

Learning-Based Planning & Control with Persistent Safety for UAS

via \mathcal{L}_1 Adaptive Control and Machine Learning

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Complex Dynamics and Environments

Challenges

- Unpredictable environments
- Obstacle-rich and dynamic
- Nonlinear uncertain dynamics



Solutions

- Fast (re-)planning
- Safe planning
- Safe learning
- **Guaranteed robustness**

**AlphaPilot simulation
challenge: camera views**



Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology

Challenges and the Tools

Complex Dynamics

Uncertain Models

Uncertain Environments

Control theoretic tools

- Structured models
- Parametric uncertainties
- Deterministic representations

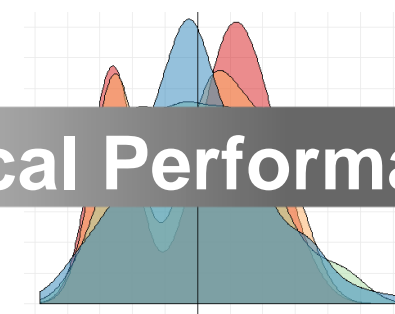
Data-driven ML tools

- General models
- Unstructured uncertainties
- Stochastic representations

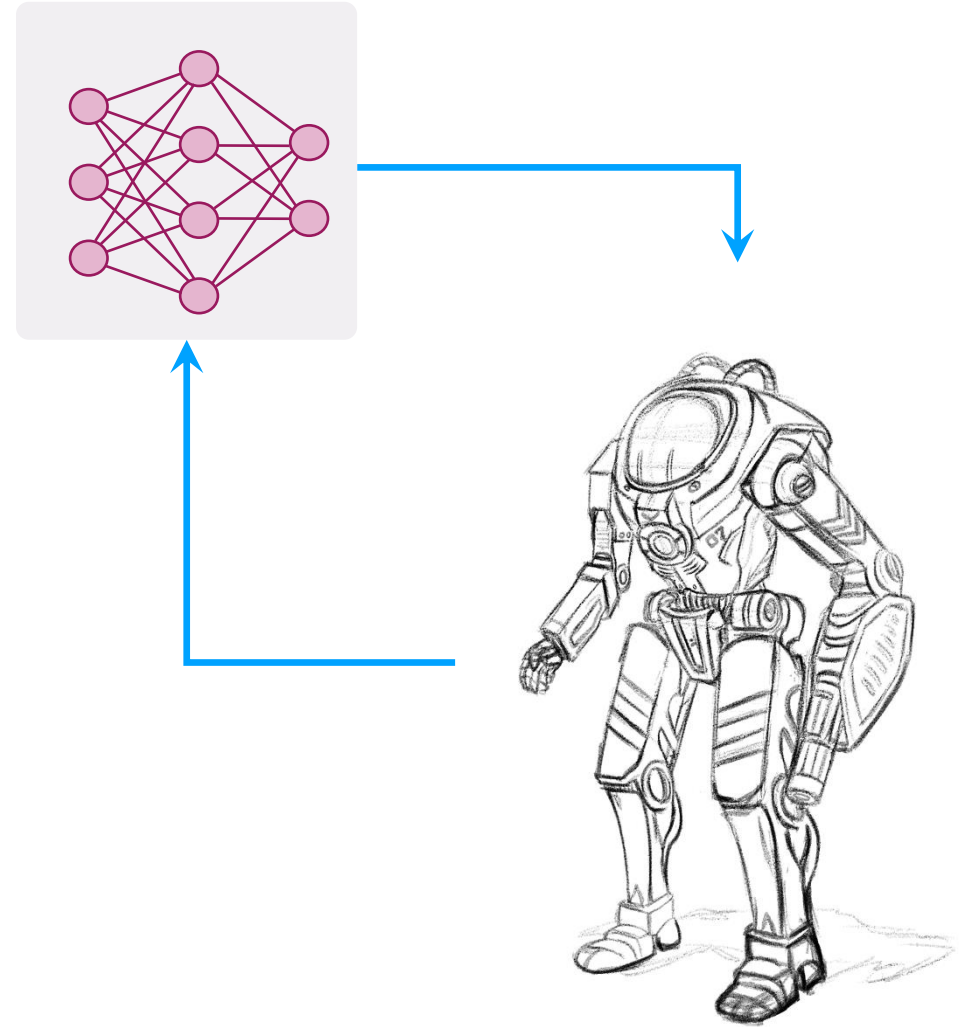
Safety & Robustness

Empirical Performance

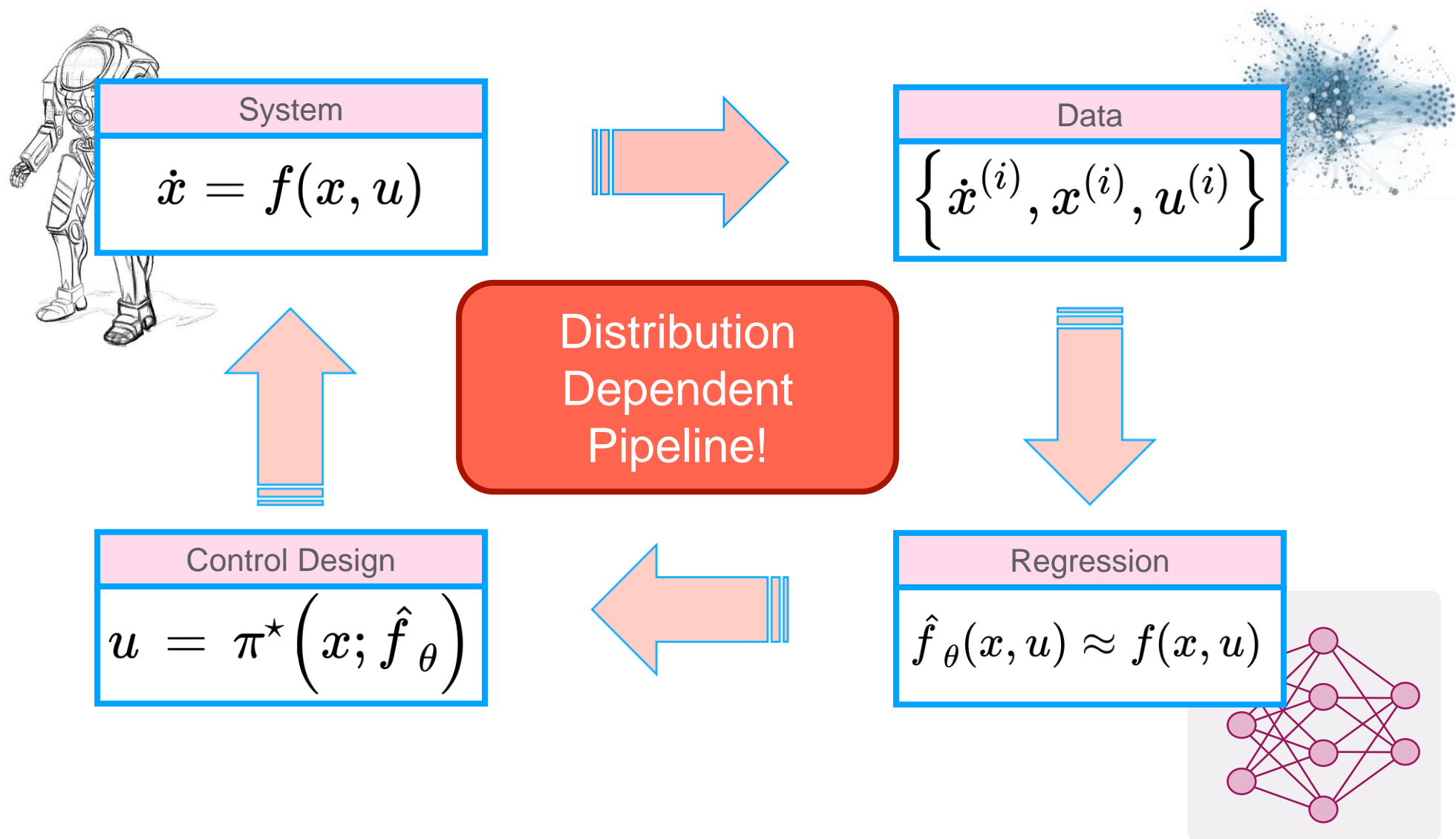
Bridging the divide



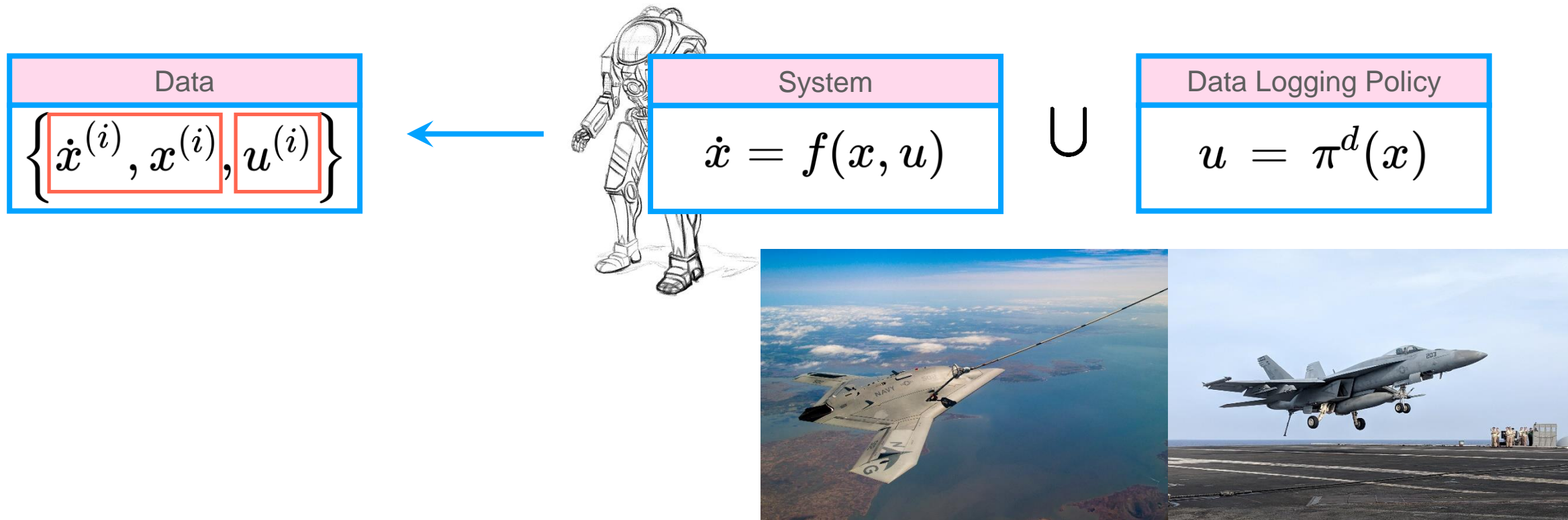
Data-driven Control Pipeline



Data-driven Control Design



Data Distribution Dependence

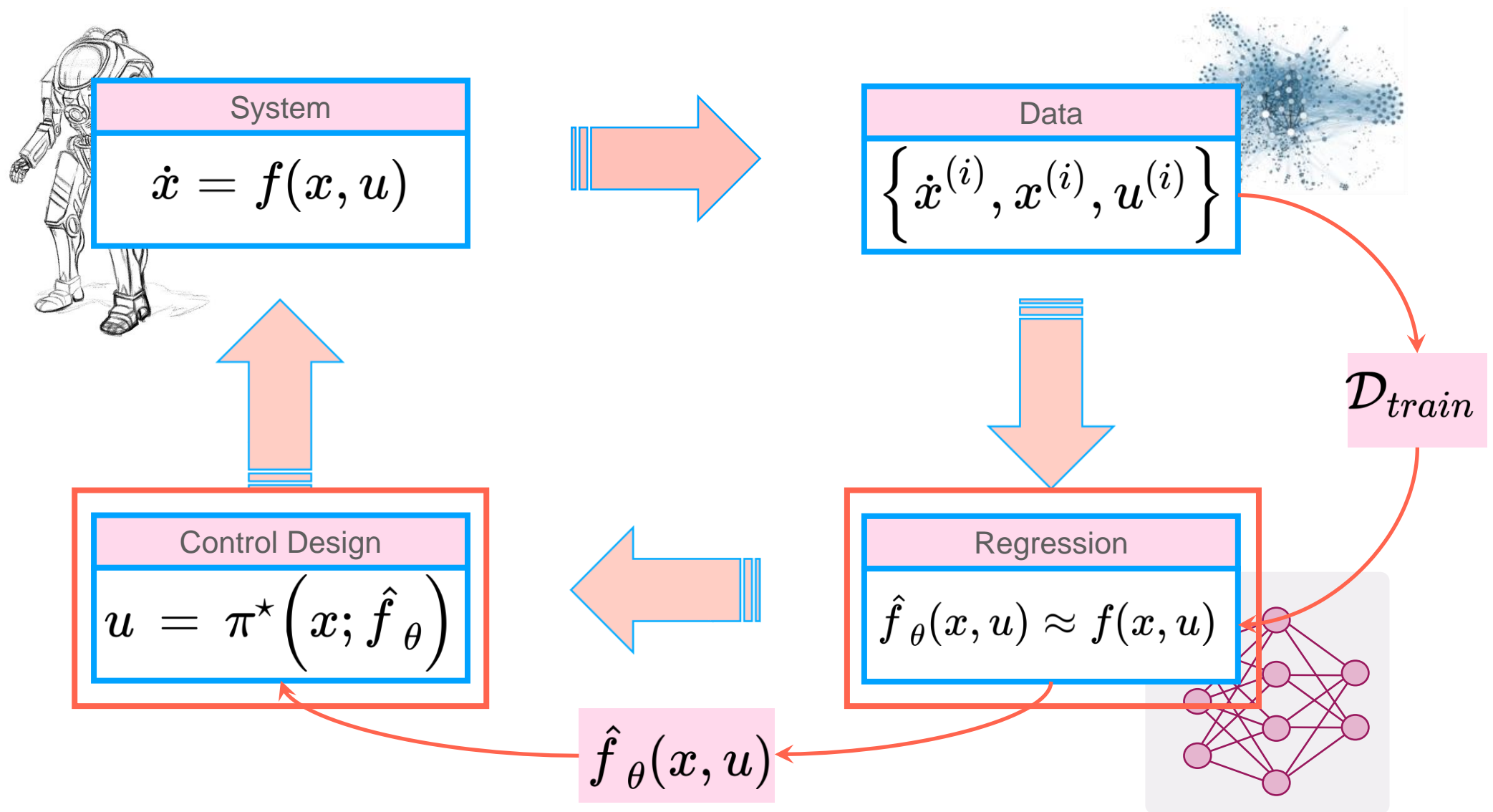


$$\{\dot{x}^{(i)}, x^{(i)}, u^{(i)}\} \sim \mathcal{D}_{train}$$

