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CV of Failures

Below are some failures I remember. While many of these were hard to go through at the time, they played an important role in shaping who I am today and serve as a strong source of motivation.

2023–

PhD

- First first-author paper at UW ([SGFT](#)) was rejected from CoRL 2024.
- Interviewed with Cursor, AI2, and Toyota Research Institute for an internship and was rejected. Did not receive responses from many other labs.
- Rejected for the UW-Meta AI Mentorship program.
- Rejected for the DoD NDSEG Fellowship.
- A paper I contributed to was rejected by multiple conferences and ultimately remained as a preprint.

2022–2023

Senior year of undergrad

- Rejected by 5 of the 7 PhD programs I applied to: Stanford, Berkeley, MIT, CMU, NYU (received offers from Prof. Abhishek Gupta at UW and Prof. Glen Berseth at MILA; thanks to both for taking a chance on me).
- Spent half a year pushing hard on a first-author project in Prof. Sergey Levine's lab. The results never quite came together, and the project was discontinued.
- Rejected for the NSF GRFP and DoD NDSEG Fellowship.

2020–2021

Sophomore year of undergrad

- Spent a year working hard on my first-ever research project in Prof. Sergey Levine's lab on offline reinforcement learning for autonomous driving. The results did not pan out, and the project was discontinued.
- Rejected or ghosted by hundreds of companies while applying for software engineering internships. Interviewed with Anyscale, Lunchclub, and Ambi Robotics but didn't pass. Received and accepted a single offer from UiPath.
- Attempted to start a no-code platform for automating data processing for pharma but failed to find a customer.
- Never completed a personal project to build custom AR glasses.

2019–2020

Freshman year of undergrad

- Rejected from all student clubs I applied to except one (thank you MDB). These included TEDxBerkeley, ML@Berkeley, Launchpad, Blueprint, CodeBase, Berkeley Innovation, Convergent, Codeology, and ROHP.
- Rejected or ghosted by every research assistant application and cold email I sent, including the Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (URAP), the Berkeley RISE Lab, and Berkeley AI Research.
- Rejected or ghosted by every software engineering internship position I applied to, numbering in the hundreds. The closest outcomes were an on-site interview at Illumio that I did not pass and an offer from Sabre that was later rescinded due to COVID-19.

- Received a B on my first two midterms at Cal (CS 61A and Math 53).

2018–2019

Senior year of high school

- Rejected from 20 of the 21 non-UC undergraduate programs I applied to, including Stanford, MIT, Caltech, CMU, Princeton, Harvard, Yale, UPenn, Cornell, Dartmouth, Brown, UChicago, Northwestern, Johns Hopkins, USC, Duke, Rice, WashU, UNC, and the University of Michigan.
- Practiced every AMC problem from 2000–2018 twice and failed to qualify for AIME for the fourth year in a row.