

# Matthew A. Zucker

(857) 205-7655 • mzucker1@swarthmore.edu  
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/mzucker1/>

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS:

Robotics, motion planning, machine learning, numerical optimization, navigation, manipulation, obstacle avoidance, dynamic simulation, computer vision, computer graphics.

## EDUCATION:

- 2005–2010     **The Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University**, Pittsburgh PA.  
Ph.D. Robotics, conferred May 2011.
- 1998–2002     **Vassar College**, Poughkeepsie NY.  
B.A., Cognitive Science, with honors. Conferred May 2002.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:

- 2012–2014     **DARPA Robotics Challenge**, *Swarthmore College*. DARPA-funded competition to develop complex behaviors for humanoid robotics in a simulated disaster response scenario.
- 2007–2009     **Learning Locomotion**, *The Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University*. DARPA-funded competition to investigate planning & control algorithms for legged robots on rough terrain; I led the CMU team.
- 2005–2007     **Vision for Safe Driving**, *The Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University*. Developed search-based algorithms to predict and classify dangerous driving conditions.
- 1998-2000     **Standard Reference Data**, *National Institute for Standards and Technology*. Co-developed several online databases which have provided physics researchers with reference data for over 15 years.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- 2016–present     **Associate Professor**, *Department of Engineering, Swarthmore College*.
- 2010–2016     **Assistant Professor**. Courses include Mobile Robotics, Computer Vision, Numerical Methods, Humanoid Robotics, Fundamentals of Digital Systems, and Linear Physical Systems Analysis (labs).

- Summer 2006    **Teaching Assistant**, *Applications in Computer Graphics: Algorithmic Modeling and Animation*, AIIT Korea. Korean government-sponsored initiative to familiarize university faculty with recent developments in the field.
- 2006, 2007    **Co-Coordinator**, *The Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University*. Designed and taught a one-day LEGO robotics workshop to expose incoming Ph.D. students from diverse backgrounds to concepts including mechanism & software design, sensor integration, and debugging.
- Fall 2006      **Teaching Assistant**, *15-462: Computer Graphics I, Carnegie Mellon University*.
- Fall 2002      **Teaching Assistant**, *COGS 211: Perception & Action, Vassar College*.

## INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE:

- 2014–present    **Co-founder**, *FlySorter LLC, Cambridge, MA*. Develop machine learning and computer vision software to classify images of *Drosophila melanogaster* for intelligent lab automation.
- Summer 2009    **Senior Software Engineer**, *Rep Invariant Systems, Cambridge MA*. US Navy Phase I SBIR. Implemented a software prototype for multi-client, collaborative mission development to extend existing aviator planning software.
- Summer 2008    **Software Consultant**, *SEEGRID Corp., Pittsburgh PA*. Developed algorithms and software for navigation and manipulation planning on high degree-of-freedom robotic platforms.
- 2000–2005      **Senior Software Engineer**, *Bluefin Robotics Corp., Cambridge MA*. MIT spin-off company designing and manufacturing autonomous underwater vehicles. Created operator tools for mission planning, diagnostics, and data analysis, as well as publish/subscribe inter-process communications software used onboard the vehicles.
- 2002–2003      **Software Consultant**, *Vassar College, Poughkeepsie NY*. Developed a secure, campus-wide online voting system for student body elections.

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

### Invited Speaker:

- *Trajectory optimization with dense constraints using multigrid CHOMP*. Autonomous Systems Labs, TU Darmstadt, July 2015; Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems, July 2015.
- *Robotics and learning: why humans are bad at telling robots what to do, and how math can help*. Swarthmore College Faculty Lecture, October 2014.

- *Gradient based trajectory optimization with CHOMP*. Healthcare Robotics Lab, Georgia Institute of Technology, April 2014.
- *Reinforcement Planning: RL for optimal planners*. GRITS Lab, Georgia Institute of Technology, February 2014.
- *A “big data” approach to exploring course enrollments at Swarthmore*. Concord Consortium, March 2014; Swarthmore College Faculty Lunch Lecture, September 2013.
- *Modes of knowledge acquisition: research, learning, and robots*. Swarthmore College Alumni Weekend Faculty Lecture, June 2013.
- *Robot motion planning via trajectory optimization with CHOMP*. Union College, Schenectady, NY, May 2013.
- *How much math should a robot know?* Birmingham Southern College, Birmingham AL, March 2012.
- *Learning for Planning: why humans are bad at telling robots what to do, and how math can help*. Drexel University, Philadelphia PA, November 2011.
- *Putting the learning back into Learning Locomotion*. Boston Dynamics, Inc., Waltham MA, February 2010.
- *Planning, Learning, and Optimization for Rough Terrain Locomotion*. Willow Garage, Menlo Park CA, 2009; University of Southern California, Los Angeles CA, 2009.
- *Embodied Intelligence: Robots (and cog sci grads) acting in the real world*. Vassar College, Poughkeepsie NY, 2008.
- *Learning motion models from recorded data*. DENSO Corporation, Nagoya Japan, 2006.
- *Navigation planning overview*. Toyota Research, Higashifuji Japan, 2005.

