

Yitong Gu (she/her/hers)

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Generative AI in Journalism: Investigating the integration of Large Language Models (LLMs) into journalistic workflows, with a focus on prompt engineering, human-AI collaboration, and audience perception

Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and User Behaviour: Exploring how users engage with AI-powered media environments, emphasizing cognitive responses, interface design, and ethical considerations in algorithmic personalization

Computational Social Science: Applying methods such as automated text analysis, semantic network analysis, and social media analytics to explore digital discourse and collective behaviour

EDUCATION

Hong Kong Baptist University

Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR

Ph.D. student in School of Communication, Department of Journalism

Sept 2022 –

Advisor: [Dr. Nick Yin Zhang](#) (Jour. Comp.) & [Dr. Jing Ma](#) (Comp. NLP)

Hong Kong Baptist University

Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR

Master of Science in AI & Digital Media | GPA: 3.73/4 (Distinction)

Sept 2020 – Jun 2021

Core Course: AI and Digital Media Workshop, Big Data Management and Analytics, DMKD for Digital Media

Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai

Zhuhai, China

Bachelor of Engineering in Digital Media Technology | GPA: 3.36/4 (Top 10%)

Sept 2016 – Jun 2020

Core Course: Mobile Front-end Programming, Computer Network, User Interface Design

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant – Data Analyst

Nov 2023 – May 2025

Project: [Jockey Club Food Assistance Programme](#)

- Designed and implemented a backend database to track and analyse participants' online browsing behaviour
- Collected, organised, and mined data from multiple sources, including website interactions, questionnaires, and interviews
- Conducted comprehensive data analysis to derive insights for programme improvement and decision-making

Research Assistant – Data Visualization

Sept 2022 – Nov 2022

Project: [Sci-fi Blockbusters' Representation of Cyborgs and its impacts on audiences' perception of HMC](#)

- Processed qualitative data from interviews and literature using Python-based pipelines
- Created interactive visualizations using TimelineJS and FoamTree to illustrate thematic evolution and audience interpretations of human-machine communication

Research Assistant (Part-time)

Jan 2021 – Apr 2021

Project: [The Making and Unmaking of the Public Sphere: Outcomes of Political Disagreement, Expression Avoidance, and a Filtered Information Repertoire](#)

- Conducted systematic literature reviews on online political discourse and digital ethnographic methods
- Facilitated and documented online focus-group interviews hosted on Slack to explore civic engagement in digital spaces

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Part-time Instructor, Department of Journalism (HKBU)

Fall 2024

COMM2036: Media Design and Digital Applications

Average student rating: 4.46/5

- Designed and delivered lectures on visual communication, interactive media, and algorithmic thinking, integrating real-world digital media applications to enhance student engagement
- Guided students through the development of digital media prototypes, emphasizing user-centered design principles and iterative testing processes

Teaching Assistant, AIDM Programme (HKBU)

Spring 2024

AIDM7880: AI for Social Good: Laws, Ethics, and Methods | Instructor: Dr. Yuner Zhu

- Facilitated hands-on lab sessions, guiding students through the application of AI auditing tools to assess algorithmic biases and understand data equity challenges in digital platforms
- Supported classroom discussions and activities, assisting students in critically evaluating ethical and legal frameworks related to AI governance and societal impact

Teaching Assistant, Department of Interactive Media (HKBU)

Fall 2023

GAME2016: Mathematical Foundation of Game Design and Animation | Instructor: Dr. Paolo Mengoni

- Supported the instruction of mathematical concepts critical to game design, such as linear algebra, geometry, and physics simulations
- Conducted tutorial sessions to help students apply what they learned to design final projects

Teaching Assistant, AIDM Programme (HKBU)

Fall 2022

AIDM7410: Computational Journalism | Instructor: Dr. Xinzhi Zhang

- Assisted in teaching data-driven journalism, focusing on how to collect and visualize data using Python
- Reviewed assignments and gave feedback on both technical accuracy and communication clarity

Teaching Assistant, AIDM Programme (HKBU)

