security Appathon
- Third place, University College London Hackin' the City

Professional Affiliations	• Student Member, IEEE	Nov '14 – Present
	• Student Member, IEEE Computational Intelligence Society	Nov '14 – Present
	• Student Member, IEEE Robotics and Automation Society	Mar '15 – Present
Positions of Responsibility	• Class Representative, University of St Andrews	September 2014 – Present
	• President, St Andrews Computing Society	May 2013 – June 2014
Technical Interests	Swarm Robotics, Emergent Behaviour, Complex Systems, Autonomous Systems, Path Planning, Aerial Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Computational Intelligence, Evolutionary Algorithms, Robotic Middleware, Stochastic Planning, Sampling Based Motion Planning, Evolutionary Robotics, Swarm Intelligence, Consensus Filtering, Mapping, Surveillance, Search & Rescue, Game Theory	
Programming Languages	Python, C, C++, Java, JavaScript, Matlab, Go, C#, Maple, Mathematica, Haskell	
Programming Libraries	ROS, OpenCV, ZeroMQ, Flask, NumPy, Matplotlib, OpenKinect, SciPy	
Publications		

Peer-reviewed

1. **Wallar A**, Plaku E, and Sofge D (2014): “**Reactive Motion Planning for Unmanned Aerial Surveillance of Risk-Sensitive Areas.**”, IEEE Transactions on Automation Science and Engineering, in press
2. Sofge D, Sydney N, **Wallar A**, and Sullivan K (2015): “**Mobile Autonomous Navy Teams for Information Surveillance and Search (MANTISS).**”, Naval Research Laboratory Review, in press
3. **Wallar A** and Plaku E (2014): “**Path Planning for Swarms in Dynamic Environments by Combining Probabilistic Roadmaps and Potential Fields.**”, IEEE Symposium on Swarm Intelligence
4. **Wallar A**, Plaku E, and Sofge D (2014): “**A Planner for Autonomous Risk-Sensitive Coverage (PARCov) by a Team of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.**”, IEEE Symposium on Swarm Intelligence
5. **Wallar A** and Plaku E (2014): “**Path Planning for Swarms by Combining Probabilistic Roadmaps and Potential Fields.**”, Springer LNAI Towards Autonomous Robotic Systems, vol. 8069, pp. 417 – 428

Theses

1. **Wallar A** (2015): “**Generating Safe Trajectories in Stochastic Dynamic Environments by Leveraging Information About Obstacle Motion**”, Undergraduate Thesis, University of St Andrews

Posters & Presentations

1. **Wallar A**, Plaku E, and Sofge D (2014): **Risk Sensitive Surveillance with Optimal Sensor Quality for Distributed Robotic Systems**, Entrepreneur First UnHacked, London, UK
2. **Wallar A**, Poellabauer C, Sazonovs A, and Flynn P (2014): **Camgaze.js: A JavaScript Library for Eye Tracking and Gaze Prediction**, Edinburgh University Young Scientific Researchers Association (EUYSRA) Conference, Edinburgh, UK
3. **Wallar A**, Choi C, and Sazonovs A (2013): **Bowtie: In-browser Mobile Aided Sensor Acquisition using HTML5**, Scottish Informatics and Computer Science Alliance (SICSA) DemoFest, Glasgow, UK
4. **Wallar A**, Poellabauer C, Sazonovs A, and Flynn P (2013): **Camgaze.js: A JavaScript Library for Eye Tracking**, Scottish Informatics and Computer Science Alliance (SICSA) DemoFest, Glasgow, UK