

Mingzhi Chen

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Education

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)
Ph.D. in Computer Science and Engineering

August 2026 – Present
Advisor: Prof. Long Chen

Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech)
Bachelor in Computer Science and Technology

August 2022 – June 2026
GPA: 3.95/4.00 Ranking: 2/166

Research Interests

My research interests broadly lie in deep learning, with an emphasis on vision and language models. A long-term goal of my work is to make deep learning systems more helpful, reliable, and intelligent in real-world applications.

Publications (* Equal Contribution † Equal Advising)

MIGA: Mutual Information-Guided Attack on Denoising Models for Semantic Manipulation  **In submission to ICML 2026**

Guanghao Li*, Mingzhi Chen*, Hao Yu, Shuting Dong, Wenhao Jiang, Ming Tang†, Chun Yuan†

Stronger Normalization-Free Transformers  **CVPR 2026**

Mingzhi Chen, Taiming Lu, Jiachen Zhu, Mingjie Sun, Zhuang Liu

A First Look at Privacy Cloak Against Visual Place Recognition  **ICCV 2025**

Shuting Dong*, Mingzhi Chen*, Feng Lu, Hao Yu, Guanghao Li, Ming Tang†, Chun Yuan†

Research Experiences

Princeton University **March 2025 – Present**
Undergraduate Researcher

- Investigate what properties make point-wise functions a good choice for normalization-free Transformers.
- Proposed Derf, a point-wise function consistently outperforming normalization-based and other normalization-free architectures across multiple modalities and tasks.
- Demonstrated Derf’s performance gains stem from stronger generalization rather than better fitting capacity.
- Advisor: [Zhuang Liu](#)

Tsinghua University **October 2024 – March 2025**
Undergraduate Researcher

- Proposed VPR-Cloak, the first real-time privacy-preserving method targeting visual place recognition.
- Achieved state-of-the-art protection and 15× speedup over prior methods while preserving high visual fidelity.
- Outperformed existing methods across multiple datasets and commercial APIs like Google and Microsoft Bing.
- Advisor: [Chun Yuan](#), [Ming Tang](#)

Southern University of Science and Technology **February 2024 – October 2024**
Undergraduate Researcher

- Developed MIGA, a semantic adversarial attack that alters denoiser outputs while keeping images visually clean.
- Introduced an MI-guided objective to induce controlled semantic shifts under high perceptual fidelity.
- Achieved state-of-the-art semantic disruption across denoisers and datasets while preserving visual quality.
- Advisor: [Chun Yuan](#), [Ming Tang](#)

Industry Experience

Hangzhou Raycloud Technology Co., Ltd. <i>LLM Engineer Intern</i>	June 2024 – August 2024
– Built a multi-LLM evaluation pipeline to assess commercial AI chatbots in e-commerce logistics scenarios. – Developed domain-specific metrics (e.g., emotional analysis and response accuracy) for systematic assessment. – Fine-tuned each LLM component with annotated logistics-related data to improve evaluation reliability. – Deployed across multiple major e-commerce platforms (e.g., TikTok), serving over 250k+ end users.	

Awards and Honors

SUSTech Motto Scholarship <i>Awarded to only 1 student in SUSTech in 2025</i>	October 2025
Student of the Year Award <i>Awarded to only 1 student in SUSTech in 2025</i>	November 2025
BYD Scholarship <i>Awarded to 0.4% students in China in 2025</i>	October 2025
National Scholarship of China <i>Awarded to 0.2% students in China in 2024</i>	December 2024
ASC, Second Prize <i>11th Asia Student Supercomputer Challenge (ASC)</i>	April 2024
ICPC Hangzhou Regional Contest, Silver Medal <i>47th International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC) Hangzhou Regional Site</i>	December 2022
ICPC Jinan Regional Contest, Silver Medal <i>47th International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC) Jinan Regional Site</i>	November 2022
CCPC Mianyang Regional Contest, Silver Medal <i>8th China Collegiate Programming Contest (CCPC) Mianyang Regional Site</i>	November 2022

Community Engagement

Peer Mentor at SUSTech	September 2024 – Present
– Provided in-person 1:1 mentoring to undergraduates on academics, research, and life matters. – To date, delivered mentorship to 67 students with a total of 200+ service hours.	
Student Representative at SUSTech	September 2022 – Present
– Coordinated student feedback on campus life within the department and submitted proposals to the university. – Formulated and implemented three new campus policies on shuttle service and athletic field reservations.	

Skills and Interests

Programming Languages: Python, Java, MATLAB, C, and HTML
Tools & Frameworks: PyTorch, Git, TensorFlow, scikit-learn, Pandas, NumPy, Linux, and Docker
TOEFL 111 (R30/L27/S26/W28) **GRE** 327 (V157/Q170)