

Caltech

Learning for Reliable Control in Dynamical Systems

Yisong Yue

Policy/Controller Learning (Reinforcement & Imitation)

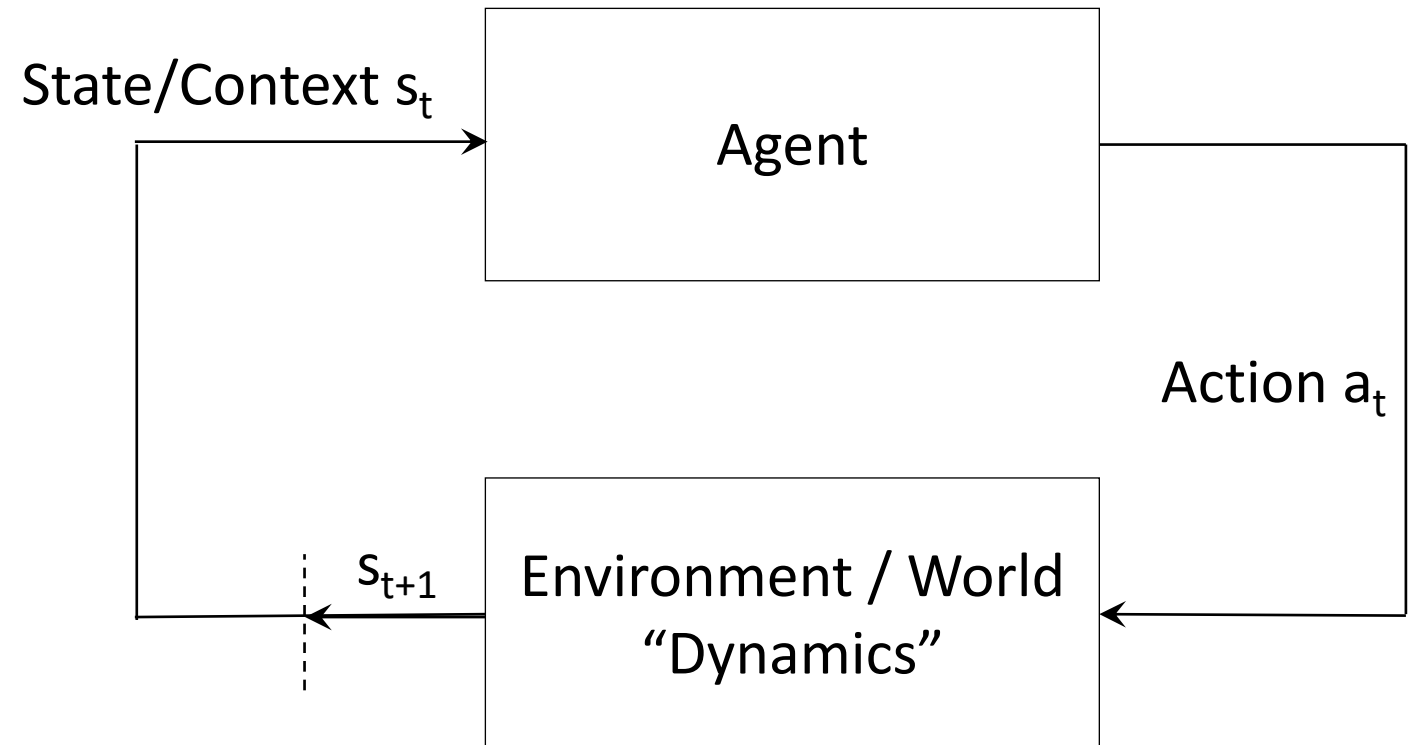
Goal: Find “Optimal” Policy

Imitation Learning:
Optimize imitation loss

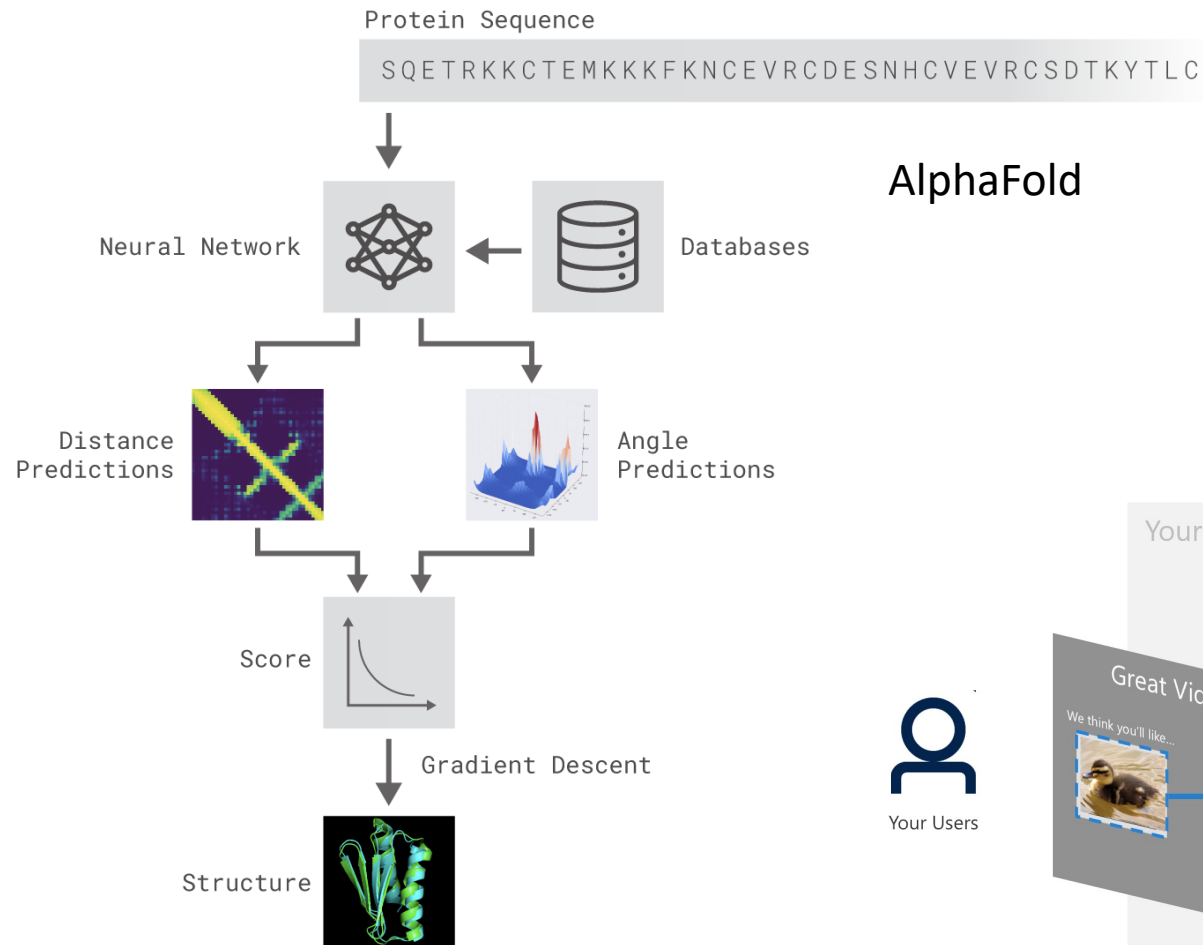
Reinforcement Learning:
Optimize environmental reward

**Learning-based Approach for
Sequential Decision Making**

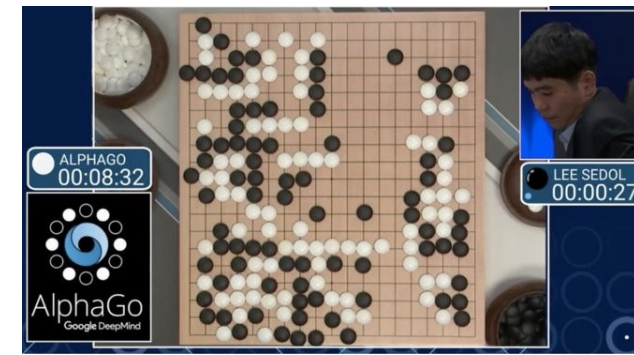
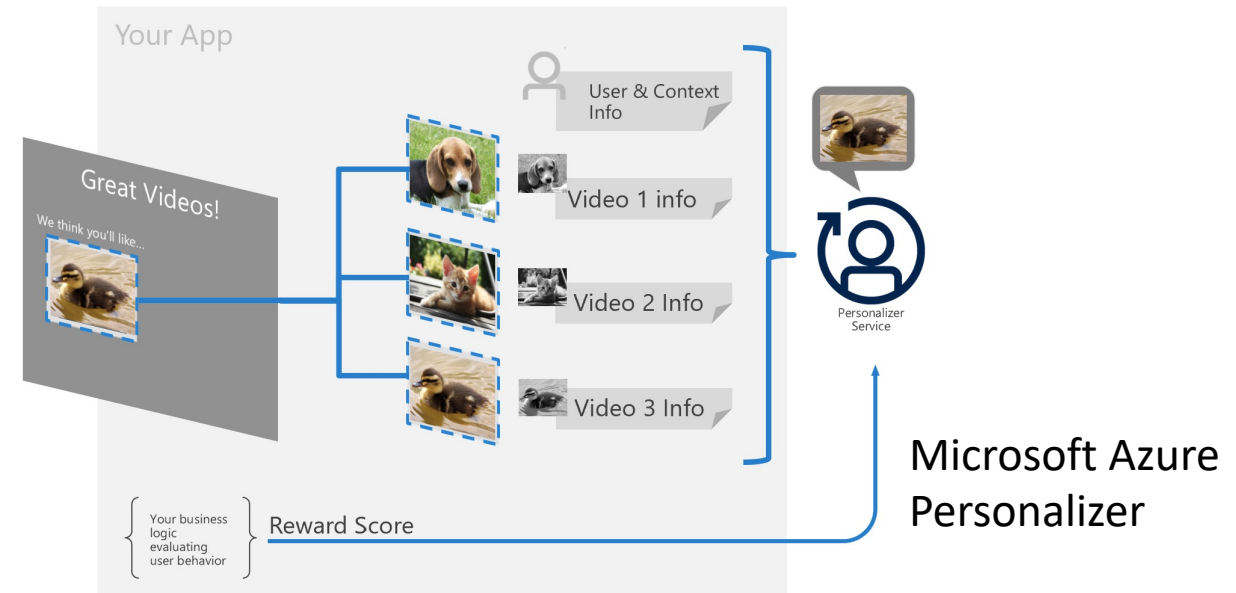
Non-learning approaches include: optimal control, robust control, adaptive control, etc.



Many Exciting Success Stories



AlphaFold



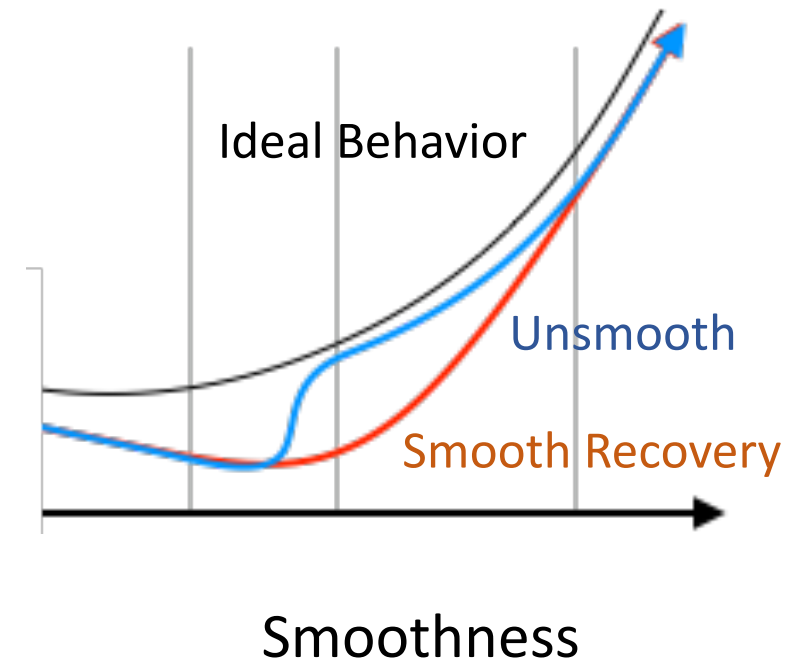
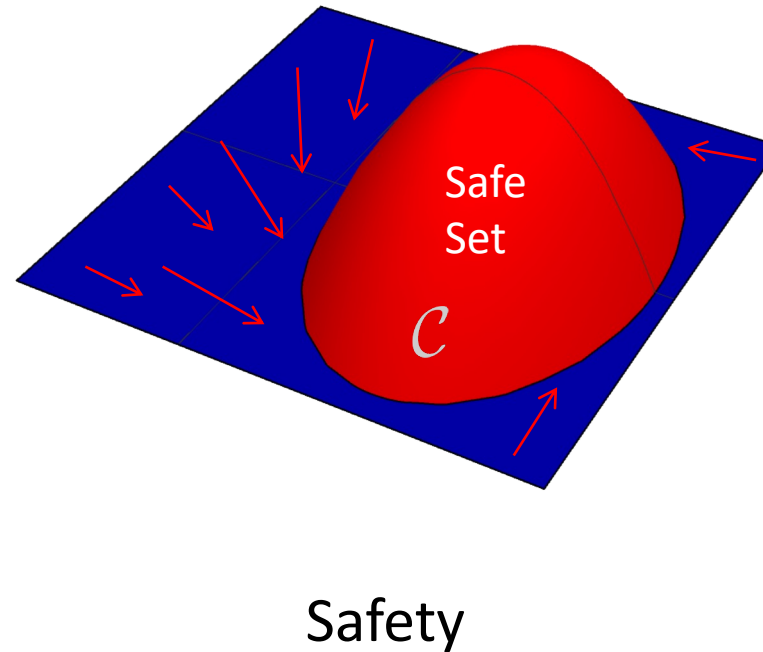
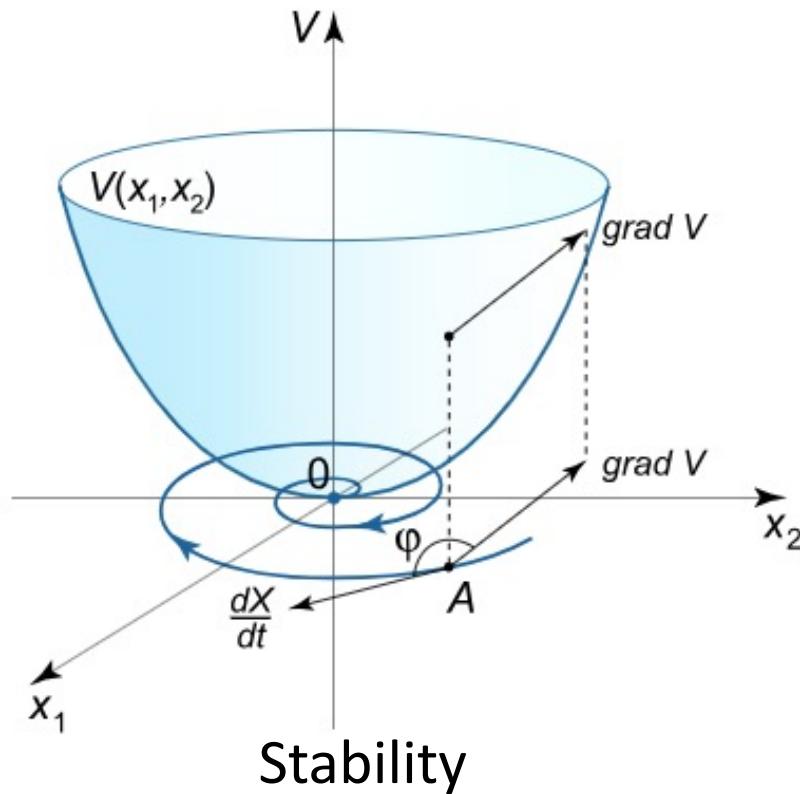
“ I want to use deep learning to optimize the design, manufacturing and operation of our aircrafts. But I need some guarantees. ” -- Aerospace Director



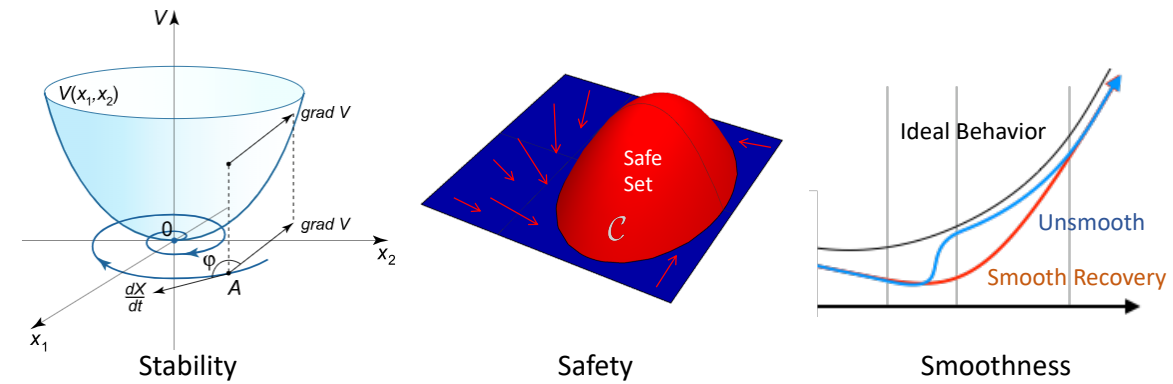
Behavioral Guarantees

Possibly Others:

- Fairness
- Low-risk
- Temporal logic
- Etc...



