# Brandon (Yifan) Yang

brandonyifanyang.com

#### EDUCATION

### University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science; GPA: 3.91/4.00

Aug. 2021 - May. 2025

Email: jqm9ba@virginia.edu

• Relevant Coursework: ML, RL (G), NLP (G), Probabilistic ML (G), Human-Robot Interaction (G), Optimization, Data Structures & Algorithms, Theory of Computation, Computer Systems Organization, Software Engineering

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

## Learning and Interactive Robotics, University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

Aug 2024 - Present

Advisor: Prof. Yen-Ling Kuo

• Ongoing Senior Capstone: Vision-Language-Action (VLA) model for robotic manipulation.

• Investigating VLA model outputting both language and corresponding actions within a unified transformer output space, grounding both domains simultaneously at each timestep.

## University of Maryland

College Park, MD

Advisor: Prof. Jia-Bin Huang

May 2024 - Present

- Semantically Aware 3D Gaussian Splatting
  - \* Developed novel method to inject semantically aware embeddings into 3D Gaussian Splatting (3DGS) scenes for 3D understanding and segmentation tasks.
  - \* Leveraged video segmentation from SAMv2 to maintain temporal consistency in injection of CLIP features from 2D training set to 3DGS scene, ensuring stable and accuracte 3D embeddings.

# Collaborative Robotics Lab, University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

Advisor: Prof. Tariq Iqbal

May 2022 - May 2024

- o Grounded Location for Object Manipulation (GLOMA)
  - \* Zero-shot image-editing model grounded by language instructions for object relocation and manipulation tasks, designed for downstream robotic applications using goal-conditioned RL.
  - \* Integrated language grounding with visual perception using bounding box guidance from pre-trained language models, enabling precise object relocation without external supervision.
  - \* Collected and annotated custom dataset for fine-tuning pre-trained language and vision models.
- o Centralized multi-agent RL for Collaborative Tasks
  - \* Developed long-horizon on/offline centralized MARL for robotic bolt screwing tasks.
  - \* Designed and optimized custom reward functions in multi-agent framework for task completion and agent collaboration.
  - \* Deployed and tested custom simulated environments in IsaacGym for training and evaluation.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

#### Teaching Assistant

Machine Learning w/ Prof. Rich Nguyen

Aug 2024 - Present

• Authored comprehensive course notes to support student learning and understanding.

## Teaching Assistant

Theory of Computation w/ Prof. Mark Floryan

Jan 2024 - May 2024

 $\circ\,$  Held weekly office hours and review sessions to assist students with course material.

## Lab Lead Teaching Assistant

Computer Systems Organization w/ Prof. John Hott

Jan 2023 - May 2023

• Led weekly lab sections with short lectures and hands-on activities for 70+ students.

# Honors

- Dean's Engineering Research Scholarship (Awarded \$5000): University of Virginia
- Entrepreneurship Cup Winner (Given \$1000 in funding): University of Virginia
- Dean's List: University of Virginia
- National Merit Scholar:

# Presentations

- GLOMA: Grounded Location for Object Manipulation: RSS 2023
- Centralized Multi-Agent Reinforcement Learning for Collaborative Tasks: ICRA 2023

# PROJECTS

- QuantSoftware Toolkit: Open source python library for financial data analysis and machine learning for finance.
- Github Visualization: Data Visualization of Git Log data using D3 to analyze project trends over time.
- Recommendation System: Music and Movie recommender systems using collaborative filtering on public datasets.

# Programming Skills

• Languages: Scala, Python, Javascript, C++, SQL, Java Technologies: AWS, Play, React, Kafka, GCE