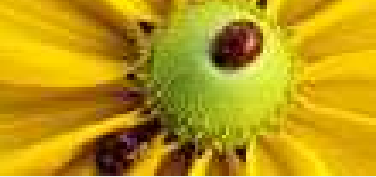


# On-line and Universal Stochastic Optimization

Stefano Leonardi  
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# Outline

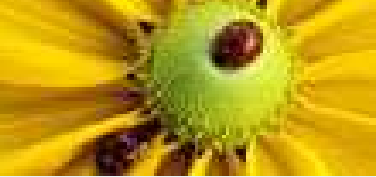
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(Grandoni, Gupta, Miettinen, Leonardi, Sankowski & Singh, FOCS 2008)
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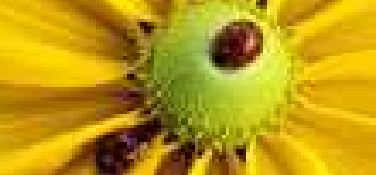
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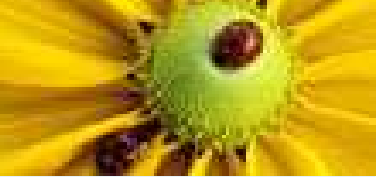
Conclusions

- **On-line algorithms** build incrementally a solution for an optimization problem while the input sequence is revealed step by step.
- **Competitive analysis** compares the performance of an on-line algorithm  $\mathcal{A}$  that knows nothing about the future against a clairvoyant adversary that builds for an input instance  $\omega$  an optimal solution  $\text{opt}(\omega)$ .
- Given an online algorithm  $\mathcal{A}$  (possibly a randomized one), the **competitive ratio** is defined as

$$\max_{\omega} \frac{\mathbf{E}_r[\mathcal{A}(\omega, r)]}{\text{opt}(\omega)},$$

where  $r$  is the set of random coins flipped by the algorithm.

- The results about the on-line model are in some cases unduly pessimistic.



# On-line Stochastic Optimization

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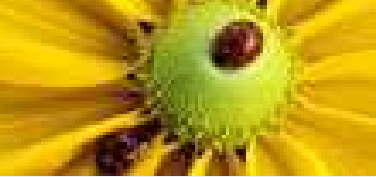
● On-line algorithms

● On-line Stochastic Optimization

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Conclusions

- Several attempts to weaken the notion of competitive analysis by having the input sequence drawn from a probability distribution
- Several results on Paging, Scheduling, data structures: the algorithm is often oblivious to the distribution.
- We rather consider on-line algorithms for stochastic covering problems: Steiner Tree, Set cover and Facility location
- We show that the ability to sample from the distribution can be exploited to achieve much better on-line results



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- On-line algorithms are asked to take decisions while the input sequence is revealed.
- Universal algorithms [Jia et al. STOC '05] are asked to take **a-priori** decisions oblivious to the input sequence.
- We a-priori map each element from a universe of requests  $e \in U$  to a solution  $\mathbf{s}(e)$  that satisfies it.

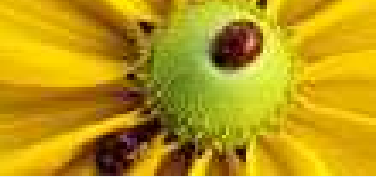
The solution to a sequence  $\omega$  is given as

$$\mathbf{s}(\omega) = \cup_{e \in \omega} \mathbf{s}(e).$$

The aim is finding a mapping such that the cost of  $\mathbf{s}(\omega)$  is as close as possible to the optimal cost for  $\omega$ , i.e., to minimize

$$\max_{\omega \subseteq U} \frac{c(\mathbf{s}(\omega))}{c(\text{OPT}(\omega))}$$

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- We are given a universe  $U$  of  $n$  elements,
- A collection  $\mathcal{S}$  of  $m$  subsets of  $U$  and a cost function  $c : \mathcal{S} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$

