

Kaiyu Zheng

Robotist / Research Scientist @ RAI Institute
kzheng@rai-inst.com · kaiyutony@gmail.com · +1 (206) 504-9208
<https://zkytony.github.io> · [github/zkytony](https://github.com/zkytony)

Employment	Robotist / Research Scientist	2023/02 - now
	RAI Institute, Cambridge, MA (formerly Boston Dynamics AI Institute) Teams: Ultra Mobility Vehicle (UMV) ; Dexterous Mobile Manipulation (DMM)	
Education	Ph.D. in Computer Science	2018/09 - 2022/12
	Brown University , Providence, RI Dissertation title: <i>“Generalized Object Search”</i> Advisor: Stefanie Tellex Committee: George Konidaris, Michael Littman, Ellie Pavlick, Leslie Kaelbling	
	M.S. in Computer Science	2017/09 - 2018/06
	B.S. in Computer Science , Minor in Mathematics	2013/09 - 2017/06
	University of Washington , Seattle, WA <i>“Learning Graph-Structured Sum-Product Networks for Probabilistic Semantic Maps”</i> Advisors: Andrzej Pronobis, Rajesh P. N. Rao	
Previous Experience	Research Assistant , Humans To Robots Lab, Brown University Advisor: Stefanie Tellex	2018/09 - 2022/12
	Head Teaching Assistant , Learning & Sequential Decision Making, Brown CS Instructor: Michael L. Littman	2021/09 - 2021/12
	Research Intern , Learning & Intelligent Systems Lab, MIT CSAIL Mentors: Yoonchang Sung, Rohan Chitnis Advisors: Leslie P. Kaelbling, Tomás Lozano-Pérez	2020/06 - 2021/03
	Research Assistant , Neural Systems Lab, University of Washington Advisors: Andrzej Pronobis, Rajesh P. N. Rao	2016/03 - 2018/06
	Teaching Assistant (× 5) Computer Science & Engineering, University of Washington	2016/09 - 2018/06
	Software Engineering Intern Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME), Chicago, IL	2015/06 - 2015/09
	Research Assistant , Movement Control Lab, University of Washington Advisors: Vikash Kumar, Emanuel Todorov	2015/04 - 2015/06
	Web Developer UW Information Technology, Seattle, WA	2014/10 - 2015/06
Selected Honors	Robotics: Science and Systems (RSS) Pioneers	2022
	IROS RoboCup Best Paper Award (winner) for <i>“Multi-Resolution POMDP Planning for Multi-Object Search in 3D”</i>	2021
	Publication of the Week, Weekly Robotics Newsletter for <i>“ROS Navigation Tuning Guide”</i>	2019

Publications PhD Thesis

1. **Kaiyu Zheng**, “[Generalized Object Search](#),” Brown University, February, 2023.

Refereed Book Chapters

2. **Kaiyu Zheng**, “[ROS Navigation Tuning Guide](#),” in *Robot Operating System (ROS) - The Complete Reference (Volume 6)*, edited by Anis Koubaa, Springer, Cham, pp 197-226, July 2021. (Publication of the Week, Weekly Robotics)

Refereed Conference Papers

3. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Anirudha Paul, Stefanie Tellex, “[A System for Generalized 3D Multi-Object Search](#),” in *IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)*, 2023.
4. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Rohan Chitnis, Yoonchang Sung, George Konidaris, Stefanie Tellex, “[Towards Optimal Correlational Object Search](#),” in *IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)*, 2022.
5. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Deniz Bayazit, Rebecca Mathew, Ellie Pavlick, Stefanie Tellex, “[Spatial Language Understanding for Object Search in Partially Observed Cityscale Environments](#),” in *IEEE International Conference on Robot and Human Interactive Communication (RO-MAN)*, 2021.
6. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Yoonchang Sung, George Konidaris, Stefanie Tellex, “[Multi-Resolution POMDP Planning for Multi-Object Search in 3D](#),” in *IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS)*, 2021.

