

Comparing Object Correlation Metrics for Effective Space Traffic Management

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Sponsored by The Aerospace Corporation

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Motivation

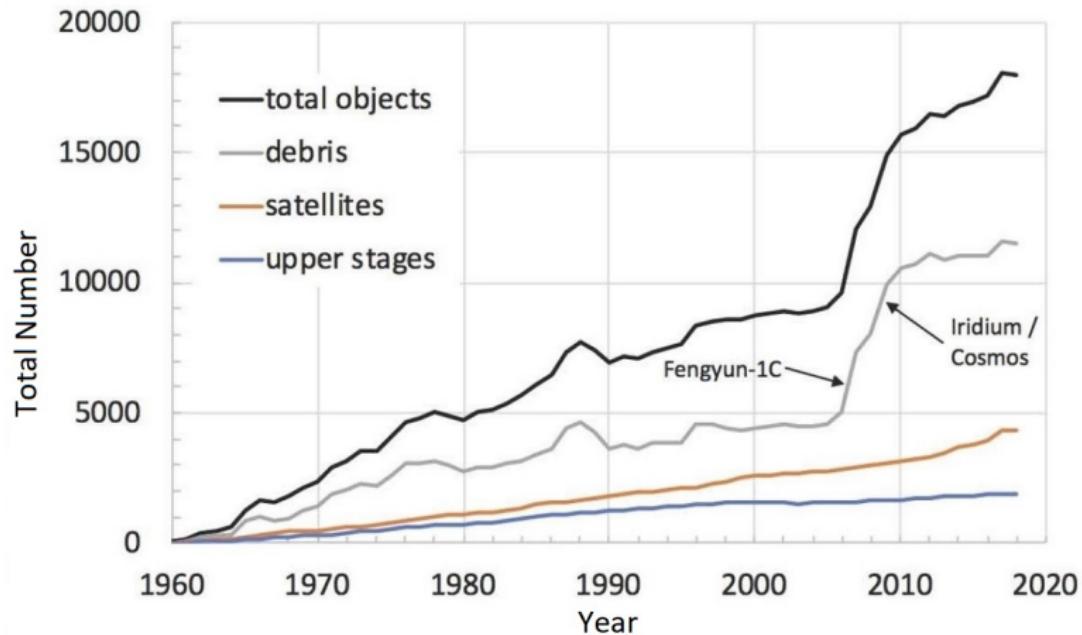


Figure 1. Catalogued Objects in Space Surveillance Network

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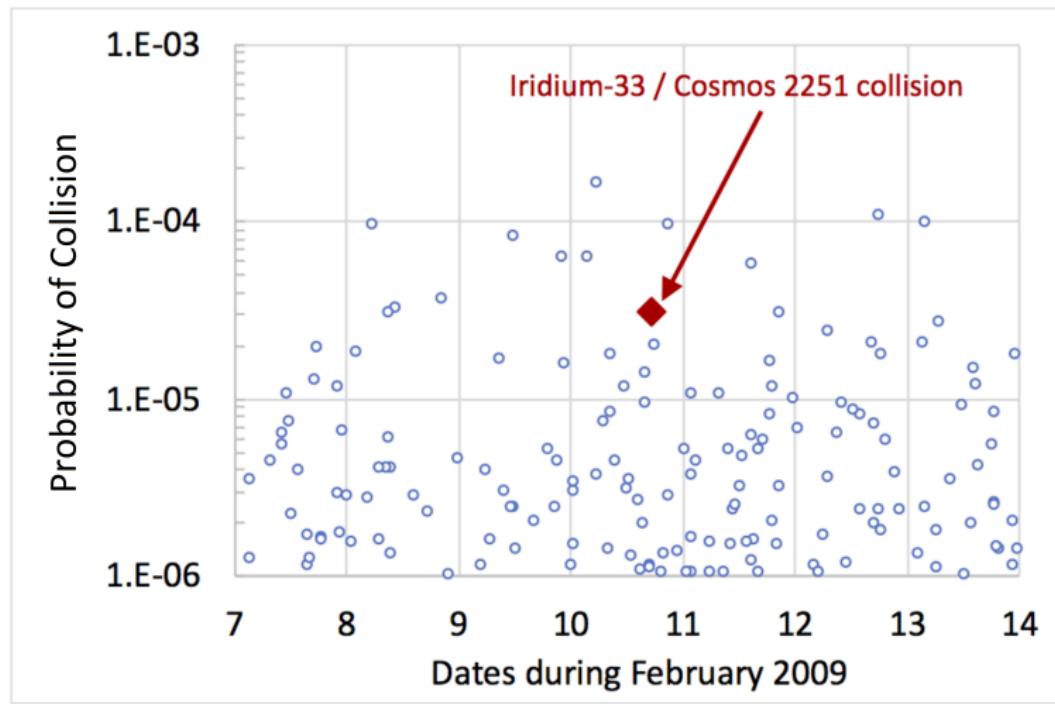


