

MATH 392: Intro to Neural Networks

Arvind Suresh

Dec 11, 2024

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

1 What is AI, anyway?

2 What is ML?

3 What is a NN?

4 Learning objectives

5 Course structure

6 Why enroll?

7 Conclusion

What is AI, anyway?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Modern AI's like ChatGPT are based on so called **Large Language Models** (LLMs).

What is AI, anyway?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Modern AI's like ChatGPT are based on so called **Large Language Models** (LLMs).
- These are very sophisticated programs– given an input (“prompt”), they generate an output (a textual response, image, and so on).

What is AI, anyway?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Modern AI's like ChatGPT are based on so called **Large Language Models** (LLMs).
- These are very sophisticated programs– given an input (“prompt”), they generate an output (a textual response, image, and so on).
- For text, output is generated word-by-word:
The model is trained to generate the *most likely* word next, given the words that have come before.

What is AI, anyway?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Modern AI's like ChatGPT are based on so called **Large Language Models** (LLMs).
- These are very sophisticated programs– given an input (“prompt”), they generate an output (a textual response, image, and so on).
- For text, output is generated word-by-word:
The model is trained to generate the *most likely* word next, given the words that have come before.
- Thus, LLM's are in the business of making *predictions*.

What is AI, anyway?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Modern AI's like ChatGPT are based on so called **Large Language Models** (LLMs).
- These are very sophisticated programs– given an input (“prompt”), they generate an output (a textual response, image, and so on).
- For text, output is generated word-by-word:
The model is trained to generate the *most likely* word next, given the words that have come before.
- Thus, LLM's are in the business of making *predictions*.
- So, at its core, modern AI falls within the framework of **machine learning** (ML).

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.
 - Each row is a *data point* (features and target).

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.
 - Each row is a *data point* (features and target).
- **Believe:** the target can be predicted from the features, i.e. there is a “one true function” F such that

$$Y = F(X_1, \dots, X_m) + (\text{noise}).$$

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.
 - Each row is a *data point* (features and target).
- **Believe:** the target can be predicted from the features, i.e. there is a “one true function” F such that

$$Y = F(X_1, \dots, X_m) + (\text{noise}).$$

- **Goal:** *Learn $F \dots$*

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.
 - Each row is a *data point* (features and target).
- **Believe:** the target can be predicted from the features, i.e. there is a “one true function” F such that

$$Y = F(X_1, \dots, X_m) + (\text{noise}).$$

- **Goal:** *Learn F ...* i.e. find a *good approximation* to F .

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.
 - Each row is a *data point* (features and target).
- **Believe:** the target can be predicted from the features, i.e. there is a “one true function” F such that

$$Y = F(X_1, \dots, X_m) + (\text{noise}).$$

- **Goal:** *Learn F ...* i.e. find a *good approximation* to F .
- **Model:** A class of functions that we believe might approximate F (e.g. linear, polynomial, logistic).

Framework of ML

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Given:** a *dataset* (matrix):
 - Some columns X_1, \dots, X_m are *features/predictors*.
 - One column Y is the *target variable*.
 - Each row is a *data point* (features and target).
- **Believe:** the target can be predicted from the features, i.e. there is a “one true function” F such that

$$Y = F(X_1, \dots, X_m) + (\text{noise}).$$

- **Goal:** *Learn F* ... i.e. find a *good approximation* to F .
- **Model:** A class of functions that we believe might approximate F (e.g. linear, polynomial, logistic).
- **Training:** *Fit the model* to the given data to get the best approximation to F within our class.

The simplest example of a ML model

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Choosing a model amounts to choosing a type of “formula” for our approximation of F .

Example (Linear models)

- **Goal:** Predict house prices (Y) from square footage (X).

The simplest example of a ML model

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Choosing a model amounts to choosing a type of “formula” for our approximation of F .

Example (Linear models)

- **Goal:** Predict house prices (Y) from square footage (X).
- **Belief:** $Y = mX + b + (\text{noise})$.

The simplest example of a ML model

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Choosing a model amounts to choosing a type of “formula” for our approximation of F .

Example (Linear models)

- **Goal:** Predict house prices (Y) from square footage (X).
- **Belief:** $Y = mX + b + (\text{noise})$.
- **Model parameters:** m and b .

The simplest example of a ML model

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Choosing a model amounts to choosing a type of “formula” for our approximation of F .

Example (Linear models)

- **Goal:** Predict house prices (Y) from square footage (X).
- **Belief:** $Y = mX + b + (\text{noise})$.
- **Model parameters:** m and b .
- **Training:** Find the values of m and b that best fit the data.

