# CS 8803-VLM Zsolt Kira

Website: <a href="https://faculty.cc.gatech.edu/~zk15/teaching/AY2025\_cs8803vlm\_fall/index.html">https://faculty.cc.gatech.edu/~zk15/teaching/AY2025\_cs8803vlm\_fall/index.html</a>

Canvas: <a href="https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/458226">https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/458226</a>
Ed: <a href="https://edstem.org/us/courses/82921/discussion">https://edstem.org/us/courses/82921/discussion</a>





#### **Zsolt Kira** zkira@gatech.edu Associate Professor School of Interactive Computing





**Robotics Perception and Learning** 

Research Interests: Intersection of deep learning and robotics, focusing on robustness and decisionmaking in an open world. Ph.D. Students

### Group

Also a number of M.S. students per year

Joined as Assistant Professor in 2018

























M.S. Students and Visitors

























— CS 8803-VLM Vision-Language Foundation Models (Fall), CS 7643 Deep Learning (Spring)







## **Zsolt Kira**

zkira@gatech.edu
Associate Professor
School of Interactive Computing
Georgia Institute of Technology

Research Interests: Intersection of deep learning and robotics, focusing on robustness and decision-making in an open world



How can perception deal with changing environments and the open world?

### **Robust Open-World Learning**

- Past: Semi and self-supervised, few-shot, continual learning
- Open-world learning and Vision-Language Models
- Robust fine-tuning of VMs/VLMs



How can we use VLMs for Learning, Planning, and Reasoning Agents

#### Planning & Reasoning

- VLMs for reasoning/planning
- Grounding







How can we scale robotics in DL era?

### **Scaling up Robotics**

- Better simulation w/ NeRFs/3D
- · Self-supervised and pre-training
- Combinations with large language and multi-modal models
  - Long-Context Models
- Vision-Language Action Models



What are Vision-Language & Multi-Modal Models?

Why, and why now?

Logistics

Q&A

## What is multimodality?

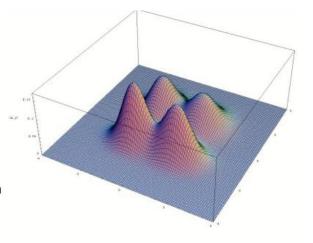
# multimodal adjective

```
mul·ti·mod·al (məl-tē-ˈmō-dəl 🖜) -ˌtī-
```

: having or involving several modes, modalities, or maxima

multimodal distributions

multimodal therapy



In our case, focusing on NLP: text + one or more other *modality* (images, speech, audio, olfaction, others). We'll mostly focus on images as the other modality.

Slide by Douwe Kiela



## Why does multimodality matter?

A range of very good reasons:

- Faithfulness: Human experience is multimodal
- Practical: The internet & many applications are multimodal
- Data efficiency and availability:
  - Efficiency: Multimodal data is rich and "high bandwidth" (compared to language; quoting LeCun, "an imperfect, incomplete, and low-bandwidth serialization protocol for the internal data structures we call thoughts"), so better for learning?
  - Scaling: More data is better, and we're running out of high quality text data.

Multimodality is one of the main frontiers of the new foundation model revolution.



## ChatGPT / Foundation Models / ... buzzwords?

# Bing's A.I. Chat: 'I Want to Be Alive. 'G'

In a two-hour conversation with our columnist, Microsoft's new chathot said it would like to be human, had a desire to be destructive and was in love with the person it was chatting with. Here's the transcript.



https://www.nytimes.com/article/ai-artificial-intelligence-

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE			i	:	:	:	i	i	i	:	:	•
ChatGPT is about to revo	lutioniz	e	tl	h	e							
economy. We need to de	cide wh	at	t	h	a	ıt	ı	0	0	k	S	
like.												
New large language models will transform many jobs. Whether widespread prosperity or not is up to us.	they will lead to											
By David Rotman	March 25, 2023											

https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/03/25/1070275/chatgpt-revolutionize-economy-decide-what-looks-like/