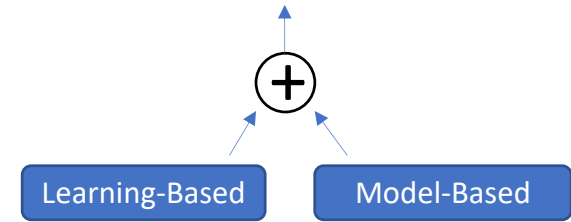
Research Questions



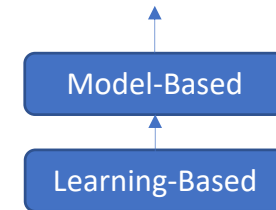
- How to **constrain** learning to (provably) satisfy guarantees?
- How to integrate **domain knowledge** from physics & control theory?
 - (Towards) a unified framework?
- How to exploit **structure** for faster learning?
 - (both computational & statistical)

Integration of Learning at Varying Levels

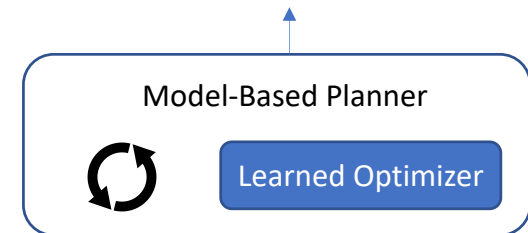
- Integration in control/action



- Integration in dynamics modeling



- Integration in optimization problem



Starting Point

Standard IL/RL Objective

$$\operatorname{argmin}_h L(h)$$

s.t.

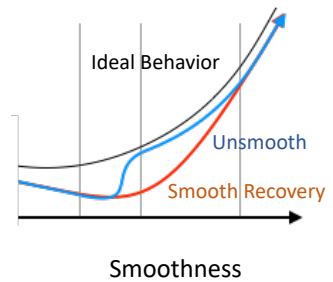
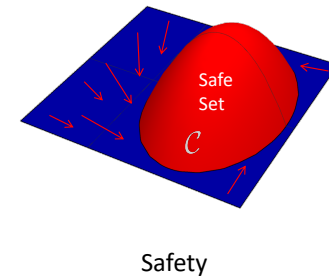
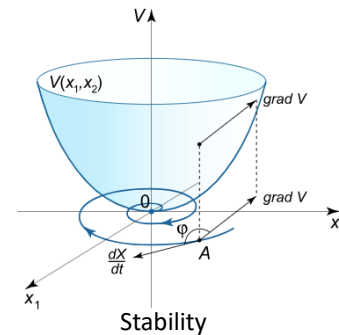
$$R(h) < \kappa$$

Side Constraint

In general, very hard
to verify/optimize!

(e.g., for all inputs, h is safe)

- Model-Based/Free
- On/Off Policy
- Imitation/Reinforcement
- Optimal Control



Functional Regularization

(to a certified controller)

$$\operatorname{argmin}_h L(h)$$

s.t.

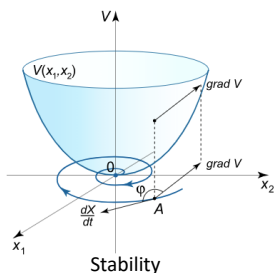
$$\exists g \in G: \|h - g\|^2 < \kappa$$



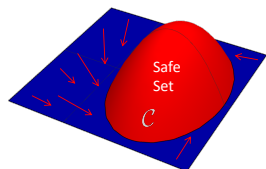
$$\operatorname{argmin}_{h,g} L(h) + \lambda \|h - g\|^2$$

Intractable?

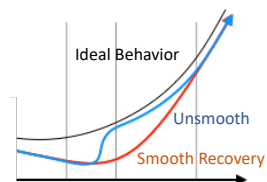
Model-Based Controllers
(certified by construction)



Stability



Safety



Smoothness

Key idea: G encodes domain knowledge & guarantees

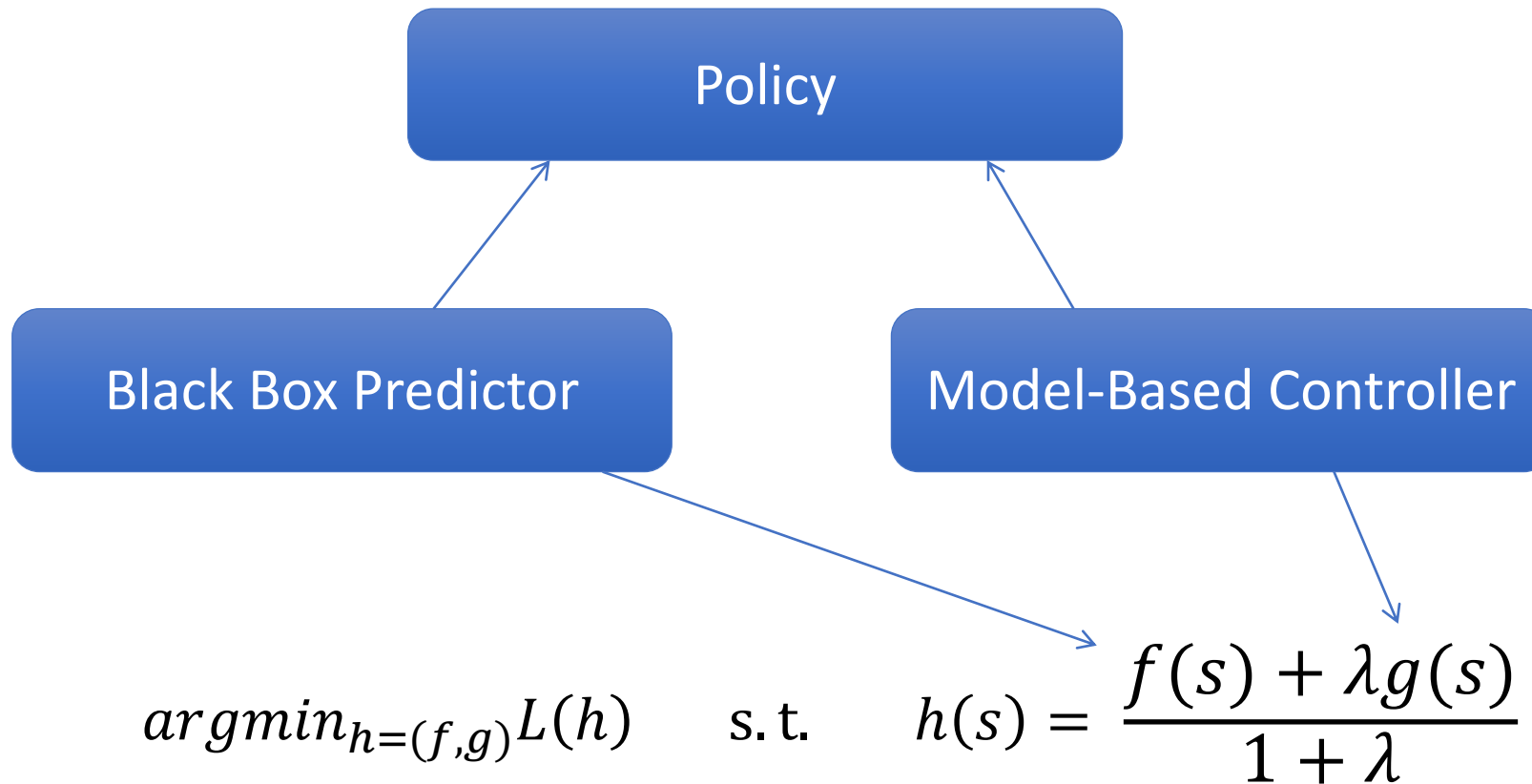
Blended Policy Class (solution concept)



Hoang
Le



Richard
Cheng

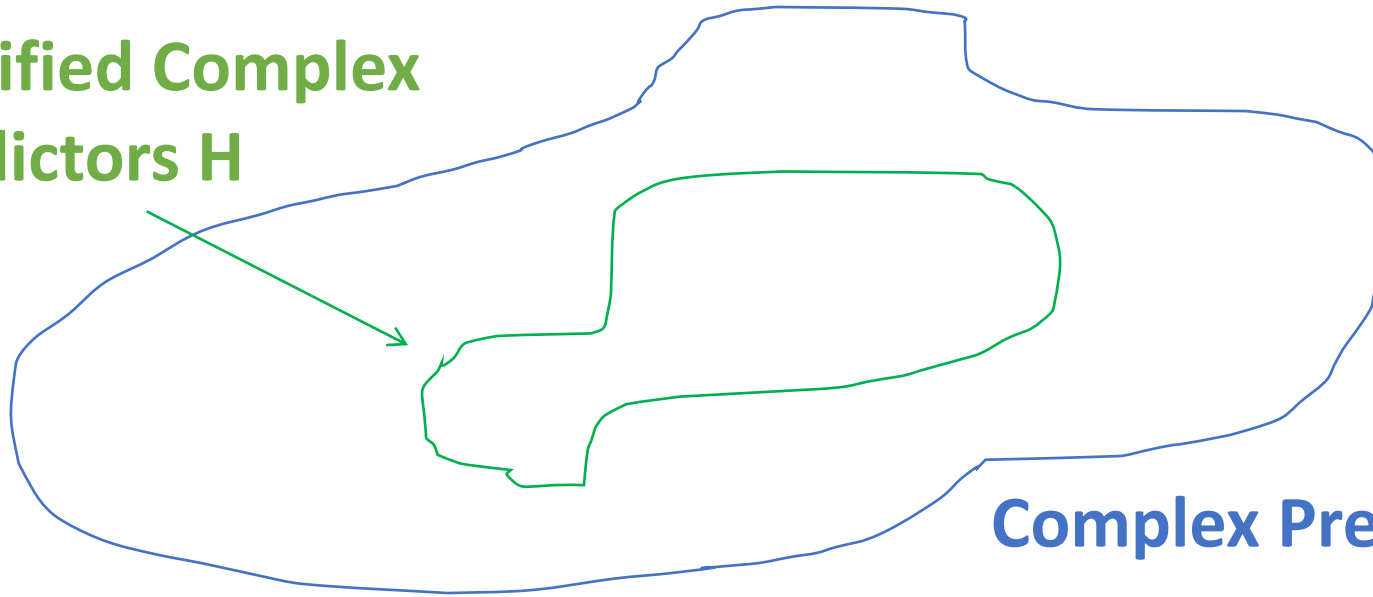


Test-Time Functional Regularization



Hoang
Le

**Certified Complex
Predictors H**



Complex Predictors F

$$\operatorname{argmin}_{h=(f,g)} L(h) \quad \text{s. t.} \quad h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

Theoretical Guarantees

$$\operatorname{argmin}_{h=(f,g)} L(h) \quad \text{s.t.} \quad h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

- By construction: h “close” to g
 - Certifications on $g \Rightarrow$ (relaxed) certifications on h
- Compatible with IL/RL
 - New learning approaches
- Very data efficient

Run-time regularization

Convergence analysis

Low-Variance Gradients

Comments on Certified by Construction

$$h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

- **Assumption:** all $g \in G$ are certified by construction
 - Robust against disturbances
 - Satisfied for many physical systems
- **Disturbance:** $f \in F$ is a “disturbance” of g
 - Worst-case disturbance depends $\max_s f(s)$ and λ
 - Guarantees worsen as λ decreases
- **Note:** local per-state guarantee \Rightarrow global guarantee

Comments on Optimization/Learning

$$\operatorname{argmin}_{h=(f,g)} L(h) \quad \text{s.t.} \quad h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

- Alternating optimization

- Hold g fixed, optimize f

- Hold h fixed, optimize g

- (see NeurIPS 2019 paper for clean treatment)

Reduces to “standard” approaches

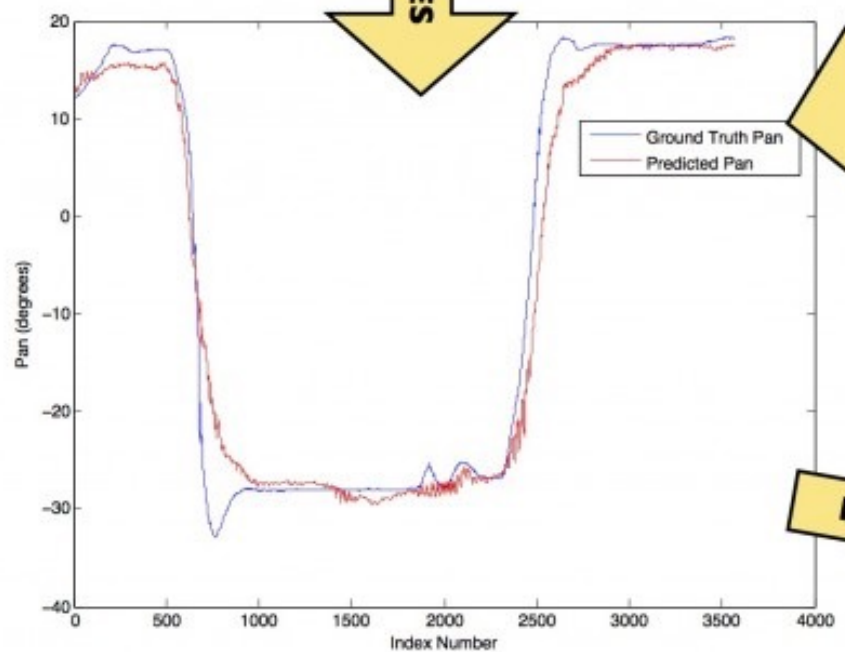
Imitation-Projected Programmatic Reinforcement Learning

