### AAAI 2024 Tutorial

Introduction to MDP Modeling and Interaction via RDDL and pyRDDLGym Part 1: Language Overview

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### RDDL Language & pyRDDLGym

Includes OpenAI Gym interface, Simulator, Viz, JaxPlan https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project



# Multiple Target Audiences

- Planning folks familiar with (P)PDDL wondering what RDDL is and when they might use it
- Planning language agnostics who are simply interested in planning for MDPs and POMDPs
- RL researchers interested in how to specify and exploit complex model structure

# **RDDL** Tutorial Outline

- Part 1: Language Overview
  - What is probabilistic planning in PPDDL?
  - Why do we need RDDL?
  - RDDL by example
  - Overview of RDDL solution methodologies

Part 2: PyRDDLGym

### Stochastic Domain Languages as of 2009

- Probabilistic PDDL (PPDDL)
  - more expressive than PSTRIPS
  - for example, probabilistic universal and conditional effects:

(:action put-all-blue-blocks-on-table :parameters () :precondition () :effect (prob 0.9 (forall (?b) (when (Blue ?b) (not (OnTable ?b))))))



- Idea: make some effects stochastic
- **Question:** is this sufficient to model realistic problems?

### More Realistic: Logistics?

• PPDDL Description:



(:action load-box-on-truck-in-city :parameters (?b - box ?t - truck ?c - city) :precondition (and (BIn ?b ?c) (TIn ?t ?c)) :effect (prob 0.7 (and (On ?b ?t) (not (BIn ?b ?c))))

- Can instantiate problems for any domain objects
  - 3 trucks: 🖡 🖡 🖡 2 planes: 🦗 🐜 3 boxes: 🖱 🖱 🖱
- But wait... only one truck can move at a time???
  - No concurrency, no time: will FedEx care?

### **Expressivity Limitations of PPDDL**

- Many PPDDL domains were tweaks of PDDL domains
  - Recipe: add success probability on some effects
    - e.g., *load-plane(p,x)* succeeds with prob 0.9
  - IPPC 2004/6, could win by determinizing / replanning
    - led to work on "probabilistically interesting" PPDDL problems (Little & Thiebaux, 2007)
- But what stochastic expressiveness is needed for modeling real-world domains?
  - Then we can ask what language is appropriate

### Observation

- Planning languages direct 5+ years of research
  - PDDL and variants
  - Probabilistic PDDL (PPDDL)
- Why?
  - Domain design is time-consuming
    - So everyone (students) use existing benchmarks
  - Need for comparison
    - Planner code not always released
    - Only means of comparison is on competition benchmarks

### • Implication:

- We should choose our languages & problems well
- Let's ask what problems we want to model / solve

What probabilistic problems might we want to model?

### Mars Rovers



- Continuous
  - Time, robot position / pose, sun angle, battery reserves...
- Partially observable
  - Even worse: high-dimensional partially observable

# **Elevator Control**

- Concurrent Actions
  - Elevator: up/down/stay
  - 6 elevators: 3^6 actions
- Exogenous / Non-boolean
  - Random integer arrivals (e.g., Poisson) at every floor
- Complex Objective
  - Minimize sum of wait times
  - Could even be nonlinear function (squared wait times)
- Complex Action Constraints
  - People might get annoyed if elevator reverses direction





## Traffic Control



- Concurrent
  - Multiple lights
- Indep. Exogenous Events Partially observable
  - Multiple vehicles

- **Continuous Variables** 
  - Nonlinear dynamics
- - Only observe stoplines

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### What are we missing in PPDDL?

