

Ryan M. Smith

PhD Candidate, Computer Science • University of British Columbia, InfoVis Lab
rs0914[at]cs.ubc.ca • rsmith0914[at]gmail.com

EDUCATION

- University of British Columbia**, Vancouver, BC *Sep 2022 – Aug 2027 (expected)*
PhD Candidate, Computer Science · InfoVis Lab · Supervisor: Dr. Tamara Munzner
- New York University**, New York, NY *Sep 2014 – May 2016*
MA, Psychology · Focus: Cognitive & Social Psychology
- Marist College**, Poughkeepsie, NY *Sep 2010 – May 2014*
BA, Psychology · Dual minor in Communication & Business

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Patient-centric data visualization; visualization-as-input systems; translating freeform patient narratives into structured, shareable visualizations for clinical encounters; cognitive biases in visual perception

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- InfoVis Lab, University of British Columbia**, Vancouver, BC *Sep 2022 – Present*
Graduate Researcher · Supervisor: Dr. Tamara Munzner
- Designing and building patient-centric visualization systems (HealthTale, SymptomTale) that transform unstructured patient narratives into structured timelines for clinical encounters.
 - Collaborating with industry partner Thrive Health to connect research prototypes to real clinical workflows.
- Visual Thinking Lab, Northwestern University**, Evanston, IL *Feb 2020 – May 2022*
Volunteer Research Assistant · PI: Dr. Steven Franconeri
- Designed, ran, and analyzed studies on visual perception of data using R and Excel.
 - Contributed to multiple studies on color saturation, graph size, shape rotation, and scatterplot area.
 - Prepared study stimuli, coding sheets, and analysis scripts.
- DePaul University Social Cognition Lab**, Chicago, IL *Sep 2019 – May 2022*
Volunteer Research Assistant · PI: Dr. Kimberly Quinn
- Contributed to manuscript development from existing lab data.
 - Conducted literature reviews and presented synthesized findings at lab meetings.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Workshop Papers

Smith, R. (2025). "Position Paper: Potential Areas of Bias in Visualization-as-Input Systems." In Proc. Workshop on Envisioning a Research Agenda for Input Visualization, IEEE VIS 2025.

Conference Presentations

Smith, R., Bellovary, A., & Quinn, K. (February 2021). "Sense of Place and Student Wellbeing: Preliminary Evidence for Impact of Liked but Not Disliked Spaces." Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention, Virtual.

Smith, R., Krenzer, W., Quinn, K., & Gomez, P. (November 2020). "The Cheerleader Effect: Replication and Extension." Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting, Virtual.

GRANTS AND FUNDING

- MITACS Accelerate Grant IT44143** 2025
Two-year, CAD \$90,000 grant for industry collaboration with Thrive Health.
- MITACS Accelerate Grant IT38408** 2024
One-year, CAD \$45,000 grant for industry collaboration with Thrive Health.

AWARDS, HONORS, & CERTIFICATIONS

- Instructional Skills Workshops for Graduate Students** 2026
- Completed the Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW), an internationally recognized, intensive 24-hour teaching certification focused on learner-centred pedagogy and instructional design
- UBC Faculty of Science Excellence in Service Award** 2025
- Annual award given to two students in UBC's Faculty of Science for service and positive impact.
 - Recognized for advocating an embedded counselor within the Faculty of Science, enabling graduate students to access mental-health support without navigating the central university queue.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Lecturer** · COGS 303, Research Methods in Cognitive Systems, UBC *Jan 2026 – May 2026*
- Designed and delivered a full undergraduate research methods course, consisting of 38 students, including development of syllabus, instructional materials, and assessment structure.
 - Implemented an active-learning, high-engagement classroom model emphasizing small-group, application-focused sessions and student-led inquiry
- Teaching Assistant** · CPSC 447, Introduction to Visualization, UBC *Winter 1 2023, Winter 2 2025*
- Supported course design and grading for assignments, projects, and exams on data visualization.
 - Held regular office hours and Piazza discussions; provided detailed feedback on student projects.
 - Maintained course website and materials.
- Teaching Assistant** · CPSC 103, Introduction to Systematic Program Design, UBC *Winter 2 2023*
- Graded assignments and tests; gave feedback focused on clean, efficient programming practices.
 - Ran course labs covering core programming concepts and provided technical support for student projects.
- Teaching Assistant** · CPSC 100, Computational Thinking, UBC *Winter 1 2022*
- Led course labs introducing foundational computer-science concepts and problem solving.
 - Graded assignments and exams.

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

- President** · Computer Science Graduate Student Association, UBC *May 2026 – May 2027*
- Leading the CS GSA; representing CS graduate students to the department and university.
- Vice President** · Computer Science Graduate Student Association, UBC *May 2024 – May 2025*
- Co-led CS GSA operations, events, and advocacy.
- Councillor** · Graduate Student Society, Executive Oversight Committee, UBC *Apr 2024 – Present*
- Elected councillor representing graduate students; serve on the Executive Oversight Committee.
- TA Union Steward** · CUPE 2278, Computer Science Department, UBC *Feb 2024 – Present*
- Department steward for the UBC teaching-assistant union; represent TAs on labor and workload issues.