Kathleen (Kate) Candon

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RESEARCH OVERVIEW

I am interested in understanding how we can **create interactive agents that are more effectively able to help people.** My current research explores techniques to **leverage multimodal implicit feedback humans provide naturally** during interactions. In the future, I want to explore how to use these techniques to better understand how and when agents should ask for explicit feedback from humans during interactions. I am excited about creating situated agents that can reason about and **adapt to the preferences of the humans they interact with, creating more positive experiences for users**.

EDUCATION

2020 – Present **Yale University**
PhD in Computer Science
Advisors: Marynel Vázquez & Brian Scassellati

2012 – 2016 **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)**
B.S. in Mathematics with Computer Science
GPA: 5.0/5.0, Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2020 – Present **Interactive Machines Group & Social Robotics Lab at Yale University**
Graduate Student Researcher

- Researching prosocial behavior, implicit feedback, and explicit feedback in human-agent interactions
- Exploring situated agents and robotics applications in elder care settings to promote safe and independent aging in place
- Mentoring undergraduate students in various research activities

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS: PREPRINTS, UNDER REVIEW

2022 **Candon, K.,** Hsu, Z., Chen, J., Kim, Y., Tsoi, N., & Vázquez, M. (2022). Human Perceptions, Preferences, and Nonverbal Reactions to Prosocial Help from an Interactive Agent. *Under Review.*

2022 Tsoi, N., **Candon, K.,** Milkessa, Y., & Vázquez, M. (2022). Bridging the Gap: Unifying the Training and Evaluation of Neural Network Binary Classifiers. arXiv preprint arXiv:2009.01367. *Under Review.*

PEER-REVIEWED WORKSHOP PAPERS

2022 **Candon, K.,** & Vázquez, M. (2022). Context^2: On the importance of the context of context in human robot interaction. *In HRI workshop on Context-Awareness in Human-Robot Interaction,* 2022

AWARDS

2020, 2022 — Honorable Mention for National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

2022 — CRA-WP Grad Cohort for Women: selected to attend conference for Women in Computing

MENTORING

2022- — Helen Zhou (Undergraduate Researcher, Interactive Machines Group)
2022- — Ariel Melendez (Undergraduate Researcher, Social Robotics Lab)
2021-2022 — Jesse Chen (Undergraduate Researcher, Interactive Machines Group)
2021 — Yoony Kim (Undergraduate Researcher, Interactive Machines Group)
2021 — Zoe Hsu (STARS Undergraduate Researcher, Interactive Machines Group)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Spring 2022 — **Artificial Intelligence, Yale University**
Teaching Fellow

Fall 2021 — **Intelligent Robotics, Yale University**
Teaching Fellow

Fall 2015 — **Fundamentals of Programming, MIT**
Lab Assistant

Winter 2014 — **Global Teaching Labs at MIT**
Teaching Ambassador in Pavia, Italy
- Planned and taught month of math and computer science classes to high school students

WORK EXPERIENCE

2018-2020 — **Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)**
Senior Strategy Manager, MassHealth
- Lead Covid-19 projects including: scheduling bi-weekly safety audits of almost 400 nursing facilities, developing and funding infection protocols for inpatient psychiatric facilities
- Conducted research and analyses to refine strategic direction of integrated care programs for dual eligible members in Massachusetts as part of ongoing negotiations with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Researched eligibility policies and processes to identify opportunities for improvement
- Managed primary care initiatives across 6+ agencies as part of EOHHS effort to create a behavioral health ambulatory treatment system
- Collaborated with academic research teams analyzing Medicaid data to provide programmatic input
- Managed a Strategy Analyst who was promoted to Strategy Manager after one year

2016-2018 **McKinsey & Company**
Business Analyst

- Researched and communicated solutions for clients on strategic and analytical projects across industries including financial services, retail, transportation, and the public sector
- Investigated customer experience in the public sector through descriptive and multivariate analysis of survey with 15,000+ respondents, contributing to McKinsey article “Understanding the customer experience with government”
- Overhauled sourcing process, built SQL database, and structured business-as-usual analyses for major U.S. fashion retailer

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2017-2020 **Back on My Feet**
Volunteer with Boston, MA & Washington, DC chapters

- Supported members in their transition from homelessness to independence through weekly runs

2016-2018 **McKinsey Social Impact Group**
Member of pro-bono teams

- Researched profiles of successful, scalable businesses in rural communities in support of the Center on Rural Innovation
- Conducted market research on potential donors and giving organizations in the DC area for Back on My Feet

2016 **CodeIt at MIT**
Volunteer Mentor

- Mentored students in MIT’s student-run weekly programming class for middle school girls