

# Ashwin Balakrishna

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EDUCATION	UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA <i>Ph.D.</i> in Computer Science (Focus in AI + Robotics) Advisor: Ken Goldberg	2018-Present
	California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA <i>Bachelor of Science</i> in Electrical Engineering Advisors: Steven Low, Hyuck Choo	2014-2018 GPA: 3.9/4.0
EXPERIENCE	UC Berkeley AUTOLAB, Ph.D. Student Researcher	2018-Present
	SpaceX, Avionics Software Intern	2017
	Intel, Power Electronics Intern	2016
	Caltech Choo Lab, Student Researcher	2015-2017
PREPRINTS	[1] Ryan Hoque, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna</b> , Brijen Thananjeyan, Carl Putterman, Michael Luo, Daniel Seita, Daniel S. Brown, Ken Goldberg. LazyDagger: Reducing Context Switching in Interactive Robot Imitation Learning 2020.	
	[2] Aditya Ganapathi, Priya Sundaresan, Brijen Thananjeyan, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna</b> , Daniel Seita, Jennifer Grannen, Minh Hwang, Ryan Hoque, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Nawid Jamali, Katsu Yamane, Soshi Iba, Ken Goldberg. Learning to Smooth and Fold Real Fabric Using Dense Object Descriptors Trained on Synthetic Color Images 2020.	
PUBLICATIONS	[24] Brijen Thananjeyan*, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna*</b> , Suraj Nair, Michael Luo, Krishnan Srinivisan, Minh Hwang, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Julian Ibarz, Chelsea Finn, Ken Goldberg. Recovery RL: Safe Reinforcement Learning with Learned Recovery Zones. NeurIPS Robot Learning Workshop 2020.	
	[23] Michael Danielczuk*, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna*</b> , Daniel Brown, Ken Goldberg. Exploratory Grasping: Performance Bounds and Asymptotically Optimal Algorithms for Learning to Robustly Grasp an Unknown Polyhedral Object. <i>Conference on Robot Learning (CoRL)</i> 2020.	
	[22] Jennifer Grannen*, Priya Sundaresan*, Brijen Thananjeyan, Jeffrey Ichnowski, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna</b> , Minh Hwang, Vainavi Viswanath, Michael Laskey, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Ken Goldberg. Learning Robot Policies for Untangling Dense Knots in Linear Deformable Structures. <i>Conference on Robot Learning (CoRL)</i> 2020 - <b>Oral</b> .	
	[21] Aditya Ganapathi*, Priya Sundaresan*, Brijen Thananjeyan, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna</b> , Daniel Seita, Ryan Hoque, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Ken Goldberg. MMGSD: Multi-Modal Gaussian Shape Descriptors for Correspondence Matching in 1D and 2D Deformable Objects. IROS Workshop on Managing Deformation: A Step Towards Higher Robot Autonomy 2020.	
	[20] Daniel Seita, Aditya Ganapathi, Ryan Hoque, Minh Hwang, Edward Cen, Ajay Kumar Tanwani, <b>Ashwin Balakrishna</b> , Brijen Thananjeyan, Jeffrey Ichnowski,	

Nawid Jamali, Kastu Yamane, Soshi Iba, John Canny, Ken Goldberg. Deep Imitation Learning of Sequential Fabric Smoothing Policies. *International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS)* 2020.

[19] Katherine Li\*, Michael Danielczuk\*, **Ashwin Balakrishna\***, Vishal Satish, Ken Goldberg. Accelerating Grasp Exploration by Leveraging Learned Priors. *Conference on Automation Science and Engineering (CASE)* 2020.

[18] Shivin Devgon, Jeffrey Ichnowski, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Harry Zhang, Ken Goldberg. Orienting Novel Objects using Self-Supervised Rotation Estimation. *Conference on Automation Science and Engineering (CASE)* 2020.

[17] Ryan Hoque\*, Daniel Seita\*, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Aditya Ganapathi, Ajay Kumar Tanwani, Nawid Jamali, Katsu Yamane, Soshi Iba, Ken Goldberg. VisuoSpatial Foresight for Multi-Step, Multi-Task Fabric Manipulation. *Robotics: Science and Systems (RSS)* 2020.

[16] Brijen Thananjeyan\*, **Ashwin Balakrishna\***, Ugo Rosolia, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Aaron Ames, Ken Goldberg. A Sample-Based Learning MPC Algorithm for Stochastic Dynamical Systems with Controller Domain Expansion and Goal Set Adaptation. *Workshop on the Algorithmic Foundations of Robotics (WAFR)* 2020.

[15] Brijen Thananjeyan\*, **Ashwin Balakrishna\***, Ugo Rosolia, Felix Li, Rowan McAllister, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Sergey Levine, Francesco Borrelli, Ken Goldberg, Safety Augmented Value Estimation from Demonstrations (SAVED): Safe Deep Model-Based RL for Sparse Cost Robotic Tasks. *Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L)*, *International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)*, and *NeurIPS Deep Reinforcement Learning Workshop* 2020.