Figure 2. Collision Probabilities

Non-Cooperative Space Traffic Management

- Estimate state of objects in orbit without a communication channel

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- Space-based and ground-based sensors contain measurement error
- Consider distribution of possible states
- Optimally assign measurements to objects
- Comprehensive comparison of likelihood-of-coincidence metrics

Overview

1 Simulation Framework

2 Experiment Design

3 Results

4 Conclusion

Simulation Framework

aeropackage

True State Propagation

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- Without the $\mathbf{f}_{\text{perturb}}$ term, models two-body gravity:
 - Perfectly spherical earth with symmetric mass distribution
 - Only force acting on satellite is Earth's gravity

True State Propagation

- In particular,

$$\mathbf{f}_{\text{perturb}} = \mathbf{f}_{\text{obl}} + \mathbf{f}_{\text{drag}} + \mathbf{f}_{\text{SRP}} + \mathbf{f}_{\text{3B}}$$

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- \mathbf{f}_{3B} is the force due to third-body gravity

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- Atmospheric Drag: The force due to the interaction of atmospheric particles with the satellite.
- Solar radiation pressure (SRP): force caused by the impact, reflection, absorption, and re-emission of photons.
- Third-body gravity: The impact on the motion of a satellite by the gravity of other bodies such as the Sun, Moon, or planets.

Sensors

- Two main types of sensors:

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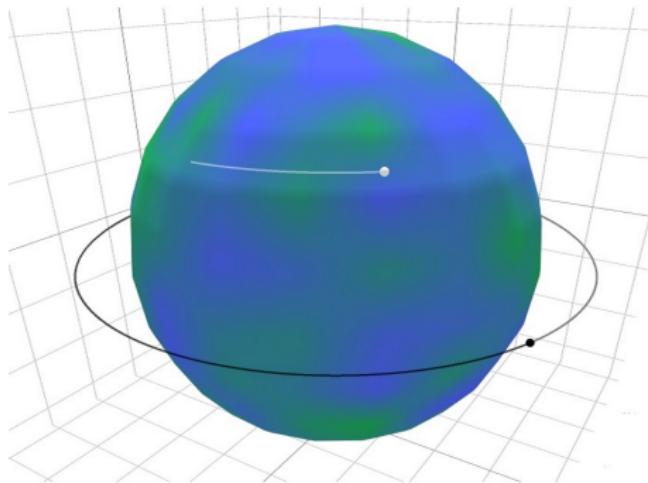


Figure 3. Tracks of Sensor Movement

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- Additionally, sensors can take different types of measurements of an object:
 - Range: The Euclidean distance from the sensor to the satellite
 - Angle: Represented in azimuth and elevation (also called altitude), the angle (as related to the tangent plane to the Earth at the sensor location) of the satellite.