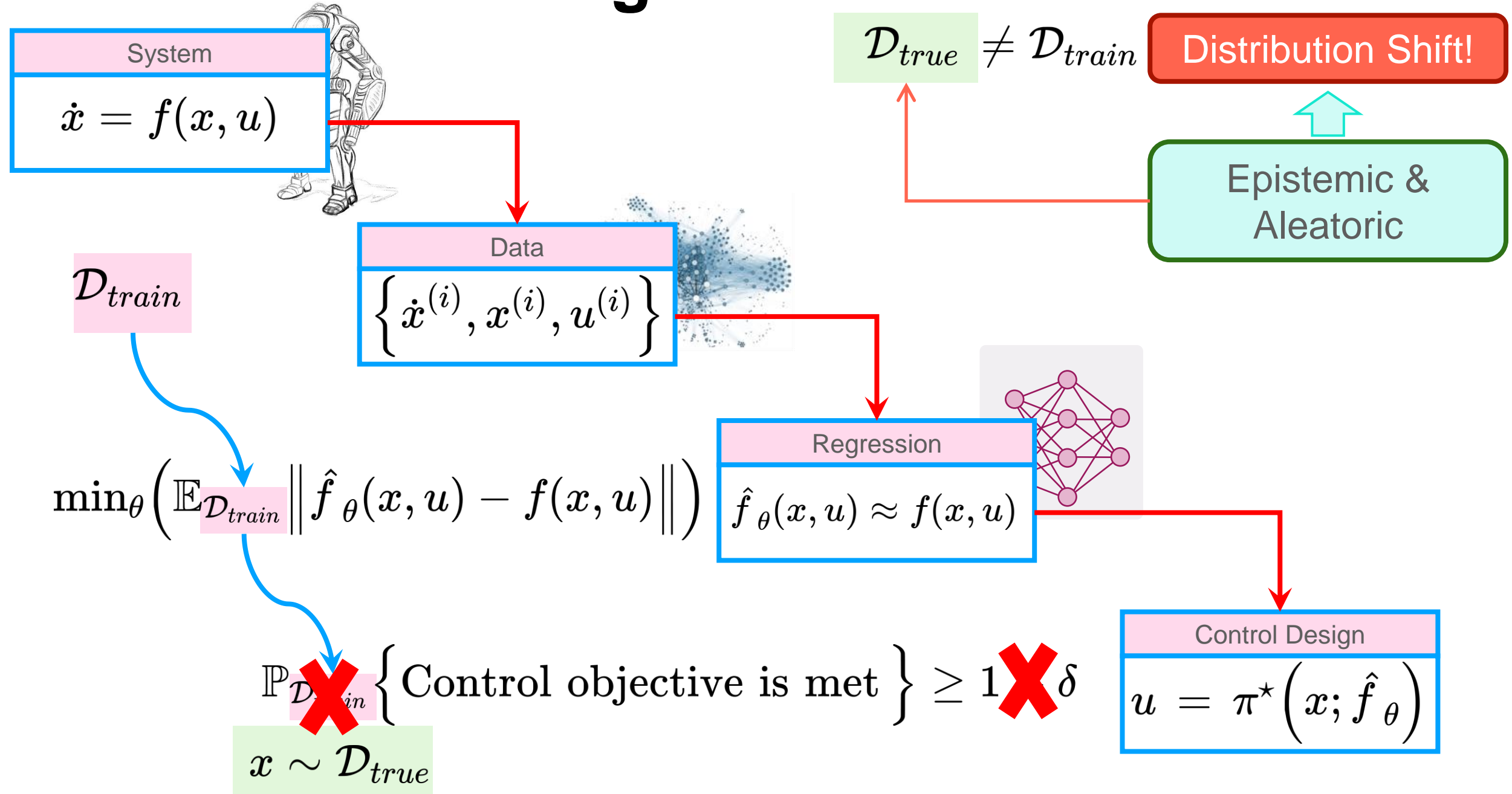
Human or Compute heavy (MPC)
Imitation Learning

- Training data distribution: True dynamics & data logging policy
- Training data has an associated distribution

The Role of Training Distribution



The Role of Training Distribution



Robustness & Distribution Shifts

Epistemic &
Aleatoric

$$\text{ } \rightarrow \hat{f}_\theta \neq f, \quad (x, u) \sim \mathcal{D}_{true} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}_{true} \neq \mathcal{D}_{train}$$

- We want to be **robust** to epistemic and aleatoric uncertainties such that
 - We can **quantify** the distribution shift

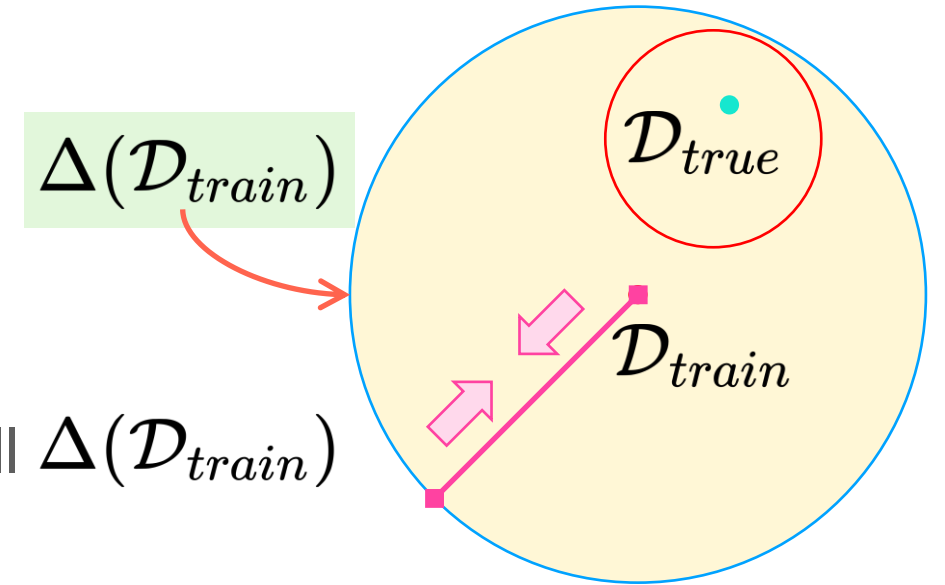
$$\mathcal{D}_{true} \in \Delta(\mathcal{D}_{train})$$

- True distribution **always** lies within a known ball $\Delta(\mathcal{D}_{train})$

Agnostic to \mathcal{D}_{train}

- We can **mitigate** the distribution shift
 - We can **control** the **size** of the guaranteed set

$$\min_{\Gamma \in \Delta(\mathcal{D}_{train})} (\mathbb{P}_\Gamma \{\text{Control objective is met}\}) \geq 1 - \delta$$



Robustness Certificates

Why **certificates** $\Delta(\mathcal{D}_{train})$ in the space of **distributions**?