The aim is finding an a-priori mapping  $\mathbf{s} : U \rightarrow \mathcal{S}$  that minimizes:

$$\max_{\omega \subseteq U} \frac{c(\mathbf{s}(\omega))}{c(\text{OPT}(\omega))}$$



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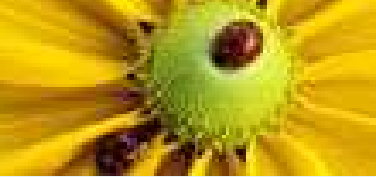
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**Theorem 1** *Any universal mapping for unweighted set cover is  $\Omega(\sqrt{n})$  approximate against a worst case adversary.*

- Consider a set system formed by all subsets of  $\sqrt{n}$  elements
- There exists a set of  $\sqrt{n}$  elements that are mapped to  $\sqrt{n}$  different sets
- The optimum uses only one set.

Observe that the bound is only logarithmic in the number of sets.

# Universal Stochastic Approximation



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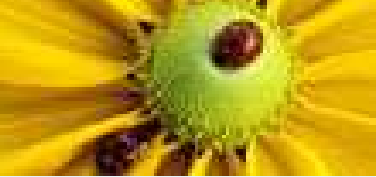
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In universal stochastic problems elements of  $U$  are taken to  $\omega$  independently according to distribution  $\pi$ .

$$\text{USApX}(\mathbf{S}) = \frac{\mathbf{E}_{\omega}[c(\mathbf{S}(\omega))]}{\mathbf{E}_{\omega}[c(\text{OPT}(\omega))]}$$

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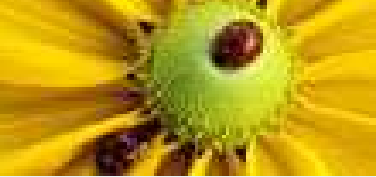
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In the **set cover problem**:

- we are given a universe  $U$  of  $n$  elements,
- and a weighted collection  $\mathcal{S}$  of  $m$  subsets of  $U$ ,
- the requests are elements  $e_1, e_2, \dots$  from  $U$  that need to be covered by  $S \in \mathcal{S}$ ,
- the decisions are irrevocable.
- $e_i$  is covered by  $\mathbf{S}(e_i)$  only if not covered by the sets already picked for  $e_1, \dots, e_{i-1}$

# Unweighted Set Cover - Length oblivious



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Let us consider the case of  $c(S) = 1$  for each  $S \in \mathcal{S}$ .

We use the standard Greedy algorithm to generate the universal mapping.

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## Algorithm 1: Universal mapping for unweighted set cover.

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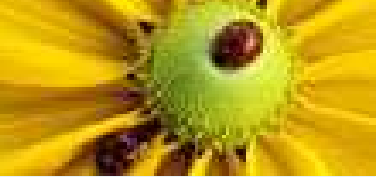
**Data:** Set system  $(U, \mathcal{S})$ .

**while**  $U \neq \emptyset$  **do**

**let**  $S \leftarrow$  set in  $\mathcal{S}$  maximizing  $|S \cap U|$ ;  
     $\mathbf{s}(v) \leftarrow S$  for each  $v \in S \cap U$  ;  
     $U \leftarrow U \setminus S$  ;

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# Related Results



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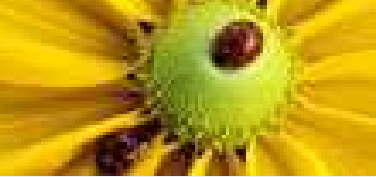
### Conclusions

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**Theorem 2** *The mapping  $\mathbf{s}$  is a length-oblivious universal mapping to the unweighted universal stochastic set cover problem with  $SA_{\text{px}} = O(\log mn)$ .*

In the universal case the best solution is  $\tilde{\Theta}(\sqrt{n})$  approximate (Jia et al. STOC '05).

In the online case the best solution is  $\tilde{\Theta}(\log n \log m)$  approximate (Alon et al. STOC '03).



