

Milton O. Candela-Leal

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miltoncandela.github.io

EDUCATION

Tecnológico de Monterrey

Monterrey, Mexico

BS in Biomedical Engineering (GPA = 95/100 = 3.8/4.0)

2020 - Dec 2024

Highest honors (*Summa Cum Laude*) and highest co-curricular award

(*Excellence Diploma*); top graduate in professional development (*Borrego de Oro*, 1/1500).

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

NSF IUCRC BRAIN Center, Tecnológico de Monterrey

Monterrey, Mexico

Research Assistant

Mar 2021 - Jul 2023, Aug 2024 - May 2025

Advisor: Prof. Mauricio A. Ramírez-Moreno, PhD

Projects: Biometrics (EEG, PPG/EDA, CV) and Machine Learning to predict:

Mental fatigue (2021); engineering interest (2021); emotion (2023).

- Force prediction through pose estimation keypoints and RNN (2022).

- Cognitive load in chess (2023); closed-loop BCI for attention (2024).

- Multi-sensor (Camera, Radar, LiDAR) for autonomous vehicles (2025).

Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical School

Boston, MA, USA

Research Intern

Aug 2023 - Jul 2024

Advisor: Prof. Kiho Im, PhD

Projects: Fetal MRI brain subplate segmentation through attention U-Net;

non-linear qMRI for CHD classification; MICCAI FeTA Challenge 2024.

NSF IUCRC BRAIN Center, University of Houston

Houston, TX, USA

Research Intern

Spring 2022

Advisor: Prof. Jose L. Contreras-Vidal, PhD

Project: EEG functional connectivity and bispectrum analysis between actors.

PUBLICATIONS

(* indicates equal contribution)

Ramírez-Moreno, M.A., Hernández-Mustieles, M.A., **Candela-Leal, M.O.** *et al.* (accepted). Workplace Measures of Mental Fatigue. In V.B. Patel (Eds.), *The Scientific Basis of Fatigue*.

Candela-Leal M.O., Alanis-Espinosa, M., Murrieta-González, J. *et al.* (2025). Neural Signatures of STEM Learning and Interest in Youth. *Acta Psychologica*, 255, 104949.

doi:[10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.104949](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.104949). PubMed PMID:[40168892](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40168892/)

Mandujano-Granillo, J.A., **Candela-Leal, M.O.**, Ortiz-Vazquez, J.J. *et al.* (2024). Human-Vehicle Interfaces: A Review for Autonomous Electric Vehicles. *IEEE Access*, 12, 121635–121658.

doi:[10.1109/ACCESS.2024.3450439](https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2024.3450439)

Blanco-Ríos, M.A.*, **Candela-Leal, M.O.***, Orozco-Romo, C. *et al.* (2024). Real-time EEG-based Emotion Recognition for Neurohumanities: Perspectives from Principal Component Analysis and Tree-based Algorithms. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 18, 1319574. doi:[10.3389/fnhum.2024.1319574](https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2024.1319574).

PubMed PMID:[38545515](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38545515/) (editor's choice, 2024)

Candela-Leal, M.O., Gutiérrez-Flores, E.A., Presbítero-Espinosa, G. *et al.* (2022). Multi-Output Sequential Deep Learning Model for Athlete Force Prediction on a Treadmill Using 3D Markers.

Applied Sciences, 12(11), 5424. doi:[10.3390/app12115424](https://doi.org/10.3390/app12115424)

Lozoya-Santos, J.J., Ramírez-Moreno, M.A., **Candela-Leal, M.O.** *et al.* (2022). Current and Future Biometrics: Technology and Applications. In R.A. Ramirez-Mendoza, J.J. Lozoya-Santos, R. Zavala-Yoé *et al.* (Eds.), *Biometry: Technology, Trends and Applications* (1st ed., pp. 1–30). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press. doi:[10.1201/9781003145240-1](https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003145240-1) ISBN: 9781003145240

Ramírez-Moreno, M.A., Carrillo-Tijerina, P., **Candela-Leal, M.O.** *et al.* (2021). Evaluation of a Fast Test Based on Biometric Signals to Assess Mental Fatigue at the Workplace—A Pilot Study.

