Dynamic Programming Alignment Language Specification

# 1. Introduction

This manual describes the programming language DPAL: dynamic programming alignment language, a simple C-like domain-specific language for dynamic programming sequence alignment algorithms. It is inspired by variations in the Smith-Waterman alignment algorithm, an algorithm less commonly used for DNA sequence alignment due to its slow run-time, but whose high sensitivity would provide immense benefits to the bioinformatics community if accelerated. The language is designed to efficiently describe such an algorithm, but also to be limited enough so that it can be automatically implemented by a compiler in a CPU-FPGA hybrid architecture.

# 2. Language Description

A DPAL program consists of five fields:

1. An alphabet for the sequence characters
2. Constant declarations (optional)
3. 2D dynamic programming matrix declarations
4. DP matrix cell score computation function
5. Alignment reporting condition function

DPAL is a strongly typed language with three different data types: unsigned, signed, and bool. The bitwidths of the first two, representing unsigned and signed integers respectively, can be specified by the user. For example, the following declares an 8-bit signed integer variable:

signed<8> var;

An unspecified bitwidth defaults to 32 bits. Adjusting the bitwidth could significantly improve the performance of the generated FPGA implementation, as the produced circuits could be significantly smaller, resulting in many more processing elements fitting in the FPGAs. Bool data take either true or false values, and since DPAL is strongly typed, they are not interoperable with integers.

## 2.1 Alphabet

The user specifies the alphabet for the sequences. This alphabet declaration is very similar to an enum in C, where the alphabet character identifiers are listed. For example, the alphabet for the four basic nucleotides would be declared as:

alphabet = {A, C, G, T};

Similarly, the alphabet of the twenty amino acids could be declared as:

alphabet = {ala, arg, asn, asp, cys, glu, gln,

gly, his, ile, leu, lys, met, phe,

pro, ser, thr, trp, tyr, val};

As with enums in C, each character in the alphabet has an implicit integer representation. In DPAL, this integer representation is unsigned, and the default representation of each character is its index in the list. Just as in C, the integer representations of the characters can also be explicitly specified. For example, the following is a more transparent way to specify the nucleotides in the standard .2bit format:

alphabet = {A=2, C=1, G=3, T=0};

## 2.2 Constants

Constants are declared after the alphabet, and can be used globally throughout the program. Constant values must be defined at declaration, and both scalar and matrix constants are supported. The following are examples of scalar and matrix constants, used for a fixed HOXD55 scoring scheme (see section 4.4).

const unsigned BITWIDTH = 18;

const signed<BITWIDTH> HOXD55[4][4] = {

{91, -90, -25, -100},

{-90, 100, -100, -25},

{-25, -100, 100, -90},

{-100, -25, -90, 91}

};

const signed<BITWIDTH> GAP\_OPEN = -400;

const signed<BITWIDTH> GAP\_EXTEND = -30;

## 2.3 Dynamic Programming Matrix Declarations

The core of dynamic programming alignment algorithms is the computation of 2D dynamic programming matrices. The user declares these matrices after the alphabet and constant declarations. The following is an example of a DP matrix declaration:

dpmat signed<8> score[][];

DP matrix cell scores are assigned in the cell score computation function (section 2.5), and are referenced in the alignment reporting condition function (section 2.6).

Cell scores are initialized to 0 or false. (User-specifiable cell score initialization may be implemented in the future.)

## 2.4 Cell Score Computation Function

The computation of each cell score in the 2D dynamic programming matrices is performed in the cell() function. The indices of the current cell are accessed using the keywords row and col.

The arguments to the cell() function are run-time loadable parameters. These are typically used for parameterizable scoring schemes. At run-time, modification of these parameters is done through the generated software API, and are updated asynchronously from any alignments. Fixed implementations without run-time loadable parameters would likely achieve higher performance than those with the loadable parameters, as more FPGA resources would be allocated for processing elements.

Temporary variables may be used and are declared at the beginning of the function. The scope of a variable only includes the current iteration of the function. Variables must be assigned values before being referenced.

Characters, constants, and parameters cannot be assigned.

The report() function cannot be invoked in the cell()function.

Cell scores must be assigned from the result of a max() function call. This is because each cell score computation is treated as a decision between multiple options. For example, in the following Smith-Waterman case (see section 4.2), the computation of cell H[row][col] chooses between 0, a substitution, an insertion, and a deletion:

H[row][col] = max(0,

H[row-1][col-1] + substitute,

H[row-1][col] + insert,

H[row][col-1] + delete);

The arguments for the max()functions must abide by the following restrictions:

* Each argument can be dependent upon constants, parameters, and up to one other DP matrix cell.
* The DP matrix cell dependency must have indices less than or equal to the indices of the current cell.
* No two arguments can be dependent upon the same DP matrix cell.
* Circular dependencies are not allowed.