The simplest example of a ML model

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Choosing a model amounts to choosing a type of “formula” for our approximation of F .

Example (Linear models)

- **Goal:** Predict house prices (Y) from square footage (X).
- **Belief:** $Y = mX + b + (\text{noise})$.
- **Model parameters:** m and b .
- **Training:** Find the values of m and b that best fit the data. Get the best approximation to F among all linear functions:

$$f(X) = \hat{m}X + \hat{b}.$$

The simplest example of a ML model

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

Choosing a model amounts to choosing a type of “formula” for our approximation of F .

Example (Linear models)

- **Goal:** Predict house prices (Y) from square footage (X).
- **Belief:** $Y = mX + b + (\text{noise})$.
- **Model parameters:** m and b .
- **Training:** Find the values of m and b that best fit the data. Get the best approximation to F among all linear functions:

$$f(X) = \hat{m}X + \hat{b}.$$

- **Prediction:** Given a house with a certain square footage x , predict the house price to be $y = f(x) = \hat{m}x + \hat{b}$.

What are neural networks?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

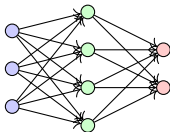
What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion



- A flexible class of ML models that combine linear and non-linear functions in *layers*:

Input layer \longrightarrow *Hidden layers* \longrightarrow *Output layer*

What are neural networks?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

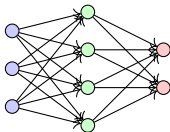
What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion



- A flexible class of ML models that combine linear and non-linear functions in *layers*:

Input layer \longrightarrow *Hidden layers* \longrightarrow *Output layer*

- Inspired by biology– the data flow in a NN is similar to how neurons transmit info by electric impulses.

What are neural networks?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

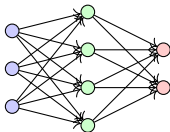
What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion



- A flexible class of ML models that combine linear and non-linear functions in *layers*:

Input layer \longrightarrow *Hidden layers* \longrightarrow *Output layer*

- Inspired by biology– the data flow in a NN is similar to how neurons transmit info by electric impulses.
- The model parameters are called *weights*; they are trained using a process called *backpropagation*.

What are neural networks?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

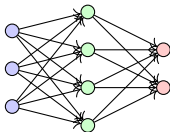
What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion



- A flexible class of ML models that combine linear and non-linear functions in *layers*:

Input layer \longrightarrow *Hidden layers* \longrightarrow *Output layer*

- Inspired by biology– the data flow in a NN is similar to how neurons transmit info by electric impulses.
- The model parameters are called *weights*; they are trained using a process called *backpropagation*.
- LLMs like ChatGPT are based on neural networks with billions of weights!

Why are neural networks so useful?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

**What is a
NN?**

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

There are two reasons, one theoretical, one computational.

Why are neural networks so useful?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

There are two reasons, one theoretical, one computational.

- (Theoretical): They are *universal approximators*, which means that *any* real-world function F can (in principle) be closely approximated by a NN.

Why are neural networks so useful?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

There are two reasons, one theoretical, one computational.

- (Theoretical): They are *universal approximators*, which means that *any* real-world function F can (in principle) be closely approximated by a NN.
- (Computational): They are *scalable*, which means that they can be trained on large datasets with many features.

Why are neural networks so useful?

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

There are two reasons, one theoretical, one computational.

- (Theoretical): They are *universal approximators*, which means that *any* real-world function F can (in principle) be closely approximated by a NN.
- (Computational): They are *scalable*, which means that they can be trained on large datasets with many features.

Highly optimized hardware (GPUs) and software (e.g. PyTorch) allow for large-scale parallel computations.

MATH 392: Learning objectives

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

**Learning
objectives**

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Gain experience in the research method (asking questions and hunting for answers).

MATH 392: Learning objectives

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

**Learning
objectives**

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Gain experience in the research method (asking questions and hunting for answers).
- Develop a solid mathematical foundation to approach problems related to NNs: linear algebra, probability and statistics, gradient descent (vector calculus).

MATH 392: Learning objectives

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Gain experience in the research method (asking questions and hunting for answers).
- Develop a solid mathematical foundation to approach problems related to NNs: linear algebra, probability and statistics, gradient descent (vector calculus).
- Learn to build and implement simple NNs using libraries like PyTorch.

MATH 392: Learning objectives

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Gain experience in the research method (asking questions and hunting for answers).
- Develop a solid mathematical foundation to approach problems related to NNs: linear algebra, probability and statistics, gradient descent (vector calculus).
- Learn to build and implement simple NNs using libraries like PyTorch.
- Learn how to evaluate NN's (model optimization, regularization, and hyperparameter tuning).