Exam	GPT-4	GPT-4 (no vision)	GPT-3.5
Uniform Bar Exam (MBE+MEE+MPT)	298 / 400 (-90th)	298 / 400 (-90th)	213 / 400 (-10th)
LSAT	163 (~88th)	161 (-83rd)	149 (~40th)
SAT Evidence-Based Reading & Writing	710 / 800 (~93rd)	710 / 800 (~93rd)	670 / 800 (~87th)
SAT Math	700 / 800 (~89th)	690 / 800 (~89th)	590 / 800 (~70th)
Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Quantitative	163 / 170 (-80th)	157 / 170 (~62nd)	147 / 170 (~25th)
Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Verbal	169 / 170 (~99th)	165 / 170 (~96th)	154 / 170 (~63rd)
Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Writing	4/6 (~54th)	4 / 6 (~54th)	4/6 (~54th)
USABO Semifinal Exam 2020	87 / 150 (99th - 100th)	87 / 150 (99th - 100th)	43 / 150 (31st - 33rd
USNCO Local Section Exam 2022	36/60	38 / 60	24/60
Medical Knowledge Self-Assessment Program	75 %	75 %	53 %
Codeforces Rating	392 (below 5th)	392 (below 5th)	260 (below 5th)
AP Art History	5 (86th - 100th)	5 (86th - 100th)	5 (86th - 100th)
AP Biology	5 (85th - 100th)	5 (85th - 100th)	4 (62nd - 85th)
AP Calculus BC	4 (43rd - 59th)	4 (43rd - 59th)	1 (0th - 7th)
AP Chemistry	4 (71st - 88th)	4 (71st - 88th)	2 (22nd - 46th)
AP English Language and Composition	2 (14th - 44th)	2 (14th - 44th)	2 (14th - 44th)
AP English Literature and Composition	2 (8th - 22nd)	2 (8th - 22nd)	2 (8th - 22nd)
AP Environmental Science	5 (91st - 100th)	5 (91st - 100th)	5 (91st - 100th)
AP Macroeconomics	5 (84th - 100th)	5 (84th - 100th)	2 (33rd - 48th)
AP Microeconomics	5 (82nd - 100th)	4 (60th - 82nd)	4 (60th - 82nd)
AP Physics 2	4 (66th - 84th)	4 (66th - 84th)	3 (30th - 66th)
AP Psychology	5 (83rd - 100th)	5 (83rd - 100th)	5 (83rd - 100th)
AP Statistics	5 (85th - 100th)	5 (85th - 100th)	3 (40th - 63rd)
AP US Government	5 (88th - 100th)	5 (88th - 100th)	4 (77th - 88th)
AP US History	5 (89th - 100th)	4 (74th - 89th)	4 (74th - 89th)
AP World History	4 (65th - 87th)	4 (65th - 87th)	4 (65th - 87th)
AMC 10 <sup>3</sup>	30 / 150 (6th - 12th)	36 / 150 (10th - 19th)	36 / 150 (10th - 19t
AMC 12 <sup>3</sup>	60 / 150 (45th - 66th)	48 / 150 (19th - 40th)	30 / 150 (4th - 8th
Introductory Sommelier (theory knowledge)	92 %	92 %	80 %
Certified Sommelier (theory knowledge)	86 %	86 %	58 %
Advanced Sommelier (theory knowledge)	77 %	77 %	46 %
Leetcode (easy)	31/41	31 / 41	12 / 41
Leetcode (medium)	21/80	21 / 80	8 / 80
Leetcode (hard)	3 / 45	3 / 45	0 / 45

Table 1. GPT performance on academic and professional exams. In each case, we simulate the conditions and scoring of the real exam. We report GPT-4's final score graded according to examspecific nubrics, as well as the percentile of test-takers achieving GPT-4's score.

GPT4 technical report, OpenAl, March 2023





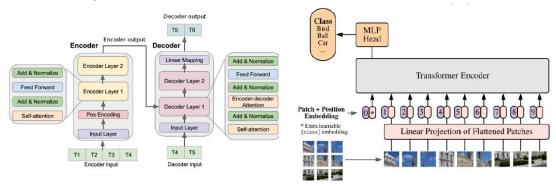


# Homogenization of Deep Learning

Homogenization is the **consolidation** of methodologies for building machine learning systems across a wide range of applications.

- Enabled by modular, plug-n-play nature of neural networks and training
- Consequence: Multi-modal, unified architectures, unified tasks (next-token prediction)

**Example**: The Transformer Models (Vaswani et al., 2017)



Transformer Models originally designed for NLP

Almost identical model (Visual Transformers) can be applied to Computer Vision tasks

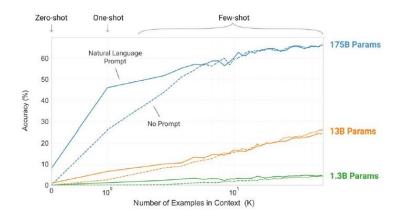


# Emergence of new behaviors

**Emergence** means that the behavior of a system is implicitly induced rather than explicitly constructed. For Deep Learning, emergence is often induced by larger model & more data.

