

EDUCATION

Rutgers University
Ph.D. in Statistics

Piscataway, NJ
2023–present

**School of the Gifted Young,
University of Science and Technology of China (USTC)**
B.S. in Mathematics, Major GPA: 4.17/4.30

Hefei, China
2019–2023

PREPRINTS/PUBLICATIONS

- Representation Learning

1. **Zihan Dong**, Xin Zhou, Ryumei Nakada, Lexin Li, and Linjun Zhang (2025). Contrastive Network Representation Learning. *Submitted to JASA Theory and Methods*. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2509.11316>.

- Statistical Foundations of Large Language Models

1. **Zihan Dong**, Ruijia Wu, and Linjun Zhang (2025). Labels or Preferences? Budget-Constrained Inference with Human Judgments over AI-Generated Outputs. *Manuscript available upon request*.
2. Tianci Liu, Ruirui Li, **Zihan Dong**, Hui Liu, Xianfeng Tang, Qingyu Yin, Linjun Zhang, Haoyu Wang, and Jing Gao (2025). Mitigating Heterogeneous Token Overfitting in LLM Knowledge Editing. *ICML 2025*.
3. Ran Xu, Yuchen Zhuang, **Zihan Dong**, Ruiyu Wang, Yue Yu, Joyce C. Ho, Linjun Zhang, Haoyu Wang, Wenqi Shi, and Carl Yang (2025). AceRAG: Advancing Reasoning-Intensive Retrieval-Augmented Generation via LLM Self-Play. *NeurIPS 2025 Spotlight*.
4. Peng Xia Peng, Jinglu Wang, Yibo Peng, Kaide Zeng, **Zihan Dong**, Xian Wu, Xiangru Tang, Hongtu Zhu, Yun Li, Linjun Zhang, Shujie Liu, Yan Lu, and Huaxiu Yao (2025). MMedAgent-RL: Optimizing Multi-Agent Collaboration for Multimodal Medical Reasoning. *Submitted to ICLR 2026*.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Best Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Performance Award, Rutgers University 2024
- National Scholarship, Top 1% nationwide, Chinese Ministry of Education 2022
- Cyrus Tang Scholarship, Top 3%, Cyrus Tang Foundation, Nationwide 2019-2022
- The 12th Chinese Mathematics Competitions, Second Prize in Professional Group 2020

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

Rutgers University

- Probability and Stochastic Process (for Ph.D student).¹

Summer 2025

¹This course is taught by the recipient of the *Best Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Performance Award*.

Teaching Assistant

Rutgers University

- STATS 654 - Stochastic Process (Core Course for Ph.D. student) Spring 2025
- STATS 382 - Introduction to Theory of Statistics Spring 2025
- STATS 592 - Theory of Probability (Core Course for Ph.D. student) Fall 2024
- STATS 211 - Statistics 1 Spring 2024
- STATS 291 - Statistical Inference for Data Science Spring 2024
- STATS 463 - Regression Methods Fall 2023
- STATS 401 - Basic Statistics for Research Fall 2023

University of Science and Technology of China

- Mathematical Statistics Spring 2022