



# Christopher You

PhD · Human-Centered Computing

☎ (+1) 763-321-4721 | ✉ christopheryou@ufl.edu | 🏠 Personal Website | 🌐 LinkedIn | 🎓 Google Scholar | 🐙 GitHub

## Summary

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PhD in Human-Centered Computing specializing in multi-agent systems, conversational AI architectures, and production-scale applications. Experienced in designing and deploying agentic platforms integrating LLM pipelines, retrieval systems, web frameworks, and tool-calling workflows. Combines rigorous experimental evaluation with scalable full-stack engineering, with a track record of delivering AI systems that support real users in high-stakes domains. Passionate about building AI systems that are not only sophisticated but impactful – grounded in human-centered design, validated with real users, and driven by research.

## Experience

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### Research Assistant University of Florida

Aug 2020 - May 2026

- Broad impacts of research: (1) embodied agents to improve care for psychiatric patients (NIH R34 Grant), (2) AI clinical trial enrollment platform for cancer patients (NIH R24/U01 Grant), (3) AI patient simulations in university curriculum, and (4) conversational AI and agentic systems to support mental well-being.
- Created and launched **Build-a-Being Yourself**, a web-based conversational AI platform to support healthcare research, enabling domain experts to rapidly deploy conversational interventions at scale.
- Architected multi-agent orchestration systems coordinating memory management, dialogue planning, strategy selection, and response generation across stateful sessions, with LLM fine-tuning and retrieval pipelines.
- Led development of a multi-institutional **AI Clinical Trial Enrollment Platform** and evaluation pipelines for conversational AI, analyzing model outputs, user engagement metrics, and behavioral outcomes among 1500+ patients.
- Integrated user-state modeling, human-AI collaborative frameworks, and VR technologies into research protocols across 10+ web-deployed user studies.
- Served as graduate teaching assistant and undergraduate mentor, directly advising 3 mentee-authored publications.

### Research Assistant Davidson College

May 2022 - Aug 2022

- Conducted in-depth research on embodiment and agency in avatars within VR and desktop environments, leading to two publications.
- Built IK-driven avatar systems to achieve high-fidelity user embodiment using consumer VR tracking.

### Software Engineering Intern Amazon

May 2020 - Aug 2020

- Architected knowledge graph-backed query system spanning Amazon Help Services and Alexa, enabling semantic search across large-scale service documentation.
- Designed and implemented full-stack SPARQL query interface, integrating NLP-driven entity resolution with a structured graph backend.
- Built frontend and API layer to expose graph query results to end users at production scale.

### Research Assistant University of Minnesota

Oct 2018 - May 2020

- Created novel redirection techniques for locomotion in VR, leading to two publications.
- Developed programming skills in C# using Unity to explore practical applications of VR systems.

## Technical Skills

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- Agentic Systems** Multi-Agent Orchestration, Agentic Workflows, Knowledge Graphs, MCPs, Tool-Calling, Human-AI Collaboration, Human-in-the-Loop Frameworks
- AI/ML** LLMs, PyTorch, HuggingFace Transformers, RAG, Scikit-Learn, Fine-Tuning, Prompt Engineering, Embeddings, Model Evaluation & Benchmarking, LoRA/PEFT, Hyperparameter Optimization
- Infrastructure** AWS, Google Cloud, REST APIs, Scalable Backend Architectures, Distributed Systems, Web Frameworks (Node.js, React, Express, JavaScript), MongoDB, SQL/RDS, CI/CD, Git
- Research** Experimental Design, Statistical Modeling (Python, R, SPSS), Qualitative/Quantitative Methods, Power Analysis

## Education

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### Ph.D. in Human-Centered Computing