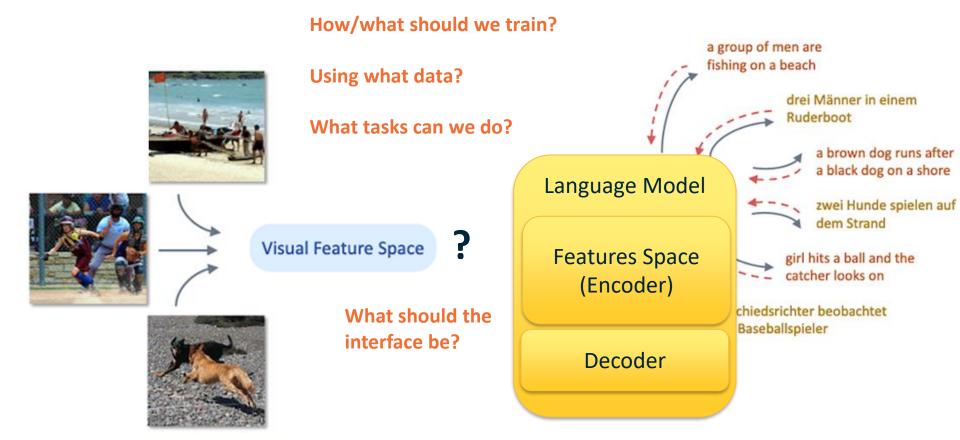
**Example**: Compared to GPT-2's 1.5B parameter parameter model, GPT-3's 175-billion model permits "prompting" and "in-context learning", i.e., adapting to a new task simply by describing task.

Example input (prompt): Ask it to translate French to English  $\underbrace{\text{maison} \rightarrow \text{house, chat} \rightarrow \text{cat, chien} \rightarrow}_{\text{prompt}} \underbrace{\text{dog}}_{\text{completion}}.$ 



Bommasani et al., On the Opportunities and Risks of Foundation Models

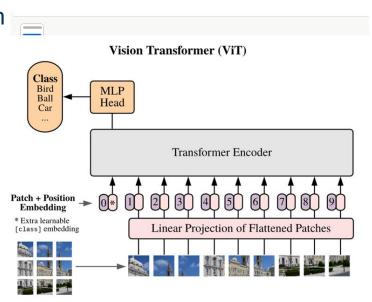


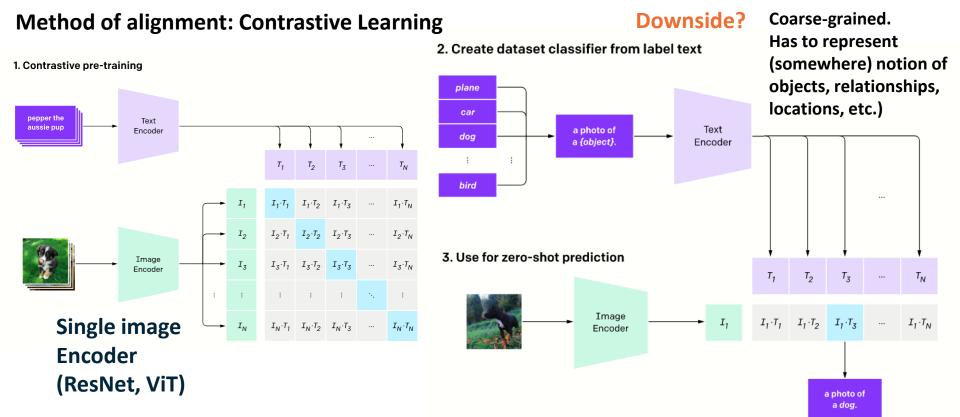




### Potential ways of representing an image?

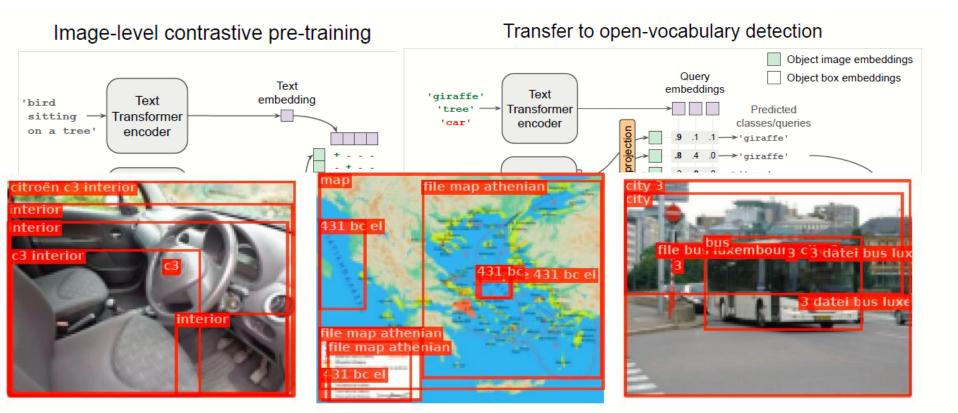
- Image encoder
  - Any architecture: ResNet, Vision transform (ViT)
  - Randomly initialized, SL/SSL pre-trained





