

Jiixin An

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Research focus

My research aims to (1) advance the understanding of human behavior through the lens of information science and (2) apply this knowledge to address societal challenges arising from rapid technological development. Currently, my research focuses on developing agentic systems that empower vulnerable populations in information-seeking. Specifically:

- I examine *autonomy*, a fundamental characteristic of agentic systems and a core ethical principle in human life. As technological advancements enable autonomous systems, I aim to understand how we can design these systems to enhance, rather than diminish, human autonomy.
- I focus on *aging populations*, a rapidly growing demographic whose autonomy is often challenged by physical and cognitive decline, as well as by social stigmatization stemming from ageism.

Education

Ph.D. in Information Studies / The University of Texas at Austin

AUG 2021 - PRESENT, AUSTIN, TX

Advisor: Dr. Yan Zhang

Dissertation: Older adults' autonomy in health information seeking with information agents

M.S., Library Science / Peking University

JUL 2018 - JUN 2020, BEIJING, CHINA

Advisor: Dr. Pengyi Zhang

Thesis: The health information behavior of parents of children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)

B.S., Library Science & B.S., Psychology / Peking University

JUL 2014 - JUN 2018, BEIJING, CHINA

Honor & Awards

Best Artificial Intelligence Published Paper Award

2025, Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), SIG-AI

Dayuan Wu & Suiqiao Chen Scholarship, Top 1

2017, Department of Information Management, Peking University

Merit Student, Top 10%

2017, Peking University

"Challenge Cup" Academic Competition, 2nd Prize

2016, Peking University

Funding & Grants

IC² Institute Graduate Fellowship, \$6000

2025-2026, IC² Institute, University of Texas at Austin

Student Travel Grant Award, \$375

2024/2025, ASIS&T, SIG-AI

Graduate School Summer Excellence Fellowship, \$10,000

2023/2024/2025, School of Information, University of Texas at Austin

College Recruitment Fellowship, \$48,933

2021-2022, University of Texas at Austin

Publications

* [J] Journal, [C] Peer-reviewed conference proceedings, [W] Workshop presentation, [P] Poster, [M] Pre-printed Manuscripts

Older Adult-Agent Interaction

[M2] An, J., Yi, S., Lyu, Y., Liu, H., & Zhang, Y. (2025). Conversational Agents for Older Adults' Health: A Systematic Literature Review. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2503.23153*.

[W4] An, J. (2025). Autonomy in People's Information Seeking and Sharing with Information Agents. *Annual Meeting of the Association for Information Science and Technology*.

🏆 SIG-AI Student Travel Award

Human-AI Interaction

- [W3] **An, J.** (2025). Autonomy for Older Adult-Agent Interaction. *ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems 2025*.
- [M1] Zhang, Y., **An, J.**, Wang, B., Zhang, Y., & Liu, J. (2025). Human-Centered Explainability in Interactive Information Systems: A Survey. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2507.02300*.
- [J2] Choi, W., Bak, H., **An, J.**, Zhang, Y., & Stvilia, B. (2024). College students' credibility assessments of GenAI-generated information for academic tasks: An interview study. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*.
 **SIG-AI Best Artificial Intelligence Published Paper Award**
- [P2] **An, J.**, Bak, H., Choi, W., Zhang, Y., & Stvilia, B. (2024). College Students' Metaphors for ChatGPT: An Exploratory Study. *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology*.
- [W2] **An, J.**, Bak, H., Choi, W., Zhang, Y., & Stvilia, B. (2024). College Students' Barriers and Challenges of Using ChatGPT: An Exploratory Study. *Annual Meeting of the Association for Information Science and Technology*.
 **SIG-AI Student Travel Award**

Information behavior in health and other domains

- [J1] **An, J.**, Fan, W., Mittal, A., Zhang, Y., & Chen, A. (2024). Mobile App Use among Persons with Fibromyalgia: A Cross-Sectional Survey. *The Journal of Pain*. DOI: 10.1016/j.jpain.2024.03.011
- [W1] **An, J.** (2023). Resilience in parents' caregiving for children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder): an exploratory study. *ACM Conference on Designing Interactive Systems*
- [C3] Liu, J., **An, J.**, & Zhang, P. (2020). Analyzing opinion conflicts in an online group discussion: From the perspective of majority and minority influence. *iConference 2020 Proceedings*.
- [C2] **An, J.**, Na, Y., & Zhang, P. (2019). How do parents of children with ASD use information grounds to seek for ASD-related information? *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 56(1), 10-20.
- [C1] **An, J.**, Li, T., Teng, Y., & Zhang, P. (2018, March). Factors influencing emoji usage in smartphone-mediated communications. In *International Conference on Information* (pp. 423-428). Springer, Cham.
- [P1] **An, J.**, Fu, Y., Wang, M., & Liu, C. (2017). To learn or not to learn? The primary school students' internet use for learning. *iConference 2017 Proceedings*.

