

ZIRUI CHENG

CURRICULUM VITAE

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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 , <i>Princeton, NJ</i> Visiting Student, Department of Computer Science Advisor: Peter Henderson	2025 Summer
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign , <i>Urbana, IL</i> Research Assistant, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science Advisor: Hao Peng	2025 Spring – Now
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign , <i>Urbana, IL</i> Research Assistant, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science Advisor: Jiaxuan You	2024 Fall
Carnegie Mellon University , <i>Pittsburgh, PA</i> 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 , <i>Beijing, China</i> 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).