Radford et al., Learning Transferable Visual Models From Natural Language Supervision

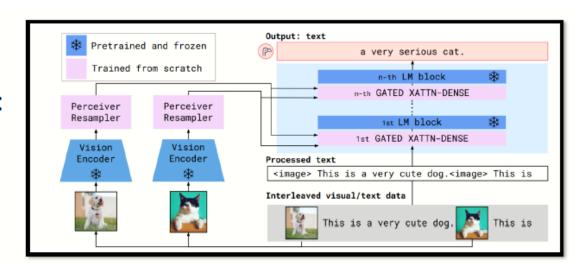




Minderer et al., Simple Open-Vocabulary Object Detection with Vision Transformers Minderer et al., Scaling Open-Vocabulary Object Detection



## • Flamingo:



Language Model

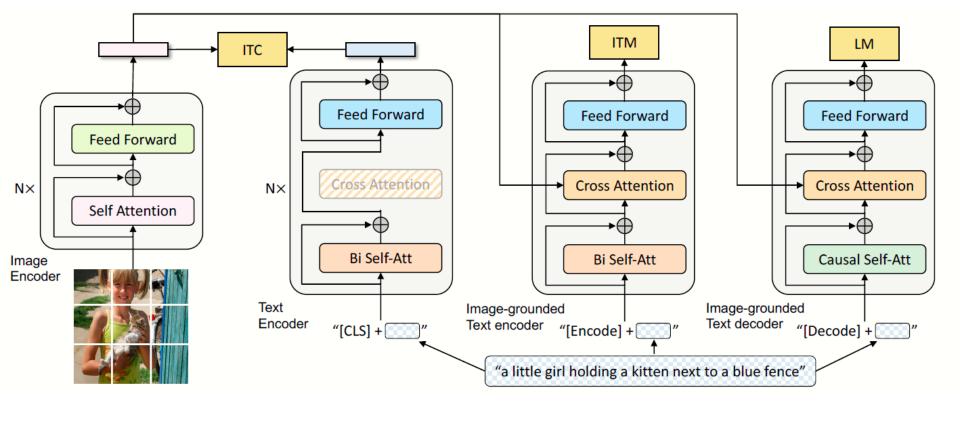
Connection Module

Vision Encoder

Pre-trained: 70B Chinchilla
Perceiver Resampler

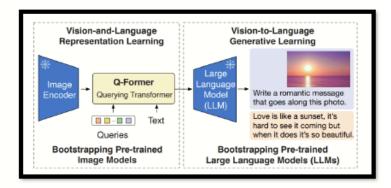
Gated Cross-attention + Dense

Pre-trained: Nonrmalizer-Free ResNet (NFNet)



Li et al., BLIP: Bootstrapping Language-Image Pre-training for Unified Vision-Language Understanding and Generation

### • BLIP2



Language Model

Connection Module

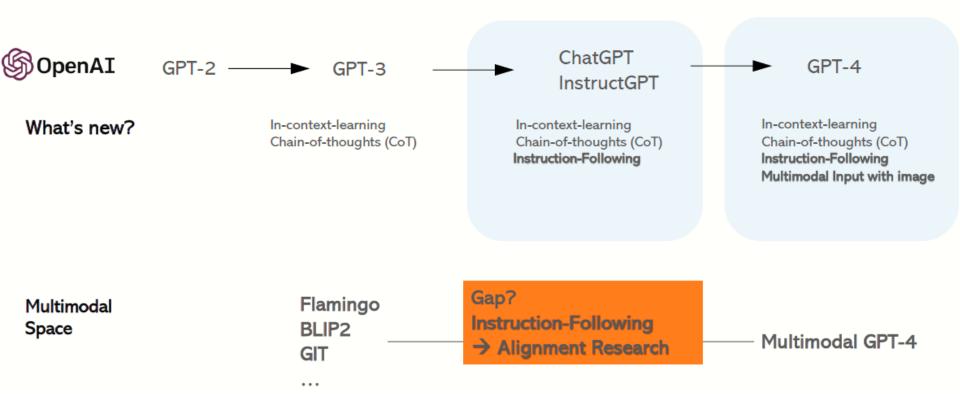
Vision Encoder

Pre-trained: FLAN-T5/OPT

Q-Former: Lightweight
Querying Transformer

Contrastive pre-trained:
EVA/CLIP

## Recap on Language Modeling: Large Language Models (LLM)



### GPT-assisted Visual Instruction Data Generation

- Rich Symbolic Representations of Images
- In-context-learning with a few manual examples