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18(22), 11891.

doi:[10.3390/ijerph182211891](https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182211891). PubMed PMID:[34831645](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34831645/)

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Candela-Leal, M.O., Ramírez-Moreno, M.A., & Lozoya-Santos, J.J. (accepted). Task Resolution Time Estimation through Cognitive Load: An EEG Study of Chess Players. In *Proceedings of the 47th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)*. San Francisco, CA: Taylor & Francis

- Ramírez-Arceo, G.A., **Candela-Leal, M.O.**, Tudon-Martinez, J.C. *et al.* (*accepted*). Innovative Spaces with Advanced Technologies such as Research Activity Simulators for Engineering Education. In Proceedings of the *16th Global Engineering Education Conference (EDUCON)*. London, United Kingdom: IEEE
- Candela-Leal, M.O.**, Aguilar-Herrera, A.J., Ramírez-Moreno, M.A. *et al.* (2024). Conscious Technologies Projects as a Hub for Real Life Challenges in Engineering Education. In Proceedings of the *15th EDUCON*. Kos, Greece: IEEE. doi:[10.1109/EDUCON60312.2024.10578738](https://doi.org/10.1109/EDUCON60312.2024.10578738)
- Candela-Leal, M.O.**, Martínez-Díaz, D., Orozco-Romo, C. *et al.* (2023). Biomechanics Digital Twin: Markerless Joint Acceleration Prediction Using Machine Learning and Computer Vision. In Proceedings of the *Future of Educational Innovation-Workshop Series: Data in Action*. Monterrey, Mexico: IEEE. doi:[10.1109/IEEECONF56852.2023.10104757](https://doi.org/10.1109/IEEECONF56852.2023.10104757)
- Candela-Leal, M.O.**, García-Briones, J.M., Olivas-Martínez, G. *et al.* (2021). Real-time Biofeedback System for Interactive Learning using Wearables and IoT. In Proceedings of the *6th International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management*. Monterrey, Mexico: IEOM. doi:[10.46254/NA06.20210487](https://doi.org/10.46254/NA06.20210487) (**best undergraduate paper award**)
- Olivas-Martínez, G., **Candela-Leal, M.O.**, Ocampo-Alvarado, J.C. *et al.* (2021). Detecting Change in Engineering Interest in Children through Machine Learning using Biometric Signals. In Proceedings of the *Machine Learning-Driven Digital Technologies for Educational Innovation Workshop*. Monterrey, Mexico: IEEE. doi:[10.1109/IEEECONF53024.2021.9733772](https://doi.org/10.1109/IEEECONF53024.2021.9733772)

INVITED TALKS

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| Panelist , Neuroscience Laboratories @ Tec, (with Prof. Pedro Cortes, Prof. Manuel Cebral ...) | 2025 |
| <i>NeuroTalks@Tec: Meet the Experts</i> , Tecnológico de Monterrey | |
| Guest Lecturer , Decoding Cognitive Performance: From Chess Puzzles to STEM Classrooms, | 2024 |
| <i>Cognitive Neuroscience</i> minor, Tecnológico de Monterrey - School of Humanities and Education | |
| Invited Lecturer , Computer Vision and Facial Recognition, | 2023 |
| <i>Computing Seminar</i> course, UANL - School of Physics and Mathematics | |

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Oral Presentations

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| Digital Twins in Education: Enhancing Student Well-being and Academic Performance with Biometric Insights and Machine Learning. <i>U21 Health Sciences Group 2024 Annual Meeting</i> , Amsterdam University Medical Centers (Amsterdam, Netherlands) (student speaker award) | 2024 |
| High-resolution Fetal Subplate Automatic Segmentation. <i>FNNDSC Research Symposium</i> , Boston Children's Hospital (Boston, MA) | 2024 |
| CHD Fetal Brain Analysis using Combined Quantitative MRI Features and Custom-build Loss Functions. <i>FNNDSC Research Symposium</i> , Boston Children's Hospital (Boston, MA) | 2024 |
| Biomechanics for the Digital Twin of Performance: Study Cases. <i>Conscious Technologies for Smart Communities Workshop</i> (Virtual) | 2021 |
| <i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i> (2004), a Cultural and Ideological Instructor of the Millennial Viewer. <i>51th Research and Development Congress</i> (Virtual) | 2021 |

Poster Presentations

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| FALCONS: Fetal Automatic Landmark Computation and Optimization for Neuroimaging Segmentation. <i>27th International Conference on MICCAI</i> (Marrakesh, Morocco) | 2024 |
| Real-time Dual-feature Mental Fatigue State SVM Classification using EEG Delta Bandpower. <i>19th IEEE-EMBS International Conference on BSN</i> , MIT Media Lab (Boston, MA) | 2023 |
| Biometric Cabin for Neurohumanities Lab. <i>NSF IUCRC BRAIN 2023 Annual Meeting</i> , Arizona State University (Phoenix, AZ) | 2023 |
| Brain on Acting: Neural Dynamics of Actor-Actor Dyads During an Acted Scene. <i>NSF IUCRC BRAIN 2022 Annual Meeting</i> , University of Houston (Houston, TX) | 2022 |
| Identifying Engineering Interest in Children through Machine Learning using Biometric Signals. <i>43rd Annual Conference of the IEEE-EMBS</i> (Virtual) | 2021 |
| Digital Twin of Biomechanics: Joint Force Prediction using Video and AI. At the <i>NSF IUCRC BRAIN 2021 Annual Meeting</i> (Virtual) | 2021 |

