

Native Julia Solvers for Ordinary Differential Equations Boundary Value Problem: A GSoC proposal

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Contents

1	The Project	1
1.1	Basic concepts for nonexperts	1
1.1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Project Goals	2
1.2.1	Goal 1: Implement BVP related data structure	2
1.2.2	Goal 2: Implement shooting method	2
1.2.3	Goal 3: Implement collocation method	3
1.3	Stretch Goals and Future Directions	3
1.4	Timeline	3
1.5	Potential Hurdles	5
1.6	Mentor	5
1.7	Julia Coding Demo	5
1.8	About me	5
1.9	Contact Information	5
2	Summer Logistics	5

1 The Project

1.1 Basic concepts for nonexperts

An ordinary differential equation (ODE) is an equality relationship between a function $y(x)$ and its derivatives, and an n th order ODE can be written as

$$F(x, y, y', \dots, y^{(n)}) = 0$$

Physics and engineering often present ODE problems. Many physics phenomena in physics can be reduced into an ODE. Newton's second law of motion, namely $F = ma$ can be rewritten into an ODE as $m \frac{d^2x}{dt^2} = F(x)$, since a can depend on time. ODEs can be very difficult to solve. There are many case in which an ODE does not have an analytical solution. Therefore, numerical methods need to be used to solve ODEs, by approximating the solution. There are two kinds of problems in ODE. One is initial value problem (IVP) and the other is boundary value problem (BVP). For instance, the ODE

$$m \frac{d^2x}{dt^2} = -kx(t)$$

describes the motion for a harmonic oscillator. If the initial position x_0 and initial velocity $\frac{dx_0}{dt}$ is known, then it is an IVP problem. If the condition at the “boundary” is known, for instance, initial position x_0 and final position x_1 , then it is a BVP problem. The solvers that I am going to work on with solvers for BVP problem.

1.1.1 Introduction

The project that I propose to work on in Google’s Summer of Code project is the native Julia implementation of some BVP solving methods for ODE, namely, collocation method and shooting method.

1.2 Project Goals

1.2.1 Goal 1: Implement BVP related data structure

A data structure to describe the BVP problem, namely, “BVPProblem”. It contains the information

$$F(x, y, y', \dots, y^{(n)}) = 0$$

domin: $x \in [a, b]$

boundary condition: Dirichlet, Neumann, Robin.

It can be defined by

$$\text{prob} = \text{BVPProblem}(f, \text{domin}, bc)$$

```

1 abstract AbstractBVPProblem{dType,bType,isinplace,F} <: DEProblem
2
3 type BVPProblem{dType,bType,initType,F} <: AbstractBVPProblem{dType,bType,F}
4     f::F
5     domin::dType
6     bc::bType
7     init::initType
8 end
9
10 function BVPProblem(f,domin,bc,init=nothing)
11     BVPProblem{eltype(domin),eltype(bc),eltype(init),typeof(f)}(f,domin,bc,init)
12 end

```

1.2.2 Goal 2: Implement shooting method

The shooting method is a method that convert a BVP problem into an IVP problem and a root finding problem. Generally, the shooting method is efficient in simple problems, because it does not need a discretization matrix. This is no memory overhead. The drawback is that even if the BVP problem is well-conditioned, the root finding problem that the BVP converted to can be ill-conditioned. Therefore, a more robust method like the collocation method is also needed, despite shooting method is easy to implement.

This is the my current implementation of the shooting method. I will work on to generalize it later, e.g. let user has the ability to input a ODE solver and a minimization algorithm.

```

1 function solve(prob::BVPProblem; OptSolver=LBFGS())
2     bc = prob.bc
3     u0 = bc[1]
4     len = length(bc[1])

```

```

5 probIt = ODEProblem(prob.f, u0, prob.domin)
6 function loss(minimizer)
7   probIt.u0 = minimizer
8   sol = DifferentialEquations.solve(probIt)
9   norm(sol[end]-bc[2])
10 end
11 opt = optimize(loss, u0, OptSolver)
12 probIt.u0 = opt.minimizer
13 @show opt.minimum
14 DifferentialEquations.solve(probIt)
15 end