→ Text-only GPT-4

#### Context type 1: Captions

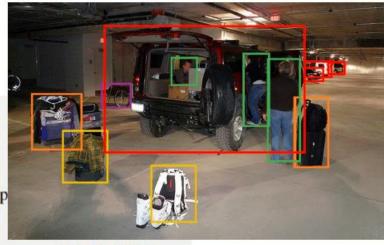
A group of people standing outside of a black vehicle with various luggage. Luggage surrounds a vehicle in an underground parking area

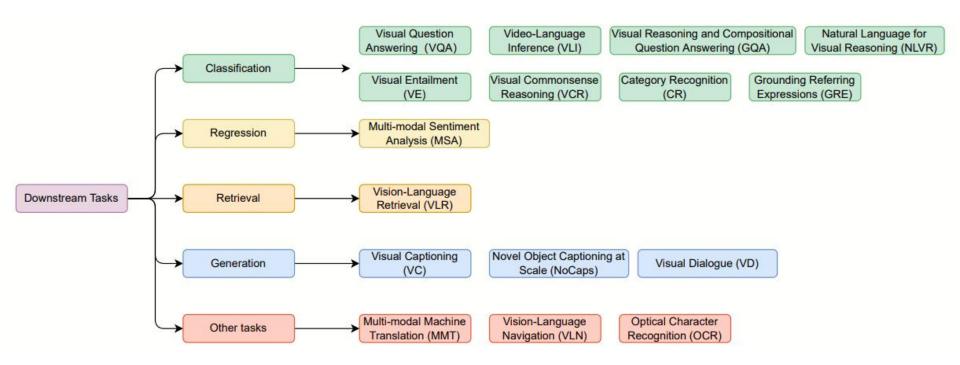
People try to fit all of their luggage in an SUV.

The sport utility vehicle is parked in the public garage, being packed for a trip Some people with luggage near a van that is transporting it.

#### Context type 2: Boxes

person: [0.681, 0.242, 0.774, 0.694], person: [0.63, 0.222, 0.686, 0.516], person: [0.444, 0.233, 0.487, 0.34], backpack: [0.384, 0.696, 0.485, 0.914], backpack: [0.755, 0.413, 0.846, 0.692], suitcase: [0.758, 0.413, 0.845, 0.69], suitcase: [0.1, 0.497, 0.173, 0.579], bicycle: [0.282, 0.363, 0.327, 0.442], car: [0.786, 0.25, 0.848, 0.322], car: [0.783, 0.27, 0.827, 0.335], car: [0.86, 0.254, 0.891, 0.3], car: [0.261, 0.101, 0.787, 0.626]





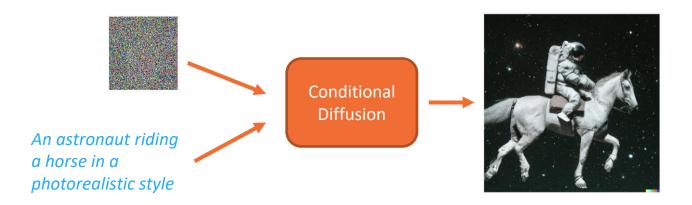
VLP: A Survey on Vision-Language Pre-training, <a href="https://arxiv.org/pdf/2202.09061">https://arxiv.org/pdf/2202.09061</a>



Yang et al., MM-ReAct MM-ReAct: Prompting ChatGPT for Multimodal Reasoning and Action



# **Conditional Diffusion Models**



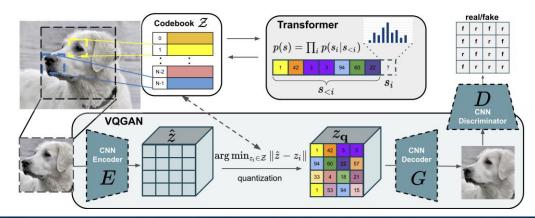
Simple idea: just condition the model on some text labels y!  $\epsilon_{\theta}(x_t, y, t)$ 



# Latent-space Diffusion

Problem: Hard to learn diffusion process on high-resolution images

Solution: learn a low-dimensional latent space using a transformer-based autoencoder and *do diffusion on the latent space*!

