

Meixuan (Michelle) Li

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Professional Summary

Innovative and socially driven student, researcher, and developer with experience at the intersection of social work, programing, and artificial intelligence. Adept at interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical data practices, and knowledge dissemination through academic projects, workshops, and research and development.

Education

University of Toronto, ON Canada
Master of Social Work

Sep. 2025 – Present

University of Toronto, ON Canada
HBA in Political Science (Major), Economics (Minor), Sociology (Minor)

Sep. 2020-Apr. 2025

Experience

Training Program Developer – Simulation-Based Volunteer Training Program

CompanionLink (NGO) | Sep. 2024 – Present

- Designed and developed an AI simulation-enhanced volunteer training program to prepare volunteers for meaningful engagement with seniors, strengthening skills in rapport-building, empathy, and conversational adaptability.
- Built scenario-based modules using Python and HTML that allow volunteers to practice introductions, boundary-setting, and supportive responses, with real-time feedback to improve communication effectiveness
- Collaborated under the supervision of Dr. Franco Taverna and worked closely with a multidisciplinary team of developers and E-Learning experts to ensure the program's clinical relevance, accessibility, and ethical alignment.
- Conducted regular testing and refinement of chatbot modules, integrating team and user feedback to optimize the training experience and maintain professional standards.

Presenter and Research Assistant – SSHRC Connection Grant

Artificial Intelligence and Social Work in Canada: Exploring intra- and Interdisciplinary Opportunities, Tensions, and Challenges | Jul. 2024 – April. 2025

- Collaborated with scholars from University of Toronto, McGill, Laurentian, and Western to examine AI's role in social work practice and education, addressing interdisciplinary opportunities and ethical challenges.
- Contributed to the development of the grant proposal, drawing on Tatbot (AI-powered training tool) to identify gaps in psychotherapy training and client support.
- Presented at the April 2025 conference with Dr. Ka Tat Tsang on AI application in Social Work Education, highlighting innovations in simulation training with standardized patients.
- Coordinated cross-institutional meetings and integrated diverse perspectives from academics and practitioners to strengthen the project's collaborative scope.
- Supported research planning, communication, and budget preparation, ensuring alignment with SSHRC's objectives and evaluation standards.

Creator and Developer - ASD Child Standardized Patient Simulation Chatbot

Apr. 2024 – Present

- Designed BOB, a simulation-based training tool that replicates interactions with a 4-year-old child with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), helping social work students practice assessment, empathy, and intervention skills in a safe and accessible format.
- Developed the prototype using published research and evidence-based insights to model realistic communication styles and clinical change processes in children with ASD.
- Negotiated a research partnership with Hong Kong Christian Service to support inclusive development of BOB, ensuring diverse case representation while adhering to ethical standards.
- Pursued University of Toronto's Research Ethics Board (REB) application, ensuring informed consent, de-identification, and responsible data use in collaboration with community partners.
- Engaged in ongoing consultation with social work and ethics scholars to align development with professional standards and client-centered practice.

Research Assistant –SSHRC Funded Research

Exploring Inter-ethnic Relationships in the Settlement Sector | Sep. 2024 – Nov. 2024

- Contributed to a multi-site, SSHRC-funded study examining immigrant adaptation and inter-ethnic relationships, with attention to often-overlooked perspectives such as Indigenous communities.
- Conducted data analysis using both AI tools and conventional methods (e.g., NVivo), focusing on pattern recognition, thematization, and detail extraction.
- Collaborated with researchers and assistants across institutions, engaging in team discussions to align methodologies and integrate diverse perspectives.
- Supported knowledge dissemination efforts, exploring ways to make findings accessible to policymakers, settlement organizations, and academic audiences.

Creator and Developer – Tatbot (Advanced SSLD Training Aid)

Sep. 2024 – Apr. 2025

- Developed Tatbot, an AI-powered training tool grounded in Dr. Ka Tat Tsang's Strategies & Skills Learning & Development (SSLD) system, designed to support social work and psychotherapy education.
- Reviewed and organized SSLD content to ensure Tatbot's responses provide practical, applied guidance for social workers and human service professionals.
- Conducted rigorous testing and ethical review to maintain appropriateness, reliability, and alignment with professional standards of practice.
- Contributed to broader research initiatives, including an SSHRC-funded project, by identifying challenges and opportunities in integrating AI into clinical training.

Student Participant - TalkLab: Tackling Social Anxiety among U of T Undergraduate Students

University of Toronto | Jul 2024 – Present

Interdisciplinary group: Chi Ming Chou (Faculty of Medicine), Adam Frost (cognitive neuroscience post-doc. researcher), Brian Harrington (Computer Science), Steve Joordens (Department of Psychology), Yvonne Leung (Department of Psychiatry/UHN), Ka Tat Tsang (Faculty of Social Work)

- Collaborated with an interdisciplinary team (medicine, psychology, psychiatry, social work, and computer science) to design a program addressing social isolation and communication challenges among undergraduates.
- Contributed a social work perspective in user-testing of the TalkLab chatbot, providing feedback to improve its effectiveness in strengthening verbal communication and reducing anxiety.
- Participated in monthly team meetings to align strategies, share research developments, and integrate cross-disciplinary insights into project design.