- Upstream **nominal controllers** designed with certificates of **distributional rob.**
 - Available data** with associated **distribution**

$$\mathbb{P}_{\mathcal{D}}\{\text{Control objective is met}\} \geq 1 - \delta$$

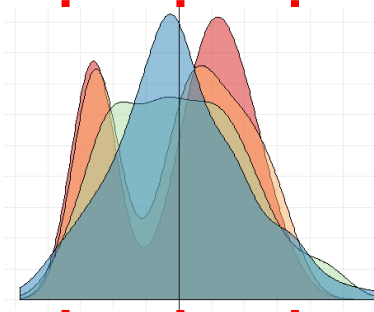
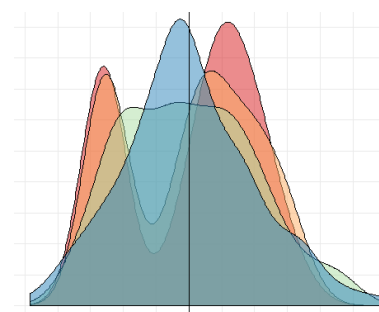
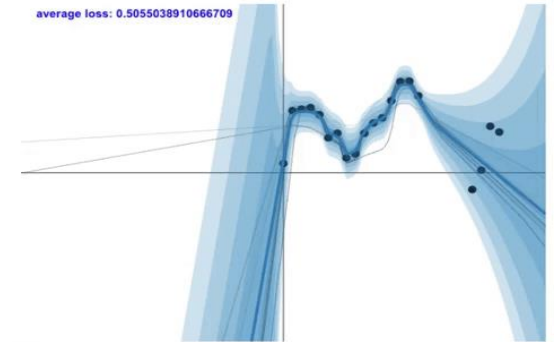
- Availability of data with **true distribution** is difficult to justify
 - Expensive and unsafe $\mathcal{D}_{true} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}_{train}$
 - Only training data is available: from past operation, sim etc.
- Instead, **if** we can produce **certificates** of **distributional robustness**

$$\mathcal{D}_{true} \in \Delta(\mathcal{D}_{train})$$

- Robust nominal control \rightarrow **Distributionally robust** control, learning, and optimization $\min_{\Gamma \in \Delta(\mathcal{D}_{train})} (\mathbb{P}_{\Gamma}\{\text{Control objective is met}\}) \geq 1 - \delta$

Distributional Robustness

- Safe use of machine learning
 - Safe predictive control
- Natural ability to consider epistemic and aleatoric uncertainties
 - Systems and our understanding of them are stochastic
- Design principles guided by distributional guarantees independently verified by e.g. Monte-Carlo methods
 - **Design space = Test space**
 - Easier feedback between the spaces



DR Control

- Distributionally robust control
 - **Samples** from the **true distribution**, only finite samples required [1,2]
 - **Known distribution** (measure), state constraint satisfaction [3]
- (Un)stable deterministic systems → robustness to stochastic disturbances
 - **Stochastic disturbances** enter unstable deterministic systems through **uniformly bounded input operators**, incremental stability extended to stochastic systems [4,5]
 - **Stable systems** with **uniformly bounded input operators** for stochastic disturbances, control of higher moments [6], robustness in the sense of the

Wasserstein metric [7]

[1] Yang, Insoo. "Wasserstein distributionally robust stochastic control: A data-driven approach." *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control* 66.8 (2020): 3863-3870.

[2] Hakobyan, Astghik, and Insoo Yang. "Distributionally Robust Differential Dynamic Programming with Wasserstein Distance." *IEEE Control Systems Letters* (2023).

[3] Van Parys, Bart PG, et al. "Distributionally robust control of constrained stochastic systems." *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control* 61.2 (2015): 430-442.

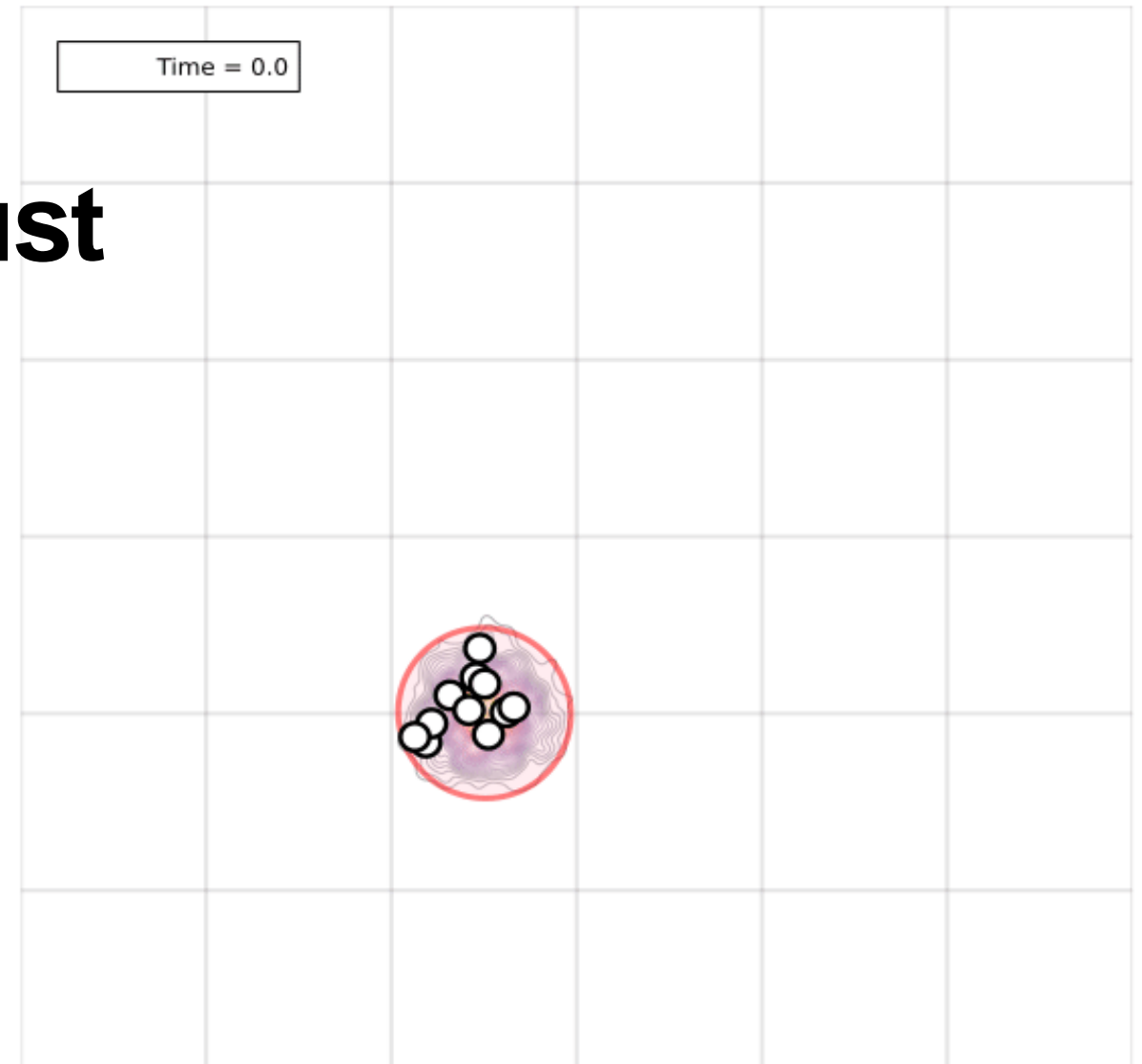
[4] Tsukamoto, Hiroyasu, and Soon-Jo Chung. "Robust controller design for stochastic nonlinear systems via convex optimization." *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control* 66.10 (2020): 4731-4746.

[5] Pham, Quang-Cuong, Nicolas Tabareau, and Jean-Jacques Slotine. "A contraction theory approach to stochastic incremental stability." *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control* 54.4 (2009): 816-820.

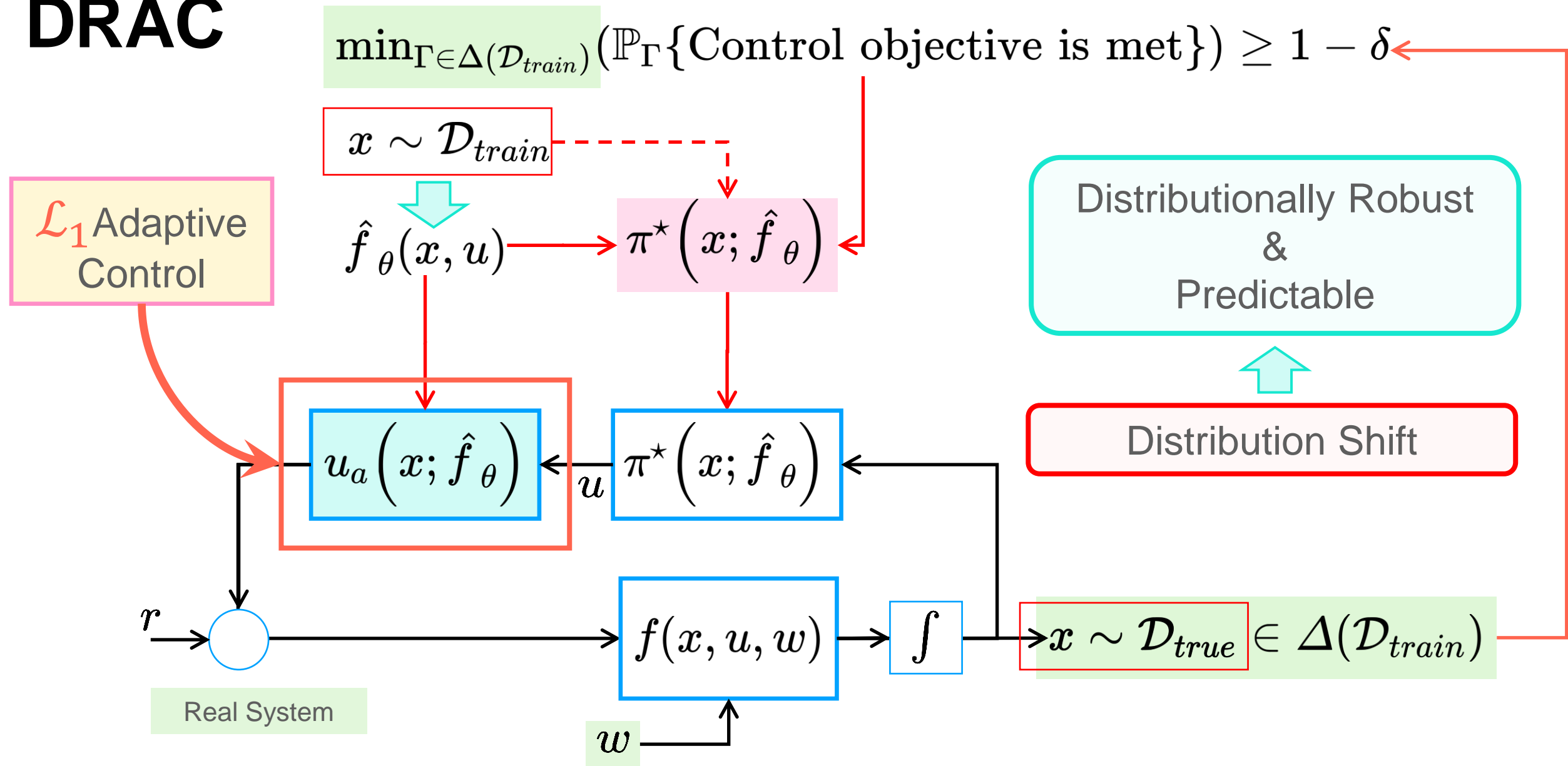
[6] Mazumdar, Eric, et al. "High confidence sets for trajectories of stochastic time-varying nonlinear systems." *2020 59th IEEE Conference on Decision and Control (CDC)*. IEEE, 2020.

