

EMILY SHEETZ

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EDUCATION

University of Michigan

August 2018 - Present (Anticipated December 2024)

PhD, Computer Science and Engineering
Artificial Intelligence
Robotics

GPA: **3.940** / 4.0

Member of Ensemble of Computer Science and Engineering Ladies+ (ECSEL+)
Member of Women+ in Robotics and Engineering (WiRE+)
Member of GENder Diversity in Robotics (GENDiR)
Member of Graduate Society of Women Engineers (GradSWE)

University of Michigan

August 2018 - June 2021

MS, Computer Science and Engineering

GPS: **3.940** / 4.0

Monmouth College

August 2014 - May 2018

BA, Mathematics and Computer Science
Spanish Minor
Honors Program
Summa Cum Laude

GPA: **3.975** / 4.0

Member of Blue Key Honors Society
Member of Sigma Delta Pi, Spanish Honors Society
Member of Alpha Lambda Delta

RESEARCH

Affordance Representation and Execution

January 2019 - Present

University of Michigan

Ann Arbor, MI

- Explore use of object affordances to achieve complex robot manipulation tasks
- Extend representation of object affordances to include controllers to improve manipulation abilities
- Lead project conception and implementation and work collaboratively with students

Natural Language Processing

August 2017 - May 2018

Monmouth College

Monmouth, IL

- Trained a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN) to generate sentences of text on the character level
- Explored how probabilistic language models could be quantitatively evaluated using perplexity
- Defined the problem, investigated methods, and planned the execution of the research plan
- Presented results of mathematics and computer science senior research projects to faculty and students

Analog and Digital Sound Synthesis

August 2017

Monmouth College

Monmouth, IL

- Introduced to software for high quality sound recording and visualizing sound waves
- Explored FM synthesis with non-sinusoidal carrier waves using the LittleBits Synth Kit
- Presented research to faculty and students

Optimized Snapshot-Based Visual Homing for UAVs

May 2017 - July 2017

Auburn University

Auburn, AL

- Researched visual homing on unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)
- Introduced to Python, OpenCV, and machine learning implementations
- Implemented simulation framework for testing techniques in MATLAB
- Worked independently to research, design simulation framework, and find solutions

Design of a Mathematical Model for an Autonomous Vehicle June 2016 - August 2016
University of Arizona *Tucson, AZ*

- Used system identification to develop a mathematical model for internal vehicle dynamics
- Introduced to autonomous systems, control theory, and model predictive control
- Worked independently to research, analyze data, troubleshoot, and solve problems
- Operated the Cognitive Autonomous Test (CAT) Vehicle for project testing

Analysis of Chaotic Walks on a Plinko Board August 2015
Monmouth College *Monmouth, IL*

- Conducted experiments for introduction into the mathematics of chaos theory
- Supervised students during Summer Opportunity for Intellectual Activity projects
- Presented research to faculty, students, and community members

Particle Image Velocimetry for Flow Around an Airfoil August 2014 - May 2015
Monmouth College *Monmouth, IL*

- Investigated water flow around airfoils at angles of attack using particle image velocimetry
- Operated lab equipment including lasers, flow cell, and Phantom v9.1 high speed camera
- Created poster presentation and presented research to students and faculty members

High Speed Imagery and Mathematical Modeling August 2014
Monmouth College *Monmouth, IL*

- Focused on experiment design, data analysis, and introduction to mathematical modeling
- Collaborated with mathematics majors to conduct experiments
- Gained experience designing experiments and using Mathematica and MATLAB

WORK EXPERIENCE

NASA Johnson Space Center Pathways Intern May 2023 - August 2023
NASA Johnson Space Center, ER4 *Houston, TX*

- Lead development of tool manipulation pipeline for Valkyrie to use a tool mounted to her hip
- Develop general manipulation tools, such as sequencing action primitives and locally searching the robot's workspace for states that satisfy goal constraints
- Ensure straightforward operator interaction with general and tool-specific manipulation tools through RQT and RViz panel plugins
- Lead robot ops sessions to test key functionality and coordinating with several team members to ensure proper support of ops sessions
- Work on tasks closely related to projects by teammates and act on feedback from multiple teammates
- Assist with onboarding of other interns and share resources on my work with other teammates
- Regularly test features and document progress through written documentation and teams updates
- Organize a live demonstration of autonomous manipulation capabilities for team and answered questions
- Present work to team leadership and branch/division management
- Earned an Individual Excellence Award for my project innovation and implementation
- Earned a Team Excellence Award for my technical contributions and robot ops support to the team's year-end demo

Curriculum Developer and Instructor

November 2022 - Present

*Veritas AI**Virtual*

- Develop artificial intelligence and machine learning curriculum for middle school students (AI Trailblazers) based on pre-existing high-school level curriculum (Veritas AI)
- Research middle school engagement and teaching best practices
- Revamp curriculum to include active learning and formative assessment activities
- Teach students during weekly courses
- Mentor and guide students through small group practice problems and scaffolded projects
- Coordinate logistics and administrative tasks with program managers
- Onboard and support team of additional instructors and mentors

