

ZIRUI CHENG

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CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL

2026 (Expected)

M.S. in Computer Science

GPA: 4.00/4.00

Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

2024

B.Eng. in Computer Science and Technology

B.Econ. in Economics and Finance

GPA: 3.86/4.00

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing, Reinforcement Learning, and Game Theory.

PUBLICATIONS

Preprints

- [1] Towards Strategic Persuasion with Language Models

Zirui Cheng, Jiaxuan You.

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2509.22989>.

Working Papers

- [1] Modeling Human Decision-Making in Persuasion Games with Language Models

Zirui Cheng, Zeyu Shen, Vartan Shadarevian, Peter Henderson.

Draft Available Upon Request.

Published Papers

As a Graduate Student

- [5] ResearchTown: Simulator of Human Research Community

Haofei Yu*, Zhaochen Hong*, Zirui Cheng*, Kunlun Zhu*, Keyang Xuan, Jinwei Yao, Tao Feng, Jiaxuan You.

ICML 2025 – Forty-second International Conference on Machine Learning.

- [4] How Far Are We From AGI?

Tao Feng*, Chuanyang Jin*, Jingyu Liu*, Kunlun Zhu*, Haoqin Tu, Zirui Cheng, Guanyu Lin, Jiaxuan You.

TMLR 2024 – Transactions of Machine Learning Research.

As an Undergraduate Student

- [3] Wikibench: Community-Driven Data Curation for AI Evaluation on Wikipedia

Tzu-Sheng Kuo, Aaron Halfaker, Zirui Cheng, Jiwoo Kim, Meng-Hsin Wu, Sherry Tongshuang Wu, Kenneth Holstein, Haiyi Zhu.

CHI 2024 – 2024 ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.

- [2] **TreeQuestion: Assessing Conceptual Learning Outcomes with LLM-Generated Multiple-Choice Questions**
 Zirui Cheng, Jingfei Xu, Haojian Jin.
CSCW 2024 – 2024 ACM SIGCHI Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing.
- [1] **Modeling the Trade-off of Privacy Preservation and Activity Recognition on Low-Resolution Images**
 Yuntao Wang*, Zirui Cheng*, Xin Yi, Yan Kong, Xueyang Wang, Xuhai Xu, Yukang Yan, Chun Yu, Shwetak Patel, Yuanchun Shi. (* indicates co-first author)
CHI 2023 – 2023 ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ Visiting Student, Department of Computer Science Advisor: Peter Henderson	2025 Summer
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL Research Assistant, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science Advisor: Hao Peng	2025 Spring – Now
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL Research Assistant, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science Advisor: Jiaxuan You	2024 Fall – Now
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA Visiting Student, Human-Computer Interaction Institute, School of Computer Science <i>Supported by Tsinghua University – Carnegie Mellon University Summer Program</i> Advisor: Kenneth Holstein, Haiyi Zhu	2023 Summer
Tsinghua University, Beijing, China Research Assistant at Department of Computer Science and Technology Advisor: Yuanchun Shi, Shwetak Patel (University of Washington)	2022 Spring – 2024 Spring

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Software Design Lab University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, CS222 Instructor: Michael Woodley	2025 Fall, 2025 Spring
Deep Learning with Graphs University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, CS598 Instructor: Jiaxuan You	2024 Fall

HONORS

Outstanding Graduate Award Department of Computer Science and Technology, Tsinghua University	2024
Freshman Scholarship Tsinghua University	2019

SKILLS

Programming: Python, C/C++, JavaScript/CSS/HTML, Java, R, Verilog, VHDL, Rust.

Languages: Chinese (native), English (fluent), German (conversational), French (basic).