

# Life as a PhD student

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Old Dominion University

# About Me

- 3rd year PhD student @ODU
  - Joined on Fall 2019
- Former Research Intern
  - Los Alamos National Laboratory
  - Dr. Martin Klein (@mart1nkle1n)
  - Dr. Lyudmila Balakireva (@Milbala)
- Former Teaching Assistant
- Research Assistant
  - Dr. Sampath Jayarathna (@openmaze)
- Research Areas
  - Eye/ Gaze Tracking
  - Computer Vision
  - Deep Learning
  - Machine Learning



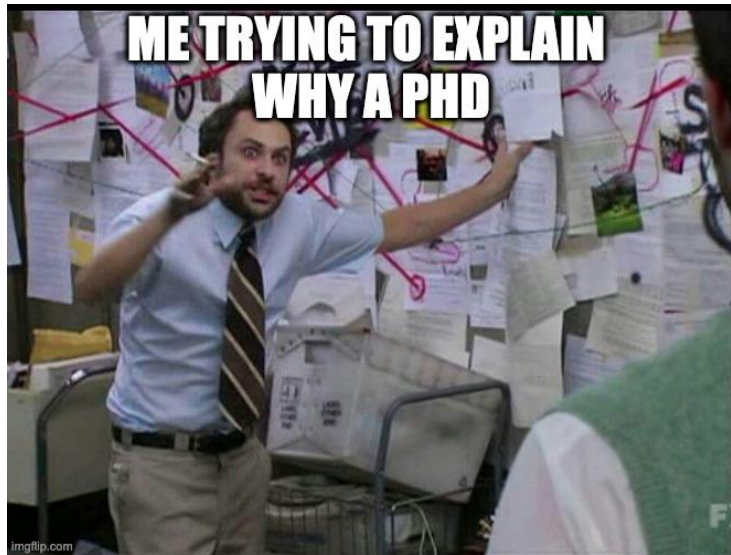
# About Me - Before ODU

- BSc in Engineering @UOM (University of Moratuwa)
- Software Engineer @Gloabal Wavenet
  - High available distributed systems
  - Product development and integration
- Visiting Instructor @UOM
  - CS 3032 - Computer Networks
- Junior Consultant @UOM
  - Instructor
  - Department service



# The beginning - Why a PhD

- Permanent academic positions
  - Requires a PhD
  - Requires research skills
- Job opportunities
  - Research scientist
- Other
  - Work with smart people
  - Get to code
  - Try (or break) new stuff



# Developing Research Topic

- Make sure
  - Chose an interesting topic
  - Manageable in size
  - Competent (or willing to be)
- Be ready to
  - Shift gears
  - Fine-tune the topic
  - Read a lot
- Find a theoretical base

# Research Topic - Helpful

- Classes
  - Introduction to topics
  - Major theories and developments
- Publications
  - Fine details
  - Recent developments
  - Overlooked concepts/ topics
- Supervisor
  - Opinions
  - Directions

**coursera**

**Google** Scholar



Papers With Code

# Working on Topic - My Experience

- Take small steps
  - Manageable amounts
- Keep motivated
  - No desired results
  - Rejections
  - Imposter syndrome
- Get help
  - Advisor
  - Lab mates



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# How we work

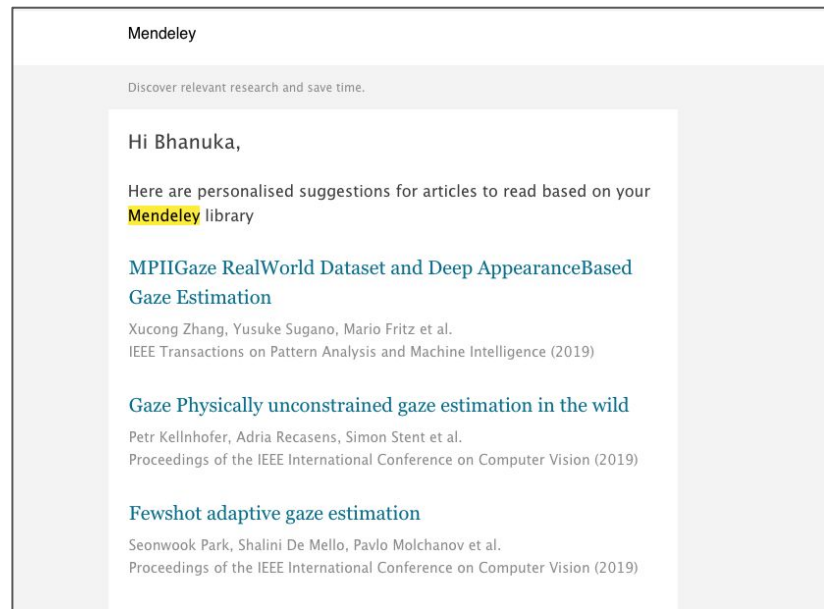
- Advising
  - Weekly meetings
  - Progress presentations/ demos
  - Casual meetings
- Collaborations
  - Internal (within NirdsLab, WSDL)
  - External (UCSD, Clemson, ..)
- Volunteering
  - Paper review in lab
  - Study participants





# Some tips

- Use reference management tools
  - I use Mendeley
- Familiarize with Latex
  - I use overleaf
  - Start with homeworks
- Use social media
  - Twitter
  - ResearchGate
- Start writing
  - Blogs
  - Technical reports



Mendeley Suggestions

# More tips

- Use version control
  - I use GitHub
- Collaborate
  - Easier to spot errors
  - Free “unlimited” reviews
- Volunteer
  - Conferences (Reviewing, sub-reviewing)
  - Journals
  - Events
- Find your caffeinated drink
  - Coffee
  - Tea ..



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# Summary

- Find an interesting topic
- Keep motivated
- Take small steps
- Find your schedule
  - Advising
  - Project work
- Use tools
  - Reference management
  - Writing
  - Version control



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Research Group: [@WebSciDL](https://twitter.com/WebSciDL), [@NirdsLab](https://twitter.com/NirdsLab)