```

1.2.3 Goal 3: Implement collocation method

The collocation method is the idea that a solution $y(x)$ of a ODE $F(x, y, y', \dots, y^{(n)}) = 0$ can be approximated by a linear combination of basis functions.

$$y(x) \approx \hat{y}(x) = \phi_0 + \sum_{i=1}^n a_i \phi_i(x)$$

And the residual $R(x, a)$ can be written as

$$F(x, \hat{y}(x), \hat{y}'(x), \dots, \hat{y}^{(n)}(x)) = R(x, a)$$

Collocation method forces the residual $R(x, a)$ to be 0 for n collocation points. There are different discretization methods in collocation method, and I am going to work on Simpson discretization, Gauss discretization, Radau discretization, and Labatto discretization this summer.

1.3 Stretch Goals and Future Directions

The stretch goals for this summer would be add tests for collection method and shooting method, to make general recommendation for helping users to choose solvers.

1.4 Timeline

Pre-GSoC Unfortunately, I have to work on function of matrix (a.k.a. matrix function) in Julia Lab. I don't have much time to work on the GSoC project until it starts.

Community Bonding: May 5 (Start) - May 30

- Learn more about Julia's type system and the coding style in *JuliaDiffEq*.
- Get proficient in Git version control system.
- Learn more about the collocation method and optimization methods that will be used in the shooting method.
- Send a PR.

Shooting Method: May 30 - June 15

- Design a general framework for BVP problems. (e.g. *BVPProblem* and *BoundaryCondition* data structure.)
- Generalize shooting method.
- Test shooting method with some simple problems with analytical solutions.
- Learn more deeply about collocation methods.
- Send a PR.

Discretization Algorithms: June 15 - July 10

- Design a basic framework for different types of discretization for solving BVP problems.
- Implement different kinds of discretization algorithms for collection methods.
- Optimize those discretization algorithms that are implemented with *SIMD* and some other techniques.
- Send a PR.

Least Squares Collocation Method: July 10 - July 31

- Implement the least squares collocation method.
- Add more sophisticated testing BVP problems to test against the least squares collocation method.
- Optimize the least squares collocation method.
- Send a PR.

Weighted Residual Method: July 31 - August 15

- Implement the weighted residual method.
- Test weighted residual method, and add more tests to test against the weighted residual method.
- Optimize the weighted residual method.
- Send a PR.

Documentation & Review & Stretch Goals: August 15 - August 29 (End)

- Write a documentation page for the BVP solvers that I have written.
- Start to work on the Stretch Goals.
- Send a PR.
- Review and test all the code that I have written in GSoC project.

1.5 Potential Hurdles

The potential hurdles I see are mostly because I have not worked in a big project like this before, and I may use some effort to be familiar with the coding style in *JuliaDiffEq* organization. I need to be proficient with Git. I also need to be more fluent in Julia's type system. I used to work in linear algebra which does not require much familiarity about the software engineering side.

1.6 Mentor

My mentor will be Christopher Rackauckas.

1.7 Julia Coding Demo

Here are my code my in Julia.

<https://github.com/JuliaDiffEq/BoundaryValueDiffEq.jl>

<https://github.com/obiajulu/ODE.jl/tree/radau> Worked with with Joseph Obiajulu.

<https://github.com/YingboMa/BVP.jl>

<https://github.com/YingboMa/Funm.jl>

1.8 About me

My name is Yingbo Ma, and I am currently a senior in Lexington Public High School. I got admitted by University of California, Irvine (UCI). I am interested in mathematics and physics and willing to learn new things about them. I worked with Joseph Obiajulu on *ODE.jl* last summer in MIT Julia Lab. I still go to Julia Lab regularly now. I am working on fixing the *logm* function in Julia base.

1.9 Contact Information

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2 Summer Logistics

Work hours: I expect to be able to work over 35 hours per week though this summer. I do not have much other thing to do besides working in this project, so I can put most of my attention in this project. Over all I am able to put 400-500 hours into this project.

References