- Independent concurrent stochastic actions & events
  - Exogenous stochastic events that scale with domain size
    - Random person arrivals at elevator floors, traffic movement
    - Probabilities that are a complex function of state
  - Resolution of stochastic or concurrent event conflicts
    - Two elevators admit passengers from same floor
  - Preconditions over *joint actions* (not per action)
    - Joint traffic light configurations must adhere to safety constraints
- Remedy: action-centric (P)PDDL  $\rightarrow$  fluent-centric RDDL

Need expressive decision-making formalism that supports complex stochastic **fluent** updates

> Relational Dynamic Bayes Net + Influence Diagram (RDDL) a.k.a. Relational Factored MDP

### Dynamical Models & Influence Diagrams

- Dynamic Bayes Nets (DBNs) ...
  - Represent state @ times t, t+1
    - Assume stationary distribution
- Influence Diagrams (IDs)...
  - Action nodes [squares]
    - Not random variables
    - Rather "controlled" variables
  - Utility nodes <diamonds>
    - A utility conditioned on state, e.g.
       U(X<sub>1</sub>',X<sub>2</sub>') = if (X<sub>1</sub>'=X<sub>2</sub>') then 10 else 0



# What is RDDL?

- Relational Dynamic Influence Diagram Language
  - Relational
     [DBN + Influence Diagram]
- Think of it as a Relational Factored (PO)MDP
  - Fluent updates are probabilistic programs



### A Brief History of (ICAPS) Time



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Example: How to specify a problem in RDDL (that cannot be expressed in PPDDL)

# Wildfire Domain



- Contributed by Zhenyu Yu (School of Economics and Management, Tongji University)
  - Karafyllidis, I., & Thanailakis, A. (1997). A model for predicting forest fire spreading using gridular automata. Ecological Modelling, 99(1), 87-97.

### Wildfire in RDDL

cpfs {

Each cell may independently stochastically ignite

burning'(?x, ?y) =

else

burning(?x, ?y); // State persists

out-of-fuel'(?x, ?y) = out-of-fuel(?x, ?y) | burning(?x,?y);

};

```
reward =
    [sum_{?x: x_pos, ?y: y_pos} [ COST_CUTOUT*cut-out(?x, ?y) ]]
+ [sum_{?x: x_pos, ?y: y_pos} [ COST_PUTOUT*put-out(?x, ?y) ]]
+ [sum_{?x: x_pos, ?y: y_pos} [ COST_NONTARGET_BURN*[ burning(?x, ?y) ^ ~TARGET(?x, ?y) ]]]
+ [sum_{?x: x_pos, ?y: y_pos}
    [ COST_TARGET_BURN*[ (burning(?x, ?y) | out-of-fuel(?x, ?y)) ^ TARGET(?x, ?y) ]]];
```

### Power of Lifting

Simple domains

can generate



# We're getting ahead of ourselves

Let's see how RDDL can specify a binary discrete DBN+ID

### How to Represent Factored MDP?

#### Current State and Actions

Next State and Reward



### **RDDL** Equivalent

// Define the state and action variables (not parameterized here) pvariables { p : { state-fluent, bool, default = false }; q : { state-fluent, bool, default = false }; r : { state-fluent, bool, default = false }; Can think of a : { action-fluent, bool, default = false }; transition }; distributions as "sampling // Define the conditional probability function for each // state variable in terms of previous state and actio instructions" cpfs { p' = if (p ^ r) then Bernoulli(.9) else Bernoulli(.3); q' = if (q ^ r) then Bernoulli(.9) else if (a) then Bernoulli(.3) else Bernoulli(.8); r' = if (~q) then KronDelta(r) else KronDelta(r <=> q); }; // Define the reward function; note that boolean functions are // treated as 0/1 integers in arithmetic expressions

reward = p + q - r;

# Let's look at a few more RDDL ingredients

- enum, integer, continuous fluents
- intermediate fluents
- observation fluents (POMDP)
- more control / stochastic constructs

