

Kishor Jothimurugan

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Research Interests

My areas of interest lie at the intersection of **Formal Methods** and **Machine Learning**. In particular, I have worked on applying formal methods to improve reinforcement learning (RL), verification of neural networks (NN), and machine learning (ML) for program synthesis and analysis.

Education

University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, USA

Ph.D. candidate in Computer and Information Science, Current GPA 4.0/4.0

2017–2023

Thesis Topic: Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning

Committee: Osbert Bastani, Thomas A. Henzinger, Sampath Kannan, and George J. Pappas

Advised by Prof. Rajeev Alur

Chennai Mathematical Institute

Chennai, India

B.Sc. (Honors) Mathematics and Computer Science, CGPA 9.77/10

2014–2017

Ranked among top 3 students

Publications

First (co)author in all publications; names are listed alphabetically in some papers

* equal contribution, † authors in alphabetical order

Refereed Conference Publications.....

[ICML 23] Robust Subtask Learning for Compositional Generalization

K. Jothimurugan, S. Hsu, O. Bastani and R. Alur

International Conference on Machine Learning, 2023

Acceptance rate: 27.9%

[CAV 23] Policy Synthesis and Reinforcement Learning for Discounted LTL

R. Alur, O. Bastani, K. Jothimurugan[†], M. Perez, F. Somenzi and A. Trivedi

International Conference on Computer Aided Verification, 2023

Acceptance rate: 26%

[Festschrift 22] A Framework for Transforming Specifications in Reinforcement Learning

R. Alur, S. Bansal, O. Bastani and K. Jothimurugan[†]

Springer Festschrift in honor of Prof. Tom Henzinger (Invited), 2022

[CAV 22] Specification-Guided Learning of Nash Equilibria with High Social Welfare

K. Jothimurugan, S. Bansal, O. Bastani and R. Alur

International Conference on Computer Aided Verification, 2022

Acceptance rate: 24.4%

[NeurIPS 21] [Compositional Reinforcement Learning from Logical Specifications](#)

K. Jothimurugan, S. Bansal, O. Bastani and R. Alur

Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems, 2021

Acceptance rate: 25.7%

[EMSOFT 21] [Compositional Learning and Verification of Neural Network Controllers](#)

R. Ivanov*, K. Jothimurugan*, S. Hsu, S. Vaidya, R. Alur and O. Bastani

International Conference on Embedded Software, 2021

Acceptance rate: 25.2%

[AISTATS 21] [Abstract Value Iteration for Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning](#)

K. Jothimurugan, O. Bastani and R. Alur

International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics, 2021

Acceptance rate: 29.8%

[LICS 20] [Space-efficient Query Evaluation over Probabilistic Event Streams](#)

R. Alur, Y. Chen, K. Jothimurugan[†] and S. Khanna

Symposium on Logic in Computer Science, 2020

Acceptance rate: 39.6%

[NeurIPS 19] [A Composable Specification Language for Reinforcement Learning Tasks](#)

K. Jothimurugan, R. Alur and O. Bastani

Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems, 2019

Acceptance rate: 21.1%

[Preprints and Technical Reports](#).....

[Learning Algorithms for Regenerative Stopping Problems with Logistics Applications](#)

K. Jothimurugan, M. Andrews, J. Lee and L. Maggi

Nokia Bell Labs Intern Report

Tutorials

[AAAI 23] [Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning](#)

Presenters: K. Jothimurugan, S. Bansal, R. Alur and O. Bastani

AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence, 2023

A comprehensive tutorial on RL algorithms for learning control policies from logical specifications

Open Source Tools

DIRL — [Github link](#)

Compositional RL algorithm for learning from temporal specifications

HIGH-NASH — [Github link](#) (CAV Artifact Evaluation Badge: Functional)

Multi-agent RL algorithm for learning Nash equilibria with high social welfare

SARL — [Github link](#)

Hierarchical RL algorithm leveraging user provided state abstractions

SPECTRL — [Github link](#)

Generating shaped rewards from temporal specifications

Teaching Experience

Guest Lecturer.....

Computer-Aided Verification, CIS 673 (Class of ~ 20) *Fall 2021*
Graduate Course, University of Pennsylvania
Topic: Techniques for Verifying Robustness of Neural Networks

Teaching Assistant.....

Principles of Embedded Systems, CIS 540 (Class of ~ 20) *Spring 2019*
Graduate Course, University of Pennsylvania

Automata, Computability and Complexity, CIS 262 (Class of ~ 150) *Fall 2018*
Undergraduate Course, University of Pennsylvania

Discrete Mathematics (Class of ~ 30) *Spring 2017*
Undergraduate Course, Chennai Mathematical Institute

Design and Analysis of Algorithms *Fall 2016*
Online Course offered by Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Mentoring and Outreach

Graduate Student Mentoring 2020–2022
Steve Hsu, Masters Student, University of Pennsylvania
Topic: Compositional reinforcement learning for multi-task generalization
Co-authored two papers

Penn CIS Mentorship Program 2022
Participated as a mentor
Department-wide effort to connect early career PhD students with senior PhD students
Attracted participation from 34 first-year students

Awards

CTL Teaching Certificate *Spring 2022*
Awarded by Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Pennsylvania

CMI Undergraduate Scholarship *2014–2017*
Awarded by CMI to undergraduate students for excellence in academics

Research Presentations

Invited Talks.....

IARCS Verification Seminar Series *Summer 2023*
Title: Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign *Spring 2023*
Title: Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning

University of Virginia Title: Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning	<i>Spring 2023</i>
NYU Formal Methods Group Title: Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning	<i>Fall 2022</i>
Microsoft PROSE Group Title: Specification-Guided Reinforcement Learning	<i>Fall 2022</i>
Thomas Henzinger's Group, IST Austria Title: Reinforcement Learning from Logical Specifications	<i>Fall 2021</i>
Simons Institute, UC Berkeley Workshop on Games and Equilibria in System Design and Analysis Title: Abstract Value Iteration for Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning	<i>Spring 2021</i>

Presentations and Posters (from publications).....

Conferences: NeurIPS 2019 and 2021, LICS 2020, AISTATS 2021, EMSOFT 2021, CAV 2022, ICML 2023.

Workshops: DeepRL @ NeurIPS 2020 and 2022, SafeRL @ NeurIPS 2021, SYNT @ CAV 2022.

Internships

Amazon Web Services <i>Applied Science Intern, AI Labs</i> Incorporating program semantics in transformer-based code generation models Mentors: Nathan Fulton, Siddhartha Jain and Baishakhi Ray (Columbia University)	Summer 2022
Nokia Bell Labs <i>Research Intern, Data and AI Lab</i> An application of deep RL to regenerative stopping problems Mentors: Matthew Andrews, Jeongran Lee and Lorenzo Maggi	Summer 2020
Amazon Web Services <i>Software Development Engineering Intern, Automated Reasoning Group</i> Using machine learning to improve usability of taint analysis Mentors: Andrew Gacek and Lee Pike	Summer 2019
ENS Paris-Saclay <i>Research Intern, Formal Methods Group</i> Models for distributed reactive synthesis Mentor: Dietmar Berwanger	Summer 2017

Review Service

Conferences: NeurIPS 2022, AAAI 2023, AISTATS 2023, ESOP 2023, L4DC 2023, ICML 2023, CAV 2023, NeurIPS 2023, ICLR 2023, ICML 2024.

Journals: IEEE TCAD, JAIR.