[14] Priya Sundareshan, Jeniffer Grannen, Brijen Thananjeyan, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Michael Laskey, Kevin Stone, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Ken Goldberg. Learning Interpretable and Transferable Rope Manipulation Policies Using Depth Sensing and Dense Object Descriptors, *International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)* 2020.

[13] **Ashwin Balakrishna\***, Brijen Thananjeyan\*, Jonathan Lee, Felix Li, Arsh Zahed, Joseph E. Gonzalez, Ken Goldberg. On-Policy Robot Imitation Learning from a Converging Supervisor, *Conference on Robot Learning (CoRL)* - **Oral** and *International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML) Sequential Decision Making Workshop* 2019.

[12] Michael Danielczuk\*, Andrey Kurenkov\*, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Matthew Matl, David Wang, Roberto Martin-Martin, Animesh Garg, Silvio Savarase, Ken Goldberg. Mechanical Search: Multi-Step Retrieval of a Target Object Occluded by Clutter, *International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)* 2019.

[11] Zisu Dong, Sanjay Krishnan, Sona Dolasia, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Michael Danielczuk, and Ken Goldberg. Automating Planar Object Singulation by Linear Pushing with Single-point and Multi-point Contacts, *Conference on Automation Sciences and Engineering (CASE)* 2019.

[10] Jeong Oen Lee, Vinayak Narasimhan, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Marcus R. Smith, Juan Du, David Sretavan, and Hyuck Choo. Fabry–Perot Optical Sensor and Portable Detector for Monitoring High-Resolution Ocular Hemodynamics. *IEEE Photonics*

*Letters* 2019.

[9] Men-Andrin Meier, Zachary E Ross, Anshul Ramachandran, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Suraj Nair, Peter Kundzicz, Zefeng Li, Jennifer Andrews, Egill Hauksson, Yisong Yue. Reliable Real-Time Seismic Signal/Noise Discrimination With Machine Learning. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Solid Earth and Machine Learning for Geophysical and NeurIPS Geochemical Signals Workshop* 2018.

[8] Jeong Oen Lee, Haeri Park, Juan Du, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Oliver Chen, David Stretavan, Hyuck Choo. A microscale optical implant for continuous in vivo monitoring of intraocular pressure. *Microsystems and Nanoengineering* 2017.

[7] Frank L Brodie, David A Ramirez\*, Sundar Pandian\*, Kelly Woo, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Eugene De Juan, Hyuck Choo, Robert H Grubbs. Novel positioning sensor with real-time feedback for improved postoperative positioning: pilot study in control subjects. *Clinical Ophthalmology* 2017.

[6] Jeong Oen Lee, Haeri Park, Juan Du, Vinayak Narasimhan, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Oliver Chen, David Stretavan, Hyuck Choo. In vivo Intraocular Pressure Monitoring using Implantable Optomechanical Sensor. *International Symposium on Optomechatronic Technology* 2016.

[5] Jeong Oen Lee, Haeri Park, Juan Du, Vinayak Narasimhan, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Oliver Chen, David Stretavan, Hyuck Choo. Validation of sensor for postoperative positioning with intraocular gas. *Clinical Ophthalmology* 2016.

[4] Hyunjun Cho, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Yuan Ma, Joen Oen Lee, Hyuck Choo. Efficient Power Generation from Vocal Fold Vibrations for Medical Electronic Implants. *International Conference on Micro Electro-Mechanical Systems (MEMS)* 2016.

[3] **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Oliver Chen, Jeong Oen Lee, Hyuck Choo. A Neural Network Approach to Monitor Intraocular Pressure for Glaucoma Diagnosis. *PIERS (Oral Presentation)* 2016.

[2] Sophia Chen, Jeff Rosenberg, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Grace Ma, Hyunjun Cho, Jeong Oen Lee and Hyuck Choo. On-Demand Power Source for Medical Electronic Implants: Acousto-Mechanical Vibrations from Human Vocal Folds. *NAPA Institute Workshop on Enabling Future Health Care: the Role of Micro and Nano Technologies* 2015.

[1] **Ashwin Balakrishna**. Optimal Control Strategies for Trajectory Optimization with Applications to Continuous Solar Flight. *Oral Presentation at INFORMS Annual Meeting, E=mc<sup>2</sup> High School Mathematical Science Journal, Intel Science Talent Search Semifinalist* 2013.

## TEACHING

*Teaching Assistant*, California Institute of Technology  
EE 111: Signal-Processing Systems and Transforms

2017

## AWARDS & HONORS

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship  
Henry Ford II Scholar Award (Top GPA in EE at Caltech)

2018-2021  
2017

**PROFESSIONAL** *Paper Reviewing:*

**ACTIVITIES**

IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) 2020

IEEE International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS) 2020

IEEE Conference on Automation Sciences and Engineering (CASE) 2019, 2020

Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS): Machine Learning  
for the Physical Sciences Workshop 2019

*Services:*

Berkeley AI Research Admissions Reader 2019

Berkeley Be a Scientist Program Volunteer 2018

Mentored 10+ Undergraduate and Masters Students on Projects Related to Rein-  
forcement Learning, Control Theory, and Deformable Manipulation 2018-2020