### A Discrete-Continuous POMDP?



### A Discrete-Continuous POMDP, Part I

```
// User-defined types
types {
    enum_level : {@low, @medium, @high}; // An enumerated type
};
pvariables {
    p : { state-fluent, bool, default = false };
    q : { state-fluent, bool, default = false };
    r : { state-fluent, bool, default = false };
    i1 : { interm-fluent, int,
                                                 };
                                                 };
    i2 : { interm-fluent, enum_level
    o1 : { observ-fluent, bool };
    o2 : { observ-fluent, real };
    a : { action-fluent, bool, default = false };
};
cpfs {
    // Some standard Bernoulli conditional probability tables
    p' = if (p ^ r) then Bernoulli(.9) else Bernoulli(.3);
   q' = if (q ^ r) then Bernoulli(.9)
                    else if (a) then Bernoulli(.3) else Bernoulli(.8);
    // KronDelta is a delta function for a discrete argument
    r' = if (~q) then KronDelta(r) else KronDelta(r <=> q);
```

### A Discrete-Continuous POMDP, Part II



### Finally: Mars Rover example

- lifting
- non-fluents
- aggregation expressions
- joint action preconditions

# Lifted Continuous MDP in RDDL: **Simple** Mars Rover



# Simple Mars Rover: Part I

types { picture-point : object; };

#### pvariables {



rover?

# Simple Mars Rover: Part II

#### cpfs {

// Noisy movement update **xPos'** = xPos + xMove + Normal(0.0, MOVE\_VARIANCE\_MULT\*xMove); **yPos'** = yPos + yMove + Normal(0.0, MOVE\_VARIANCE\_MULT\*yMove); White noise, variance // Time update proportional to distance moved **time'** = if (snapPicture) then (time + 0.25) Fixed time for picture else (time + abs[xMove] + abs[yMove]); }; Time proportional to distance moved

# Simple Mars Rover: Part III

// We get a reward for any picture taken within picture box error bounds
// and the time limit.

```
reward = if (snapPicture ^ (time <= MAX_TIME))
    then sum_{?p : picture-point} [</pre>
```

then PICT\_VALUE(?p)

Reward for all pictures taken within bounding box!

if ((abs[ PICT\_XPOS(?p) - xPos] <= PICT\_ERROR\_ALLOW(?p))</pre>

^ (abs[ PICT\_YPOS(?p) - yPos] <= PICT\_ERROR\_ALLOW(?p)))</pre>

action-preconditions {

};

else 0.0 ]

else 0.0:

// Cannot snap a picture and move at the same time
snapPicture => ((xMove == 0.0) ^ (yMove == 0.0));

Cannot move and take picture at same time.

### Numeric and Logical Expressions

- RDDL permits expressive numeric expressions
  - If you want to express the condition in Wildfire that "all cells have less than 3 neighbors that are burning", then you could say

if ([forall\_{?x:Cell} [sum\_{?n:Cell} Neighbor(?x, ?n) ^ burning(?n)] < 3]) then ...

or

if ([max\_{?x:Cell} [sum\_{?n:Cell} Neighbor(?x, ?n) ^ burning(?n)]] < 3) then ...

• Allows you to write Latex-like math expressions

# **RDDL Recap**

- Relational Dynamic Influence Diagram Language
  - Relational
     [DBN + Influence Diagram]
- Specify the probabilistic process over relations to generate next state
  - Generate "ground" DBN+ID given domain object instantiation



# RDDL Recap I

- Everything is a fluent (parameterized variable)
  - State fluents
  - Observation fluents
    - for partially observed domains
  - Action fluents
    - supports factored concurrency
  - Intermediate fluents
    - derived predicates, correlated effects, ...
  - Constant nonfluents (general constants, topology relations, ...)
- Flexible fluent types
  - Binary (predicate) fluents
  - Multi-valued (enumerated) fluents
  - Integer and continuous fluents (from PDDL 2.1)

# RDDL Recap II

- Semantics is ground DBN + Influence Diagram
   Naturally supports independent exogenous events
- General expressions in transition / reward
  - Logical expressions  $(\land, \lor, \Rightarrow, \Leftrightarrow, \forall, \exists)$  so can use in
  - Arithmetic expressions  $(+,-,*,/,\sum_{x,}\prod_x, \max_x)$  arithmetic expr.
  - In/dis/equality comparison expressions (=,  $\neq$ , <,>,  $\leq$ ,  $\geq$ )
  - Conditional expressions (if-then-else, switch)
  - Standard Functions: pow[.], log[.], abs[.], max[.], sin[.]
  - Basic probability distributions
    - Bernoulli, Discrete, Normal, Poisson, Exponential, etc.