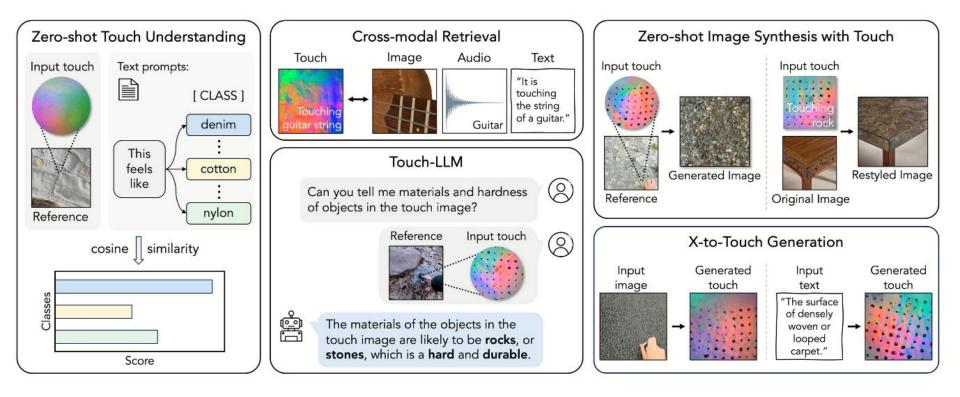




# Videos!



https://research.nvidia.com/labs/toronto-ai/VideoLDM/o-video/

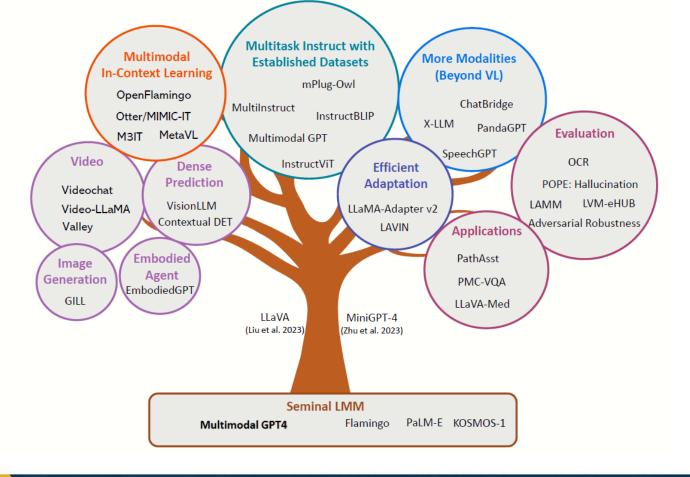


Yang et al., Binding Touch to Everything: Learning Unified Multimodal Tactile Representations, CVPR 2024



- Fusion: Early, mid, late
- Pre-training? Instruction tuning? RLHF?
- Data Generation
- Training Objectives
- Alignment between modalities
- Grounding
- Discriminative / Generative
- Promptable/steerable models?
- VLM Reasoning?
- Applications
  - Zero-shot/open-vocabulary perception
  - Multi-Modal Tasks
    - Captioning, Vision-Question Answering
  - Decision-Making (Web GUI Agents, Embodied AI, etc.)
- What are we improving? How does it come about?





Slide by Chunyuan Li



- Understand the architectural, training, dataset, and evaluation aspects of multi-modal models.
  - Be able to compare & contrast
  - Have a holistic picture of the space
- Develop skills to read papers, identify gaps/limitations, create novel methods, and rigorously evaluation them.
- Develop skills for presenting research results.









Xijia Polina Zhang

- This will be a participation-driven course
- In-person attendance will be mandatory!
  - No remote option, no recordings except for accommodations
  - Don't come in sick please!!!

- It's all deep learning We expect some deep learning background!
  - CS 7643 (Deep Learning) or similar

### Survey:

- Deep Learning class/equivalent?
- Transformers?
- PyTorch/Tensorflow?
- Vision? Language? Audio? Other?
- ECCV? CVPR? EACL? CHI? ICRA? COLING? ICLR?
- What do you want to get out of the class?
- We do not expect deep experience in all modalities!



- 15% Class Participation
- 20% Paper Reviews
- 15% Paper Discussion
- 50% Project
  - 5% Proposal
  - 10% Midterm Presentation
  - 15% Final Presentation & Video
  - 20% Final Report

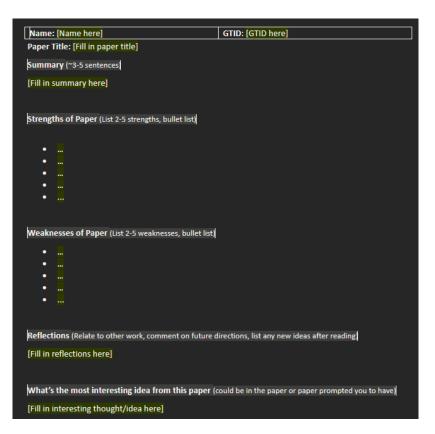
Credits: This course was designed with materials and inspiration from great courses such as <u>Learning from Limited Labels</u> and <u>Internet Data Science</u>