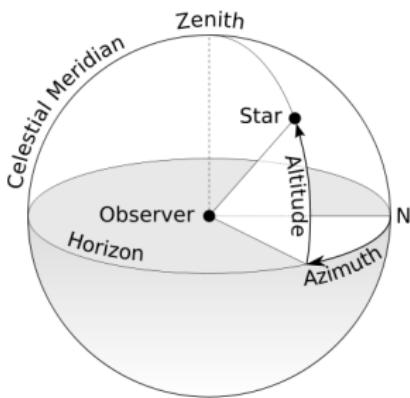


Figure 4. Azimuth/Elevation Diagram

Joshua Cesa (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Azimut_altitude.svg), "Azimut altitude", Text,
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/legalcode>

Propagating Uncertainty

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- Need to use the dynamics of the system (1) to determine what the distribution will be at a future time $t_1 > t_0$
- Use the ODE solver to propagate $\mu^{(t_0)}$ to time t
- Use the State Transition Matrix Φ to propagate $\Sigma^{(t_0)}$ as follows:

$$\Sigma^{(t_1)} = \Phi(t_1, t_0)\Sigma^{(t_0)}\Phi(t_1, t_0)^T.$$

Example of Uncertainty Propagation

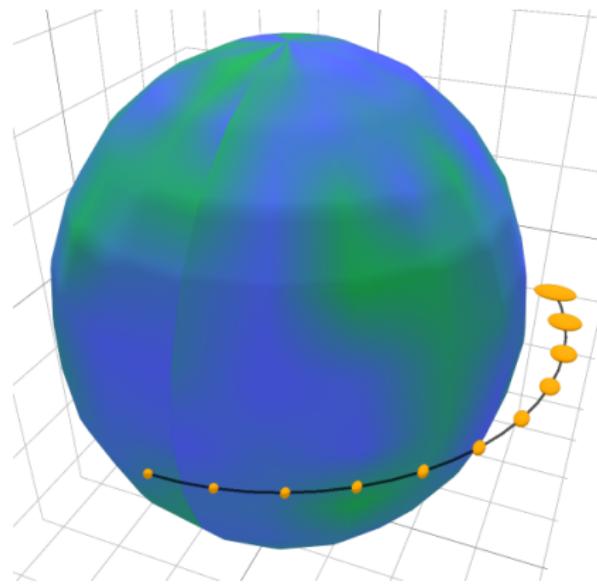
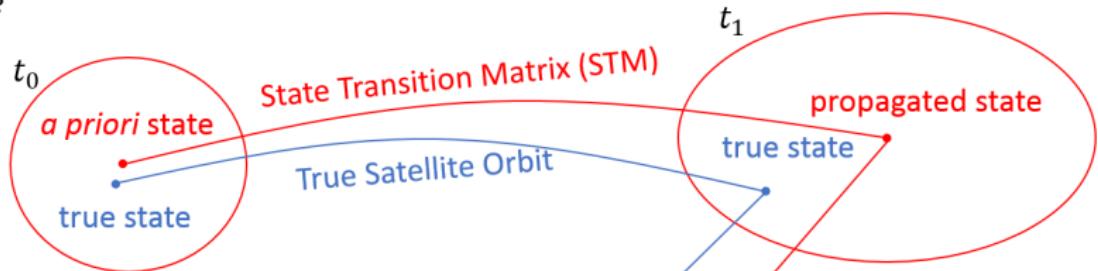


Figure 5. Propagation of Mean and Covariance

Object Correlation

Measurement Space Object Correlation

State Space



Measurement Space

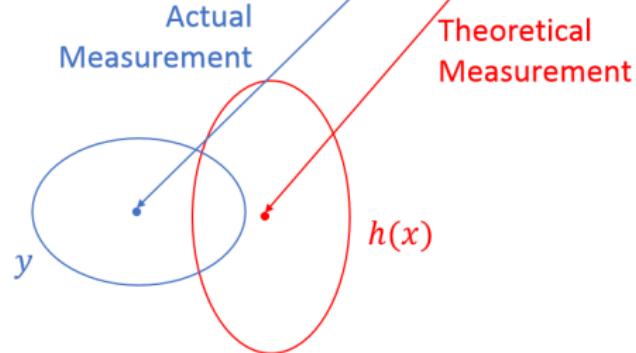


Figure 6. Object Correlation in Measurement Space

Distance Metrics in Measurement Space

Let $D_1 \stackrel{d}{=} N(\mu_1, \Sigma_1)$ and $D_2 \stackrel{d}{=} N(\mu_2, \Sigma_2)$, with dimension k .