HONORS AND AWARDS

Editor's Choice Selection , Frontiers in Human Neuroscience [eBook] Top 3% of 2024 papers (16/510) based on quality.	2025
Summa Cum Laude , Tecnológico de Monterrey Top 5% of the graduating class (highest academic honors).	2024
Borrego de Oro , Tecnológico de Monterrey [newsletter] Top graduate in professional development, among ~1,500 Fall 2024 graduates.	2024
Excellence Diploma , Tecnológico de Monterrey	2024
International Diploma , Tecnológico de Monterrey	2024
Student Speaker Award , U21 Health Sciences Group [newsletter] One of the two teams that won funding (\$1600 USD) to present at U21 HSG '24, selected from MSc/BSc research projects across 21 universities on all continents.	2024
Outstanding Student Award , Tecnológico de Monterrey Top 1% of engineering students (80/8000) with the most outstanding trajectories.	2023, 2024
1 st Place - Undergraduate Student Paper Competition, 6 th North American IEOM	2021
1 st Place - R&D Improvement Proposals (\$250 USD), 18 th Conexión Tec	2021
Academic Talent Scholarship , Tecnológico de Monterrey	2020

WORKING PAPERS

Gondova, A., Candela-Leal, M.O. , Yun, H.J. <i>et al.</i> (<i>under review</i>). Attention-gated Convolutional Neural Network for Automated Segmentation of Fetal Subplate from MRI.	
Candela-Leal, M.O. , Wong-Cantú, C.G., Ramírez-Moreno, M.A. <i>et al.</i> (<i>submitted</i>). Enhancing Engagement with Immersive Spaces: A Biomechanical Analysis of Dance	
Candela-Leal, M.O. , Marrufo-Franco, L.A., Cruz-Gómez, C.F. <i>et al.</i> (<i>submitted</i>). Closed-Loop BCI with Haptic Feedback and Machine Learning for Attention Support in ADHD Students	
Zalevskiy, V., Sanchezza, T., Kaandorpe, M. <i>et al.</i> (<i>submitted</i>). Advancing Automated Fetal MRI Brain Tissue Annotation and Biometry: Insights and Trends from FeTA Challenge 2024.	
Candela-Leal, M.O. , Martínez-Hernández, A., Moreno-Salazar, I.E. <i>et al.</i> (<i>in prep</i>). Enhanced Real-Time EEG-based Emotion Recognition using an Spherical VAD Model	
Candela-Leal, M.O. , Tudon-Martinez, J.C., & Lozoya-Santos, J.J. (<i>in prep</i>). Multi-Sensor Fusion for Vehicle Perception and Intent Recognition in Adverse Weather: A Review	

TEACHING

German A2 Teacher, Mentoour MX	2022-2024
Middle School Math and Spanish Teacher, Aprendamos Juntos	2021-2022
Independent High School Physics Teacher	Fall 2019
FIRST® LEGO® League Mentor, Little Minds	Spring 2019

GRANTS

SimEmotions: An Emotion-Centered Collaborative Learning Platform, <i>Project Groups Funding: Clinical Simulation (\$5000 USD)</i> , U21 Health Sciences Group, with Prof. Karien Henrico (University of Johannesburg), Prof. Sandra Monteiro (McMaster University), Prof. Ignacio Andrés Villagrán Gutiérrez (PUC Chile), Prof. Allison Mandrusiak (The University of Queensland), and Prof. John Fung (The University of Hong Kong)	2025-2026
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SKILLS SUMMARY

Languages	Python (3 years), R (2 years), MATLAB (1 year), Shell (3 months), SQL (3 months) English (C1), German (B1), Spanish
Frameworks	Numpy, Scipy, Pandas, Matplotlib, Scikit-learn, OpenCV, TensorFlow, Keras, BrainFlow FreeSurfer, FSL, MRtrix3, NiBabel, ANTs, PyDicom, IRTK, NUC, TochIO, MNE, OSC Lattice, Dplyr, TidyR, Caret, GA, Ggplot, Shiny
Tools	Git, Anaconda, CUDA, CMake, Tableau, Microsoft Excel, G*Power, Overleaf, \LaTeX
Platforms	Linux, Ubuntu, ROS, Windows, Arduino, Raspberry

PRESS

TecScience, Neurohumanities Lab: Detecting Emotions in Real Time to Transform Education	2025
TecScience, Future Classrooms of the Future: Real-Time Monitoring of Students' Brain Activity	2025
NSF IUCRC BRAIN, BRAIN Center Spring Newsletter (pp. 4, 9-10)	2023

Last Update: April 2025