Abhinav Verma, Hoang Le, Yisong Yue, Swarat Chaudhuri. NeurIPS 2019

Realtime Player Detection and Tracking



FEATURES



Learned Regressor

TRAIN

PREDICT

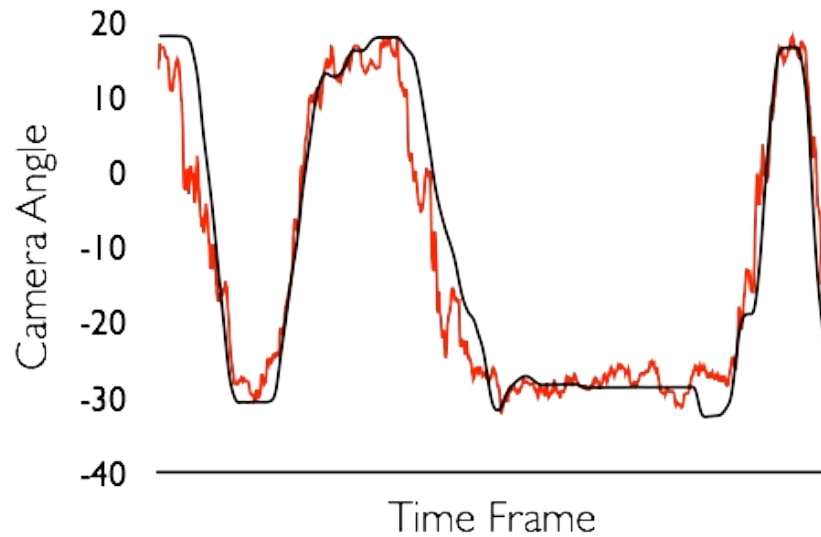
Human Operated Camera



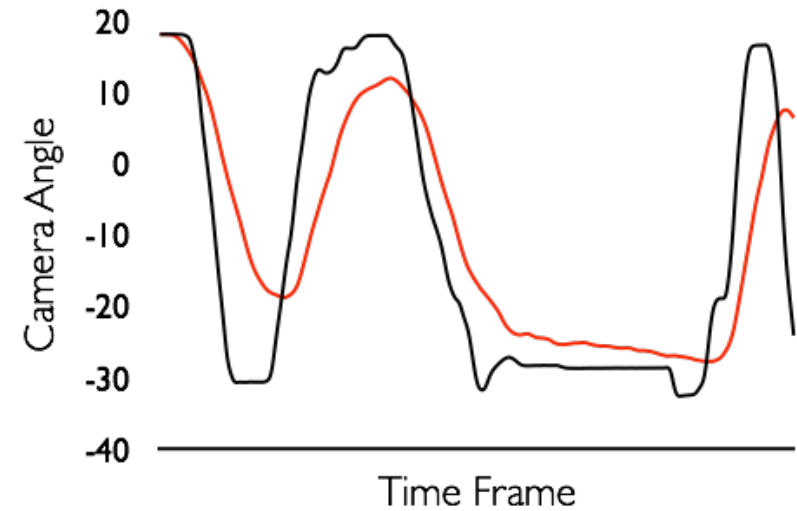
Autonomous Robotic Camera

Naïve Approach

- Supervised learning of demonstration data
 - Train predictor per frame
 - Predict per frame



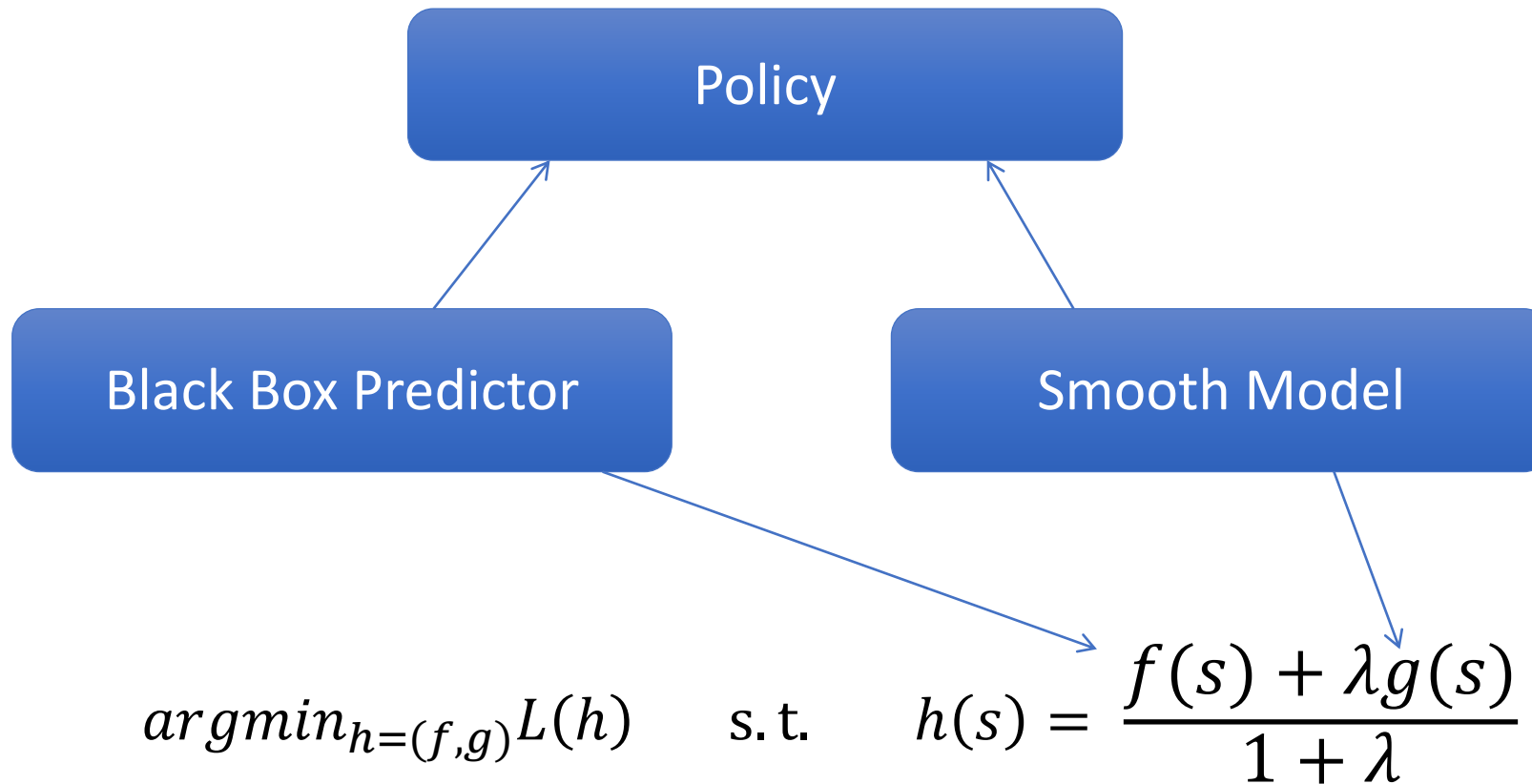
In practice, 2-step smoothing:



Smooth Policy Class



Hoang
Le

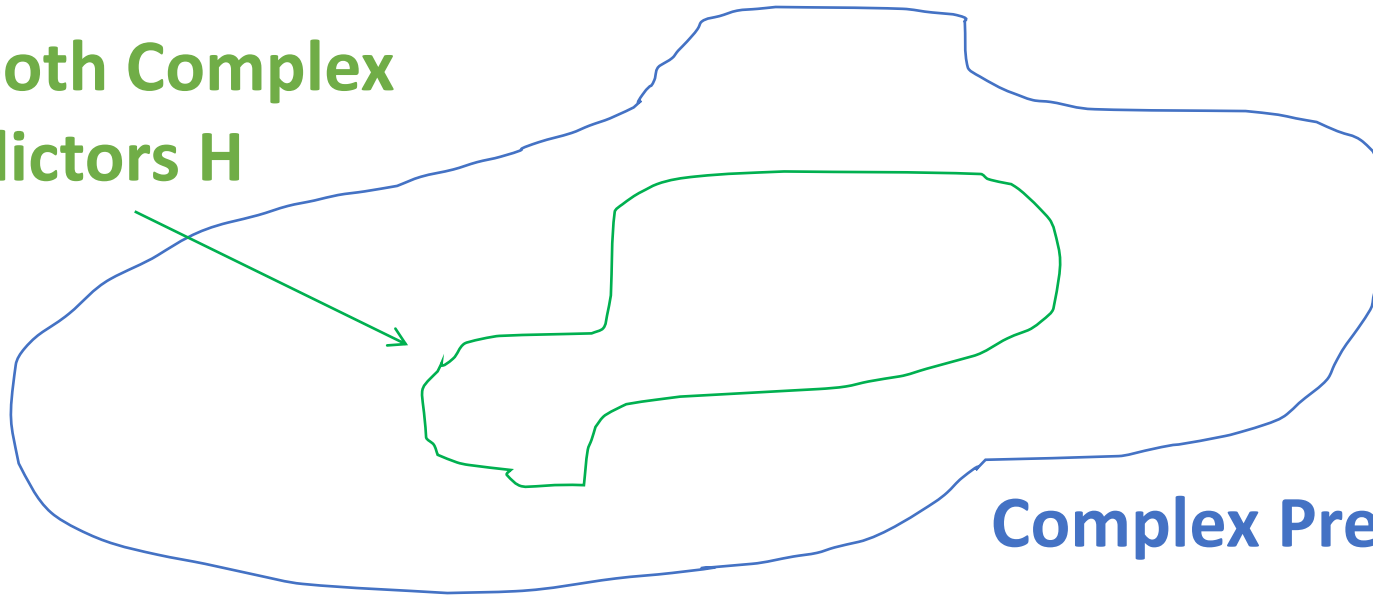


Test-Time Functional Regularization



Hoang
Le

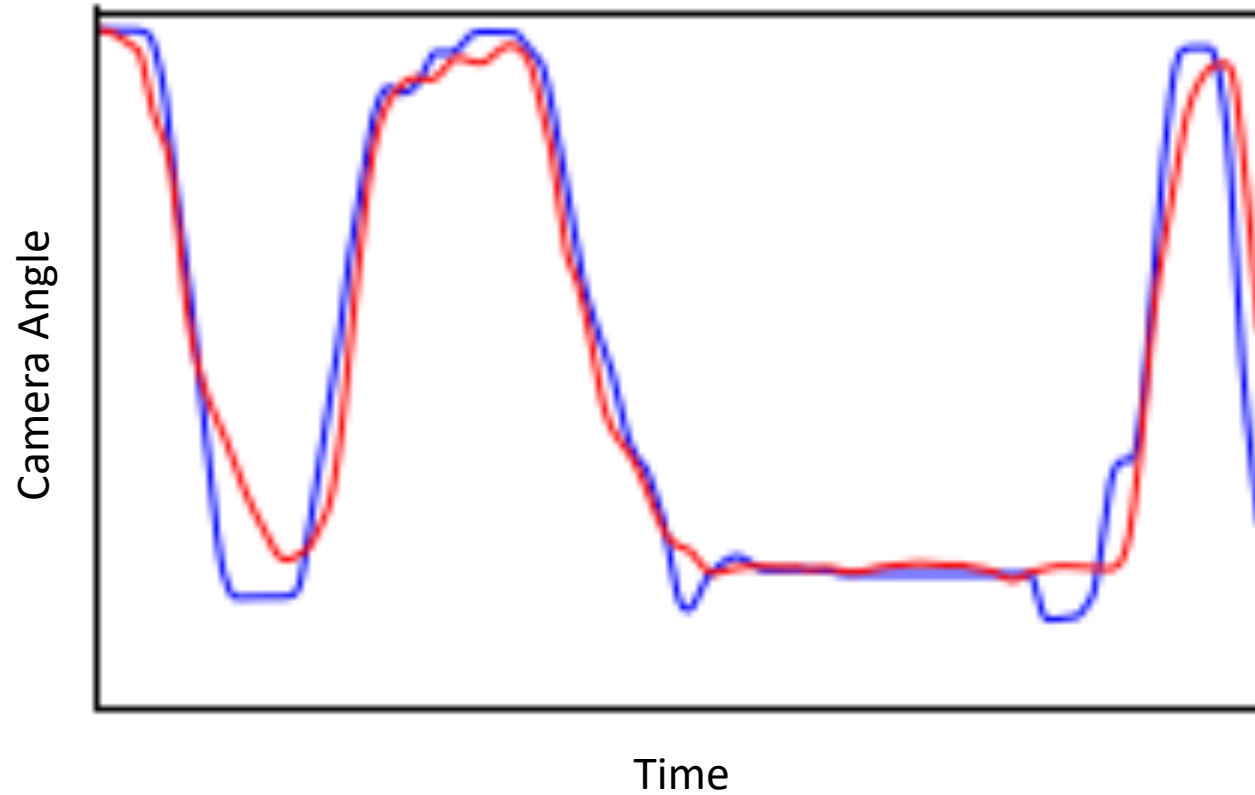
Smooth Complex
Predictors H



Complex Predictors F

$$\operatorname{argmin}_{h=(f,g)} L(h) \quad \text{s. t.} \quad h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

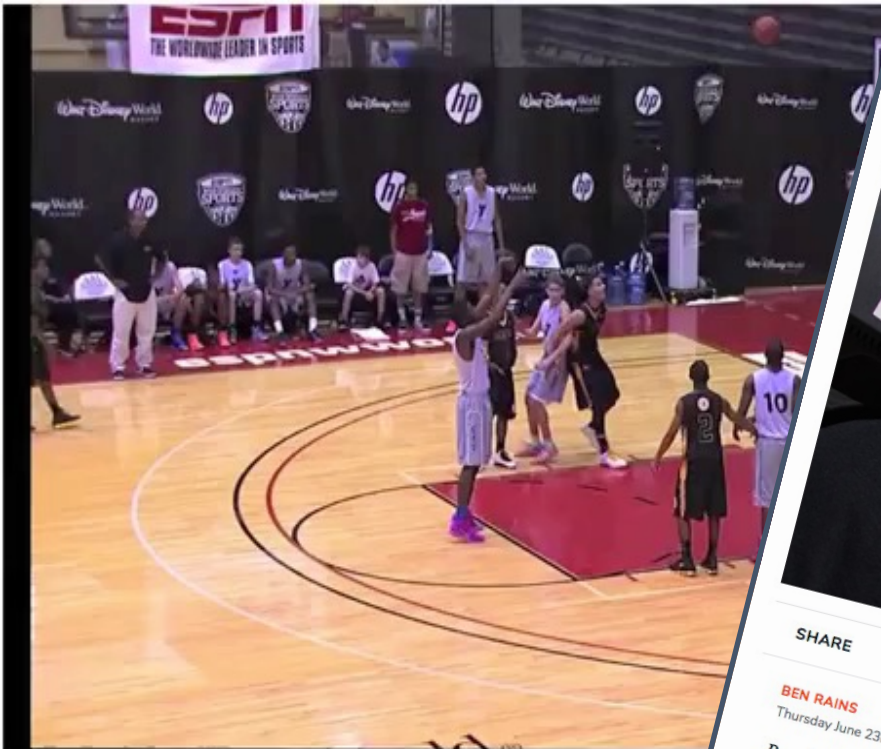
Our Results



Smooth Imitation Learning for Online Sequence Prediction

Hoang Le, Andrew Kang, Yisong Yue, Peter Carr. ICML 2016

Qualitative Comparison

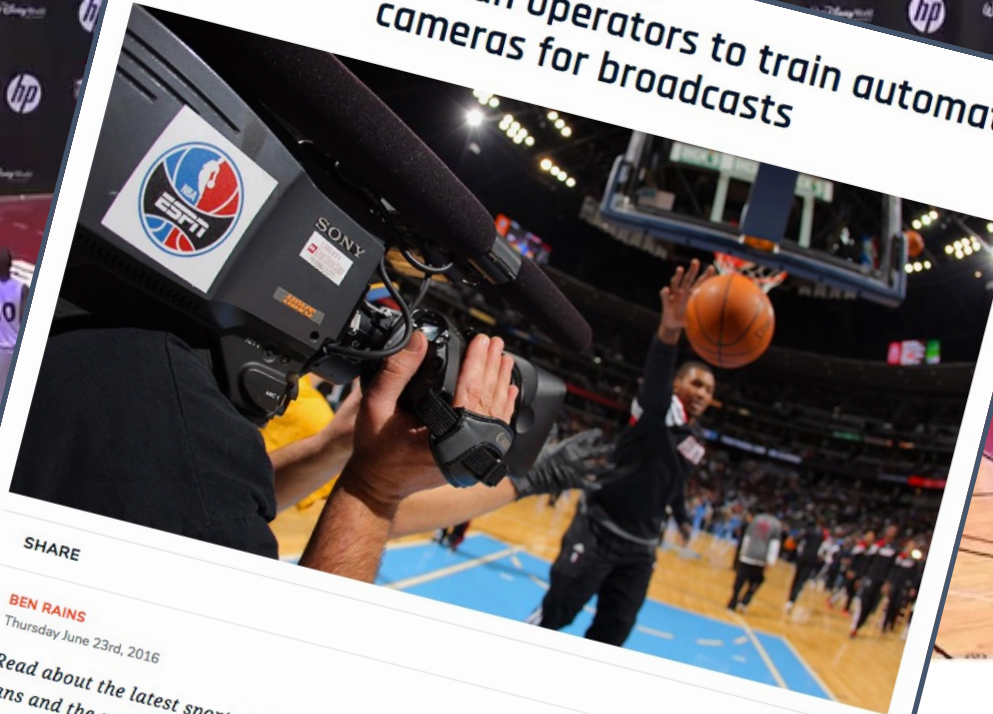


2-Step Ba

Learning Online Smooth P

Jianhui Chen, Hoang Le, Peter Carr, et al.