Fall 2021, 2023

AIDM7450: Dynamic Web and Mobile Programming for Digital Media | Instructor: Mr. Edward Szeto

- Led practical labs on front-end and mobile development, using JavaScript and responsive design methods
- Assisted students in building interactive projects that worked across different devices
- Evaluated final projects and offered suggestions on both code quality and user experience

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Backend Engineer

Aug 2021 – Sept 2022

[Lab for AI-Powered Financial Technology Limited](#)

- Used python and AWS to deploy an automatic data collection capability on dubious/negative activities from hidden darknet such as TOR networks
- Designed non-relational databases and developed predictive models to identify potential cybersecurity threats and illicit network behaviour

Intern Data Analyst

Jan 2021 – Mar 2021

[5 Miles Lab Digital Advertising Agency, Hong Kong SAR](#)

- Deployed scripts to gather Facebook data through its API
- Turned the data into visual reports using PowerBI to help clients understand how their online ads were doing

CONFERENCES

- [06] **Gu, Y.**, Zhang, B. (2025, August). *Evaluating the Impact of Authorship and AI System Provenance on News Credibility*. Paper to be presented at the 108th Annual International Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference (AEJMC), San Francisco, CA, the United States, 7-10 August 2025
- [05] **Gu, Y.**, Zhang, Y. (2025, July). *Cultural Resilience in Music: How Cantopop Reflects and Responds to Hong Kong's Economic Shifts*. Paper presented at the 37th Annual International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) Conference, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 13-17 July 2025
- [04] **Gu, Y.**, Su, K., Liu, D. (2025 April). *A Semantic Network Analysis of Hong Kong's city Image on YouTube*. Paper presented at the 2nd Emerging Media for Communicating SDGs Conference, Shanghai, China, 18-19 April 2025
- [03] Liu, D., Su, K., **Gu, Y.** (2025 April). *From Phubbing to PSU: Social Capital and Family Mediation in Adolescents' Digital Behaviour*. Paper presented at the 2nd Emerging Media for Communicating SDGs Conference, Shanghai, China, 18-19 April 2025
- [02] Wang, H., Zhou, T., Luo, Y., **Gu, Y.** (2024, June). *Living Behind Screens: Construe the Public Sentiment Amid Shanghai Lockdown from the Perspective of Community Resilience*. Paper presented at the 74th Annual International Communication Association Conference (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia, 20-24 June 2024
- [01] **Gu, Y.**, Zhang, X. (2023, August). *What We Can Do with YouTube API in Communication Research: A Descriptive Review*. Extended abstract presented at the 106th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference (AEJMC), Washington, D.C., the United States, 7-10 August 2023

HONORS & AWARDS

Scholarships

Research Studentships of Hong Kong Baptist University (HKD 222,600)	2024-2025
Transdisciplinary Research Labs Scholarship of Hong Kong Baptist University (HKD 213,840)	2022-2023
Merit-Based Scholarship of MSc in AI & Digital Media, first price (HKD 15,000)	2021
Merit-Based Scholarship of Undergraduate Studentship, first price (RMB 300)	2018
Merit-Based Scholarship of BEng in Digital Media Technology, second price (RMB 800)	2017

Awards

The 2nd Place Student Paper in Broadcast and Mobile Journalism Division of 108th AEJMC August 7 – 10 in San Francisco, CA (USD 250)	2025
The 2nd Runner-Up of Global Virtual Hackathon 2021 - Hack for a Sustainable "New Normal", Global Virtual Hackathon Organizing Committee (HKD 2,000)	2021
Outstanding university's community leader, Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai Campus (RMB 800)	2017-2019
The 14th "Zhongxing Cup" IT Festival Digital Design Competition, third price (RMB 500)	2016
The 6th Web Design Freshman Competition, second price (RMB 800)	2016

SKILLS

Programming: Python (Advanced), JavaScript (Advanced), SQL (Advanced), Java (Advanced), R (Intermediate)

Languages: English (IELTS: 6.5), Cantonese (Native), Mandarin (Native)

Applications: PowerBI, Adobe After Effects, Unity 3D, Maya