#### **Journal Reviewer:**

- Journal of Field Robotics
- International Journal of Robotics Research
- Autonomous Robots
- IEEE Transactions on Robotics
- IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L)
- IEEE Transactions on Aerospace & Electronic Systems

#### **Conference Reviewer/Coordinator:**

- IEEE/RSJ Int’l Conference on Intelligent Robotics and Systems (IROS) – reviewer, associate editor
- IEEE-RAS Int’l Conference on Humanoid Robots – reviewer, associate editor
- International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML) – PC member
- Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) Conference – PC member

- Robotics: Science and Systems Conference (RSS) – PC member
- IEEE Int’l Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) – session co-chair, reviewer
- International Symposium on Robotics Research (ISRR) – reviewer
- IEEE Conference on Decision and Control – reviewer

### Memberships:

- Member IEEE, Robotics and Automation Society.
- Member ASEE.
- Member Sigma Xi, *Inducted September 2011.*
- Member Phi Beta Kappa, *Inducted May 2002.*
- Member Psi Chi, *Inducted May 2002.*

### Service at Swarthmore College:

- Member, Fellowships and Prizes Committee, 2014-2015
- Member, Aydelotte Foundation Steering Committee, 2012-2015
- Member, Institutional Review Board, 2011-2013
- Treasurer, Sigma Xi chapter, 2012-2013

### PUBLICATIONS (Swarthmore student co-authors are underlined):

#### Journal Articles:

- [1] M. Zucker, S. Joo, M.X. Grey, C. Rasmussen, E. Huang, M. Stilman, and A. Bobick. A general-purpose system for teleoperation of the DRC-HUBO humanoid robot. *Journal of Field Robotics*, 32(3):336–351, 2015.
- [2] M. Zucker, N. Ratliff, A. Dragan, M. Pivtoraiko, M. Klingensmith, C. Dellin, J.A. Bagnell, and S. Srinivasa. CHOMP: Covariant Hamiltonian optimization and motion planning. *International Journal of Robotics Research*, 32:1164–1193, August 2013.
- [3] M. Zucker, N. Ratliff, M. Stolle, J. Chestnutt, J.A. Bagnell, C. Atkeson, and J. Kuffner. Optimization and learning for rough terrain legged locomotion. *International Journal of Robotics Research*, 30(2):175–191, February 2011.

#### Refereed International Conferences:

- [4] M.X. Grey, S. Joo, and M. Zucker. Planning heavy lifts for humanoid robots. In *Proc. IEEE-RAS Int’l Conf. on Humanoid Robotics*, 2014.
- [5] K. He ’13, E. Martin ’13, and M. Zucker. Multigrid CHOMP with local smoothing. In *Proc. IEEE-RAS Int’l Conf. on Humanoid Robotics*, 2013.

- [6] M. Zucker, Y. Jun, B. Killen, T. Kim, and P. Oh. Continuous trajectory optimization for autonomous humanoid door opening. In *Proc. IEEE Int'l Conf. on Technologies for Practical Robot Applications*, 2013.
- [7] M. Zucker and J.A. Bagnell. Reinforcement planning: RL for optimal planners. In *Proc. IEEE Int'l Conf. on Robotics and Automation*, May 2012.
- [8] M. Zucker, J.A. Bagnell, C. Atkeson, and J. Kuffner. An optimization approach to rough terrain locomotion. In *Proc. IEEE Int'l Conf. on Robotics and Automation*, 2010.
- [9] N. Ratliff, M. Zucker, J.A. Bagnell, and S. Srinivasa. CHOMP: Gradient optimization techniques for efficient motion planning. In *Proc. IEEE Int'l Conf. on Robotics and Automation*, 2009.
- [10] M. Zucker, J. Kuffner, and J.A. Bagnell. Adaptive workspace biasing for sampling based planners. In *Proc. IEEE Int'l Conf. on Robotics and Automation*, 2008.
- [11] N. Chan, J. Kuffner, and M. Zucker. Improved motion planning speed and safety using regions of inevitable collision. In *17th CISM-IFTOMM Symposium on Robot Design, Dynamics, and Control (RoManSy'08)*, 2008.
- [12] M. Zucker, J. Kuffner, and M. Branicky. Multipartite RRTs for rapid replanning in dynamic environments. In *Proc. IEEE Int'l Conf. on Robotics and Automation*, 2007.
- [13] M. Zucker. Fast seafloor topography extraction and visualization from sparse AUV altimeter data. In *Proc. Oceans '05 Europe Conference*, 2005.

**Technical Reports:**

- [14] M. Zucker. *Learning and Optimization Methods for High Level Planning*. PhD thesis, The Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, May 2010.
- [15] M. Zucker. Approximating state-space obstacles for non-holonomic motion planning. Technical Report CMU-RI-TR-06-27, Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, May 2006.
- [16] M. Zucker. *Evolution of cooperative controllers for multi-agent systems*. Undergraduate thesis, Cognitive Science Department, Vassar College, 2002.
- [17] M.J. Berger, J.S. Coursey, M.A. Zucker, and J. Chang. Stopping-power and range tables for electrons, protons, and helium ions. SRD 124, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD, 2005.
- [18] Y.-K. Kim, K.K. Irikura, M.E. Rudd, M.A. Ali, P.M. Stone, J. Chang, J.S. Coursey, R.A. Dragoset, A.R. Kishore, K.J. Olsen, A.M. Sansonetti, G.G. Wiersma, D.S. Zucker, and M.A. Zucker. Electron-impact ionization cross section database. SRD 107, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD, 2004.