TECH & MEDIA
Disney using human operators to train automatic cameras for broadcasts



SHARE

BEN RAINS

Thursday June 23rd, 2016

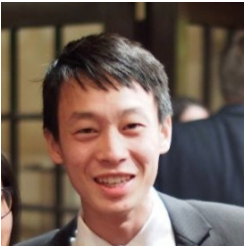
Read about the latest sports tech news, innovations, ideas and products that impact players, fans and the sports industry overall at SportTechie.com.
The Walt Disney Company recently announced they would be enhancing their basketball and soccer television coverage by improving their automated camera technology. Computer engineers are helping automated cameras learn from human camera operators to help create a smoother and cleaner broadcast.



Our Approach

g Recurrent Decision Trees

Control Regularization

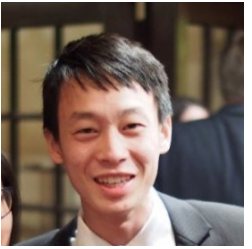


Richard
Cheng

$$h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

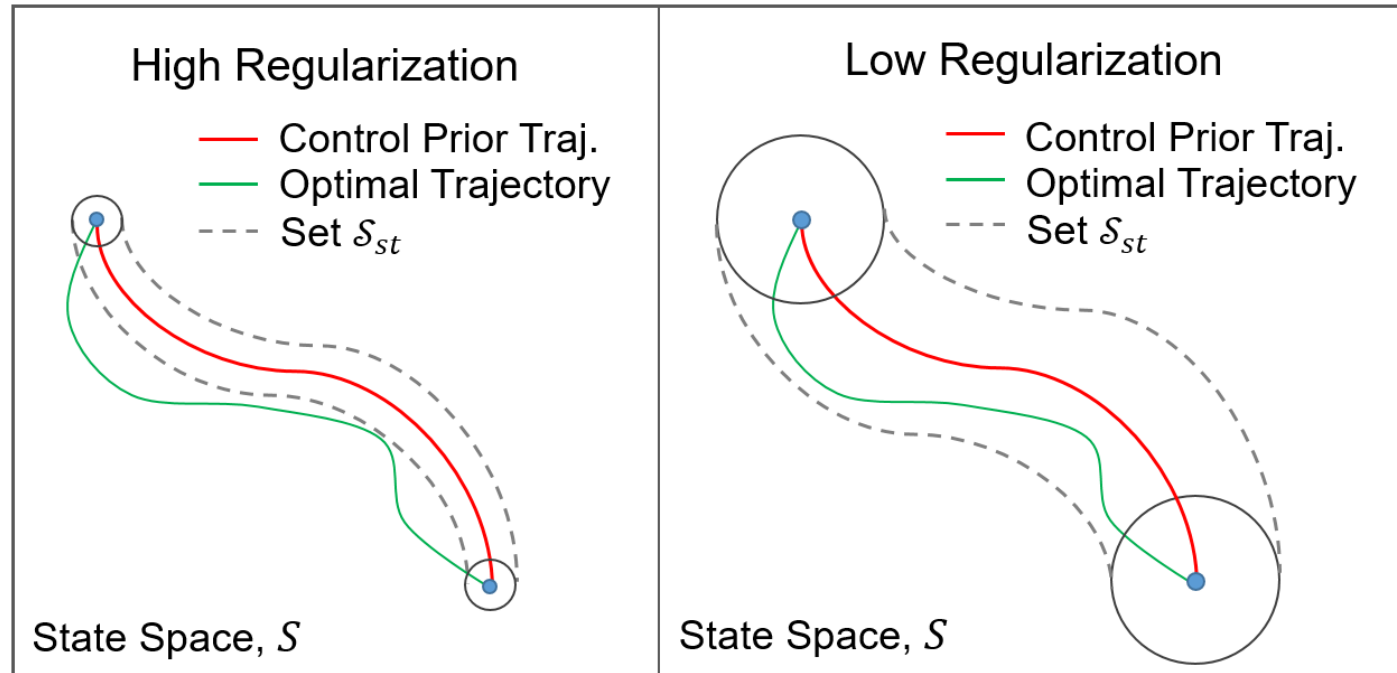
- f is black box
- g is “control prior” (e.g., H-infinity controller)
- Learn f using any RL method

Control Regularization

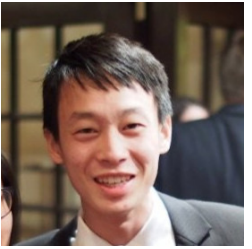


Richard
Cheng

- (Relaxed) Lyapunov stability bounds:



Control Regularization



Richard
Cheng

$$h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

- Theorem (informal):

- Variance of policy gradient decreases by factor of: $\left(\frac{1}{1+\lambda}\right)^2$

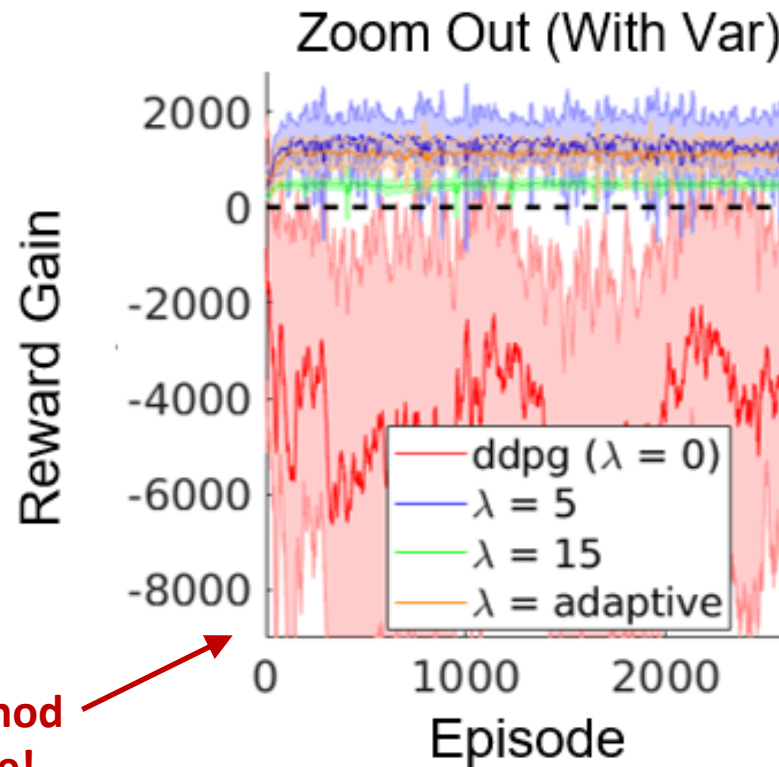
Implies much faster learning!

- Bias converges to: $\left(\frac{\lambda}{1+\lambda}\right) D_{TV}(h^*, g)$

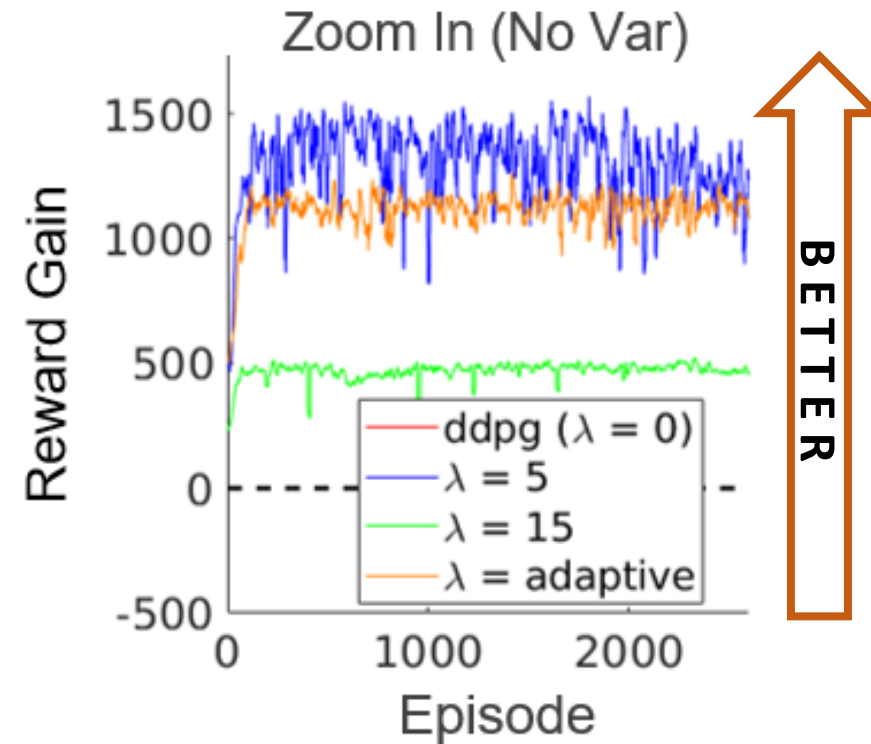
Control Regularization



Richard
Cheng



Baseline RL Method
has High Variance!



Control Regularization for Reduced Variance Reinforcement Learning

Richard Cheng, Abhinav Verma, Gabor Orosz, Swarat Chaudhuri, Yisong Yue, Joel Burdick. ICML 2019

Ready



Ready



Summary: Functional Regularization

Regularization \leftrightarrow
Constrained Learning



Hybrid Policy
Solution Concept

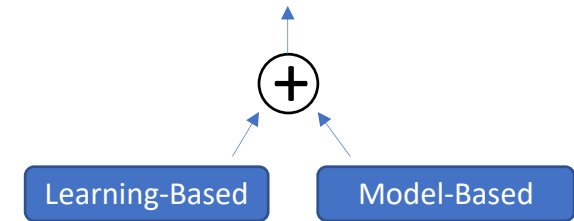
$$h(s) = \frac{f(s) + \lambda g(s)}{1 + \lambda}$$

Summary: Functional Regularization (cont.)

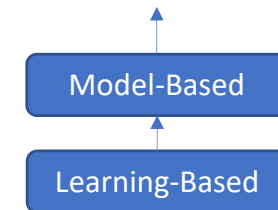
- Control methods => analytic guarantees (side guarantees)
- Blend w/ learning => improve precision/flexibility (real-world improvements)
- Preserve behavioral guarantees (possibly relaxed)
- Interpret as functional regularization (speeds up learning)
- Other directions:
 - Batch Policy Learning under Constraints**
Hoang Le, Cameron Voloshin, Yisong Yue. ICML 2019 (offline learning)
 - Imitation-Projected Programmatic Reinforcement Learning**
Abhinav Verma, Hoang Le, Yisong Yue, Swarat Chaudhuri. NeurIPS 2019 (neurosymbolic policies)

Integration of Learning at Varying Levels

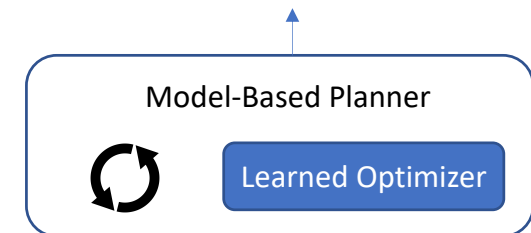
- Integration in control/action



- Integration in dynamics modeling



- Integration in optimization problem



Model-Based Control

The diagram shows the equation $s_{t+1} = F(s_t, u_t) + \epsilon$ with four annotations and arrows pointing to its components:

- New State**: Points to s_{t+1}
- Current Action (aka control input)**: Points to u_t
- Current State**: Points to s_t
- Unmodeled Disturbance / Error**: Points to ϵ

(Value Iteration is also contraction mapping)

Robust/Optimal Control (fancy contraction mappings)

- Stability guarantees (e.g., Lyapunov)
- Precision/optimality depends on error

Learning Residual Dynamics

F = nominal dynamics

\tilde{F} = learned dynamics

The diagram shows the equation $s_{t+1} = F(s_t, u_t) + \tilde{F}(s_t, u_t) + \epsilon(s_t, u_t)$ with four blue arrows pointing to its components: 'New State' points to s_{t+1} , 'Current Action (aka control input)' points to u_t , 'Current State' points to s_t , and 'Unmodeled Disturbance / Error' points to $\epsilon(s_t, u_t)$.

$$s_{t+1} = F(s_t, u_t) + \tilde{F}(s_t, u_t) + \epsilon(s_t, u_t)$$

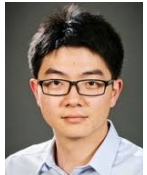
Leverage robust/optimal control (fancy contraction mappings)

- Preserve stability (even using deep learning)
- Requires \tilde{F} Lipschitz & bounded error

Boundary Conditions



Guanya
Shi

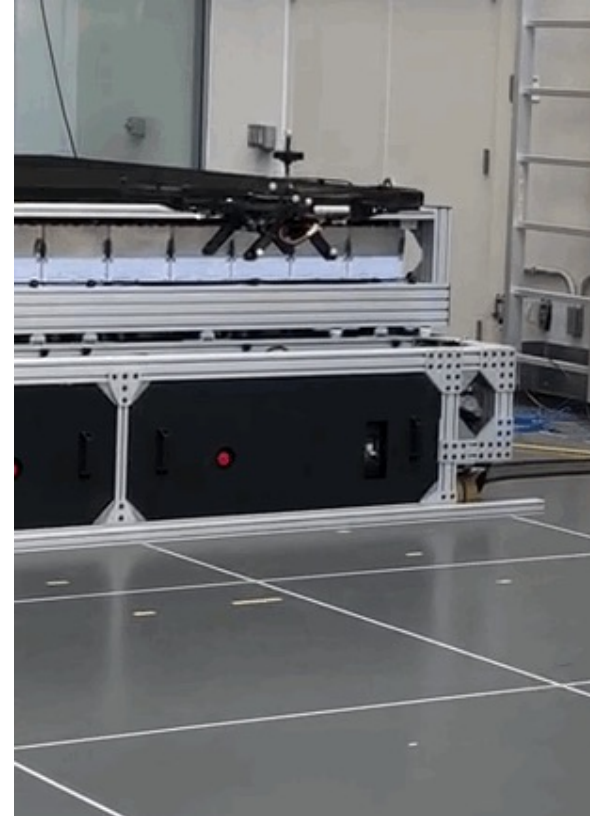
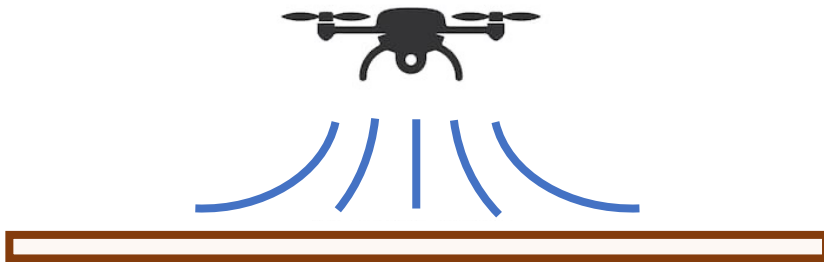


Xichen
Shi



Michael
O'Connell

Ground effect



Neural Lander: Stable Drone Landing Control using Learned Dynamics, Guanya Shi, Xichen Shi, Michael O'Connell, et al. ICRA 2019
Neural-Swarm: Decentralized Close-Proximity Multirotor Control Using Learned Interactions, Guanya Shi et al., ICRA 2020
Neural-Swarm2: Planning and Control of Heterogeneous Multirotor Swarms using Learned Interactions, Guanya Shi et al., T-RO 1021

Control System Formulation

Learn the Residual



- Dynamics:

$$\begin{cases} \dot{\mathbf{p}} = \mathbf{v}, & m\dot{\mathbf{v}} = m\mathbf{g} + R\mathbf{f}_u + \mathbf{f}_a \\ \dot{R} = RS(\boldsymbol{\omega}), & J\dot{\boldsymbol{\omega}} = J\boldsymbol{\omega} \times \boldsymbol{\omega} + \boldsymbol{\tau}_u + \boldsymbol{\tau}_a \end{cases}$$