IROS RoboCup Best Paper Award

7. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Andrzej Pronobis, “[From Pixels to Buildings: End-to-end Probabilistic Deep Networks for Large-scale Semantic Mapping](#),” in *IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS)*, 2019.
8. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Andrzej Pronobis, Rajesh P. N. Rao, “[Learning Graph-Structured Sum-product Networks for Probabilistic Semantic Maps](#),” in *AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI)*, 2018. (oral presentation)

Refereed Workshop Papers and Extended Abstracts

9. Shangqun Yu, Sreehari Rammohan, **Kaiyu Zheng**, George Konidaris, “[Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning of Locomotion Policies in Response to Approaching Objects: A Preliminary Study](#),” in *Multidisciplinary Conference on Reinforcement Learning and Decision Making (RLDM)*, 2022
10. Monica Roy*, **Kaiyu Zheng***, Jason Liu, Stefanie Tellex, “[Dialogue Object Search](#),” in *Robotics: Science and Systems (RSS) Workshop on Robotics for People: Perspectives on Interaction, Learning, and Safety*, 2021. * indicates equal contribution.
11. Semanti Basu, Sreshtaa Rajesh, **Kaiyu Zheng**, Stefanie Tellex, R. Iris Bahar, “[Parallelizing POMCP to Solve Complex POMDPs](#),” in *Robotics: Science and Systems (RSS) Workshop on Software Tools for Real-Time Optimal Control*, 2021.
12. **Kaiyu Zheng**, Stefanie Tellex, “[pomdp_py: A Framework to Build and Solve POMDPs](#),” in *International Conference on Automated Planning and Scheduling (ICAPS) Workshop on Planning and Robotics (PlanRob)*, 2020.

Patents	Kaiyu Zheng , Stefanie Tellex, “ Generalized Three Dimensional Multi-Object Search ,” <i>U.S. Patent App. 18500768</i> .	
Software	pomdp-py: A framework to build and solve POMDP problems. https://github.com/h2r/pomdp-py/	
Datasets	Spatial Language on Open Street Maps https://h2r.github.io/sloop/html/ Cognitive rObot Localization Database (COLD). https://www.coldb.org/site/	
Talks	<p>POMDP Lecture The Boston Dynamics AI Institute, Cambridge, MA. 2023/06/26</p> <p>Generalized Object Search Northeastern GRAIL Laboratory, Boston, MA. 2022/12/15 MIT Interactive Robotics Group, Cambridge, MA. 2022/12/02 WPI ECE Graduate Seminar Lecture, virtual. 2022/11/30 Viam, New York, NY. 2022/11/04 CMU HRI Reading Group, virtual. 2022/10/11</p> <p>Representations in Robotics Brown Robotics Group Seminar, Providence, RI. 2022/07/01</p> <p>Planning Under Uncertainty for Object Search Georgia Tech RoboGrads Seminar, Atlanta, GA. 2022/04/22</p> <p>Look we have a Spot Brown Robotics Group Seminar, virtual. 2022/02/25</p> <p>Towards Optimal Correlational Object Search Brown Robotics Group Seminar, virtual. 2021/10/01</p> <p>A Peek into Robotics Research Here at Brown Brown University Staff Development Days, virtual. 2021/06/09</p> <p>Multi-Resolution POMDP Planning for Multi-Object Search in 3D MIT CSAIL Learning and Intelligent Systems Group, virtual. 2020/07/10 Brown Robotics Group Seminar, Providence, RI. 2020/02/07</p> <p>End-to-end Probabilistic Deep Networks for Large-scale Semantic Mapping. Brown Visual Computing Seminar, Providence, RI. 2019/09/23</p> <p>An Introduction to Semantic Mapping in Robotics Brown Robotics Group Seminar, Providence, RI. 2019/03/22</p> <p>Probabilistic Semantic Mapping Using Graph-Structured Sum-Product Networks Allen School Industry Affiliates Research Day, Seattle, WA. 2017/11/15</p>	
Teaching Experience	<p>Learning & Sequential Decision Making (CSCI 2951F) Head Teaching Assistant. Instructor: Michael L. Littman. Fall 2021 Brown University, Providence, RI</p>	

- Graduate-level course on automated decision making from a computer-science perspective. Topics include Markov decision processes, stochastic and repeated games, partially observable Markov decision processes, and reinforcement learning.
- As a head teaching assistant, I contributed to the course by developing project requirements, presenting project ideas, mentoring project groups, creating homework problems and solutions, holding office hours, and managing teaching assistants.

