

# 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; Economics and Computation.

## PUBLICATIONS

### *Preprints*

[1] **Towards Strategic Persuasion with Language Models**

Zirui Cheng, Jiaxuan You

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

### *Peer-Reviewed Papers*

[5] **ResearchTown: Simulator of Human Research Community**

Haofei Yu\*, Zhaochen Hong\*, Zirui Cheng\*, Kunlun Zhu\*, Keyang Xuan, Jinwei Yao, Tao Feng, Jiaxuan You. (\* indicates co-first author)

**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. (\* indicates co-first author)

**TMLR 2024 – Transactions of Machine Learning Research.**

[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

### **Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA**

Visiting Student, Human-Computer Interaction Institute,  
School of Computer Science

2023 Summer

*Supported by Tsinghua University – Carnegie Mellon University Summer Program*  
Advisor: **Kenneth Holstein, Haiyi Zhu**

### **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:* Mandarin Chinese (Native), English (Fluent, TOEFL 105), German (Medium, Equivalently A2 Level).