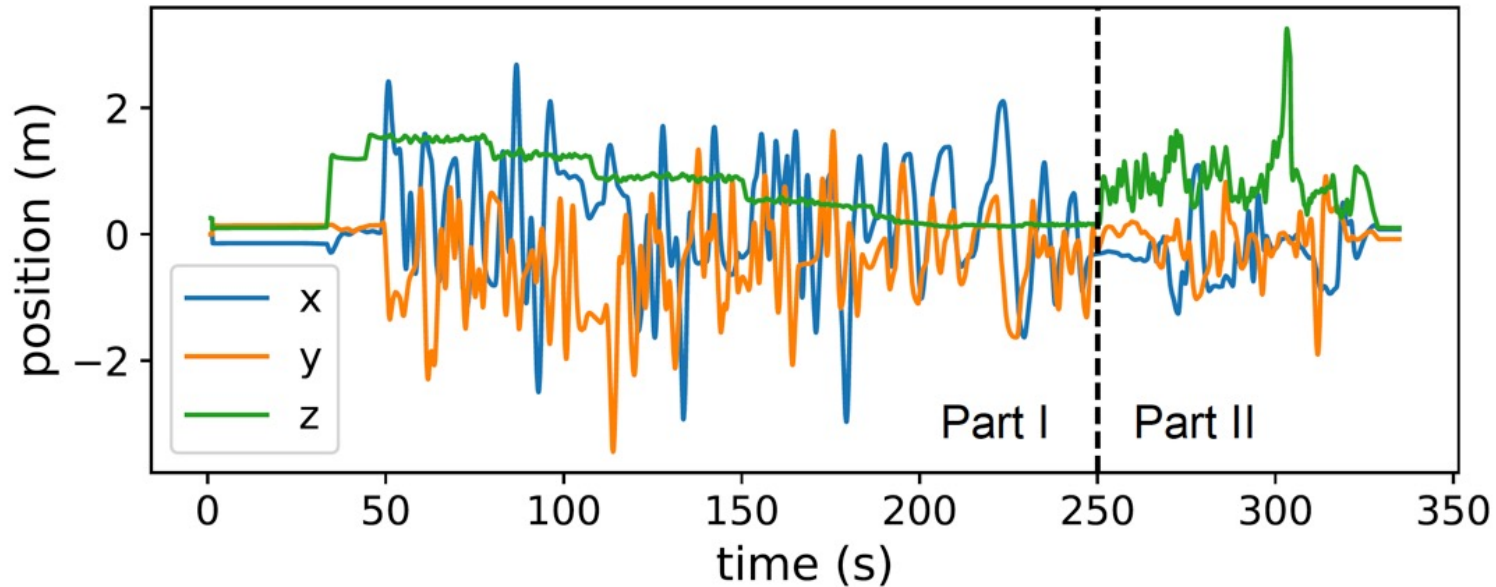
- Control:

$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{f}_u = [0, 0, T]^\top \\ \boldsymbol{\tau}_u = [\tau_x, \tau_y, \tau_z]^\top \\ \begin{bmatrix} T \\ \tau_x \\ \tau_y \\ \tau_z \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} c_T & c_T & c_T & c_T \\ 0 & c_T l_{\text{arm}} & 0 & -c_T l_{\text{arm}} \\ -c_T l_{\text{arm}} & 0 & c_T l_{\text{arm}} & 0 \\ -c_Q & c_Q & -c_Q & c_Q \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} n_1^2 \\ n_2^2 \\ n_3^2 \\ n_4^2 \end{bmatrix} \end{cases}$$

- Unknown forces & moments: $\begin{cases} \mathbf{f}_a = [f_{a,x}, f_{a,y}, f_{a,z}]^\top \\ \boldsymbol{\tau}_a = [\tau_{a,x}, \tau_{a,y}, \tau_{a,z}]^\top \end{cases}$

Learn the Residual

Data Collection (Manual Exploration)



- Learn ground effect: $\tilde{F}(s, u) \rightarrow \mathbf{f}_a = [f_{a,x}, f_{a,y}, f_{a,z}]^\top$
- (s, u) : height, velocity, attitude and four control inputs

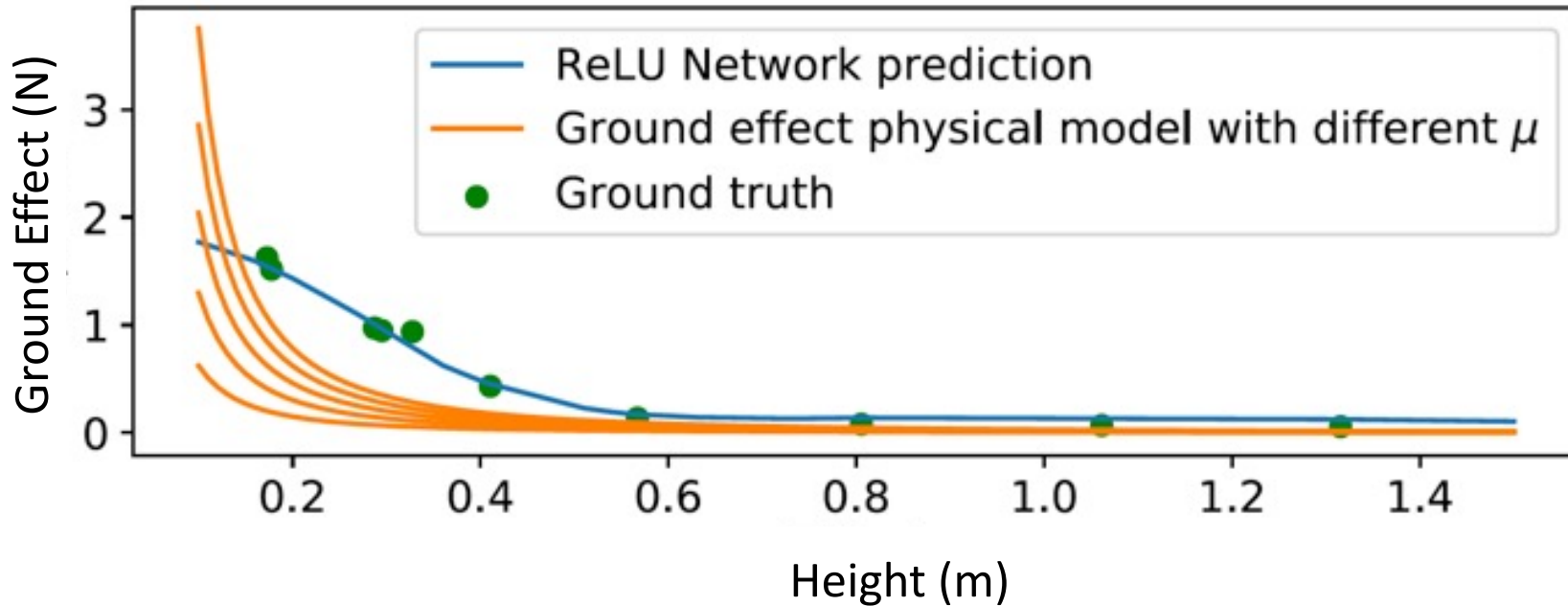
Notable Extension:
Safe Exploration

Ensures \tilde{F} is Lipschitz
[Bartlett et al., NeurIPS 2017]
[Miyato et al., ICLR 2018]



**Spectral-Normalized
4-Layer Feed-Forward**

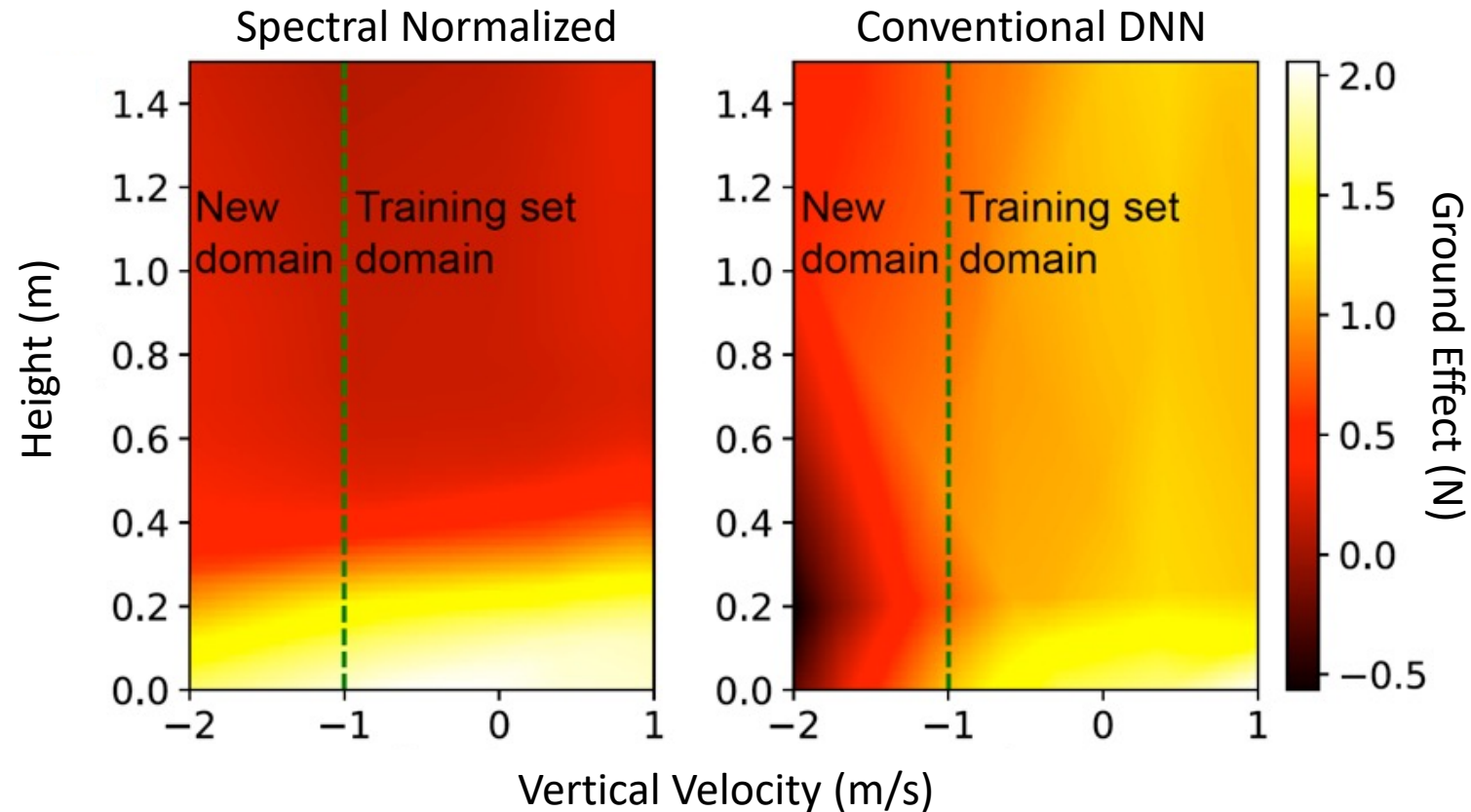
Prediction Results



Neural Lander: Stable Drone Landing Control using Learned Dynamics

Guanya Shi, Xichen Shi, Michael O'Connell, Rose Yu, Kamyar Azizzadenesheli, Anima Anandkumar, Yisong Yue, Soon-Jo Chung. ICRA 2019.

Prediction Results

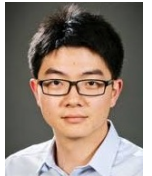


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Guanya
Shi



Xichen
Shi



Michael
O'Connell

Controller Design (simplified)

- Nonlinear Feedback Linearization:

$$u_{nominal} = K_s \eta \quad \eta = \begin{bmatrix} p - p^* \\ v - v^* \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{Desired Trajectory (tracking error)}$$

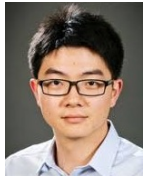
Feedback Linearization (PD control)

- Cancel out ground effect $\tilde{F}(s, u_{old})$: $u = u_{nominal} + u_{residual}$

Requires Lipschitz & small time delay



Guanya
Shi



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Shi



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O'Connell

Controller Design (simplified)

- Nonlinear Feedback Linearization:

$$u_{nominal} = K_s \eta \quad \eta = \begin{bmatrix} p - p^* \\ v - v^* \end{bmatrix} \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{Desired Trajectory} \\ \text{(tracking error)} \end{array}$$

Stability Guarantee: (simplified)

$$\|\eta(t)\| \leq \|\eta(0)\| \exp \left\{ -\frac{\lambda_{min}(K) - \tilde{L}\rho}{c} t \right\} + \frac{\epsilon}{\lambda_{min}(K) - \tilde{L}\rho}$$