Machine Learning (CSE 446)

Teaching Assistant. Instructor: Sham M. Kakade.

Winter 2018

Teaching Assistant. Instructor: Emily B. Fox.

Winter 2017

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- Undergraduate-level machine learning course. Topics include supervised learning and predictive modeling: decision trees, rule induction, nearest neighbors, Bayesian methods, neural networks, support vector machines, and model ensembles. Unsupervised learning and clustering.
- TA responsibilities: Lead section discussions (~ 30 students), grading, office hours

Foundation of Computing I (CSE 311)

Teaching Assistant. Instructors: Paul Beame, Kevin Zatloukal.

Spring 2018

Teaching Assistant. Instructors: Paul Beame, Shayan Oveis Gharan.

Fall 2016

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- First CS major course. Examines fundamentals of logic, set theory, induction, and algebraic structures with applications to computing; finite state machines; and limits of computability.
- TA responsibilities: Lead section discussions (~ 30 students), grading, office hours

Data Structures and Algorithms (CSE 373)

Teaching Assistant. Instructor: Evan McCarty.

Fall 2017

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- For non-CS majors. Fundamental algorithms and data structures for implementation. Linked lists, stacks, queues, directed graphs. Trees: representations, traversals. Searching, hashing, sorting.
- TA responsibilities: Lead section discussions (~ 30 students), grading, office hours

Teaching Certificates

Sheridan Teaching Certificate I

2021/12

Brown University, Providence, RI.

- Develop and refine fundamental teaching and assessment strategies and communication skills based on how students learn.

Mentoring

Brown University

Anirudha Paul, MSc. student in CS

2021/10 - 2022/10

Semanti Basu, PhD student in CS

2020/09 - 2022/09

(advised by R. Iris Bahar)

Vedant Gupta, BSc. student in CS

2022/03 - 2022/05

Eliza Sun, BSc. student in Math & CS

2022/03 - 2022/05

Haowei Gao, MSc. student in CS

2022/02 - 2022/05

Shangqun Yu, MSc. student in CS

2022/01 - 2022/05

Monica Roy, BSc. student in CS

2021/02 - 2022/05

Thomas Ottaway, BSc. student in CS

2020/09 - 2020/12

Deniz Bayazit, BSc. & MSc. student in CS

2020/04 - 2021/03

(Now pursuing PhD in CS at EPFL in Switzerland)

Rebecca Mathew, BSc. student in CS & Linguistics

2020/04 - 2021/03

Service

Organizer

Brown Robotics Group Seminar Series. 2021
Organized a total of 40 talks, including 27 with external speakers.

Co-Organizer

[Workshop on Language and Robot Learning](#), Conference on Robot Learning 2022

Program Committee

AAAI Student Abstract and Poster Program, AAAI 2023, 24

Reviewer

IEEE Transactions on Robotics (T-RO) 2022
IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L) 2021 – 25
International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) 2019, 21 – 24
International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS) 2019, 21 – 25
International Conference on Humanoid Robots (Humanoids) 2022
Robotics: Science and Systems (RSS) 2024, 25
Conference on Robot Learning (CoRL) 2024, 25
ACM SIGGRAPH Posters 2022
Ocean Engineering, ScienceDirect from Elsevier 2024

Extracurricular

Presenter, Team for FTC robotics challenge. 2023
Demonstrator, Brown Corporation Lab Tour, Brown Engineering. 2022
Organizer, Board Games Night, Brown CS. 2022
Presenter, Staff Development Day, Brown University. 2021
Peer mentor, PhD Mentorship Program, Brown CS. 2020 - 2022
Moderator, PhD Alumni Panel, Brown CS. 2020
Peer mentor, International Graduate Student Orientation. 2019, 2021
Producer, the “[Working Robots](#)” podcast. 2019 - 2021
Representative, Graduate Student Council, Brown CS. 2019 - 2020
Programming teacher, Asa Messer Elementary School, Providence, RI. 2018
Tutor, Allen School of Computer Science & Engineering. 2017
Food Packer, Food Lifeline, Seattle, WA. 2014
Table Demonstrator, Paws-on Science: Husky Weekend, Seattle, WA. 2014