May 2026

University of Florida

GPA: 3.8

- **Advisor:** Dr. Benjamin Lok
- **Dissertation:** "A Change in Perspective: Exploring Interaction Paradigms in AI and Virtual Human Systems that Engage Users and Promote Mental Health"
- **Awards:** Graduate School Preeminence Award (\$36k/yr), Generation NEXT Fellowship (\$10k/yr), L3Harris Graduate Scholarship (\$2,500), Olson-Mitchell STEM Translational Communications Award (\$5,000)

### M.S. in Computer Science

Dec 2022

University of Florida

GPA: 3.8

- **Advisor:** Dr. Benjamin Lok

### B.S. in Computer Science

May 2020

University of Minnesota

GPA: 3.8

- **Advisor:** Dr. Evan Suma Rosenberg
- **Awards:** Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Award (\$2k/yr)

## Publications

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### Journal Proceedings

- [3] **You, C.**, Ghosh, R., Vilaro, M., Venkatakrishnan, R., Venkatakrishnan, R., Maxim, A., Peng, X., Tamboli, D., & Lok, B. (2025). Alter egos alter engagement: Perspective-taking can improve disclosure quantity and depth to ai chatbots in promoting mental wellbeing. *Frontiers in Digital Health*, 7, 1655860
- [2] **You, C.**, Venkatakrishnan, R., Venkatakrishnan, R., Han, Z., Lok, B., & Peck, T. (2024). A sense of urgency on the sense of agency: Challenges in evaluating agency and embodiment in virtual reality. *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics*
- [1] **You, C.**, Peck, T., Stuart, J., Gomes de Siqueira, A., & Lok, B. (2024). What my bias meant for my embodiment: An investigation on virtual embodiment in desktop-based virtual reality. *Frontiers in Virtual Reality*, 5, 1251564

### Conference Proceedings

- [6] **You, C.**, Ghosh, R., Canales, R., Venkatakrishnan, R., Venkatakrishnan, R., Vilaro, M., & Lok, B. (In preparation). Human-ai collaboration and user-state modeling promotes engagement in mental health conversations. *Proceedings of the 25th ACM conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing*, 1–8
- [5] **You, C.**, Ghosh, R., Venkatakrishnan, R., Maxim, A., Peng, X., Tamboli, D., Huang, Z., & Lok, B. (2026). Build-a-being yourself: A web-based system for authoring embodied conversational agents in healthcare research. *Proceedings of the 28th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction*, 1–15
- [4] Ghosh, R., **You, C.**, Venkatakrishnan, R., & Lok, B. (2025b). The impact of health literacy in a virtual agent intervention addressing barriers to cancer clinical trial participation. *Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on Human-Agent Interaction*, 76–86
- [3] Ghosh, R., **You, C.**, Venkatakrishnan, R., & Lok, B. (2025a). Exploring the influence of multiple virtual agents for addressing barriers to cancer clinical trial participation. *Proceedings of the 25th ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents*, 1–10
- [2] **You, C.**, Benda, B., Rosenberg, E. S., Ragan, E., Lok, B., & Thomas, J. (2022). Strafing gain: Redirecting users one diagonal step at a time. *2022 IEEE international symposium on mixed and augmented reality (ISMAR)*, 603–611
- [1] **You, C.**, Ghosh, R., Maxim, A., Stuart, J., Cooks, E., & Lok, B. (2022). How does a virtual human earn your trust? guidelines to improve willingness to self-disclose to intelligent virtual agents. *Proceedings of the 22nd ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents*, 1–8

### Additional Publications and Presentations

8 posters and abstracts at venues including IEEE VR, ACM UIST, and ACM SUI, covering clinical trial recruitment systems, conversational AI platforms, and VR interaction techniques (full list at [christopheryou.github.io](https://christopheryou.github.io)).

Mentored 2 undergraduates to first-author peer-reviewed publications in the UF Journal of Undergraduate Research (2025).

Presented research across IEEE and ACM conferences, delivered guest lectures at the University of Minnesota and University of Florida on conversational AI and virtual human systems, and interviewed as a subject matter expert on AI and mental health for *The Independent Alligator* (Jan 2026).