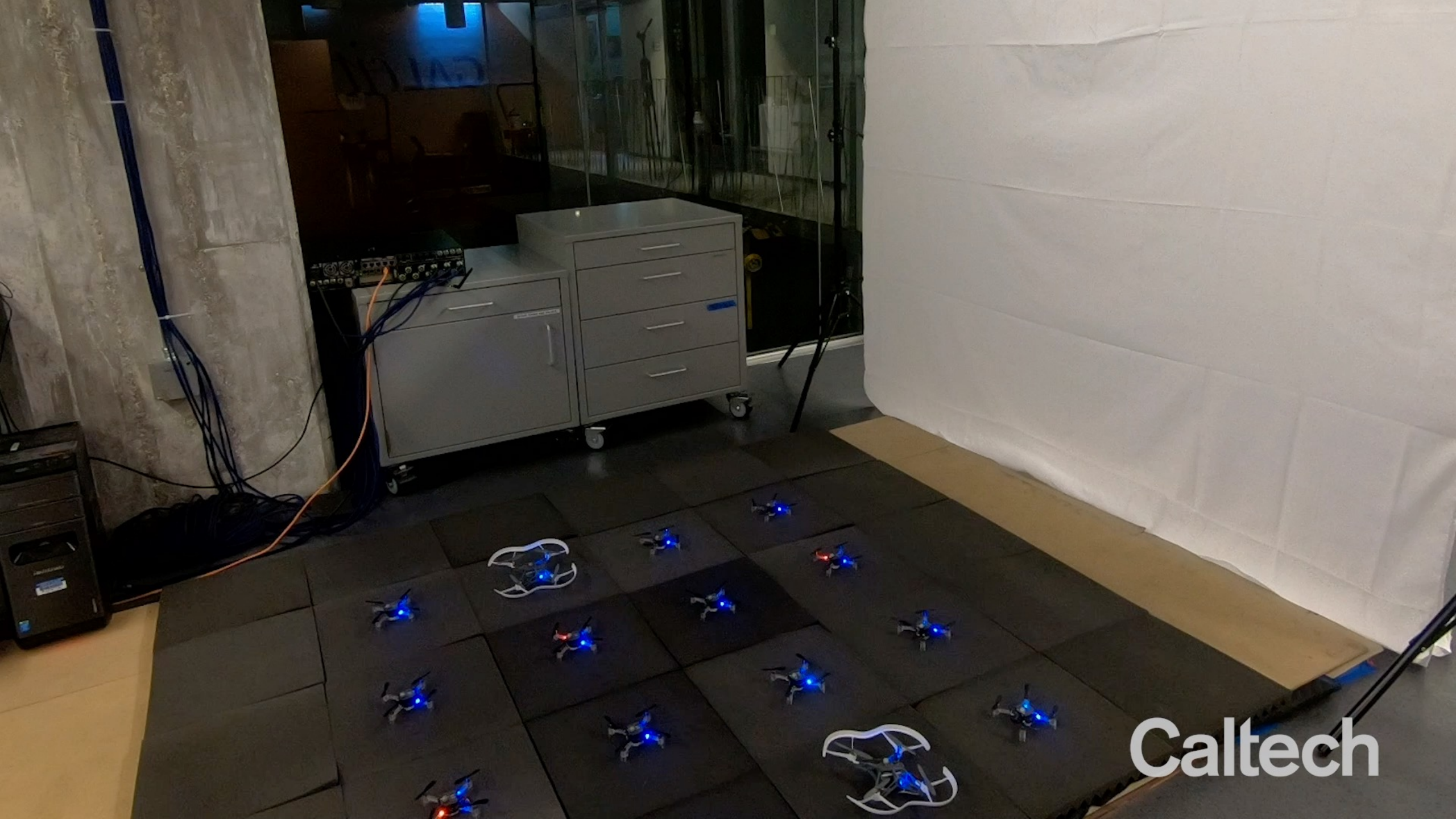
Time delay

Unmodeled
disturbance

Lipschitz of NN

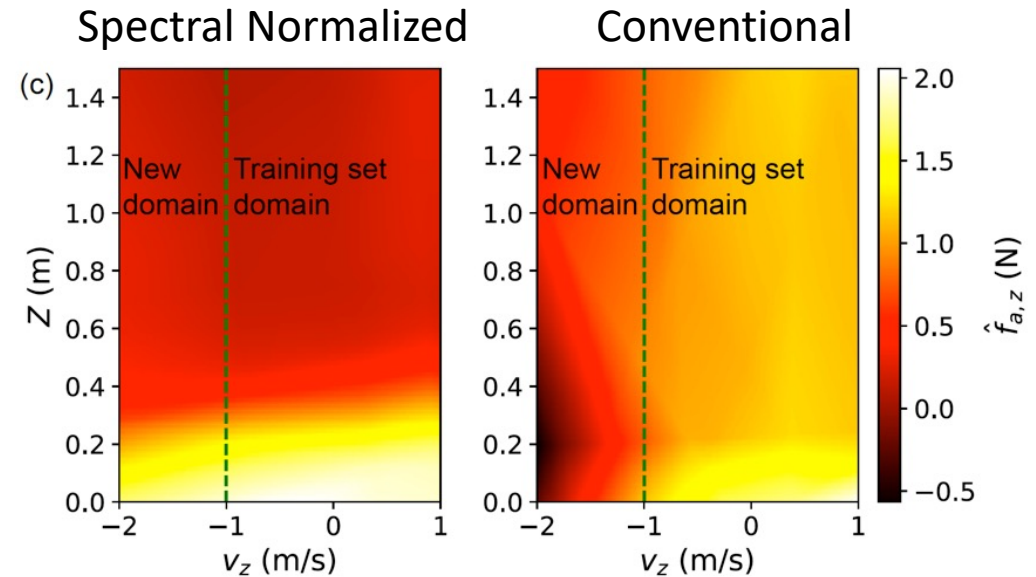
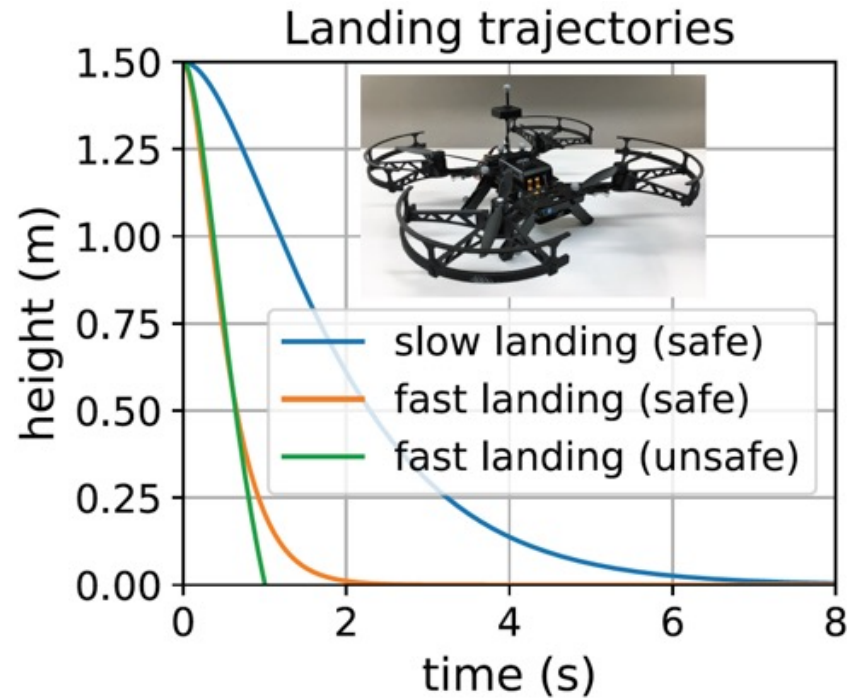
$$\Rightarrow \|\eta(t)\| \rightarrow \frac{\epsilon}{\lambda_{min}(K) - \tilde{L}\rho} \quad \text{Exponentially fast}$$





Caltech

Aside: Robust Regression for Safe Exploration



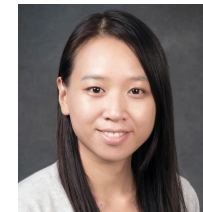
Robust regression guarantees extrapolation!
Enables safe exploration!

Robust Regression for Safe Exploration in Control,

Angie Liu, Guanya Shi, Soon-Jo Chung, Anima Anandkumar, Yisong Yue, L4DC 2020

Chance-Constrained Trajectory Optimization for Safe Exploration and Learning of Nonlinear Systems,

Yashwanth Kumar Nakka, Angie Liu, Guanya Shi, Anima Anandkumar, Yisong Yue, Soon-Jo Chung, R-AL 2021



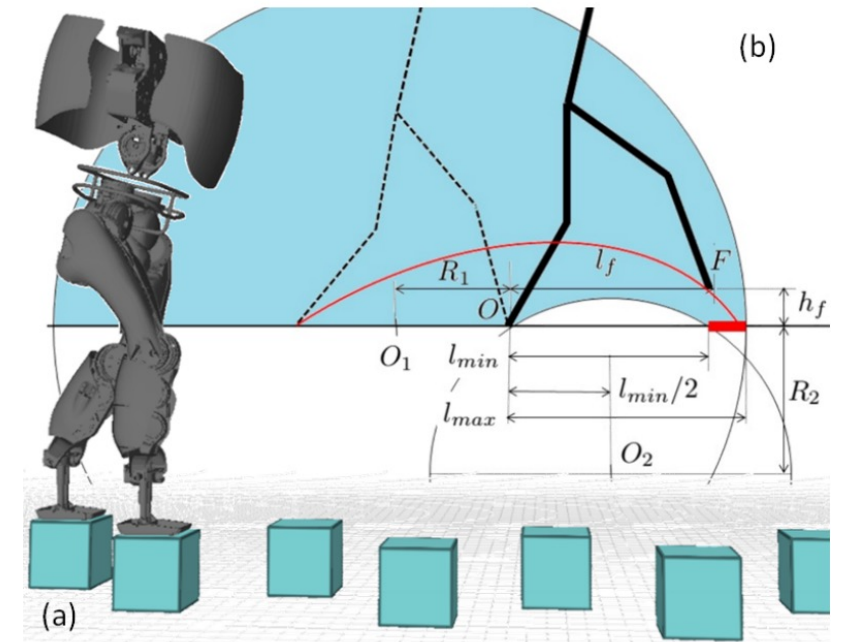
Angie
Liu



Yashwanth
Nakka

Aside: Learning Control Lyapunov/Barrier Functions

- CLFs & CBFs encode low-dim projection of dynamics
- Learn CLF/CBFs?
- Stability/safety under uncertainty?



Img: <https://arxiv.org/abs/1903.11199>

Episodic Learning with Control Lyapunov Functions for Uncertain Robotic Systems

Andrew J. Taylor, Victor D. Dorobantu, Hoang M. Le, Yisong Yue, Aaron D. Ames. IROS 2019.

A Control Lyapunov Perspective on Episodic Learning via Projection to State Stability

Andrew J. Taylor, Victor D. Dorobantu, Meera Krishnamoorthy, Hoang M. Le, Yisong Yue, Aaron D. Ames. CDC 2019.

Learning for Safety-Critical Control with Control Barrier Functions

Andrew Taylor, Andrew Singletary, Yisong Yue, Aaron Ames. L4DC 2020.

A Control Barrier Perspective on Episodic Learning via Projection-to-State Safety

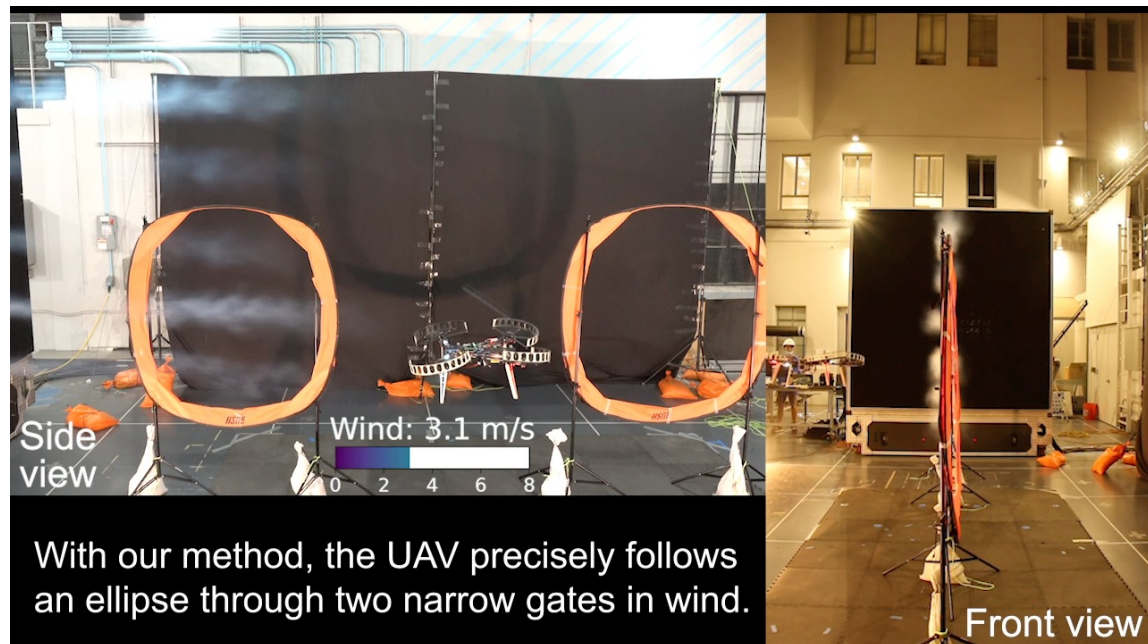
Andrew J. Taylor, Andrew Singletary, Yisong Yue, Aaron D. Ames. L-CSS 2020.



Andrew
Taylor



Victor
Dorobantu



Dynamic Environments

[Neural-Fly, Science Robotics 2022]

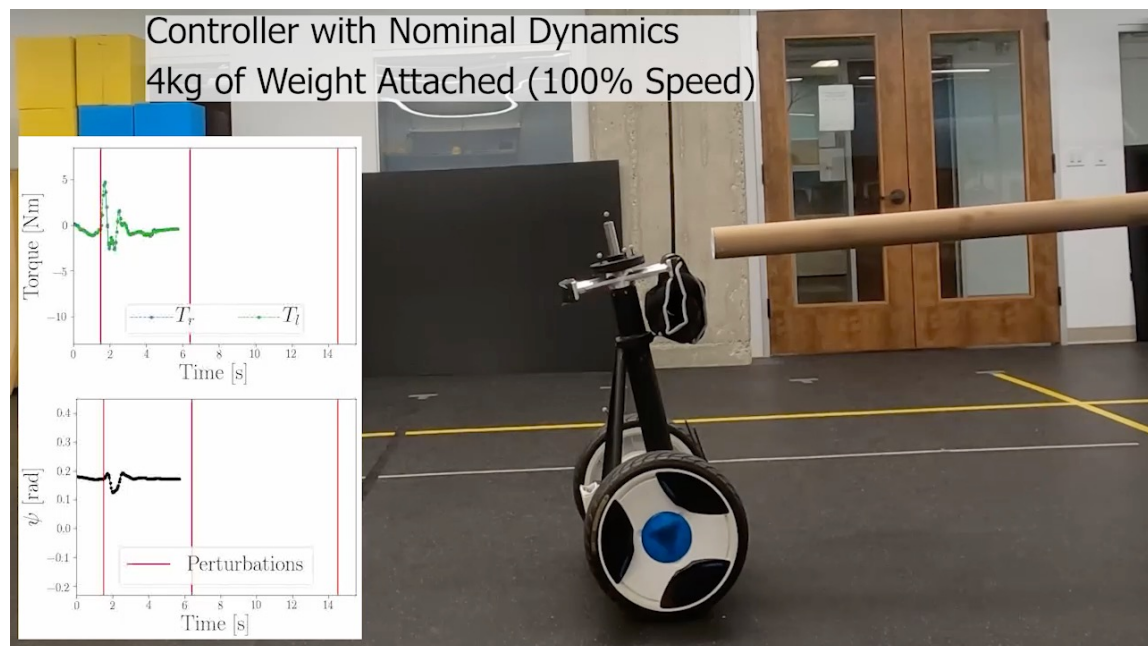
Meta-learning + Adaptive Control



Michael
O'Connell



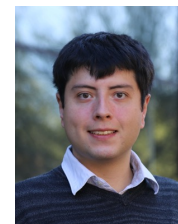
Guanya
Shi



Sharp Non-Linearities

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2103.04548> [IROS 2021]

Learn Continuous-time Models



Ivan
Jimenez
Rodriguez



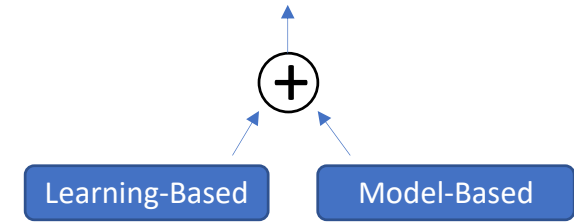
Ugo
Rosolia

Summary: Dynamics Learning

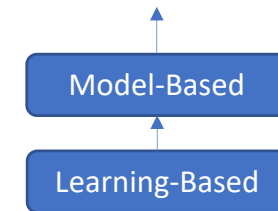
- Learn residual dynamics (data efficient)
- Control Lipschitz constant (imposes compatible structure)
- Standard controller design (inherits guarantees)
- Extend to complex settings (multi-agent, meta-learning, continuous-time, etc.)
- Robust regression for safe exploration (provable limited extrapolation)

Integration of Learning at Varying Levels

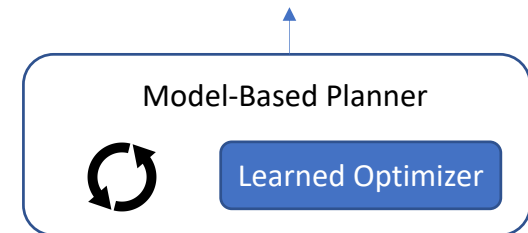
- Integration in control/action



- Integration in dynamics modeling



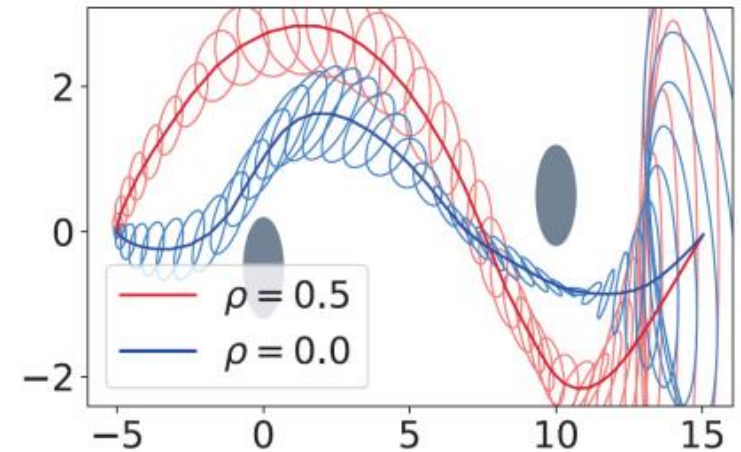
- Integration in optimization problem



Model-Based Planning

- Environment model is given
- Design global plan (aka trajectory)
- Satisfy global constraints
 - Previous topics only ensured local constraints
 - E.g., Lyapunov stability, smoothness
- **NP-Hard optimization problem!**

$$s_{t+1} = F(s_t, u_t) + \epsilon$$



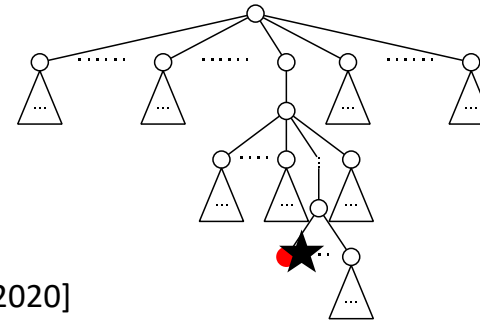
Optimization as Sequential Decision Making