[7] Bouvrie, Jake, and Jean-Jacques Slotine. "Wasserstein contraction of stochastic nonlinear systems." *arXiv preprint arXiv:1902.08567* (2019).

Distributionally Robust Adaptive Control (DRAC)



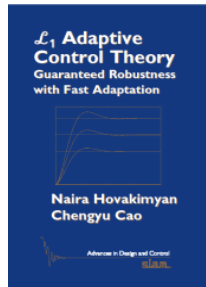
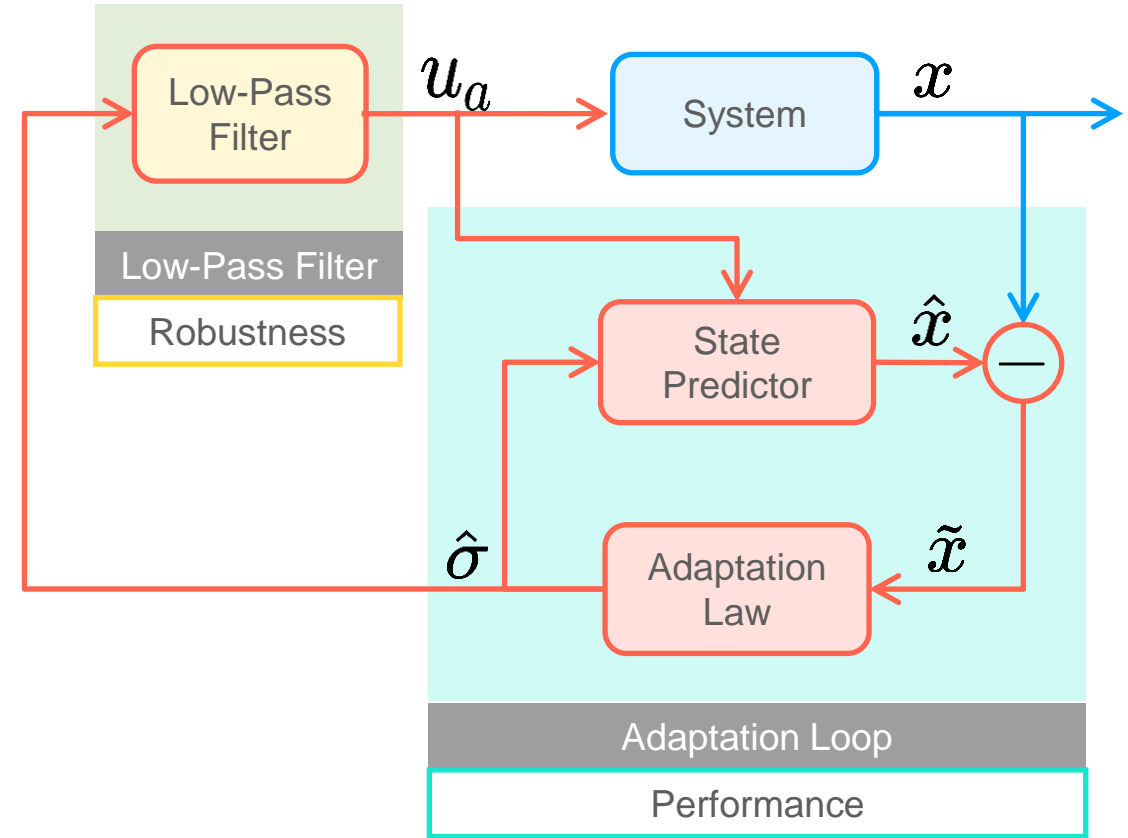
DRAC



Control augmentation u_a to guarantee certificates of **distributional robustness**

\mathcal{L}_1 Adaptive Control Architecture

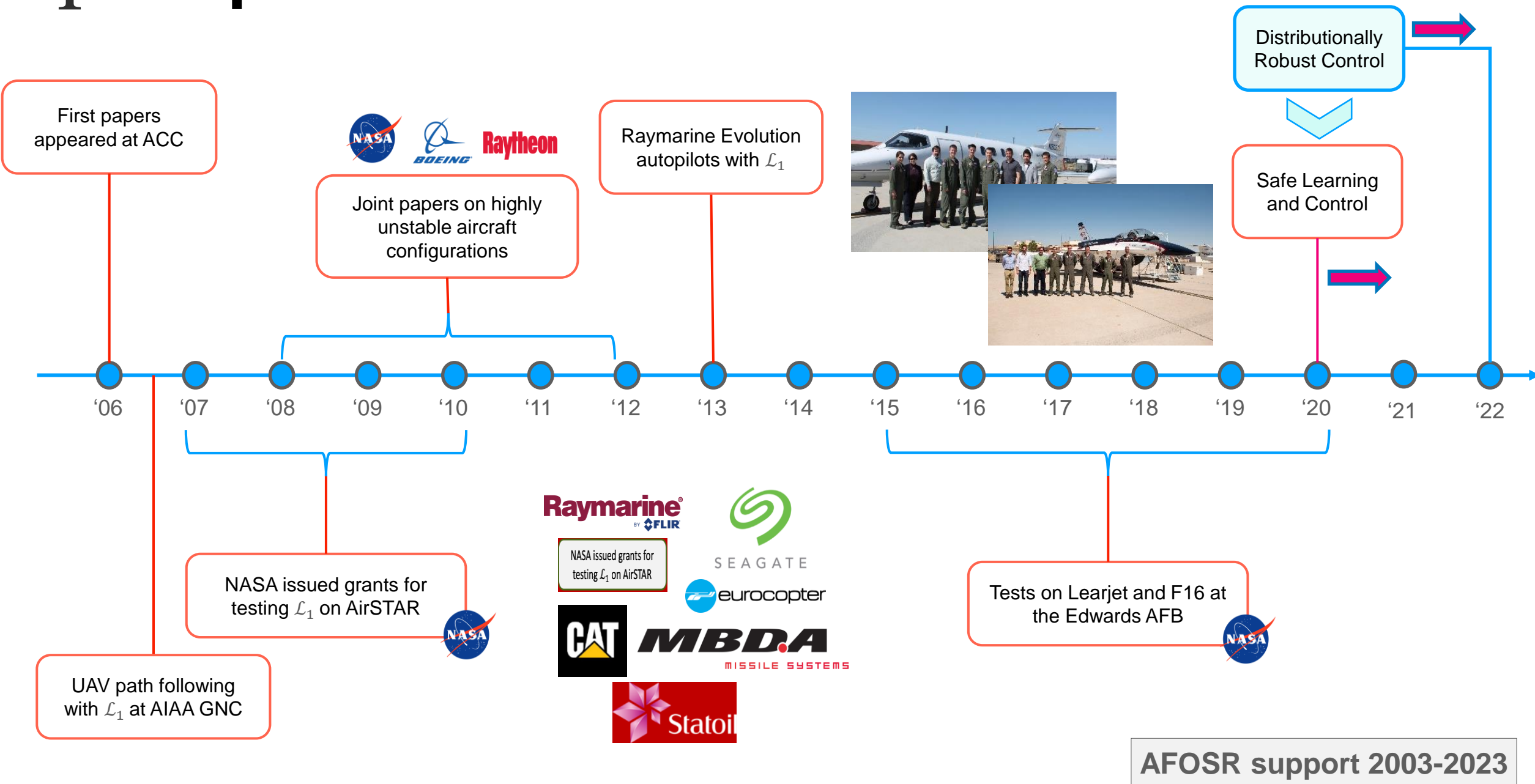
- Guaranteed **uniform performance** bounds and **robustness margins**
- Validated for manned and unmanned aerial vehicles, oil drilling operations, hydraulic pumps, etc.
- Commercialized by various industries, including Raymarine, Caterpillar, JOUAV Automation Tech, etc.



intelinair

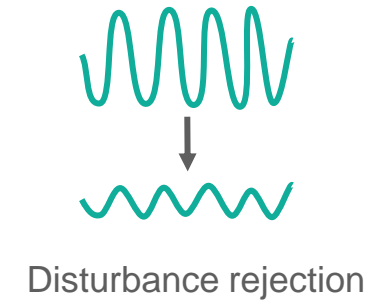
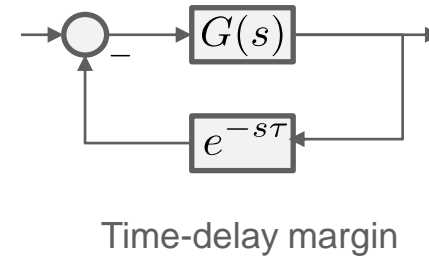
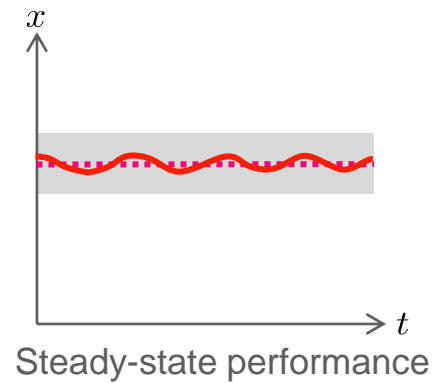
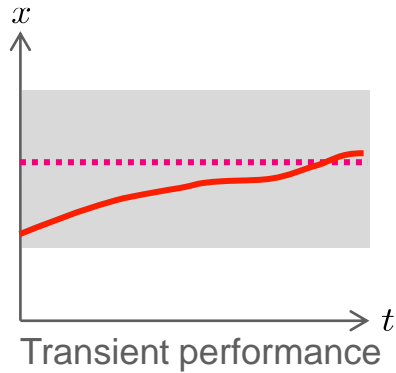


\mathcal{L}_1 Adaptive Control: Timeline



\mathcal{L}_1 Adaptive Control: Guarantees

\mathcal{L}_1 adaptive control provides *certificates of performance and robustness*

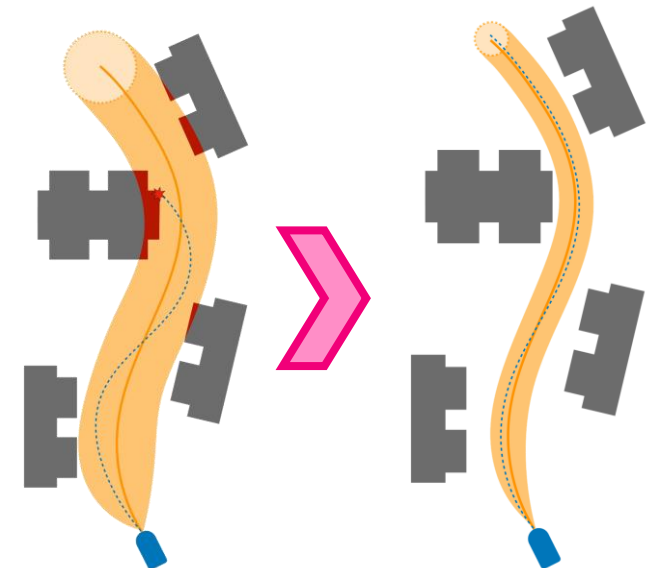


And yet, *as the world around it changes*, new forms of guarantees are needed.

