Kewei Liu is currently studying to earn his doctorate in Polymer Science under Dr. Yu Zhu. Read more about Kewei and his academic journey in CPSPE.

How does your major fit into your life’s plan?
Polymer science is multi-disciplinary; it provides very wide research and industry career options, in various fields such as automotive, electronics, health care and so on. I have had the unique opportunity to work in far ranging fields, from Nanomaterials to Lithium-ion Batteries and even device fabrication and characterization. I am grateful to have this experience and believe that the tools I learned from researching in this manner will bring me further success and fulfillment in my career as a scientist.

What have you learned that makes a difference to you?
There have been many experiments which I have found varying levels of success by brute-forcing parameters and variables, but I have often found the better way is to think deeper. I believe joy comes with the courage to try new things.

Why did you choose The University of Akron, specifically the College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering?
If you asked me in my first year, I would tell you it was because of Akron’s notoriety and fame as a top research institute in Polymers. Today, I would tell you what made me proud to have made that choice, which is experiencing firsthand the excellent professors and researchers who have made this institute what it is today.

Tell us about your experience in an internship or research project.
Working in nanomaterials brings quite a few different areas for research. I had chances to work with a variety of electrode materials for supercapacitors and batteries. Recently I have worked in safety issues for Lithium-Ion Batteries, developing an impact resistant electrolyte with shear-thickening properties.

Who is your favorite professor (or staff person) and why?
Of course, my advisor, Dr. Yu Zhu. He provides many opportunities for us to learn, ranging from fundamental research of nanomaterial and polymer synthesis to device fabrications for energy storage and electronics. His persistent, patient, and understanding instruction are greatly helpful, and his guidance has bettered me beyond just a researcher.

What are your plans after graduation?
I would like to pursue a career in academia, perhaps industry would suit me as well. The training here gives me confidence wherever my career may take me.