- Many Solvers are Sequential
 - Tree-Search
 - Greedy
 - Gradient Descent
- Can view solver as “agent” or “policy”
 - State = intermediate solution
 - Find a state with high reward (solution)
 - **Learn better local decision making**

Optimization as Sequential Decision Making

Learning Search Policy

- **Learning to Search via Retrospective Imitation** [arXiv]
- **Co-training for Policy Learning** [UAI 2019]
- **GLAS: Global-to-Local Safe Autonomy Synthesis** [RA-L 2020]
- **A General Large Neighborhood Search Framework for Solving Integer Programs** [NeurIPS 2020]



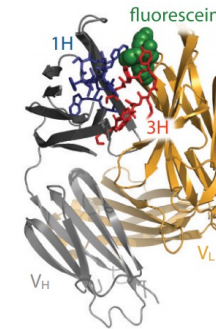
Jialin Song



Ben Riviere

Learning Value Function

- **MLNav: Learning to Safely Navigate on Martian Terrains** [R-AL 2022]
- **Learning to Make Decisions via Submodular Regularization** [ICLR 2021]



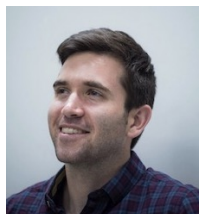
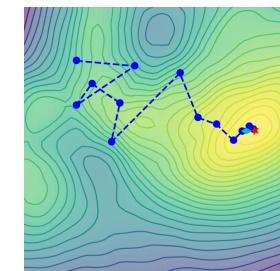
Ayda Alieva



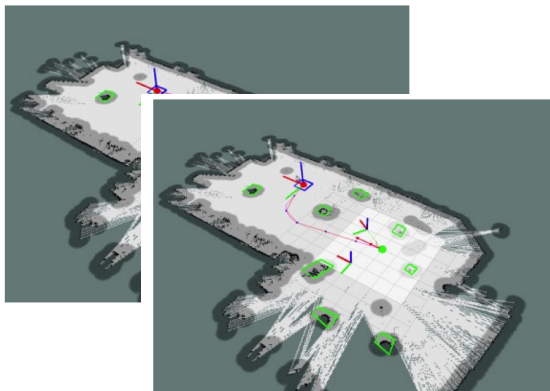
Shreyansh Daftry

Learning to Infer

- **Iterative Amortized Inference** [ICML 2018]
- **A General Method for Amortizing Variational Filtering** [NeurIPS 2018]
- **Iterative Amortized Policy Optimization** [NeurIPS 2021]



Joe Marino



Distribution of Planning Problems

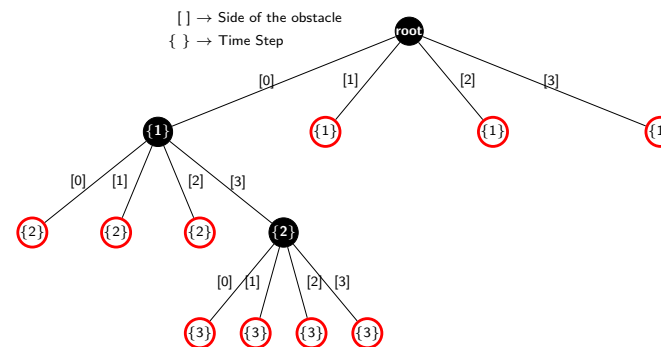


$$\min_{\mathbf{U}} J(\mathbf{U}, \mathbf{X})$$

subject to,

(Dynamic Constraint) $\mathbf{x}_{t+1} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}_t + \mathbf{B}\mathbf{u}_t,$

(Safety Constraints) $\mathbf{h}_t^{iT} \mathbf{x}_t \leq g_t^i$

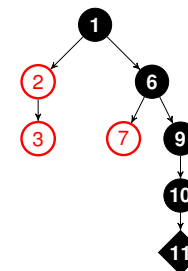


Compiled as Combinatorial Search Problems

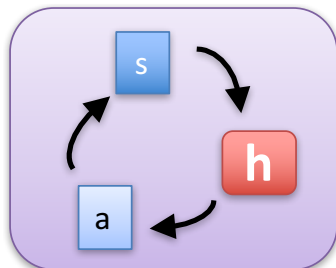


Expert Trace

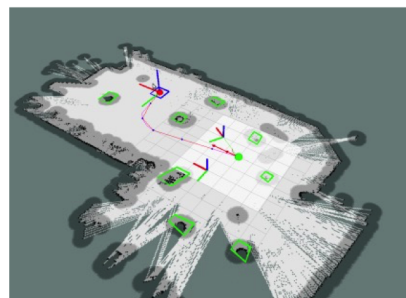
Collect Relevant Data



Learning



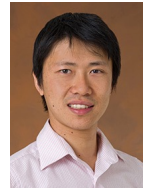
Test Instances



MLNav: Learning-Augmented Rover Navigation



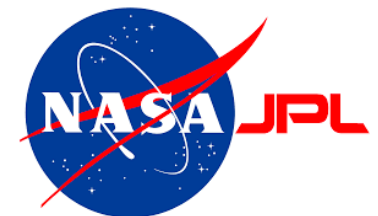
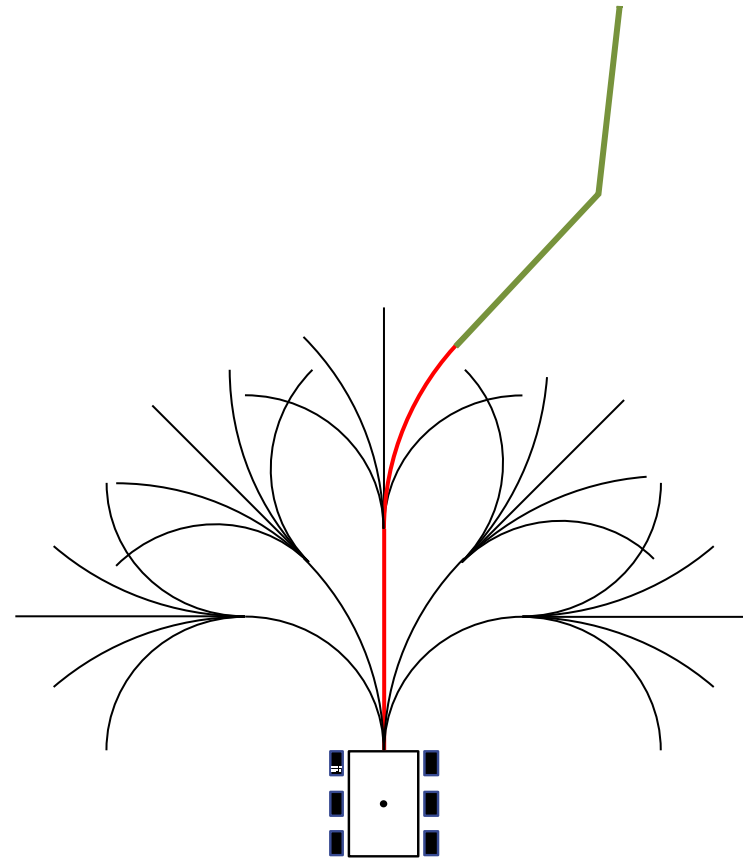
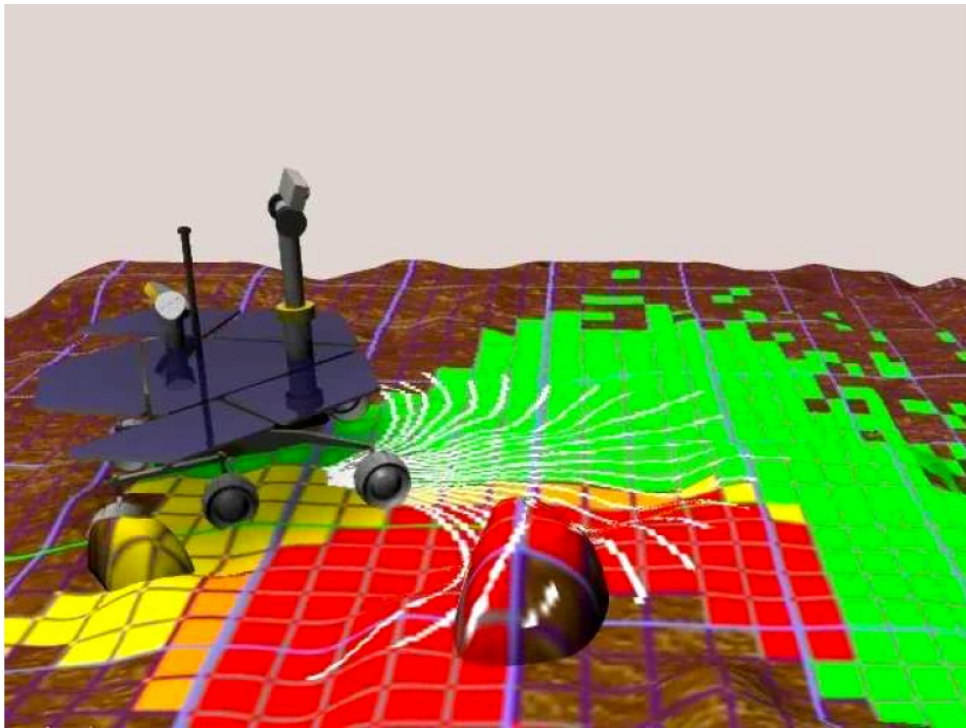
Shreyansh
Daftry



Hiro
Ono



Neil
Abcouwer





Perseverance Sol 122

Sol = Martian day

Image: NASA/JPL-Caltech

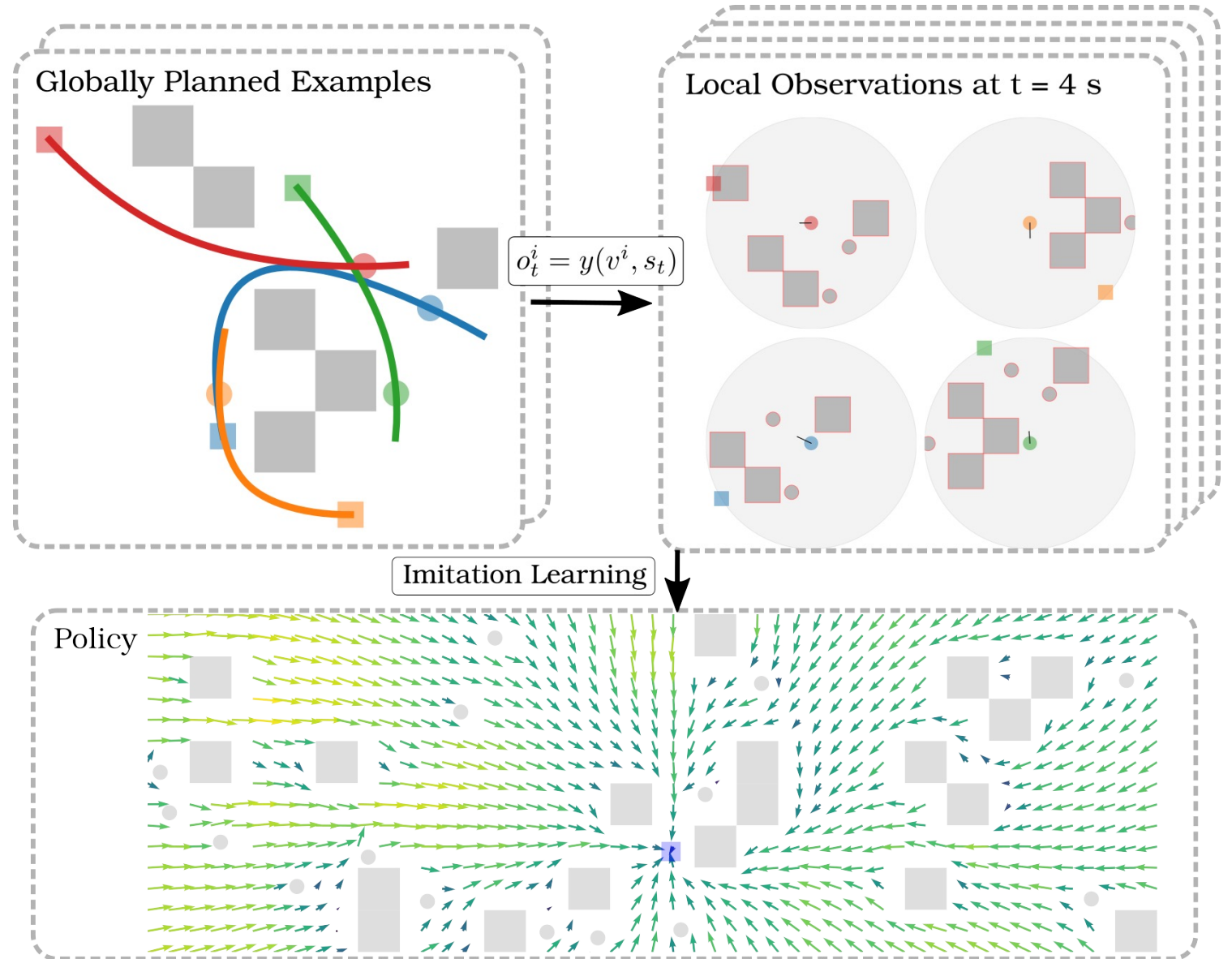
Learned Decentralized Planner (enforcing safety)



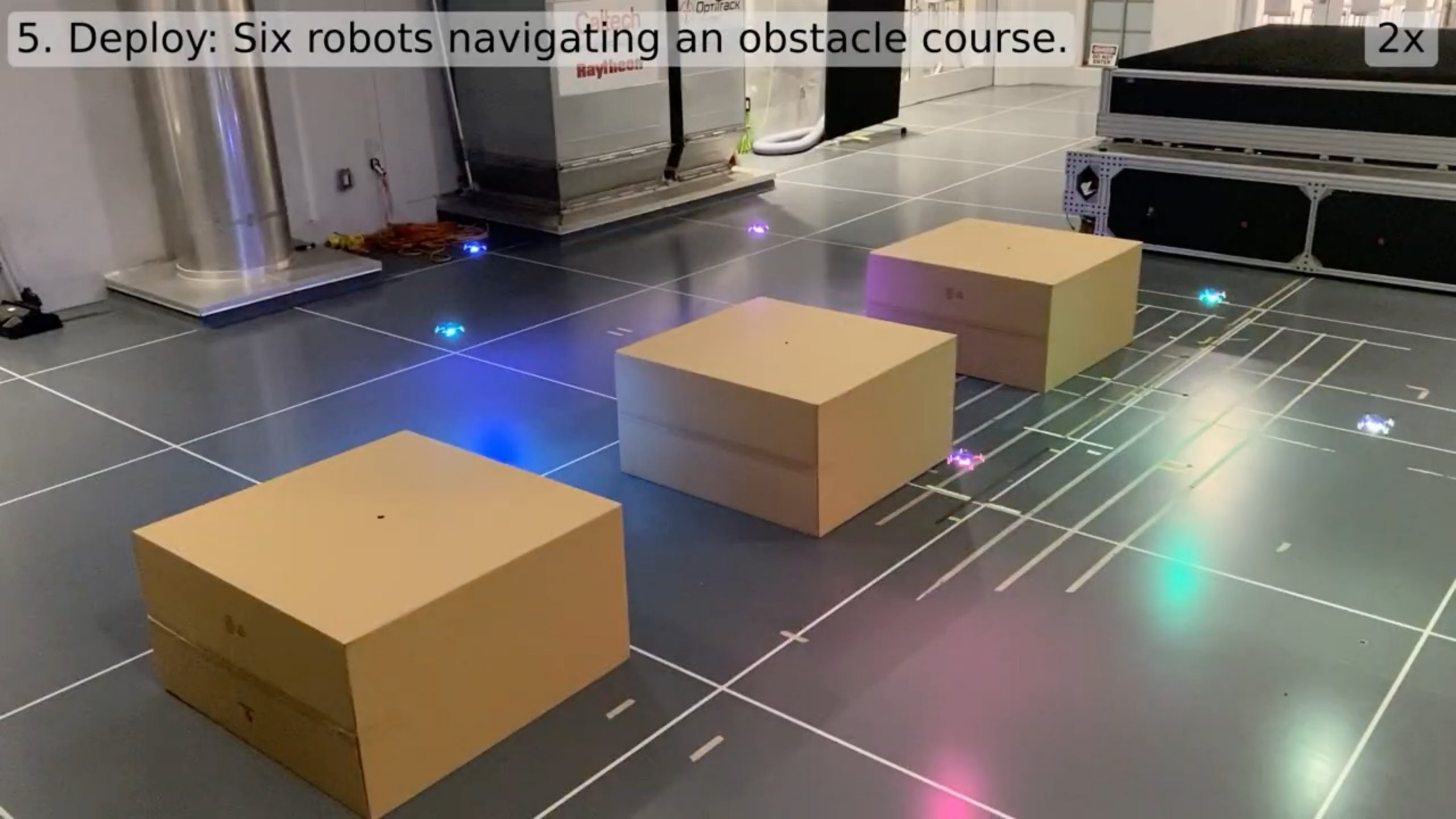
Ben
Riviere



Wolfgang
Hoenig



**GLAS: Global-to-Local Safe Autonomy
Synthesis for Multi-Robot Motion
Planning with End-to-End Learning,**
Benjamin Rivière, et al., R-AL 2020