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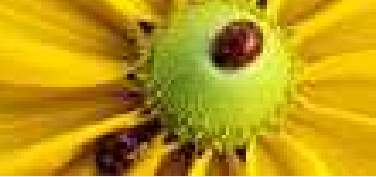
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Fix some sequence length  $k$  and let  $\mu = \mathbf{E}_{\omega \in U^k} [|\text{OPT}(\omega)|]$  be the expected optimal cost.

**Lemma 3 (Existence of Small (Almost-)Cover)** *There exists  $2\mu$  sets in  $\mathcal{S}$  which cover all but  $\delta n$  elements from  $U$ , for  $\delta = \mu \frac{3 \ln 2m}{k}$ .*

Actually Greedy needs  $2\mu \log n$  sets to cover all but  $\delta n$  elements.

To cover the remaining elements we need  $\delta n \times \frac{k}{n} = 3\mu \ln 2m$  sets.



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There are  $n^k$  scenarios and in at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of them the optimal cover is smaller than  $2\mu$ .

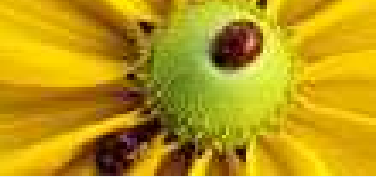
There are at most  $p \leq (2m)^{2\mu} = e^{2\mu \ln 2m}$  collections  $C_i$  of  $2\mu$  sets.

Suppose for contradiction that all  $C_i$ 's cover less than  $n(1 - \delta) < ne^{-\delta} = e^{\ln n - \delta}$  elements.

For each scenario elements can be picked from some collection  $C_i$ , so

$$\sum_{i=0}^p |C_i|^k \geq \frac{1}{2} n^k.$$

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$$\sum_{i=0}^p |C_i|^k \geq \frac{1}{2} n^k.$$

Hence, we get

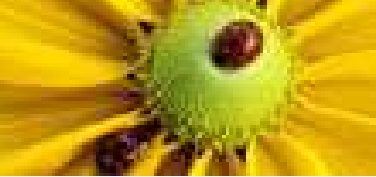
$$e^{2\mu \ln 2m} (e^{\ln n - \delta})^k > \frac{1}{2} e^{k \ln n},$$

$$e^{2\mu \ln 2m - \delta k} > \frac{1}{2} \rightarrow e^{-\mu \ln 2m} > \frac{1}{2}$$

But  $m \geq 1$  and  $\mu \geq 1$ , so we get a contradiction

$$\frac{1}{2} = e^{-\ln 2} \geq e^{-\mu \ln 2m}.$$





# Weighted Set Cover - Length oblivious

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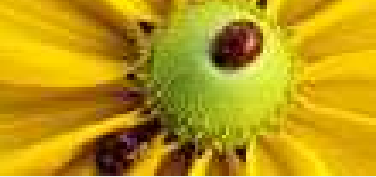
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**Theorem 4** *Any length-oblivious mapping for weighted set-cover is  $\Omega(\sqrt{n})$  approximate.*

- Consider  $n$  singleton sets  $S_i$  of cost 1 and one set  $S_{all}$  of costs  $\sqrt{n}$  containing all  $n$  elements
- If the algorithm maps more than  $n/2$  elements to  $S_{all}$  then  $k = 1$ . The algorithm pays  $\sqrt{n}$  in expectation whereas optimum pays 1.
- If the algorithm maps more than  $n/2$  elements to sets of cost 1 then  $k = n$ . The algorithm pays  $n/2$  in expectation whereas optimum pays  $\sqrt{n}$ .

A good mapping has to alternate between best ratio sets and min-cost sets



# Weighted Set Cover - Length aware

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**Theorem 5** *There exists a length-aware mapping to the universal stochastic set cover problem with  $SAP_x = O(\log mn)$ .*

**Theorem 6** *There exists a length-oblivious algorithm to the online stochastic set cover problem with  $SAP_x = O(\log mn)$ .*

# Universal Mapping for Weighted Set Cover

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$\mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})]$  given (Actually  $k$  is sufficient.)

