

Roman Aguilera-Arevalo

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Education

Ph.D. Computer Science, Robotics and Machine Learning

University of California, Santa Barbara, GPA: 3.47

January 2018 — June 2024
(Incomplete, All But Dissertation)

Fellowship Awards: Google-CAHSI (\$25,000), NSF-IGERT Network Science (\$30,000), NSF-LSAMP Bridge to Doctorate (\$64,000)

Relevant Coursework: Robotic Locomotion, Robot Dynamics and Control, Computer Vision, Runtime Systems, Convex Optimization, High Dimensional Tensor Analysis, Trustworthy Machine Learning in Security

M.S. Computer Science, Robotics and Machine Learning

University of California, Santa Barbara, GPA: 3.47

January 2024 — June 2024

B.S. Electrical Engineering, Machine Learning and Controls

University of California, San Diego, GPA: 3.09

July 2012 — December 2017

Skills

Programming Languages: C++/C, Python, MATLAB, Racket/Rosette, R, PSPICE, MIPS R2000 Assembly

Software Tools: FastAPI, Xenomai, Ubuntu, Linux, Vim, Roboflow, OpenAI Gym, OpenAI Baselines, Stable-Baselines 3, RLlib, PyBullet, Mujoco, PyTorch, TensorFlow, CVXPY

Algorithms: Model Free Reinforcement Learning, Rapidly Exploring Random Trees

Work Experience

Senior AI & ML Engineering Lead — PivotalVC

August 2025 — Present

40 hours per week

- Contributing to backend service development using FastAPI to build scalable ML endpoints.
- Participating in internal tutorials and foundational work to support future AI/ML deployment.
- Collaborating with engineers to understand system architecture and model integration.
- Exploring infrastructure for scalable, maintainable, and modular ML system deployment.

Computer Vision Engineer — Confidential Robotics Startup

September 2024 — November 2024

40 hours per week

- Trained a neural network to detect the center points of wooden blocks on video frame images.
- Set up and calibrated the camera system in the office and field, ensuring proper image quality.
- Collected image data according to project guidelines, maintaining organization and documentation.
- Made modifications to data collection software to improve ease of use.

AI Robotics Researcher & Engineer — UCSB Dynamic Robotics Lab

May 2018 — June 2024

40 hours per week

- Investigated fundamental performance of control algorithms, as robot parts and simulation environment were changed.
- Investigated performance of Rapidly-Exploring Random Trees and Model-Free/Model-Based Reinforcement Learning.
- Discovered evidence to suggest that the PPO algorithm is learning motions, rather than making sense of goal points.
- Successfully trained a 32-link arm control policy such that the end effector would touch a goal point (Python, OpenAI Gym).
- Developed a Python script that automatically generates a URDF/XML model of a robot's physical properties, for an arbitrary number of links desired on a robot. URDF model was used in a simulation environment (Python, xml.etree.ElementTree Python Package).
- Created over 8 custom reinforcement learning simulation environments for a multi-link robot arm (Python, OpenAI Gym, OpenAI Baselines, Stable-Baselines 3, PyBullet Physics Simulator, Mujoco Physics Simulator).
- Applied PPO algorithm to perform policy search for multilink arm control (Python, OpenAI Baselines, Stable Baselines).
- Applied RRT algorithm to perform trajectory search for multi-link robot arm control, such that the end effector reaches a goal point. Code works for an arbitrary number of links (MATLAB).
- Implemented Value Iteration algorithm with Barycentric Interpolation on both Gridworld and Double Integrator control problems

(MATLAB).

- Performed extensive literature reviews on Reinforcement Learning, Koopman Operator Theory, and Trajectory Optimization.
- Video demonstration of results here https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UX_fEvDkoU-bSyNF386ugiMh_kiHxJVL/view?usp=drive_link .
- Research proposal here https://docs.google.com/document/d/16SNo08ZLLnMyZ6FgPo8fR3_Y8aGxxpDIAwFg4jhn-lw/edit?usp=sharing .

Teaching Assistant — UC Santa Barbara

September 2020 — March 2024

20 hours per week

- Supervised sections for over 8 courses across 3 Departments: CS, ECE and Physics. Robot Dynamics and Control (MATLAB), Machine Learning (Python), Introduction to Data Science II (Python), Object Oriented Design and Implementation (C++), Problem Solving with Computers II (C++), Problem Solving with Computers I (C++), Introduction to Computer Science (Python), Introductory Experimental Physics.
- Created solutions for homework and lab assignments, hosted sections and office hours, and graded assignments.

Research Mentor — UCSB CSEP & EUREKA Scholars Program

June 2020 — August 2020

25 hours per week

- Supervised undergraduate mentee in their summer research project.
- Taught basic concepts in Object-Oriented Programming, Python, Reinforcement Learning, and PyBullet.
- Met with undergraduate mentee at least 2 times per week to ensure adequate progress.

Embedded Systems Researcher & Engineer — UCSD Neural Interaction Lab

December 2014 — October 2016

25 hours per week

- Created a prototype wireless sensor that sends real time skin flexion information to smart phone application.
- Integrated Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) capabilities from PSoC4 onto wearable microelectronic biosensors.
- Optimized BLE capabilities of microelectronics using C Programming and PSoC Creator integrated development environment.
- Researched, designed, built and validated microelectronic circuits for different wearable biosensor applications.

Project Experience

Runtime Systems Course Project — 'RTOS4ROBOTS: Hard Real-Time Operating Systems for Robots' January 2020 — March 2020

72 hours per week

- Compiled a hard-real time Kernel based off Xenomai and Ubuntu for time critical applications. (Linux shell scripting).

Computer Vision Course Project — 'Pixel-RNN'

May 2019 — May 2019

20 hours per week

- Implemented the Pixel Recurrent Neural Network algorithm. (PyTorch).

Publications

Yun-Soung Kim, Jesse Lu, Benjamin Shih, Armen A. Gharibans, Zhanan Zou, Kristen Matsuno, Roman Aguilera, Yoonjae Han, Ann Meek, Jianliang Xiao, Michael Thomas Tolley, and Todd P. Coleman. Scalable manufacturing of solderable and stretchable physiologic sensing systems. *Advanced materials*, 29 39, 2017.