

Ricky Zhao

Carnegie Mellon University
Department of Philosophy
Baker Hall 135
5000 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

zhongxiz@andrew.cmu.edu
<https://zhongxia-zhao.github.io/>
+1 (856) 536-2600

Research Interests

AOS: Game Theory, Decision Theory

AOC: Formal & Social Epistemology, Formal Logic, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Economics

Education

PhD in Philosophy

Expected Spring 2026

Carnegie Mellon University

Dissertation: Bounded Rationality in Sequential Games

Committee: Kevin Zollman (chair), Aydin Mohseni, John Miller

MS in Logic, Computation, and Methodology

2023

Carnegie Mellon University

Thesis: An Evolutionary Model of Subgame Perfect Equilibrium

Advisor: Kevin Zollman

BA in Mathematics

2016

Princeton University

Senior Thesis: Combinatorial Walrasian Equilibria and Social Welfare

Advisors: Matt Weinberg, Mark Braverman

Teaching

Instructor

- Games, Decisions, and Rational Thinking *Summer 2025*
- Introduction to Philosophy *Summer 2024, 2023*
- Logic and Proofs *Summer 2022, 2021*

Teaching Assistant

- Game Theory *Fall 2024*
- Decision Theory *Spring 2024*
- Dangerous Ideas in Science and Society *Fall 2023 (Head TA), Fall 2022 (Head TA), Spring 2022, Fall 2021*
- Philosophy of Economics *Spring 2023*
- Introduction to Philosophy *Fall 2020*

Guest Lectures

- "Interpersonal comparison of welfare." Guest lecture for Philosophy of Economics. Sept. 18, 2025.
- "Evolutionary game theory." Guest lecture for Game Theory; designed accompanying homework assignment. Nov. 21, 2024.

- "Welfare and Paternalism." Guest lecture for Philosophy of Economics. Feb. 21, 2023.
- "Moral Relativism." Guest lecture for Dangerous Ideas in Science and Society. Nov. 17, 2021.

Awards

Dietrich College Graduate Student Teaching Assistant Award

2023

Research

Working Papers

- Zhao, R & Zollman, Kevin. "Strategic evolution in extensive-form games."

Works in Progress

- Zhao, R. "Strategic complexity in sequential games."
- Zhao, R. & Du, Shaokai. "Role-model-based learning in a network."
- Zhao, R. "Strategic complexity in repeated games."

Campus Talks

- "Strategic Complexity in Sequential Games," Work-in-Progress Series, Institute for Complex Social Dynamics, Feb. 12, 2025.

Departmental Service

TA/Grader Committee Member

Nov. 2024 - Present

- Attended meetings to discuss and revise departmental policies for TAs and graders.

Department Grievance Council Member

Sept. 2024 - Aug. 2025

- Served as a student representative for confidential grievance review and deliberation, as required.

Job Search Committee Member (Assistant Professor in Philosophy) *Nov. 2023 - Jan. 2024*

- Reviewed applications in the initial pool and participated in committee meetings to identify shortlist candidates.

Other Work Experience

Native English Teacher

Feb. 2018 - Feb. 2019

English Program in Korea

- Taught multi-level ESL classes for South Korean students in grades 7-10
- Advisor for after-school math and games club. Informally introduced various topics of student interest including algebra, probability, and basic game theory

Skills

Languages

- English (Native)
- Mandarin Chinese (Native)
- Japanese (Intermediate)
- Korean (Intermediate)

Programming Languages

- NetLogo
- Mathematica
- R
- Python