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**Data:** Set system  $(U, \mathcal{S})$ ,  $c: \mathcal{S} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$ , and  $\mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})]$ .

**while**  $U \neq \emptyset$  **do**

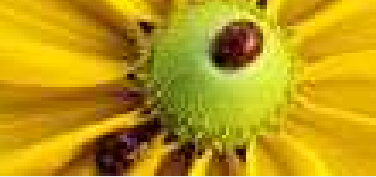
**let**  $S \leftarrow$  set in  $\mathcal{S}$  minimizing  $\frac{c(S)}{|S \cap U|}$ ;

**if**  $\frac{c(S)}{|S \cap U|} > \frac{64\mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})]}{|U|}$  **then** **let**  $S \leftarrow$  set in  $\mathcal{S}$  minimizing  $c(S)$ ;

$\mathbf{s}(u) \leftarrow S$  for each  $u \in S \cap U$  ;

$U \leftarrow U \setminus S$  and  $\mathcal{S} \leftarrow$  all sets covering at least one element remaining in  $U$  ;

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# Type I sets: best ratio sets

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**Lemma 7 (Type I Set Cost)** *The cost of Type I sets is  $O(\log n) \cdot \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)]$ .*

- Let  $S_1, \dots, S_h$  be the Type I sets.
- Let  $U_i$  denote the set of uncovered elements just before  $S_i$  was picked.
- Since the algorithm picked a Type I set,  

$$c(S_i) \leq |S_i \cap U_i| \frac{64 \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)]}{|U_i|}.$$
- Total cost of the sets  $S_i$  bounded by

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{i=1}^h c(S_i) &\leq \sum_{i=1}^h \frac{64 |S_i \cap U_i| \times \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)]}{|U_i|} \leq 64 \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)] \sum_{t=1}^n \frac{1}{t} \\ &= O(\log n) \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)] \end{aligned}$$

# Type II Sets: min-cost sets

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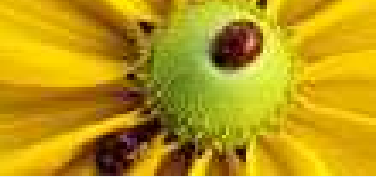
- Let  $S_1, \dots, S_\ell$  be the Type II sets.  $c(S_i) \leq c(S_{i+1})$
- $U_i$ : set of uncovered elements just before  $S_i$  was picked.
- $n_i = |U_i|$  and let  $k_i = n_i \frac{k}{n}$  be the expected number of elements sampled from  $U_i$ .
- Denote by  $\omega_i = \omega \cap U_i$
- $\text{OPT}|_{\omega_i}$ : restriction of  $\text{OPT}_\omega$  to  $\omega_i$

**Lemma 8** For all  $1 \leq i \leq \ell$ ,  $c(S_i) \mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_{i+1}}|] \leq \mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT}|_{\omega_{i+1}})]$

and

$$c(S_i) (\mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_i}|] - \mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_{i+1}}|]) \leq \mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT}|_{\omega_i})] - \mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT}|_{\omega_{i+1}})].$$

# Type II Sets: min-cost sets



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**Lemma 9** *For every  $i \in \{1, \dots, \ell\}$ , if  $k_i \geq 8 \log 2n$  then  $k_i \leq 16 \mathbf{E}[|OPT|_{\omega_i}|] \log m$ .*

The proof is similar in spirit to the one of the unweighted case but now the number of sets in the set cover is not equal to its cost.

We needed a careful restriction of the optimal solution to subproblems given by  $OPT|_{\omega_i}$ .

**Lemma 10 (Type II Set Cost)** *The expected cost of Type II sets is  $O(\log mn) \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)]$ .*

- Let  $j$  be such that  $k_j \geq 8 \log 2n$  but  $k_{j+1} < 8 \log 2n$ .
- In expectation we see at most  $8 \log 2n$  elements from  $U_{j+1}$ , with cost bounded by  $8 \log 2n \mathbf{E}[c(OPT)]$ .

