Michael Yin | Curriculum Vitae

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I design and assess technology to *support meaning-making* and *reflection* on lived experiences.

Education

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC — Sep 2022 - Present
Ph.D. in Computer Science
Advisor: Robert Xiao
Expected Graduation: Aug 2026

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC — Sep 2020 - Sep 2022
M.Sc. in Computer Science
Advisor: Robert Xiao
Thesis: *How Subtle Design in Video Games Impacts Player Experience: Qualitative Studies of Two Design Features*

University of Toronto, Toronto, ON — Sep 2015 - May 2020
B.A.Sc. in Engineering Science

Academic Appointments

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
Graduate Research Assistant - X-Lab — Sep 2020 - Present
- Research assistant for various projects under the supervision of Professor Robert Xiao as part of a M.Sc. and Ph.D.

University of Toronto, Toronto, ON — May 2019 - May 2020
Research Assistant
- Research thesis under the guidance of Professor Timothy Chan.
- Topic: Analyzing Curling Performance Using a Dynamic Programming Approach.

Research Assistant - Dynamic Graphics Project — May 2017 - Aug 2017
- NSERC-sponsored summer research partially funded by Professor Kyros Kutalakos.
- Project Description: Calculating 3D Object Depth Using Structured Light Imaging.

Research Assistant - Intelligent Sensory Microsystems Laboratory — May 2016 - Aug 2016
- Summer research project under the supervision of Professor Roman Genov.
- Project Description: Developing a Novel Biomedical Wearable for Performance Analysis through Unsupervised Machine Learning.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

[* denotes equal contribution]

How We See Changes How We Feel: Investigating the Effect of Visual Point-of-View on Decision-Making in VR Environments 📝 — Nov 2024
Michael Yin, Robert Xiao
Journal Paper accepted at CSCW 2024

VirtualNexus: Enhancing 360° Video AR/VR Collaboration with Environment Cutout and Virtual Replicas 📝 — Oct 2024
Xincheng Huang*, Michael Yin*, Kaseya Xia, Robert Xiao
Conference Paper accepted at UIST 2024 [Acceptance Rate: 24.0%]

Press A or Wave: User Expectations for NPC Interactions and Nonverbal Behaviour in Virtual Reality 📝 — Oct 2024
Michael Yin, Robert Xiao
Journal Paper accepted at CHI PLAY 2024 [Acceptance Rate: 23.5%]

Lies, Deceit, and Hallucinations: Player Perception and Expectations Regarding Trust and Deception in Games 📝 — Apr 2024
Michael Yin, Emi Wang, Felix Ng, Robert Xiao
Conference Paper accepted at CHI 2024 [Acceptance Rate: 26.4%]

Drifting Off in Paradise: Why People Sleep in Virtual Reality 📝 — Apr 2023
Michael Yin, Robert Xiao
Conference Paper accepted at CHI 2023 [Acceptance Rate: 28.4%]

How Should I Respond to "Good Morning?": Understanding Choice in Narrative-Rich Games 📝 — Jun 2022
Michael Yin, Robert Xiao
Conference Paper accepted at DIS 2022 [Acceptance Rate: 23.0%]
🏆*Honorable Mention* Award [top 4.3% of all submissions]

The Reward for Luck: Understanding the Effect of Random Reward Mechanisms in Video Games on Player Experience 📝 — May 2022
Michael Yin, Robert Xiao
Conference Paper accepted at CHI 2022 [Acceptance Rate: 24.7%]

Other Research Work

How Subtle Design in Video Games Impacts Player Experience: Qualitative Studies of Two Design Features — Aug 2022
M. Sc. Thesis

Points Gained in Curling: Modelling Curling as a Markov Reward Process June 2021
Michael Yin**,** Timothy Chan
Abstract accepted and presented at CORS 2021

Calculating 3D Object Depth Using Structured Light Imaging Aug 2017
Presentation at Undergraduate Summer Research Conference

Teaching Appointments

Teaching Assistant Sep 2020 - Dec 2021
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
- CPSC304 - Introduction to Relational Databases (3 terms)
- CPSC344 - Introduction to Human-Computer Interaction (1 term)

Mentorship

Across UofT and UBC, I have mentored 5 students (all undergrad). 3 of them have worked with me in research projects, 2 of which have co-authored papers with me. I have previously been a REX (Research EXperience Program) mentor, as part of UBC's undergraduate research program. I have also mentored at various hackathons at UBC, such as cmd-f (Western Canada's largest hackathon that supports underrepresented genders in tech).

Academic Service

Associate Chair Ongoing
- Associate Chair for CHI PLAY'24 WiP, CSCW'25 Full Papers

Student Volunteer Ongoing
- Student Volunteer at DIS'22, CHI'23, CHI'24

Paper Reviewer Ongoing
- Reviewed papers for CHI'23, DIS'23, UIST'23, IMX'23, CHI'24, and many more
- 5 Outstanding Review Recognitions at CHI'24 and CHI PLAY'24

Graduate Recruiting Group Leader Dec 2022 - Apr 2024
- Wrote initial reviews for all HCI applicants for two recruiting seasons.

Industry Experience

Software Engineering Intern - Shopify (International R&D Team) May 2019 - Aug 2019
Toronto, ON
- Wrote backend code to process and model data using user input for Shopify's shipping calculator.
- Created an integration pipeline to allow Shopify partners to incorporate their applications.

- Developed UI widgets to improve merchant experience and collect data on merchant behaviour.

Software Engineering Intern - Stanza (Data Team) May 2018 - Apr 2019
San Francisco, CA
- Implemented a backend API platform to centralize ad revenue payments and show revenue statistics.
- Developed automated jobs to query for and display engagement data.
- Created an event collection and transformation pipeline using AWS tools and Airflow.

Awards, Grants, and Scholarships

Awards

NSERC CGS D May 2023 - Apr 2026
- $40,000/year, for 3 years.

UBC Computer Science 4YF Sep 2022 - Aug 2026
- $18,200/year plus tuition, for the first 4 years of PhD studies.

University of Toronto Dean's List (8 times) Sep 2015 - May 2020

Grants

NSERC Computer Science Undergraduate Student Research Award ($6000) May 2017
- Proposal: Calculating 3D Object Depth Using Structured Light Imaging

Scholarships

The Crocker Foundation Bursary ($2600) Dec 2016
Mario and Dorothy Pesando Scholarship ($2567) Oct 2016
University of Toronto Scholar ($6000) Sept 2015