NASA Johnson Space Center Pathways Intern

January 2022 - May 2022

*NASA Johnson Space Center, ER4**Houston, TX*

- Incorporate human-in-the-loop object registration and stance generation to the Valkyrie virtual reality (VR) project
- Integrate multiple pieces of existing software and implement communication between separate parts
- Work on tasks closely related to projects by teammates and act on feedback from multiple teammates
- Regularly test features and document progress through written documentation and video demos
- Perform robot operations to test use of new VR features for driver-assist teleoperation of robots
- Present work to team and upper branch management
- Earned an Individual Excellence Award for my project implementation
- Earned a Team Excellence Award for my technical contributions and robot ops support to the team's year-end demo

Research Mentor

June 2021 - Present

*Lumiere Education**Virtual*

- Mentor high-school students on research projects related to computer science and robotics
- Explain reading and writing academic research papers during one-on-one weekly meetings
- Advise on research question, project design, code implementation, and research paper deliverables
- Lead small group lessons on applying artificial intelligence and machine learning concepts in Python

Research Intern

August 2020 - Present

*NASA Johnson Space Center**Houston, TX*

- NASA Space Technology Graduate Research Opportunities (NSTGRO) application and acceptance based on project proposal
- Collaborate with employees at JSC to incorporate my work into their existing projects with Valkyrie
- Present research findings at regular meetings
- Prepare quarterly progress reports and annual research plans

Engineering Teaching Consultant

August 2020 - Present

*University of Michigan**Ann Arbor, MI*

- Consult with teaching assistants to address teaching challenges
- Review teaching philosophy statements
- Learn about best teaching practices and pedagogy research to share during consultations

Academic Success Program Tutor

January 2019 - Present

*University of Michigan**Ann Arbor, MI*

- Tutor undergraduate level mathematics and computer science courses

- Explain concepts and work through examples with student athletes one-on-one
- Practice helpful studying, reading, and note-taking habits

Graduate Student Instructor

University of Michigan

August 2019 - May 2020

Ann Arbor, MI

- Prepare for and lead weekly discussion sections to review course material and clarify homework concepts
- Work with students one-on-one during office hours to address questions and concerns with the course
- Collaborate with staff members to write and grade exams, handle exam management, write assignments

Research Intern

TRAC Labs

June 2019 - August 2019

Webster, TX

- Developed a hierarchy of single- and multi-objective potential field controllers
- Explored practical use of controllers through experiments on the TRACArm robot
- Worked with the Robotics Lab to discuss ideas and implementation details within existing software

Computer Science Tutor

Monmouth College

August 2017 - May 2018

Monmouth, IL

- Utilized knowledge of programming practices and languages C++, Java, and Python
- Lead group discussions of material and explain concepts one-on-one
- Encouraged students to think about problems and solutions from new perspectives

Computer Science Lab Assistant

Monmouth College

August 2016 - May 2017

Monmouth, IL

- Assist in Introduction to Computer Science and Introduction to Programming labs
- Lead group discussions of material and explain concepts one-on-one
- Encourage students to think about problems and solutions from new perspectives

Math Tutor

Monmouth College

August 2016 - May 2017

Monmouth, IL

- Tutor high school student in algebra in one-on-one sessions
- Explain concepts and problem-solving strategies
- Talk student through homework problems to practice discussed strategies

Writing Tutor

Monmouth College

May 2016 - May 2018

Monmouth, IL

- Provide direction to students at any point in the writing process
- Utilize nondirective tutoring methods to help students to improve their writing process
- Develop relationships with students through encouragement and validation of their efforts

Speech Assistant

Monmouth College

August 2015 - May 2018

Monmouth, IL

- Assist students at any point in the process of drafting or delivering a speech
- Observe speeches, evaluate speakers needs, and provide feedback on speeches
- Develop relationships with students by encouraging them and supporting their efforts

Research Assistant

Auburn University

May 2017 - July 2017

Auburn, AL

- Worked under the supervision of Dr. Saad Biaz and Dr. Richard Chapman
- Collaborated with peers to research, develop approach to problem, and write code

- Wrote academic paper, created poster, and presented research

Research Assistant

University of Arizona

June 2016 - August 2016

Tucson, AZ

- Worked under the supervision of Dr. Jonathan Sprinkle and doctoral students
- Collaborated with peers to research, write MATLAB scripts, and design experiments
- Experienced writing academic papers and presenting research

Fulton Hall Resident Assistant

Monmouth College

August 2015 - May 2017

Monmouth, IL

- Plan social programs and assist with organizing collaborative educational programs
- Provide emotional and academic support for residents and residence hall staff
- Create a community on the floor and in the residence hall with open-door policy

TECHNICAL STRENGTHS

C++
Python
ROS
C#
Java
Qt
MATLAB
Mathematica
JavaScript
HTML

PUBLICATIONS

Emily Sheetz, Misha Savchenko, Emma Zemler, Abbas Presswala, Andrew Crouch, Shaun Azimi, and Benjamin Kuipers. Multi-Fingered End-Effector Grasp Reflex Modeling for One-Shot Tactile Servoing in Tool Manipulation Tasks. IEEE International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS) *Under Review*, 2024.