## 2.5 Alignment Reporting Condition Function

The condition() function represents the condition in which an alignment will be reported. Typically, this function is very simple – just a check for when a cell score exceeds a given threshold. Arguments to the condition() are run-time loadable parameters, such as the threshold value. These parameters are updated on every alignment.

Temporary variables may be used and are declared at the beginning of the function. As with the cell() function, the scope only includes the current iteration of the function, and values must be assigned before referencing.

Characters, constants, dynamic programming matrix cells, and parameters cannot be assigned.

A call to the report() function indicates the alignment is to be reported.

## 2.6 Miscellaneous Notes

* Case statements are not drop-through.

# 3. Formal Specification

Syntax specification key:

x (in courier font) means x is a keyword terminal

*x* (in *italic courier* font) means *x* is a non-keyword terminal

*x* (in *italic*) means *x* is a nonterminal

**(**x**)** (parentheses in **bold**) means zero or one occurrence of x (x is optional)

x+ means one or more occurrences of x

x\* means zero or more occurrences of x

**[**xyz**]** (brackets in **bold**) groups together grammar symbols

| separates production alternatives

*Program* ::= *AlphabetDecl*

*ConstDecl\**

*DPMatrixDecl*+

*CellFuncDecl*

*CondFuncDecl*

*AlphabetDecl* ::= alphabet={*CharacterDecl* **[**,*CharacterDecl***]**\*};

*CharacterDecl* ::= *id***(**=*int\_const***)**

*ConstDecl* ::= *ConstScalarDecl* | *ConstMatrixDecl*

*ConstScalarDecl* ::= const *Type id* = *Constant;*

*Type* ::= unsigned **(**<*Constant*>**)**

| signed **(**<*Constant*>**)**

**|** bool

*Constant* ::= *bool\_const* | *int\_const* | *id*

*ConstMatrixDecl* ::= const *Type* *id***[**[*Constant*]**]**+ = *ConstMatrixElem*;

*ConstMatrixElem* ::= {*ConstMatrixElem* **[,** *ConstMatrixElem***]**\*}

| {*Constant* **[**,*Constant***]**\*}

*TypeName* ::= unsigned | signed | bool

*DPMatrixDecl* ::= dpmat *Type* *id*[][];

*CellFuncDecl* ::= cell(*Parameter* **[**,*Parameter***]**\*) {

*VariableDecl*\*

*Stmt*\*

}

*CondFuncDecl* ::= condition(*Parameter* **[**,*Parameter***]**\*) {

*VariableDecl\**

*Stmt*\*

}

*Parameter* ::= *Type* *id* **[**[*ConstInt*]**]**\*

*Stmt* ::= *IfStmt*

| *AssignStmt*

| *SwitchStmt*

| *ReportStmt*

*VariableDecl* ::= *Type* *id* **(**=*Expr***)**;

*IfStmt* ::= if(*Expr*){*Stmt*\*}

**[**else if(*Expr*){*Stmt*\*}**]**\*

**(**else{*Stmt*\*}**)**

*AssignStmt* ::= *id* **[**[*Expr*]**]**\* = *Expr*;

*SwitchStmt* ::= switch(*Expr*){*CaseStmt+*}

*CaseStmt* ::= case *Expr*:*Stmt\** | default: *Stmt\**

*ReportStmt* ::= report();

*Expr* ::= max(*Expr* **[**,*Expr***]**\*)

| (*Expr*)

| *Expr* + *Expr*

| *Expr* – *Expr*

| *Expr* < *Expr*

| *Expr* <= *Expr*

| *Expr* > *Expr*

| *Expr* >= *Expr*

| *Expr* == *Expr*

| *Expr* != *Expr*

| !*Expr*

| *Expr* && *Expr*

| *Expr* || *Expr*

| *Expr* << *int\_const*

| *Expr* >> *int\_const*

| *Expr* & *Expr*

| *Expr* ^ *Expr*

| *Expr* | *Expr*

| ~*Expr*

| *Constant*

| *id* **[**[*Expr*]**]**\*

| query\_char

| ref\_char

| row

| col

# 4. Example Programs

The following are a series of example implementations in DPAL, including:

1. Simple Smith-Waterman
2. Run-time paramaterizable penalties with an ambiguous base character
3. Affine gap penalty
4. Fixed substitution matrix
5. Run-time parameterizable substitution matrix

DPAL keywords are bolded.