5. Deploy: Six robots navigating an obstacle course.

2x

Learned ODE-based Policy

Neural Gaits: Learning Bipedal Locomotion via
Control Barrier Functions and Zero Dynamics Policoes

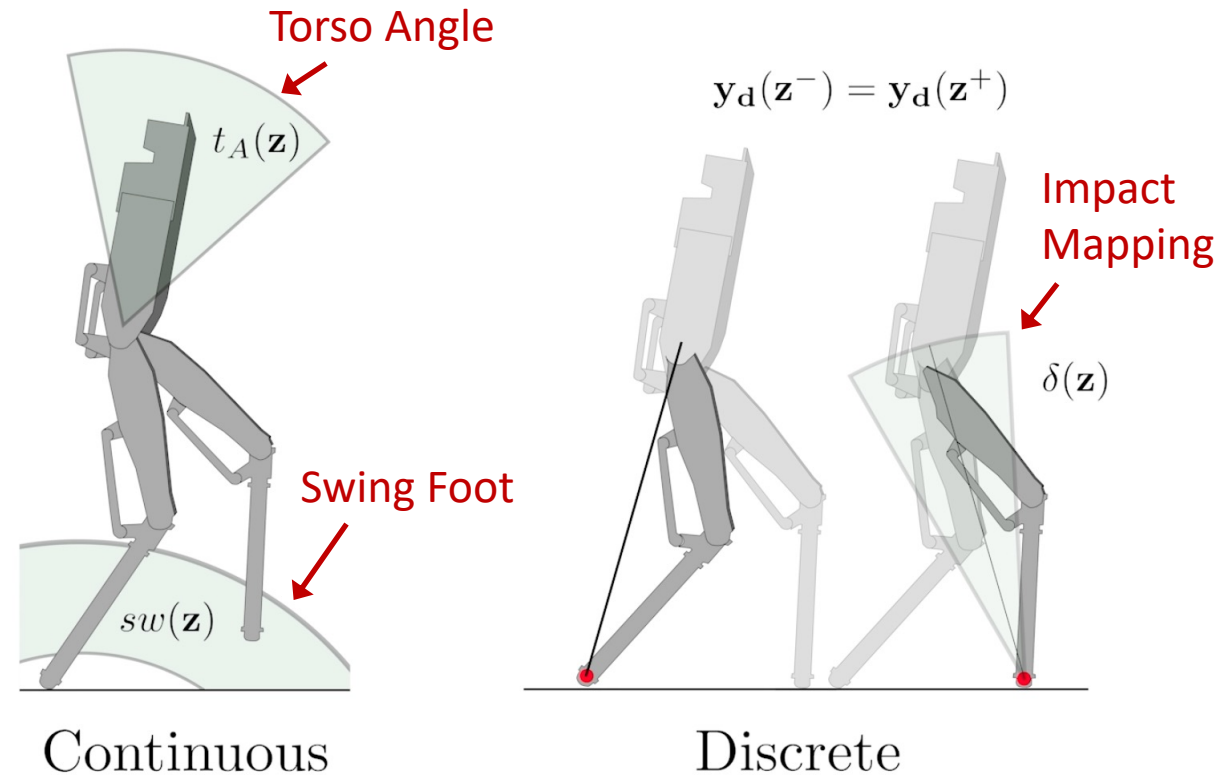
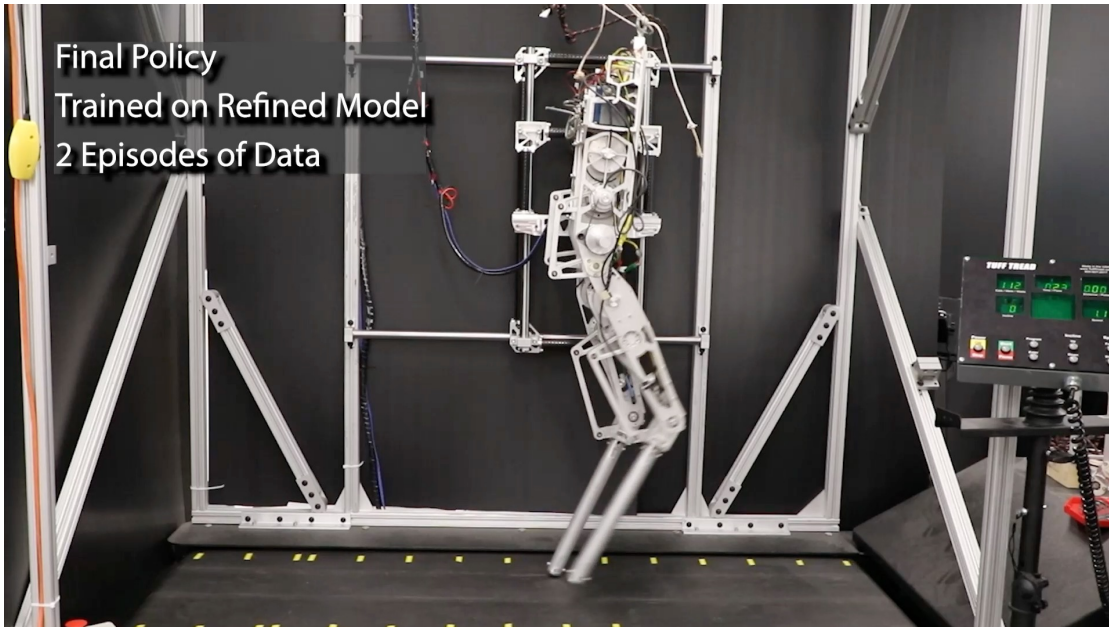
Jimenez Rodriguez, Csomay-Shanklin, et al., L4DC 2022



Ivan
Jimenez
Rodriguez

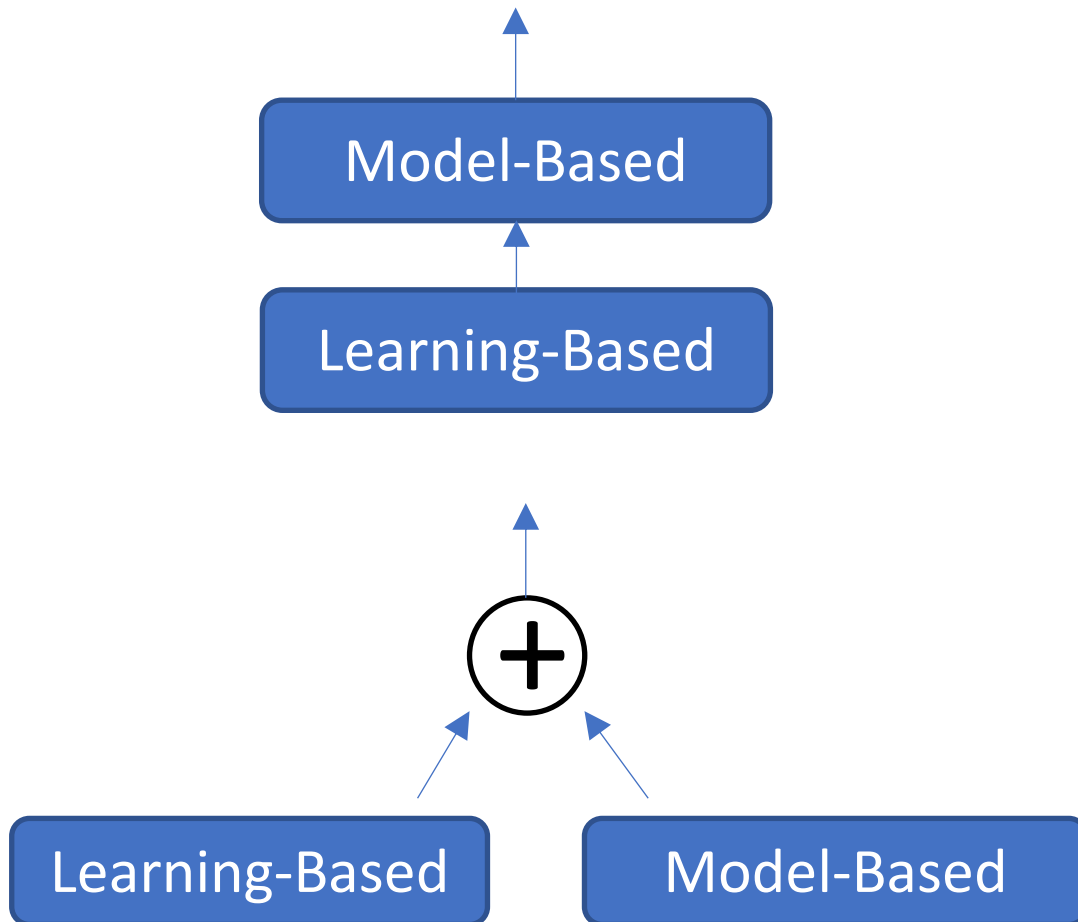


Noel
Csomay-Shanklin

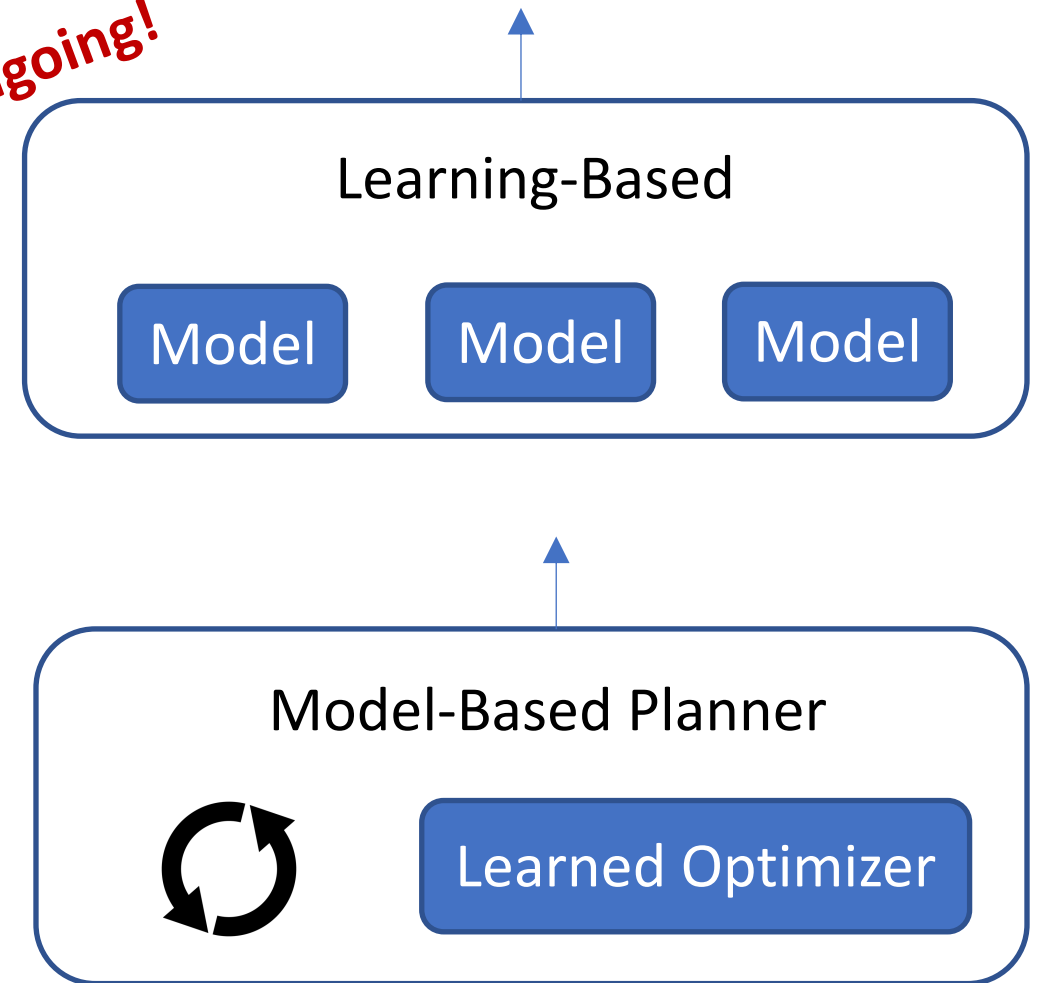


- **Barriers** induce control-theoretic safety conditions
- Conventional: **complicated ODE-based optimization**
- Learn policy as **Neural ODE**
 - **Fast run-time gait generation**
 - **Satisfies safety guarantees**

Blending Models/Rules & Black-Box Learning



Ongoing!



Collaborators



Jialin
Song



Ravi
Lanka



Joe
Marino



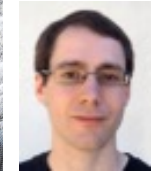
Hoang
Le



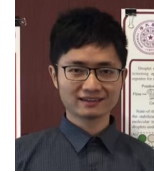
Andrew
Taylor



Victor
Dorobantu



Wolfgang
Hoenig



Guanya
Shi



Richard
Cheng



Abhinav
Verma



Angie
Liu



Ben
Riviere



Yashwanth
Nakka



Michael
O'Connell



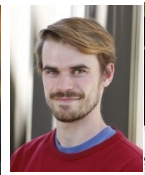
Ivan
Jimenez
Rodriguez



Ayya
Alieva



Cameron
Voloshin



Noel
Csomay-
Shanklin



Jimmy
Chen



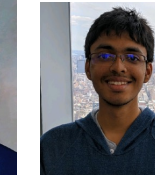
Andrew
Kang



Milan
Cvitkovic



Lucas
Igel



Siddarth
Venkatraman



Aadyot
Bhatnagar



Albert
Zhao



Meera
Krishnamoorthy



Ugo
Rosolia



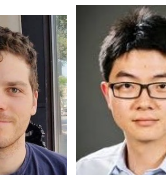
Tyler
del Sesto



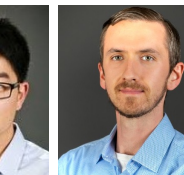
Alessandro
Ialongo



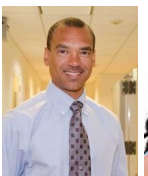
Alex
Piche



Xichen
Shi



Aiden
Aceves



Stephen
Mayo



Anima
Anandkumar



Soon-Jo
Chung



Aaron
Ames



Joel
Burdick



Gabor
Orosz



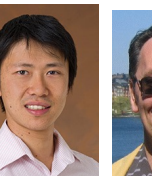
Swarat
Chaudhuri



Stephan
Mandt



Kamyar
Azizzadenesheli



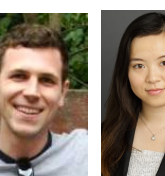
Hiro
Ono



Jim
Little



Neil
Abcouwer



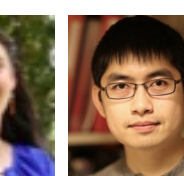
Peter
Carr



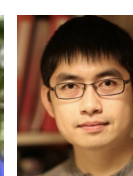
Rose
Yu



Shreyansh
Daftary



Bistra
Dilkina



Yuxin
Chen

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Thanks!



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