Yuxiao Yang

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Education

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill — **Chapel Hill, NC**
Ph.D. in Computer Science — *Jan 2026 – Present*

Shanghai Jiao Tong University — **Shanghai, China**
B.S. in Computer Science and Technology — *Sept 2021 – June 2025*
GPA: 90/100 (3.83/4.3)
Zhiyuan Honors Program: Member of the John Hopcroft Honors Class

Research Experience

Aug 2025 – Present: Researcher, UNC-Chapel Hill; advised by Weitong Zhang.

Oct 2023 – May 2025: Undergraduate Researcher, ApexLab (SJTU); advised by Weinan Zhang.

Publications

- **Return-to-Go Is More Than a Number: Q-Guided Alignment for Return-Conditioned Supervised Learning** (ICML 2026)
  Yuxiao Yang, Weitong Zhang
  Paper · Code
- **Provable and Practical In-Context Policy Optimization for Self-Improvement** (ICLR 2026)
  Tianrun Yu*, **Yuxiao Yang***, Zhaoyang Wang, Kaixiang Zhao, Porter Jenkins, Xuchao Zhang, Chetan Bansal, Huaxiu Yao, Weitong Zhang
  Paper · Code

* Equal contribution.

Preprints

- **OGLS-SD: On-Policy Self-Distillation with Outcome-Guided Logit Steering for LLM Reasoning**
  Yuxiao Yang, Xiaoyun Wang, Weitong Zhang
  Paper
- **When EOS Tokens Disagree: Understanding Length Inflation in On-Policy Distillation**
  Yuxiao Yang, Tianrun Yu, Shangzhe Li, Kaixiang Zhao, Xuchao Zhang, Chetan Bansal, Huaxiu Yao, Taylor W. Killian, Weitong Zhang
  Paper · Hugging Face
- **REVO: Rollout-Efficient Off-Policy Distillation via Variance-Guided Reuse**
  Yuxiao Yang, Shangzhe Li, Tianrun Yu, Kaixiang Zhao, Taylor W. Killian, Weitong Zhang
  Paper
- **Rethinking Training-Inference Mismatch in LLM Reinforcement Learning: Where It Arises and How to Correct It**
  Tianrun Yu, Kaixiang Zhao, Shangzhe Li, **Yuxiao Yang**, Porter Jenkins, Weitong Zhang, Taylor W. Killian
  Paper
- **An RL View of OPD: Least Square Policy Distillation for Sample-Efficient LLM Reasoning**
  Shangzhe Li, **Yuxiao Yang**, Tianrun Yu, Kaixiang Zhao, Xiaoyun Wang, Taylor W. Killian, Weitong Zhang
  Paper
- **Recovering Reliable Supervision via Critique-Guided On-Policy Distillation**
  Kaixiang Zhao, Tianrun Yu, Shangzhe Li, **Yuxiao Yang**, Amanda Hughes, Weitong Zhang, Taylor W. Killian
  Paper

Academic Service

Conference Reviewer: AAAI 2027, ICLR 2027

Journal Reviewer: Transactions on Machine Learning Research (TMLR)

Teaching

Fall 2026: Teaching Assistant, DATA 521: Foundations of AI, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Summer 2023: Teaching Assistant, Data Structure, Shanghai Jiao Tong University.