Emily Sheetz, Xiaotong Chen, Zhen Zeng, Kaizhi Zheng, Qiuyu Shi, and Odest Chadwicke Jenkins. Composable Causality in Semantic Robot Programming. IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA), 2022.

Semir Tatlidil, Yanqi Liu, **Emily Sheetz**, R. Iris Bahar, and Steven Sloman. Using Human-Guided Causal Knowledge for More Generalized Robot Task Planning. Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) Fall Symposium on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI). *arXiv preprint arXiv:2110.04664*, 2021.

PRESENTATIONS

Visiting Talk on Robotics at Monmouth College

April 2022

My Journey in Robotics: Humans Wanted ([watch on YouTube](#))

Presentation for General Audience, including Faculty, Staff, and Students

RSS Workshop on Declarative Representations in Robot Control

July 2021

Composable Causality in Semantic Robot Programming

Lightning Talk and Poster Presentation

RSS Workshop on Artificial Intelligence and Manipulation for Robotics Composable Causality in Semantic Robot Programming Poster Presentation	July 2021
Tri-Section Meeting of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) Optimized Snapshot-Based Visual Homing for UAVs Oral Presentation <i>Recipient of Outstanding Undergraduate Research (OUR) Award from the Illinois Section (ISMAA)</i>	March 2018
Scholar's Day Presentation on Mathematics Capstone Project Evaluating Horror Text Generated by Probabilistic Language Models Poster Presentation	April 2018
Scholar's Day Presentation on Computer Science Capstone Project Writing Horror Text Using Generative Adversarial Networks with Memory Poster Presentation	April 2018
Presenter at First Science Symposium Probabilistic and Machine Learning Approaches to Text Generation Oral Presentation	April 2018
Scholar's Day Presentation on Honors Capstone Project Mathematics and the Philosophy of Chaos Oral Presentation	April 2017
Scholar's Day Presentation on Historical Documents Research Balancing Equality and Freedom: An Examination of Declarations of Independence Poster Presentation	April 2016
Scholar's Day Presentation on Mathematics Research Particle Image Velocimetry Experiments for Flow Around an Airfoil Poster Presentation	April 2015
Scholar's Day Presentation on Gender Disparity in Education Oral Presentation	April 2015

ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

NASA Johnson Space Center ER Division Team Excellence Award	December 2023
NASA Johnson Space Center ER Division Individual Excellence Award	December 2023
NASA Johnson Space Center ER Division Team Excellence Award	August 2022
NASA Johnson Space Center ER Division Individual Excellence Award	May 2022
Advancement to PhD Candidacy	September 2021
Pass PhD Preliminary Examination	June 2021
Monmouth College Dean's List	August 2014 - May 2018
Paul Cramer Prize for Outstanding Work in Upper-Level Mathematics	April 2018
Computer Science Award for Senior Project	April 2018
Outstanding Undergraduate Research (OUR) Award at MAA Conference	March 2018
Robert Minter Prize for Student Working to Maximum Potential	April 2017
Paul Cramer Prize for Outstanding Work in Upper-Level Mathematics	April 2017

Computer Science Award for Introductory Sequence	April 2017
Ray A. Schwind Scholarship for Sciences	April 2016
Ray A. Schwind Scholarship for Sciences	April 2015
Hugh R. Beveridge Prize for Outstanding Work in Intermediate Mathematics	April 2015
Speaker Showcase Participant and Winner	December 2014
Illinois Seal of Biliteracy for English and Spanish	May 2014

NEWS AND MEDIA

Valkyrie Robot Capability Demonstration (NASA NTR and recognition for my contributions)	March 2024
My Journey in Robotics: Humans Wanted	April 2022
Alumna Working with NASA	October 2020
Student NASA Award Supports Work on More Dexterous, Collaborative Space Robots	October 2020

FUNDING APPLICATIONS

NASA Space Technology Graduate Research Opportunities (NSTGRO) Accepted for funding and collaboration August 2020 to Present	November 2019
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program	October 2019
National Science Foundation National Robotics Initiative 2.0 Grant Proposal	February 2019
NASA Space Technology Research Fellowship (NSTRF)	November 2018
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program	October 2017

LEADERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCES

Monmouth College Class Reunion Committee Member	May 2023 - October 2023
CSE Department Faculty Candidate Grad Student Host	March 2021
Computer Science and Robotics Visit Day Volunteer	March 2019 - April 2019
CSE Department Take Your Child To Work Day Volunteer	April 2019
Wind Ensemble Flute Section Leader	August 2016 - May 2018
Wind Ensemble President	August 2017 - May 2018
Wind Ensemble Secretary	August 2016 - May 2016
Marching Band Flute Section Leader	August 2015 - May 2018
Marching Band Woodwind Captain	August 2016 - May 2018
Blue Key Honor Society Secretary	March 2017 - March 2018
Monmouth College Admissions Events Volunteer	August 2015 - May 2018
Jamieson Center and Strom Center Thrift Shop Volunteer	August 2015 - May 2016
SO _f IA Activities Coordinator	August 2015
Monmouth College Bands Dodgeball Tourmanment Supervisor	February 2014