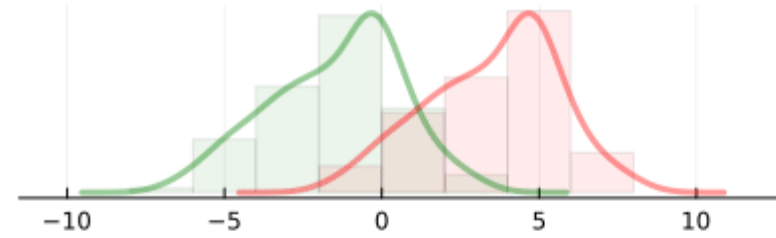


Data-driven systems,
Stochastic representations

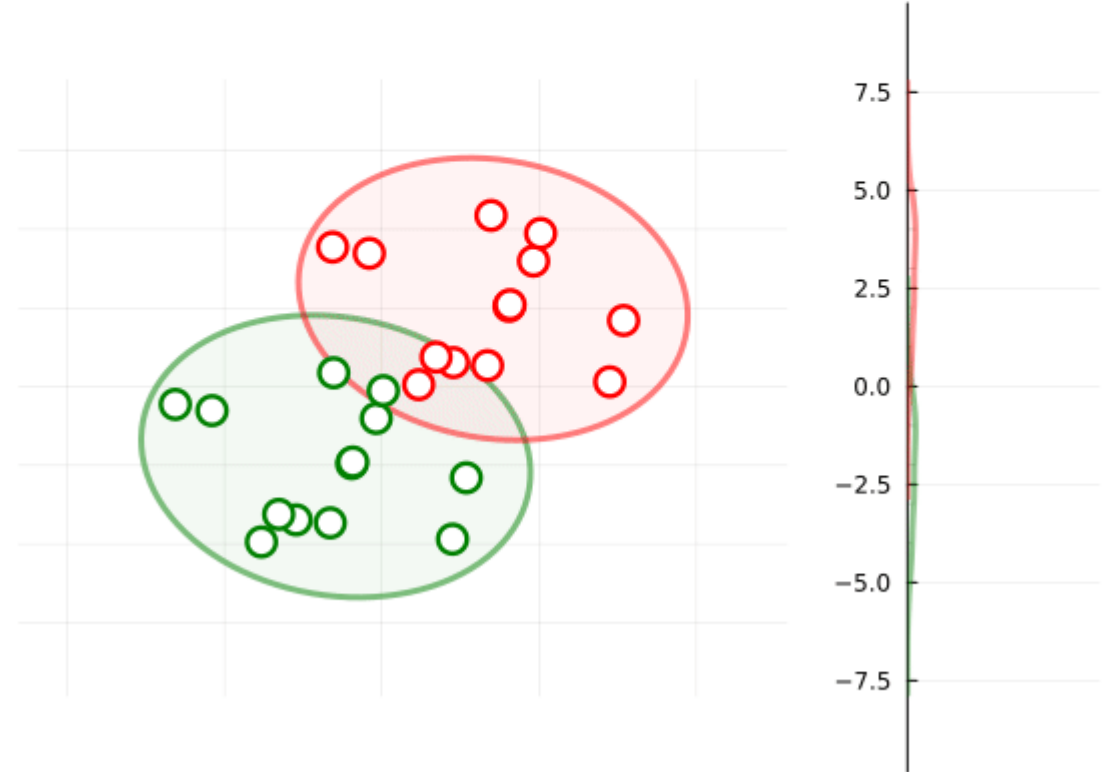
Distributional
Guarantees



The Systems



$t = 0.0$

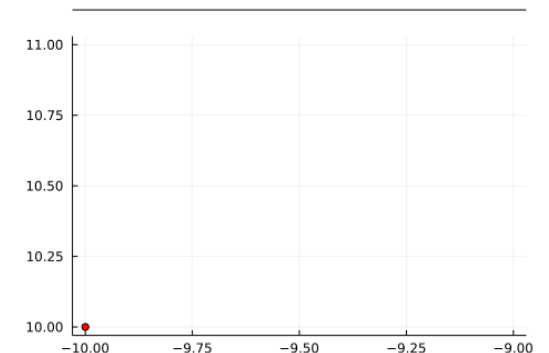


Nonlinear Itô Processes

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

- W_t : Brownian motion
 - Gaussian Markov Process
 - Stationary independent increments: Lévy process
 - Continuous and nowhere differentiable, almost surely
 - Motivation: Every almost surely continuous process with independent increments is Gaussian [1]



Nonlinear Itô Processes

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

Uncertain drift $F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt = f(X_t) + g(X_t)(U_t + h(X_t)) + l(X_t)$

- Known drift component
- Matched and unmatched uncertainties
 - Locally Lipschitz, linear growth

Nonlinear Itô Processes

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

Uncertain diffusion $F_\sigma(X_t, U_t)dt = [\vartheta g(X_t)(U_t + h(X_t)) \quad p(X_t) + q(X_t)]$

- Known diffusion component: uniformly bounded
- Drift uncertainty
 - sublinear **growth**, Holder continuous $\alpha \leq \frac{1}{2}$
 - **Robust** approaches **fail** due to the growth
- Control channel noise parameter $\vartheta \in \mathbb{R}$
 - Stronger results if $h \in S_{loc}^{2,\infty}(\mathbb{R}^m)$ (Sobolev space)
 - \exists locally essentially bounded weak derivatives up to order 2 [1]

Systems

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t,$$

$$X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

\mathcal{D}_{true}

Distribution Shift

$$F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt = f(X_t) + g(X_t)(U_t + h(X_t)) + l(X_t)$$

$$F_\sigma(X_t, U_t)dt = [\vartheta g(X_t)(U_t + h(X_t)) \quad p(X_t) + q(X_t)]$$

Nominal
System

$$dX_t^* = \bar{F}_\mu(X_t^*, U_t^*)dt + \bar{F}_\sigma(X_t^*, U_t^*)dW_t^*,$$

$$X_t^* \sim \mathbb{Q}_t^*$$

\mathcal{D}_{learn}

Nominal system: No **epistemic uncertainties**, only **aleatoric**

Independent
Brownian motions

W_t

W_t^*

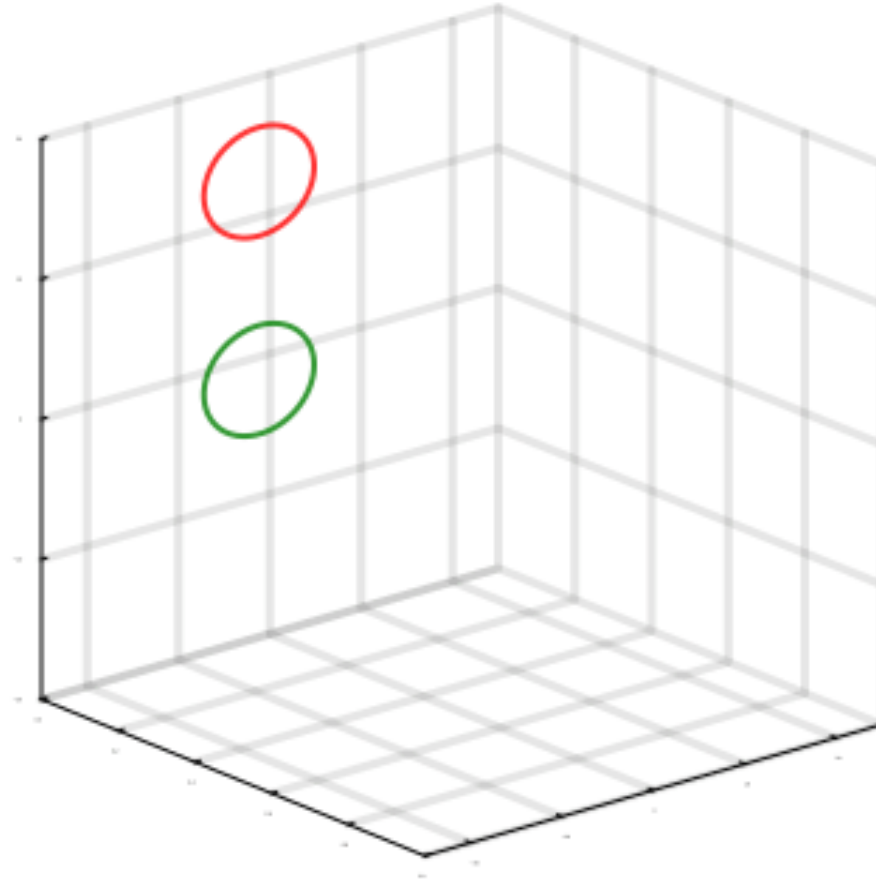
True System
Measure
(Distribution)

\mathbb{Q}_t

Nominal System
Measure
(Distribution)

\mathbb{Q}_t^*

The Goals



Goals

Nominal
System

$$dX_t^* = \bar{F}_\mu(X_t^*, U_t^*)dt + \bar{F}_\sigma(X_t^*, U_t^*)dW_t^*, \quad X_t^* \sim \mathbb{Q}_t^*$$

$$\pi^*(X_t^*; \hat{f}_\theta)$$

Learned via
Nominal
Distribution

Distribution Shift

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

$$\pi^*(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta)$$

- Learned controller on true system: **Distribution shift**
 - **Guarantees** of safety and predictability: **Invalid**

Goals

Nominal
System

$$dX_t^* = \bar{F}_\mu(X_t^*, U_t^*)dt + \bar{F}_\sigma(X_t^*, U_t^*)dW_t^*,$$

Any Distribution

$$X_t^* \sim \mathbb{Q}_t^*$$

Bounded

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t,$$

$$X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

$$\pi^*(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta) + \pi_a(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta)$$

- We want to design a **feedback augmentation** such that
- True distribution \mathbb{Q}_t remains uniformly bounded around the nominal distribution \mathbb{Q}_t^*
 - Robustness bounds used **upstream** for DR planning and control
- Bound in the sense of **Wasserstein metric**
 - Optimal transport theory
 - A metric on the space of distributions (distance and shape)

The Goals: Pictorial Depiction

- For each $t \geq 0$ $\underbrace{\mathbb{W}_p(\mathbb{Q}_t, \mathbb{Q}_t^*)}_{\text{Wasserstein Distance}} \leq \rho \Rightarrow \underbrace{\mathbb{Q}_t^*}_{\text{Ambiguity Set}} \in \mathcal{A}(\rho, \mathbb{Q}_t^*)$