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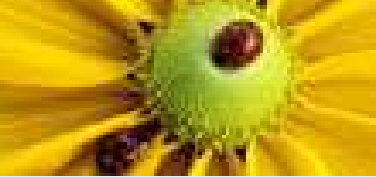
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Expected cost incurred on  $S_1, \dots, S_j$ :

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{i=1}^j c(S_i) \Pr[\omega \cap (S_i \cap U_i) \neq \emptyset] \\ & \leq \sum_{i=1}^j c(S_i) \mathbf{E}[|\omega \cap (S_i \cap U_i)|] \\ & \leq \sum_{i=1}^j c(S_i) \mathbf{E}[|\omega \cap (U_i \setminus U_{i+1})|] \\ & \leq \sum_{i=1}^j c(S_i) (k_i - k_{i+1}) \leq \sum_{i=1}^j k_i (c(S_i) - c(S_{i-1})) \\ & \leq \sum_{i=1}^j 16 \mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_i}|] \log m \cdot (c(S_i) - c(S_{i-1})) \\ & = 16 \log m \cdot (c(S_j) \mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_{j+1}}|] \\ & \quad + \sum_{i=1}^j c(S_i) (\mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_i}|] - \mathbf{E}[|\text{OPT}|_{\omega_{i+1}}|])) \\ & \leq 16 \log m \cdot (\mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})|_{\omega_{j+1}}]) + \sum_{i=1}^j (\mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})|_{\omega_i}] - \mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})|_{\omega_{i+1}}]) \\ & = 16 \mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})|_{\omega_1}] \log m \leq 16 \mathbf{E}[c(\text{OPT})] \log m \end{aligned}$$



# Nonmetric Facility Location

- Outline

- Introduction

- Universal Stochastic Set Cover

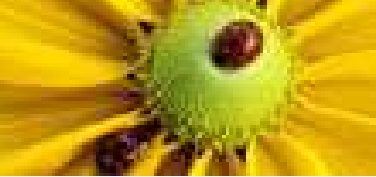
- Universal Approximation
- Universal Set Cover
- Worst case lower bound
- Universal Stochastic Approximation
- Online Stochastic Set Cover
- Unweighted Set Cover - Length oblivious
- Related Results
- Universal Algorithm
- Universal Algorithm
- Universal Algorithm
- Weighted Set Cover - Length oblivious
- Weighted Set Cover - Length aware
- Universal Mapping for Weighted Set Cover
- Type I sets: best ratio sets
- Type II Sets: min-cost sets
- Type II Sets: min-cost sets
- Proof of Lemma 10
- Nonmetric Facility Location

- Conclusions

The above result can be generalized to the nonmetric facility location problem:

**Theorem 11** *There exists a length-aware algorithm to the online stochastic nonmetric facility location problem with  $S_{Apx} = O(\log mn)$ .*





● Outline

Introduction

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Universal Stochastic Set Cover

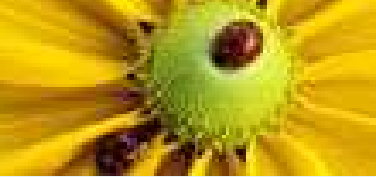
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Conclusions

● Conclusions

# Conclusions

# Conclusions



● Outline

Introduction

Universal Stochastic Set Cover

Conclusions

● Conclusions

The stochastic assumptions in the online setting allow to:

- beat the classical competitive  $\Omega(\log n)$  lower bound for the online Steiner tree,
- beat the classical competitive  $\Omega(\log n \log m)$  lower bound for the online set cover.
- beat the  $\Omega(\sqrt{n})$  lower bound for universal set cover
- overcome inapproximability results for network design with outliers

Interesting problems:

- We are interested in algorithms with better expectation of ratios and length oblivious
- Develop algorithms that are risk averse, i.e., probability to deviate from the expectation for more than a  $\rho$  factor is bounded
- Tight  $O(\log n)$  results for online network design with outliers