

# Michael Yin | Curriculum Vitae

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I design and assess technology to support *interpersonal* and *intrapersonal social relationships*

## Education

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**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

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**University of British Columbia**, Vancouver, BC

**Graduate Research Assistant** - X-Lab

Sep 2020 - Present

- Research assistant for various human-computer interaction 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 Kutalakov.
- 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

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[\* denotes equal contribution]

**VIBES: Evaluating Real-Time Spatial Interaction Events on the Video Player for Livestreaming Applications** Jun 2025

Michael Yin, Robert Xiao

Conference Paper accepted at IMX 2025 [Acceptance Rate: 40.0%]

**Entertainers Between Real and Virtual - Investigating Viewer Interaction, Engagement, and Relationships with Avatarized Virtual Livestreamers** Jun 2025

Michael Yin, Chenxinran Shen, Robert Xiao

Conference Paper accepted at IMX 2025 [Acceptance Rate: 40.0%]

**TravelGalleria: Supporting Remembrance and Reflection of Travel Experiences through Digital Storytelling in Virtual Reality**  Apr 2025

Michael Yin, Robert Xiao

Conference Paper accepted at CHI 2025 [Acceptance Rate: 24.9%]

 Honorable Mention Award [top 5% of submissions]

**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 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%]

## Projects In-Submission

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### TravelTales: Reflecting on Meaningful Travel through Digital Scrapbooking and Journalling

Michael Yin, Robert Xiao

In submission to IMWUT 2025

## Other Research Work

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### Understanding and Supporting Interactions with Virtual Agents

Apr 2025

Doctoral Consortium at CHI 2025

### 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

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### 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

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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 published papers with me. I have previously been a **REX**

(Research **EX**perience 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

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<b>Organizing Committee</b> - Virtualization Chair for CHI PLAY'25	Ongoing
<b>Associate Chair</b> - Associate Chair for CHI'25 WiP, CHI PLAY'24 WiP, CSCW'25 Full Papers	Ongoing
<b>Student Volunteer</b> - Student Volunteer at DIS'22, CHI'23, CHI'24	Ongoing
<b>Paper Reviewer</b> - 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	Ongoing
<b>Graduate Recruiting Group Leader</b> - Wrote initial reviews for all HCI applicants for two recruiting seasons.	Dec 2022 - Apr 2024

## Industry Experience

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<b>Software Engineering Intern</b> - Shopify (International R&D Team) 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.	May 2019 - Aug 2019
<b>Software Engineering Intern</b> - Stanza (Data Team) 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.	May 2018 - Apr 2019

## Awards, Grants, and Scholarships

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### *Awards*

<b>NSERC CGS D</b> - \$40,000/year, for 3 years.	May 2023 - Apr 2026
<b>UBC Computer Science 4YF</b> - \$18,200/year plus tuition, for the first 4 years of PhD studies.	Sep 2022 - Aug 2026

**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

### Relevant Skills

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**Programming Languages:** Python, Javascript, C#, C, HTML, CSS, SQL

**Other Skills:** Qualitative and Ethnographic Research, Prototyping and Design, Game Development