## 4.1 Simple Smith-Waterman

**alphabet** = {A, C, G, T};

**dpmat signed**<10> H[][];

**cell**() {

**signed**<10> substitute = 2;

**if** (**query\_char** != **ref\_char**) {

substitute = -2;

}

H[**row**][**col**] = **max**(0,

H[**row**-1][**col**-1] + substitute,

H[**row**-1][**col**] - 1,

H[**row**][**col**-1] - 1);

}

**condition**(**signed**<10> threshold) {

**if** (H[**row**][**col**] >= threshold) {

**report**();

}

}

## 4.2 Run-time parameterizable penalties with ambiguous base

**alphabet** = {A, C, G, T, N};

**const** **unsigned** BITWIDTH = 10;

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> H[][];

**cell**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> match, **signed**<BITWIDTH> mismatch,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> insert, **signed**<BITWIDTH> delete,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> N\_penalty) {

**signed**<BITWIDTH> substitute;

**if** (**query\_char** == N || **ref\_char** == N) {

substitute = N\_penalty;

} **else** **if** (**query\_char** == **ref\_char**) {

substitute = match;

} **else** {

substitute = mismatch;

}

H[**row**][**col**] = **max**(0,

H[**row**-1][**col**-1] + substitute,

H[**row**-1][**col**] + insert,

H[**row**][**col**-1] + delete);

}

**condition**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> threshold) {

**if** (H[**row**][**col**] >= threshold) {

**report**();

}

}

## 4.3 Affine gap penalty

**alphabet** = {A, C, G, T, N};

**const** **unsigned** BITWIDTH = 18;

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> M[][];

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> I[][];

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> D[][];

**cell**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> match, **signed**<BITWIDTH> mismatch,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> gap\_open,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> gap\_extend,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> N\_penalty) {

**signed**<BITWIDTH> substitute;

**if** (**query\_char** == N || **ref\_char** == N) {

substitute = N\_penalty;

} **else** **if** (**query\_char** == **ref\_char**) {

substitute = match;

} **else** {

substitute = mismatch;

}

I[**row**][**col**] = **max**(M[**row**-1][**col**] + gap\_open,

I[**row**-1][**col**] + gap\_extend);

D[**row**][**col**] = **max**(M[**row**][**col**-1] + gap\_open,

D[**row**][**col**-w] + gap\_extend);

M[**row**][**col**] = **max**(0,

M[**row**-1][**col**-1] + substitute,

I[**row**][**col**],

D[**row**][**col**]);

}

**condition**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> threshold) {

**if** (M[**row**][**col**] >= threshold) {

**report**();

}

}

## 4.4 Fixed substitution matrix

**alphabet** = {A, C, G, T};

**const** **unsigned** BITWIDTH = 18;

**const** **signed**<BITWIDTH> HOXD55[4][4] = {

{91, -90, -25, -100},

{-90, 100, -100, -25},

{-25, -100, 100, -90},

{-100, -25, -90, 91}

};

**const** **signed**<BITWIDTH> GAP\_OPEN = -400;

**const** **signed**<BITWIDTH> GAP\_EXTEND = -30;

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> M[][];

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> I[][];

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> D[][];

**cell**() {

**signed**<BITWIDTH> substitute =

HOXD55[**query\_char**][**ref\_char**];

I[**row**][**col**] = **max**(M[**row**-1][**col**] + GAP\_OPEN,

I[**row**-1][**col**] + GAP\_EXTEND);

D[**row**][**col**] = **max**(M[**row**][**col**-1] + GAP\_OPEN,

D[**row**][**col**-1] + GAP\_EXTEND);

M[**row**][**col**] = **max**(0,

M[**row**-1][**col**-1] + substitute,

I[**row**][**col**],

D[**row**][**col**]);

}

**condition**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> threshold) {

**if** (M[**row**][**col**] >= threshold) {

**report**();

}

}

## 4.5 Run-time parameterizable substitution matrix

**alphabet** = {A, C, G, T, N};

**const** **unsigned** BITWIDTH = 18;

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> M[][];

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> I[][];

**dpmat signed**<BITWIDTH> D[][];

**cell**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> sub\_mat[5][5],

**signed**<BITWIDTH> gap\_open,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> gap\_extend,

**signed**<BITWIDTH> N\_penalty) {

**signed**<BITWIDTH> substitute;

**if** (**query\_char** == N || **ref\_char** == N) {

substitute = N\_penalty;

} **else** {

substitute = sub\_mat[**query\_char**][**ref\_char**];

}

I[**row**][**col**] = **max**(M[**row**-1][**col**] + gap\_open,

I[**row**-1][**col**] + gap\_extend);

D[**row**][**col**] = **max**(M[**row**][**col**-1] + gap\_open,

D[**row**][**col**-1] + gap\_extend);

M[**row**][**col**] = **max**(0,

M[**row**-1][**col**-1] + substitute,

I[**row**][**col**],

D[**row**][**col**]);

}

**condition**(**signed**<BITWIDTH> threshold) {

**if** (M[**row**][**col**] >= threshold) {

**report**();

}

}

# Appendix

## List of Semantic Errors

1. Alphabet characters doesn’t have either all explicit or all implicit values.
2. Alphabet character has negative explicit value.
3. Alphabet characters not previously declared.
4. Constant scalar not previously declared.