Wasserstein
Distance

Ambiguity
Set

Agnostic to \mathbb{Q}_t^*

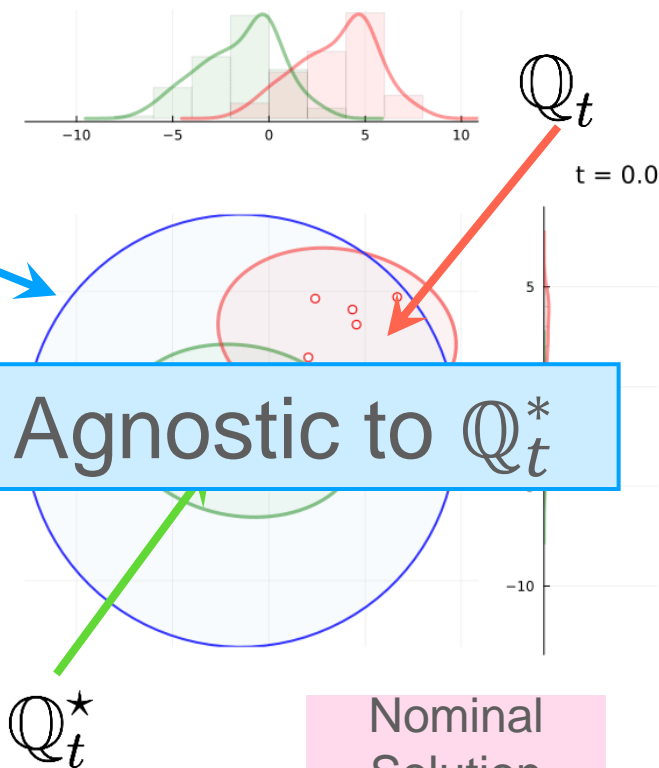
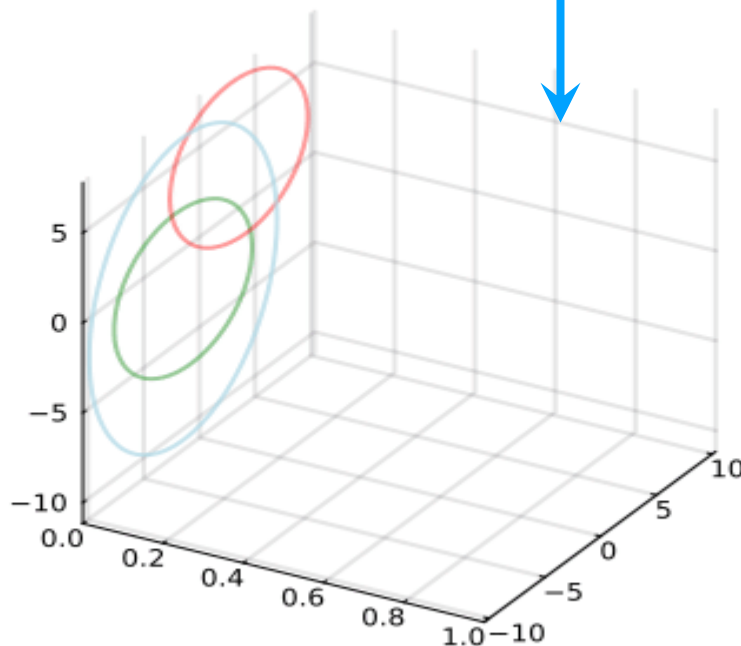
Ambiguity tube of distributions $\Omega(\rho)$

$t = 0.0$

Set of **path measures**
(Kolmogorov extension)
Distributions on

$$\mathcal{C}([0, T]; \mathbb{R}^n)$$

Sample trajectories
via Girsanov



Nominal
Solution

$$X_t^* \sim \mathbb{Q}_t^*$$

$$X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

True
Solution

Nominal Stability Assumptions

Nominal
System

$$dX_t^* = \bar{F}_\mu(X_t^*, U_t^*)dt + \bar{F}_\sigma(X_t^*, U_t^*)dW_t^*, \quad X_t^* \sim \mathbb{Q}_t^*$$

Nominal Deterministic
Sub-system

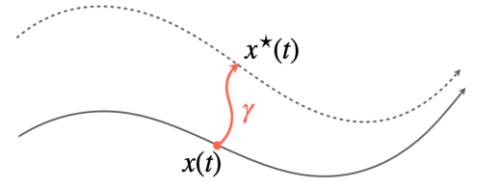
$$\dot{x}^* = \bar{F}_\mu(x^*, u^*) \quad \pi^*(x^*; \hat{f}_\theta) \quad x^*(0) \sim \mathbb{Q}_0^*$$

The nominal deterministic subsystem with the nominal controller

- Incrementally exponentially stable (IES)

$$\|x_1^*(t) - x_2^*(t)\| \leq Ce^{-\lambda t} \|x_1^*(0) - x_2^*(0)\|, \quad \forall t \geq 0 \quad \forall \text{ feasible } (x_1^*, x_2^*)$$

Furthermore, \exists positive scalars α_1 , α_2 , and λ , and function $V : \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$



$$\alpha_1 \|x - x^*\| \leq V(x, x^*) \leq \alpha_2 \alpha_1 \|x - x^*\|$$

Incremental Lyapunov function
(ILF)

Certificate for IES [1]

$$L_{F(x^*, u^*)} V(x, x^*) + L_{F(x, u_c)} V(x, x^*) \leq -2\lambda V(x, x^*)$$

Controller

Nominal
System

$$dX_t^* = \bar{F}_\mu(X_t^*, U_t^*)dt + \bar{F}_\sigma(X_t^*, U_t^*)dW_t^*, \quad X_t^* \sim \mathbb{Q}_t^*$$

True
System

$$dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

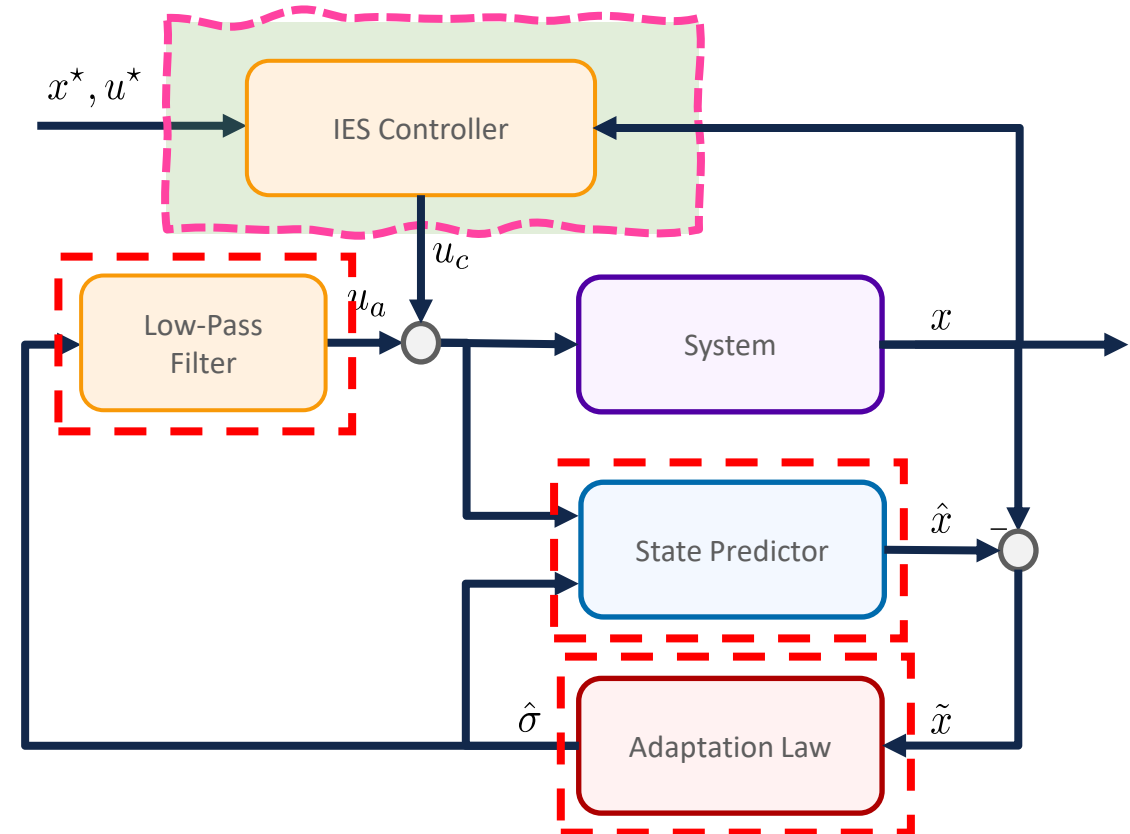
The controller has the architecture of an \mathcal{L}_1 adaptive controller

The controller has three main components

State Predictor

Adaptation Law

Low-Pass Filter



Controller

True System

$$\pi^*(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta) \xrightarrow{U_t^*} \pi_a(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta) \xrightarrow{U_{a,t}} dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

State Predictor

Adaptation Laws

Control Law

$$d\hat{X}_t = \left[A_s(\hat{X}_t - X_t) + \bar{F}_\mu(X_t, U_t^* + U_{a,t}) + g(X_t)\hat{\sigma}_m(t) + \hat{\sigma}_{um}(t) \right] \hat{X}_t \sim \hat{\mathbb{Q}}_t$$

- Components:
 - Known deterministic subsystem
 - Cannot estimate diffusion due to independent Brownian motion → fundamental limitation
- Deterministic dynamics, stochastic state
 - State-feedback injection
 - Predictor driven by a state induced by its dynamics and Brownian motion
 - Colored noise
- Adaptive estimates

Controller

True System

$$\pi^*(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta) \xrightarrow{U_t^*} \boxed{\pi_a(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta)} \xrightarrow{U_{a,t}} dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

State Predictor

Adaptation Laws

Control Law

$$\begin{bmatrix} \hat{\sigma}_m(t) \\ \hat{\sigma}_{um}(t) \end{bmatrix} \doteq \hat{\sigma}(t) = \hat{\sigma}(iT_s) = -\bar{g}(X_{iT_s})^{-1} \Phi^{-1} \mu(iT_s),$$

$$(t, i) \in [iT_s, (i+1)T_s) \times \mathbb{N}$$

- **Piecewise constant adaptive** law

- T_s : Sampling period
- Quality of adaptive estimates $\propto \frac{1}{T_s}$

Can run at a rate up to the digital hardware limit

- Entities \bar{g} , Φ^{-1} , μ are (partially) computed before runtime
 - **Minimal computation** to produce adaptive estimates
- **Numerically stable** implementation \rightarrow avoids stiffness

Controller

True System

$$\pi^*(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta) \xrightarrow{U_t^*} \boxed{\pi_a(X_t; \hat{f}_\theta)} \xrightarrow{U_{a,t}} dX_t = F_\mu(X_t, U_t)dt + F_\sigma(X_t, U_t; \vartheta)dW_t, \quad X_t \sim \mathbb{Q}_t$$

State Predictor

Adaptation Laws

Control Law

$$U_{a,t} = (\mathcal{K}_\omega \hat{\sigma}_m(\cdot))(t) = -\omega \int_0^t e^{-\omega(t-s)} \hat{\sigma}_m(s) ds$$

- **Feedback** operator
 - **Linear bounded** operator $L_\infty^{loc}(\mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}, \mathbb{R}^m) \rightarrow L_\infty^{loc}(\mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}, \mathbb{R}^m)$
 - First order **low-pass filter** with bandwidth ω
- $\hat{\sigma}_m(t)$: adaptive estimate of the **matched uncertainty**

Main Result

Theorem: Suppose for any p , the initial nominal and true measures \mathbb{Q}_0^* and \mathbb{Q}_0 satisfy

$$\mathbb{W}_p(\mathbb{Q}_0^*, \mathbb{Q}_0) \leq \infty$$

Given any ϵ and ρ_a , define

$$\rho_r = \left(\left(\frac{\alpha_2}{\alpha_1} \right)^p \mathbb{W}_p(\mathbb{Q}_0^*, \mathbb{Q}_0) + \sum_{i=1}^2 \zeta_i(\omega) + \zeta_3(T_s) + \sum_{i=1}^3 C_i \right)^{\frac{1}{p}}, \quad \rho = \rho_r + \rho_a,$$

where, α_i are the bounds on the ILF $V(\cdot, \cdot)$, C_i , $i \in \{1, \dots, 3\}$, are constants dependent on the unmatched uncertainty $l(x)$, diffusion terms $p(x)$ and $q(x)$, and the control noise parameter ϑ , respectively. Moreover, $\zeta_i(\omega)$, $i \in \{1, 2\}$, and $\zeta_3(\omega)$ are functions of the filter bandwidth ω , and the adaptive law's sampling period T_s , respectively.