	Sign-up is first come first served. Each paper needs a pro/con presenter, compare/contrast can be selected once that is full.  Paper selection subject to change.					
			Discussion Lead			
Date	Торіс	Paper		Presenter 2 - Cons (First Last Name)	Presenter 3 Compare/Contrast, Related Worl (First Last Name)	
nu, Aug 29		CLIP, ALIGN, & CoCa				
ue, Sep 3		Open-Vocabulary (e.g. OWL/v2, LSeg)				
hu, Sep 5		Datasets / Eval				
Tue, Sep 10		<u>ViLT</u>			Some change	
Thu, Sep 12		FLAVA			_	
Thu, Sept 19		Frozen			<ul> <li>+1 lecture</li> </ul>	
Tue, Sep 24		Flamingo			"historica	
Thu, Sep 26		BLIP / BLIP-2			HIStorica	
Tue, Oct 1		Llava / LLava1.5/Llava-NeXt/Llava-OneVisi	sion		<ul> <li>More pap</li> </ul>	
Thu, Oct 3		Intern-VL			• •	
Tue, Oct 8		UnifiedVLP/UnifiedIO-2			advancen	
Tue, Oct 10		Chameleon				
Thu, Oct 24		ViperGPT				
Tue, Oct 29		MM-CoT/ReAct				
Thu, Oct 31		Web Agents (WebGUM, SeeClick)				
Tue, Nov 5		Embodied AI (PALM-E/RT-2, etc.)				
Thu, Nov 7		Something with other modalities (e.g. aud	idio) from Owens et al. Another optio	n is ImageBind		
Tue, Nov 12		A Framework for Multi-modal Learning: Jo	Jointly Modeling Inter- & Intra-Modali	ity Dependencies		
Thu, Nov 14		Survey paper				
Thu, Nov 19		Survey paper				



- <u>Template</u> (instructions are in Word comments)
- 1-page review of each paper (except if presenter).
- Due: 11:59 pm ET on the day before class. Late reviews will not be accepted.
- We will drop your lowest 3 submissions.
- Limit reviews to 1-pg using our review template





- ~1 page total (separated into parts below)
- Detailed review
  - Brief (~3-4 sentence) summary
  - Main contribution
  - Strengths? Weaknesses?
- Relationship observed between the papers we are reading
- Pull out most interesting thought
- View class webpage for details
- Write in your own words and proof read (this is individual work!)



### Template

For each paper, two to three students will be responsible for a 45-minute presentation including:

- Jointly set of slides summarizing the paper (problem, methods, experiments)
- Each student presenting one focused slide on strengths,
   weaknesses, and (if there is a third student) related papers
- After (or during) the presentation we will have in-depth discussions! In addition to the above, you will have to jointly: Come up with five questions/points of discussion
- Add any additional resources for students to explore if background is needed or they would like to learn more



- Submit draft slides:
  - Friday before week of presentation (Tuesday presentation)
  - Monday on week of presentation (Thursday presentation)
- Submit final form the night before class presentation 11:59 pm ET
  - Option of a practice presentation during office hours (optional).

	Sign-up is first come fir	Sign-up is first come first served. Each paper needs a pro/con presenter, compare/contrast can be sel Paper selection subject to change.		
				Discussion
Date	Торіс	Paper	Presenter 1 - Pros (First Last Name)	Presenter 2 - Cons (First Last Name)
hu, Aug 29		CLIP, ALIGN, & CoCa		
ue, Sep 3		Open-Vocabulary (e.g. OWL/v2, LSeg)		
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Thu, Sep 12		FLAVA		
Thu, Sept 19		Frozen		
Tue, Sep 24		Flamingo		
Thu, Sep 26		BLIP / BLIP-2		
Tue, Oct 1		Llava / LLava1.5/Llava-NeXt/Llava-OneVis	ion	
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Tue, Nov 12		A Framework for Multi-modal Learning: J	ointly Modeling Inter- & Intra-l	Modality Dependencies
Thu, Nov 14 Thu, Nov 19		Survey paper Survey paper		

Let me know if you may drop the course, before signing up.

- Note: We will release semifinalized list by tomorrow morning
- Feel free to suggest papers!
- Papers subject to updating, but similar topic outline
- Sign up by Monday



- 50% Project
  - 5% Proposal
  - 10% Midterm Presentation
  - 15% Final Presentation & Video
  - 20% Final Report
- Goal is to develop a novel approach to a multi-modal problem
- Shooting for publications at top venues highly encouraged!

- Possibilities
  - Design and evaluate a novel approach
  - A novel application, use case
  - Extension of a technique studied in class
  - Be creative!
- Target is a research paper at a good conference
- Work in teams of 3-4 (varies by enrollment)
- Sign up for teams by September 6 11:59PM ET

- Three in-class presentations (class schedule coming tonight)
- Project proposal [5%]
- Project update [10%]
- Final presentation and short video [15%]
- Final report [20%]

- Make sure you are saying everything we need to know to understand you
- Practice presenting and make sure you know what you want to cover
  - Practice is the BIGGEST driver of good presentations
- Think about your audience
- Make your talks visual and animated
- Stick to the time limit!