Research Experience

The University of Texas at Austin / Research Assistant

AUG 2021 - PRESENT, AUSTIN, TX

Project 1: Human-Centered Explainability in Interactive Information Systems

- PI: Dr. Jiqun Liu (University of Oklahoma) and Dr. Yan Zhang
- Reviewed 1000+ publications to understand the practices of UX design for AI explainability

Project 2: The Application of Generative AI in Education

- PI: Dr. Wonchan Choi (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Dr. Yan Zhang, and Dr. Besiki Stvilia (Florida State University)
- Investigated students' understanding and use of Generative AI in their study through interviews and qualitative coding

Project 3: Consumer Longitudinal Health Information Needs and Search Behavior

- PI: Dr. Yan Zhang and Dr. Jacek Gwizdka
- Conducted three-month data collection (interviews, diaries, and logs) for each participant and

analyzed data with mixed methods.

Project 4: Fibromyalgia-Related Mobile App Use

- PI: Dr. Annie T. Chen (University of Washington)
- Surveyed 600+ patients with fibromyalgia to understand their mobile app use behavior in health management, and conducted statistical analysis.

Peking University / Research Director

JUL 2015 - JAN 2020, BEIJING, CHINA

Project 1: Information Behavior of Parents of Children with ASD

- Advisor: Dr. Pengyi Zhang
- Interviewed 16 Chinese parents of children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) after 2-month observation to understand their information practice that supports their caregiving.
- 2+ years of volunteering in a local ASD community

Project 2: Factors Influencing Emoji Usage in Smartphone-Mediated Communications

- Advisor: Dr. Pengyi Zhang
- Explored emoji usage by collecting WeChat messages, qualitative coding, and statistical tests

Project 3: The Primary School Students' Internet Usage for Learning

- Advisor: Dr. Chang Liu
- Investigated students' Internet use during their study by diaries, focus groups, and qualitative coding

Teaching experience

The University of Texas at Austin / Teaching Assistant

JAN 2023 - PRESENT, AUSTIN, TX

Course 1: Academic Success in Digital University (Fall 2025)

- Designed in-person discussion classes for 26 undergraduates, complementing lectures through activities such as workshops, group discussions, and debates.
- Integrated collaborative tools (Figma, Google Docs, Google Slides) to support group work and active learning..
- Graded assignments, including discussion posts, in-class journals, and individual projects.

Course 2: Consumer Health Informatics (Fall 2024)

- Delivered an in-person introductory session for 20 master's students on design tools such as Figma.
- Provided ongoing academic support via individual appointments to address course content and project needs.

Course 3: Introduction to Informatics (Fall 2023 - Spring 2024)

- Developed and led in-person and online discussion classes for 27 - 40 undergraduates in addition to the lectures, such as workshops, group discussions, and debates
- Integrated collaborative tools, including Figma, Google Docs, and Google Slides, to help with group collaborations.
- Guided students in reviewing lecture content and completing final projects through one-on-one appointments.
- Evaluated a range of assignments, including discussion posts, presentations, individual essays, and group reports.

Peking University / Teaching Assistant

SEP 2018 - MAY 2020, BEIJING, CHINA

Course: Information Organization

- Developed in-person discussion classes for 20 undergraduates, including workshops and group discussions.
- Designed syllabus, assignments, examinations, and Q&A videos for an online course of 30+ students.

Industry experience

Xiaomi Technology / User Research Intern

APR 2021 - JUL 2021, BEIJING, CHINA

- Log analysis combined with literature review, survey, and interview to explore how voice assistant XiaoAI influences mobile phone purchases. The findings provided insights into the commercial strategies and optimization points of XiaoAI.
- Content analysis of 500+ Weibo posts to support the training of XiaoAI's public sentiment monitoring system. This project was selected as a "Quality Star" program in 2023.

Ferrum Health / User Research Intern

JUL 2018 - AUG 2018, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

- Interviewed six Chinese physicians to understand their perspectives on AI-powered CT scanners and the possibility of introducing products to China. The findings helped the team understand the concerns of Chinese physicians about AI in medicine.
- This internship is funded by the CHINA-US Program for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CUSPEI)

Didi Chuxing / Product Manager Assistant

JUL 2017 - JAN 2018, BEIJING, CHINA

- Interviewed 10 drivers and 17 riders to understand the value that motivates them to stay on the platform.
- Log analysis to understand drivers' behavior patterns to design the algorithm that motivates them to work at specific time periods.

Skills

Software: NVivo, MAXQDA, SPSS, Excel, Axure, Sketch, Figma

Research methods: Experienced in qualitative methods, e.g., surveys, observation, interviews, focus groups, and diaries. Familiar with quantitative methods, e.g., experiment design and statistical tests.

Coding: Basic knowledge of Python, SQL, HTML, CSS

Language: Chinese, English.

Services

Reviewer: CHI 23/24/25; CUI 24; CSCW 24/25; ASIS&T 19/21/24/25; iConference 18/24; CHIIR 23/24; Humanities and Social Sciences Communications (HSSCOMMS); Information Research; The Electronic Library

Volunteer: DIS 23; CHIIR 23; iConference 18