Then, there exists a filter-bandwidth ω_0 and adaptation-rate Γ_0 such that for $\omega \geq \omega_0$ and $\Gamma \geq \Gamma_0$,

$$\mathbb{W}_p(\mathbb{Q}_t^*, \mathbb{Q}_t) \leq \rho, \quad \forall t \geq 0$$

UB

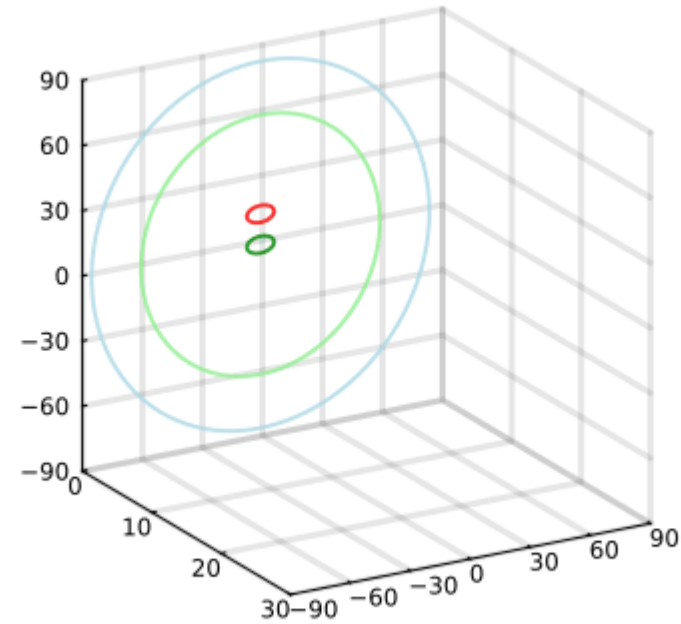
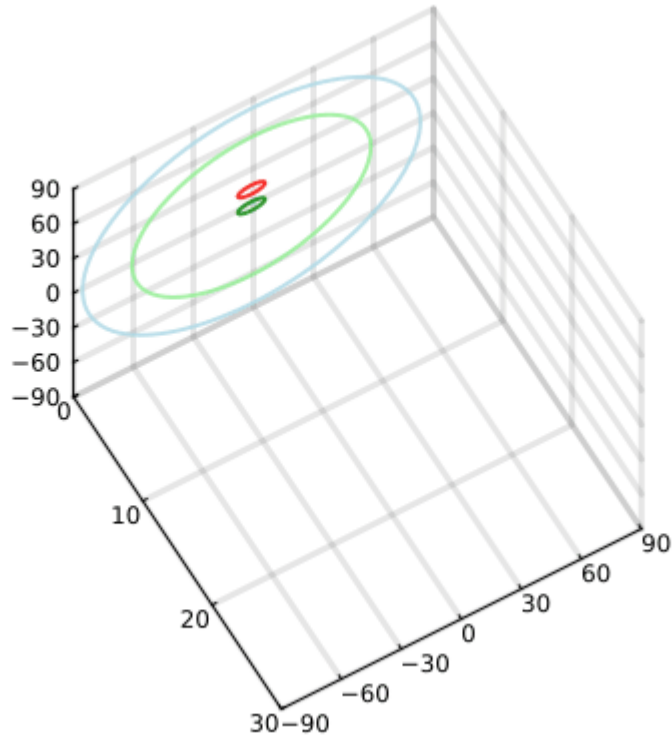
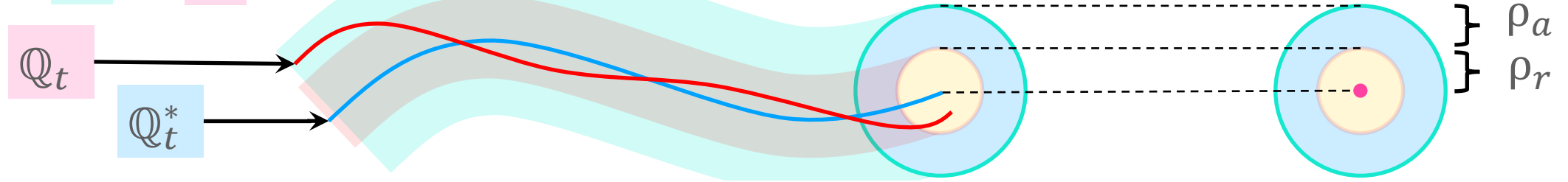
$$\mathbb{W}_p(\mathbb{Q}_t^*, \mathbb{Q}_t) \leq D \mathbb{W}_p(\mathbb{Q}_0^*, \mathbb{Q}_0) e^{-\lambda T} + \sum_{i=1}^2 \zeta_2(\omega) + \zeta_3(\omega) + \sum_{i=1}^3 C_i, \quad \forall t \geq 0 \geq T > 0$$

UUB

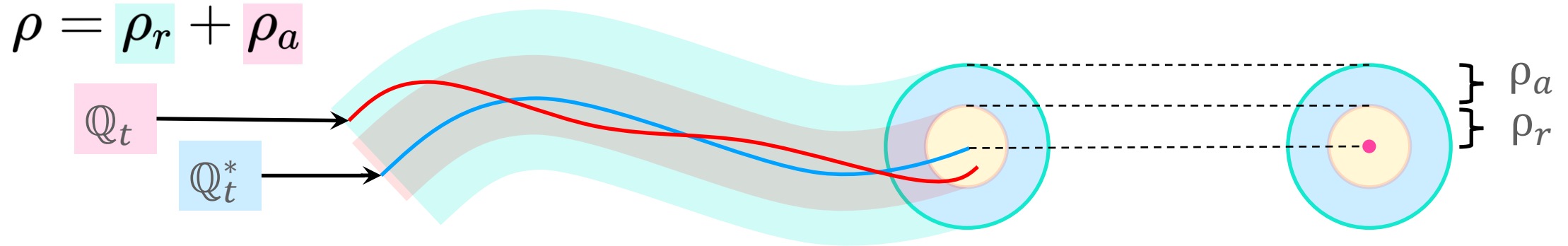
where $\zeta_i(\omega) \propto \frac{1}{\omega}$, $i \in \{1, 2\}$, $\zeta_3(\omega) \propto T_s$, and D is a constant.

Main Result

$$\rho = \rho_r + \rho_a$$



Main Result



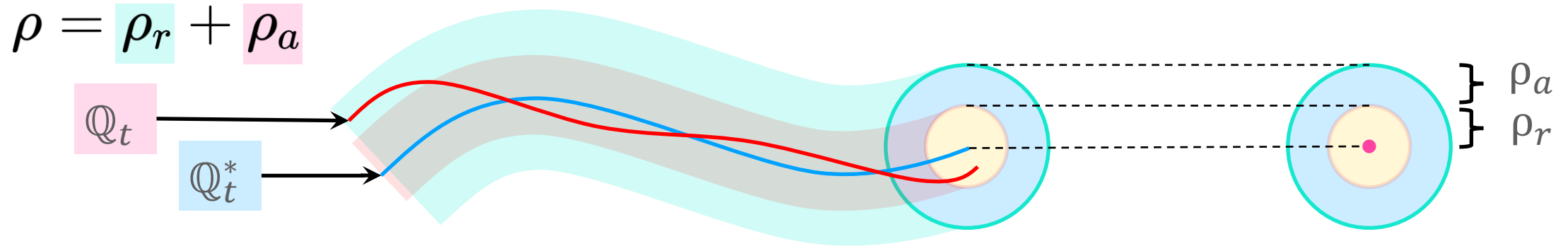
$$W_p(Q_t^*, Q_t) \leq DW_p(Q_0^*, Q_0) e^{-\lambda T} + \sum_{i=1}^2 \zeta_2(\omega) + \zeta_3(\omega) + \sum_{i=1}^3 C_i, \forall t \geq 0 \geq T > 0$$

- Using the transient bounds of \mathcal{L}_1 adaptive controller
- Bound on the p^{th} -Wasserstein due to Burkholder-Davis-Gundy inequality [1]
 - Bound on supremum of martingales via their quadratic variation
- Term C_1 due to unmatched uncertainty
- Term C_2 due to independence of Brownian motions [2]
 - Lower bounded by a strictly positive $C > 0$
 - Not present in deterministic systems

[1] Ren, Yao-Feng. "On the Burkholder–Davis–Gundy inequalities for continuous martingales." *Statistics & probability letters* 78.17 (2008): 3034-3039

[2] Pham, Quang-Cuong, Nicolas Tabareau, and Jean-Jacques Slotine. "A contraction theory approach to stochastic incremental stability." *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control* 54.4 (2009): 816-820.