- Clearly define the problem statement (input, output)
- Place your work in the context of existing work
- Lay out a set of claims and the set of experiments you'll conduct to demonstrate your claims and effectiveness of approach
  - Did your claims actually get validated by results?
- Present a timeline
  - Concrete goals for the next update
  - Propose long shot goals
  - Present updates following same plan
  - See class webpage for more details



- Use any language / platform / package you like
- No support for code / implementation issues will be provided this is not a programming assignment!
- Al Assistants OK for implementation
  - But you are the driver of the creativity, novelty, and approach!



**Grade** Percentage Range

A 90% and above

B 80% - 89%

C 70% - 79%

D 60% - 69%

F Below 60%



- 1. *Read first, Write later*. Read the ENTIRE set of posts/comments before posting.
- 2. <u>Avoid language that may come across as strong or offensive</u>. Language can be easily misinterpreted.
- 3. <u>Follow the language rules of the Internet.</u> Do not write using all capital letters, use emoticons to temper.
- 4. <u>Consider the privacy of others</u>. Ask permission prior to giving out a classmate's email address or other information.
- <u>5. inappropriate material.</u> Do not forward virus warnings, chain letters, jokes, etc. to classmates or instructors. The sharing of pornographic material is forbidden.

### Be professional, objective, and kind!

**NOTE**: The instructor reserves the right to remove posts that are not collegial in nature and/or do not meet the Online Student Conduct and Etiquette guidelines listed above.

## What is the collaboration policy?

#### Collaboration

- Encouraged for presentation and project (team members)
- Can also discuss anything with classmates, but reviews must all be written by you!
  - Cite all resources, including collaborators, used
- Each student writes their own answers.

#### Al Assistants:

- Paper Reviews, Presentations, Ed Posts/Discussions: NO! All materials submitted for these deliverables must be entirely your own.
- Project: It is OK to discuss the projects with others (of course including your team) and you are free to
  use whatever online codebases, blogs, resources, and AI coding assistants (e.g. Copilot) if you wish.
   Explicitly acknowledge any and all resources used. Describe how you used AI if you did.
- Zero tolerance on plagiarism
  - Neither ethical nor in your best interest
  - Always credit your sources, Don't cheat. We will find out.



### How do I get in touch?

- Primary means of communication -- Ed
  - No direct emails to Instructor unless private information
  - Instructor/TAs can provide answers to everyone on forum
  - Class participation credit for answering questions!
  - No posting answers. We will monitor.
  - Stay respectful and professional



### GT Resources for Mental Health

#### Georgia Tech Police Department

Emergency: Call 911 | 404-894-2500

#### Dean of Students Office

404-894-2565 | studentlife.gatech.edu Afterhours Assistance Line & Dean on Call: 404-894-2204

#### Center for Assessment, Referral and **Education (CARE)**

404-894-3498 | care.gatech.edu

#### Collegiate Recovery **Program**

404-894-2575 | counseling.gatech.edu

#### **Counseling Center** 404-894-2575 |

counseling.gatech.edu

#### **Health Initiatives**

404-894-9980 healthinitiatives.gatech. edu

#### **LGBTQIA** Resource Center

404-385-4780 | lgtbgia.gatech.edu

#### Stamps Psychiatry Center

404-894-1420

#### VOICE

404-385-4464 | 404-385-4451 24/7 Info Line: 404-894-9000 | voice.gatech.edu

#### Women's Resource Center

404-385-0230 I womenscenter.gatech.edu

#### Veterans Resource Center

404-894-4953 | veterans.gatech.edu

#### Georgia Crisis and Access Line

1-800-715-4225

social workers and counselors 24 hours per day, every day, to assist those with urgent and emergency needs.

#### **Trevor Project**

1-866-488-7386

Trained counselors are available to support anyone in need.

#### National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-8255

The crisis line is staffed with professional A national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7.

#### Georgia State Psychology Clinic

404-413-2500

The clinic offers high quality and affordable psychological services to adults, children, adolescents, families and couples from the greater Atlanta area.



# Computing

- Major bottleneck: GPUs
- Options
  - Your own / group / advisor's resources
  - PACE-ICE (w/ some H100s)
  - Google Colab
    - jupyter-notebook + free GPU instance
  - Google Cloud credits
    - Tutorial on setting up gloud: <a href="https://github.com/cs231n/gcloud">https://github.com/cs231n/gcloud</a>



### **FAQ**

• Can I audit? No 🕾

- Will I get a seat?
  - We can't expand class size. Waitlist is only hope.

- Read the class website **thoroughly** after my initial Ed post tonight
- Tentative schedule will be up by tonight
- Sign up to lead a discussion by Monday August 25th
- Probability of dropping class? Talk to me first.
- Start thinking about project teams



Have fun!