# RDDL Recap III

- Goal + General (PO)MDP objectives
  - Arbitrary reward
    - goals, numerical preferences (c.f., PDDL 3.0)
  - Finite horizon
  - Discounted or undiscounted
- State/action constraints
  - Encode legal "action-preconditions"
    - (concurrent) action preconditions
  - Assert "state-invariants"
    - serve as integrity constraint checks on state
    - e.g., an elevator cannot be in two locations

# What RDDL does not do...

- RDDL just provides a language for specifying complex (PO)MDPs
  - For an MDP: <S, A, T, R>
  - For a POMDP: <S, A, T, R, O, Z>
- RDDL does not define a policy
- RDDL does not specify a planning methodology
  - It's up to external planners to perform planning, learning, or inference on the RDDL domain model

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### Common question from RL crowd: Why RDDL vs. a Simulator in C++?

Answer: Want a language that can be compiled into other formalisms for planning and domain analysis such as abstraction.

RDDL is a disciplined subset of modern languages designed to facilitate compilation.



### **RDDL Planning Overview**

- Use RL (e.g., Stable Baselines for Gym) https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-rl
- SOTA: **compile instance** to planning formalism
  - MCTS (Discrete Search) (PROST, Keller et al, ICAPS-12) discrete only <u>https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-prost</u>
  - Symbolic Dynamic Programming with XADDs (Sanner et al, UAI-11)
     <a href="https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-symbolic">https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-symbolic</a>
  - Planning by Autodiff/Backprop (JaxPlan, Gimelfarb et al ICAPS-24)
     <a href="https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-jax">https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-jax</a>
  - Planning by Gurobi Optimization (GurobiPlan, Gimelfarb et al ICAPS-24)
     <a href="https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-gurobi">https://github.com/pyrddlgym-project/pyRDDLGym-gurobi</a>
- Generalized Planning: "solve" at lifted domain level
  - Relational / First-order MDPs (Khardon et al, Sanner et al)
  - Graph neural network policies (Symnet 1/2/3: Mausam et al)
     Note: Plan / policy should work for *all* instances

### Symbolic Decision Diagram Methods

### SPUDD for Factored MDPs

- Value Iteration using ADDs (SPUDD)
  - Can use ADDs or any DD that supports +,\*,max
  - Bounded approximations (APRICODD)



Sanner et al (UAI-11, AAAI-12, UAI-13)

### XADDs for Discrete+Continuous MDPs



https://pyrddlgym.readthedocs.io/en/latest/xadd.html

### RDDL Compiles to (X)ADDs!

UAV Problem



### Planning by Autodiff / Backprop

Wu, Say, Sanner (NeurIPS-17, JAIR-22, AI-19), SOGBOFA by Cui, Khardon, et al, DisProd by Chaterjee, Khardon et al (IJCAI-23), JaxPlan by Gimelfarb et al (ICAPS-24)

#### JaxPlan: Encode Reward and Transition in a Stochastic Computation Graph and Optimize End-to-end!



### GPU-based Gradient Path Planning via Autodiff

• RMSProp makes for a great non-convex optimizer!



### Need Modern Non-convex Gradient Methods



RMSProp is the best-performing optimizer for planning, likely b/c it can handle piecewise structure.

Bueno, ..., Sanner (AAAI-19)

### Learning Deep Reactive Policies (DRPs)

### Stochastic RNNs



### Lifted Approaches: Generalized Planning for RDDL

### SymNet 1/2/3 (Mausam et al, IIT Delhi)

#### SymNet 2.0 (Sharma, Arora, Geißer, Mausam, Singla, ICML-22)

Compile RDDL DBN into GNN, Embed, Decode to Actions (GNN learning is domain instance independent)



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