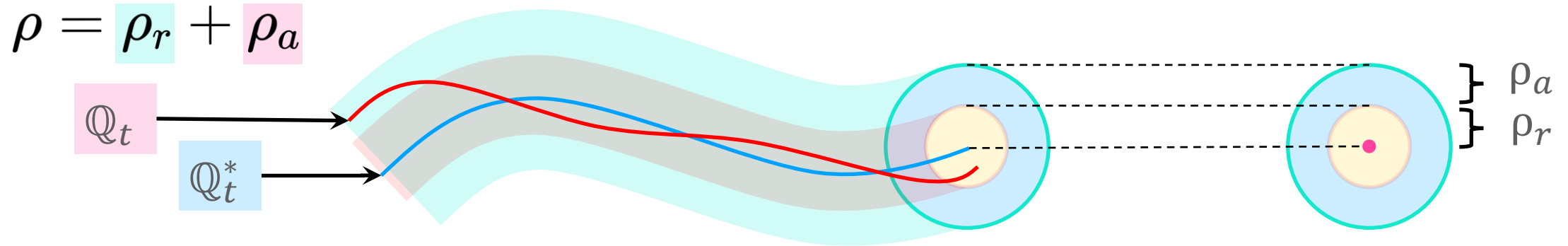
Main Result



$$\mathbb{W}_p(Q_t^*, Q_t) \leq D\mathbb{W}_p(Q_0^*, Q_0)e^{-\lambda T} + \sum_{i=1}^2 \zeta_2(\omega) + \zeta_3(\omega) + \sum_{i=1}^3 C_i, \forall t \geq 0 \geq T > 0$$

- Term C_3 due to **noisy** control channel
 - Can obtain stronger results when $h \in \mathcal{S}_{loc}^{2,\infty}(\mathbb{R}^m)$ (Generalized Ito Lemma)
 - Feedback operator is Frechet Differentiable
 - Ito lemma for weakly differentiable functions [1]

Main Result



$$W_p(Q_t^*, Q_t) \leq DW_p(Q_0^*, Q_0)e^{-\lambda T} + \sum_{i=1}^2 \zeta_2(\omega) + \zeta_3(\omega) + \sum_{i=1}^3 C_i, \forall t \geq 0 \geq T > 0$$

In the case when W_t^* and $W_t \equiv 0$ (deterministic)

- Wasserstein \rightarrow Euclidean norm
- We recover \mathcal{L}_1 guarantees for nonlinear deterministic systems [1]

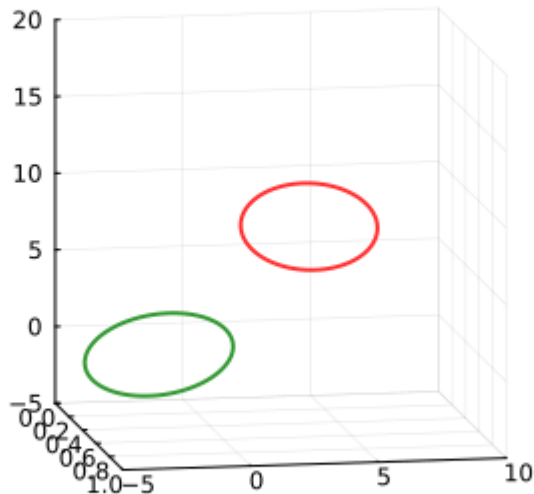
Numerical Experimentation

Angular rate dynamics of a **quadrotor**

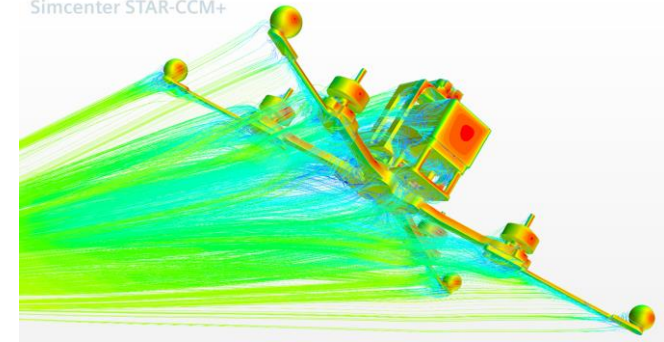
Drift and diffusion **uncertainties**

Divergence of nominal and true distributions

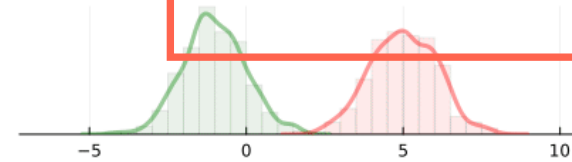
$$W_2(Q_t^*, Q_t) : 99.259$$



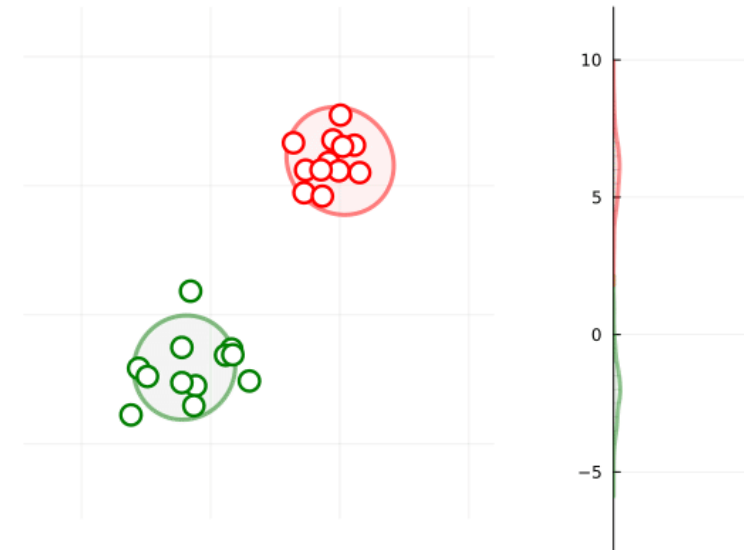
Simcenter STAR-CCM+



$$W_2(Q_t^*, Q_t) : 100.314$$



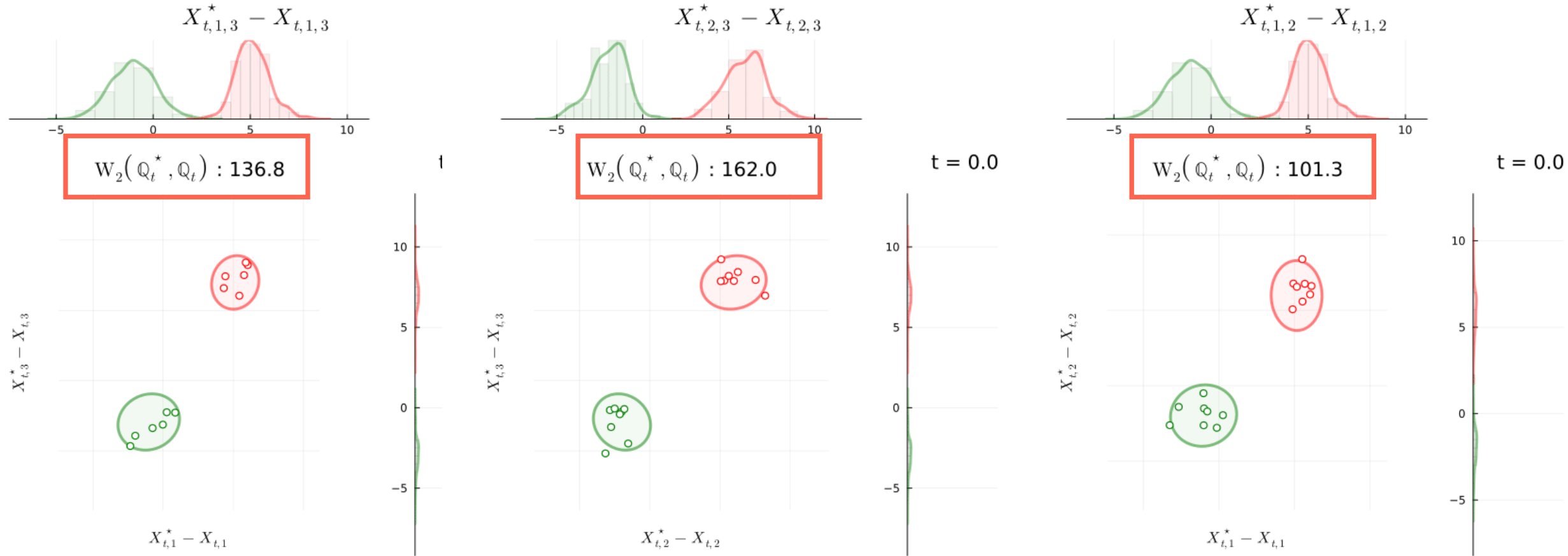
t = 0.0



Numerical Experimentation

DRAC control

Independent Brownian motions → Convergence up to a nonzero limit



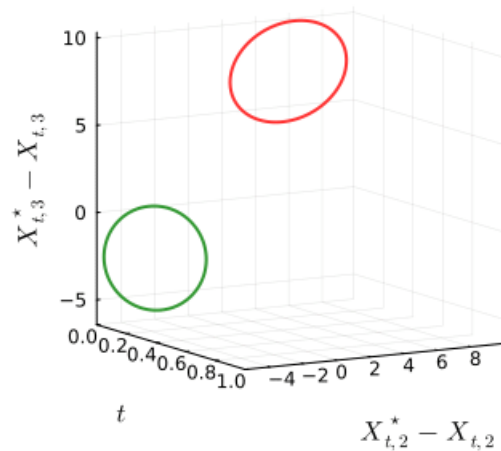
Boundedness and Convergence of distributions in the Wasserstein metric

Numerical Experimentation

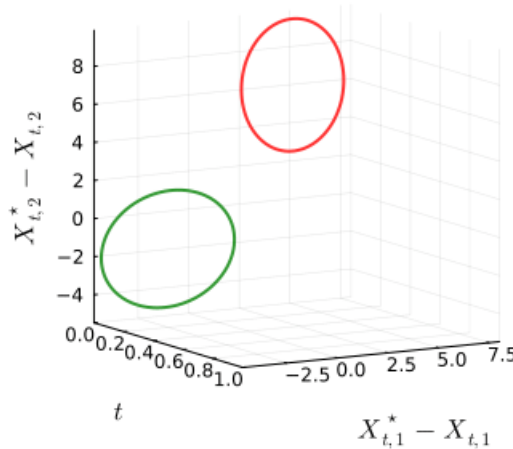
DRAC control

Independent Brownian motions → Convergence up to a nonzero limit

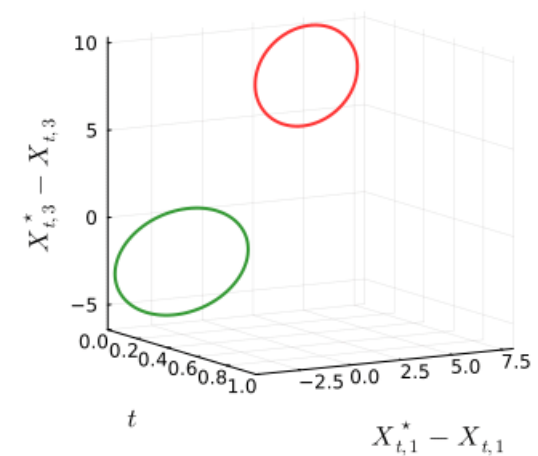
$$W_2(Q_t^*, Q_t) : 162.023$$



$$W_2(Q_t^*, Q_t) : 101.314$$



$$W_2(Q_t^*, Q_t) : 136.801$$



Boundedness and Convergence of distributions in the Wasserstein metric

Continuation

- Extension to general Lévy processes
 - Non-Gaussian
 - Continuous in probability
- Further experimentation of DRAC
 - Learned systems subject to distribution shifts
- V&V of controlled systems with learned components in the loop
 - Distributional certificates
 - Deep learned dynamics and controllers
 - Learned sensing (perception)
- Propagation of robust data-driven certificates through the complete control pipeline
 - Distributional robustness as a language for sensing, planning, and control to communicate
- Distributionally robust planning and control

Ongoing Projects

- Social Information Dynamics and Control (AFOSR)
- NASA ULI on Robust Resilient Autonomy (AVIATE Center, UIUC)
- Two NSF projects on safe learning and robotics, one pending
- Industry developments at Lockheed Martin with Air Force Academy vehicles
- Potential opportunities at AFRL with Boeing (Archer)
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 - Sitao Zhang (MS student) and Sambhu Karamanas (Ph.D. student)
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