MATH 392: Learning objectives

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- Gain experience in the research method (asking questions and hunting for answers).
- Develop a solid mathematical foundation to approach problems related to NNs: linear algebra, probability and statistics, gradient descent (vector calculus).
- Learn to build and implement simple NNs using libraries like PyTorch.
- Learn how to evaluate NN's (model optimization, regularization, and hyperparameter tuning).
- Demonstrate your learning by completing a final project.

MATH 392: Course structure

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

**Course
structure**

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Motivation:** Develop math concepts by asking natural questions about datasets.

MATH 392: Course structure

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

**Course
structure**

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Motivation:** Develop math concepts by asking natural questions about datasets.
- **In-class:** Learn key concepts → engage with the material via hands-on coding exercises (Jupyter notebooks).

MATH 392: Course structure

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

**Course
structure**

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Motivation:** Develop math concepts by asking natural questions about datasets.
- **In-class:** Learn key concepts → engage with the material via hands-on coding exercises (Jupyter notebooks).
- **Coding:** Will make systematic use of GitHub Copilot for Education to write code with minimal effort.

MATH 392: Course structure

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Motivation:** Develop math concepts by asking natural questions about datasets.
- **In-class:** Learn key concepts → engage with the material via hands-on coding exercises (Jupyter notebooks).
- **Coding:** Will make systematic use of GitHub Copilot for Education to write code with minimal effort.
- **Assignments:** 4-5 Mini-projects implemented in Python using industry-standard packages, and one final project.

MATH 392: Course structure

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Motivation:** Develop math concepts by asking natural questions about datasets.
- **In-class:** Learn key concepts → engage with the material via hands-on coding exercises (Jupyter notebooks).
- **Coding:** Will make systematic use of GitHub Copilot for Education to write code with minimal effort.
- **Assignments:** 4-5 Mini-projects implemented in Python using industry-standard packages, and one final project.
- **GitHub:** Maintain a repository containing mini-projects and final project.

MATH 392: Course structure

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- **Motivation:** Develop math concepts by asking natural questions about datasets.
- **In-class:** Learn key concepts → engage with the material via hands-on coding exercises (Jupyter notebooks).
- **Coding:** Will make systematic use of GitHub Copilot for Education to write code with minimal effort.
- **Assignments:** 4-5 Mini-projects implemented in Python using industry-standard packages, and one final project.
- **GitHub:** Maintain a repository containing mini-projects and final project.
- **Research-spirit:** Heavy emphasis on asking interesting questions and collaborating with peers on projects.

MATH 392: Reasons why you might like to enroll

MATH 392: Intro to Neural Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- You are interested in AI and would like a self-contained introduction covering the basics.

MATH 392: Reasons why you might like to enroll

MATH 392: Intro to Neural Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- You are interested in AI and would like a self-contained introduction covering the basics.
- You enjoy seeing math concepts from different courses come together in a single course.

MATH 392: Reasons why you might like to enroll

MATH 392: Intro to Neural Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- You are interested in AI and would like a self-contained introduction covering the basics.
- You enjoy seeing math concepts from different courses come together in a single course.
- You are considering internships/jobs in the field of ML/AI and would like to get started building a portfolio with projects to showcase to potential employers.

MATH 392: Reasons why you might like to enroll

MATH 392: Intro to Neural Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- You are interested in AI and would like a self-contained introduction covering the basics.
- You enjoy seeing math concepts from different courses come together in a single course.
- You are considering internships/jobs in the field of ML/AI and would like to get started building a portfolio with projects to showcase to potential employers.
- You enjoy courses that blend theory (from math) with practice (coding).

MATH 392: Reasons why you might like to enroll

MATH 392: Intro to Neural Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

- You are interested in AI and would like a self-contained introduction covering the basics.
- You enjoy seeing math concepts from different courses come together in a single course.
- You are considering internships/jobs in the field of ML/AI and would like to get started building a portfolio with projects to showcase to potential employers.
- You enjoy courses that blend theory (from math) with practice (coding).
- You are a math major looking to fill the “Application Course” credit.

Closing remarks

MATH 392:
Intro to
Neural
Networks

Arvind
Suresh

Outline

What is AI,
anyway?

What is ML?

What is a
NN?

Learning
objectives

Course
structure

Why enroll?

Conclusion

I hope you will consider enrolling in MATH 392!

Please feel free to reach out to me at arvindsuresh@arizona.edu if you have any questions about the course, or simply want to chat about neural networks (or anything else mathematical, for that matter).

Thank you for your time!!