Mahalanobis:

$$d_M(D_1, D_2) = (\mu_2 - \mu_1)^T (\Sigma_1 + \Sigma_2)^{-1} (\mu_2 - \mu_1)$$

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Bhattacharyya:

$$\begin{aligned} d_B(D_1, D_2) &= \frac{1}{4} (\mu_2 - \mu_1)^T (\Sigma_1 + \Sigma_2)^{-1} (\mu_2 - \mu_1) \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{2} \log \left(\frac{\det(\Sigma_1 + \Sigma_2)}{\sqrt{\det \Sigma_1 \det \Sigma_2}} \right) - \frac{k}{2} \log 2 \end{aligned}$$

Distance Metrics in Measurement Space

Kullback-Liebler divergence is a nonsymmetric function, so we define two versions of it.

KL1:

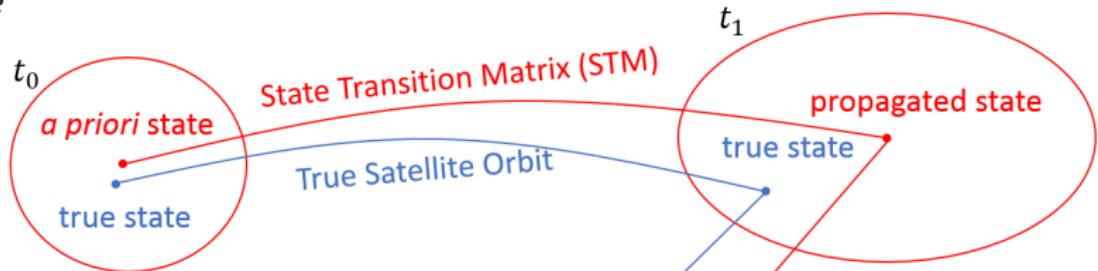
$$d_{KL}(D_1, D_2) = \frac{1}{2}(\mu_2 - \mu_1)^T \Sigma_2^{-1} (\mu_2 - \mu_1) + \frac{1}{2} \log \left(\frac{\det \Sigma_2}{\det \Sigma_1} \right) + \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr}(\Sigma_2^{-1} \Sigma_1) - \frac{k}{2}$$

KL2:

$$d_{KL}(D_2, D_1)$$

Measurement Space Object Correlation

State Space



Measurement Space

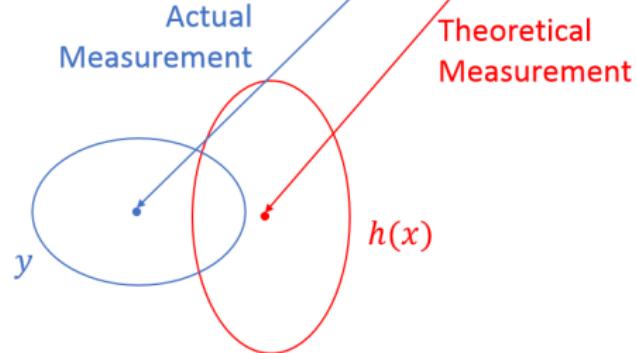
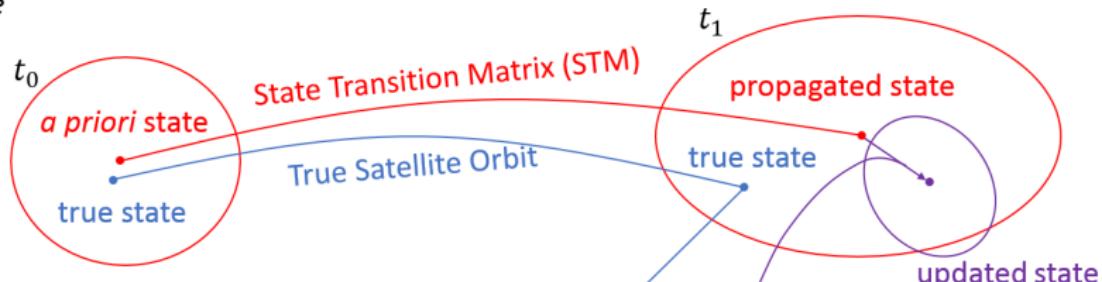


Figure 7. Object Correlation in Measurement Space

State Space Object Correlation

State Space



Measurement Space

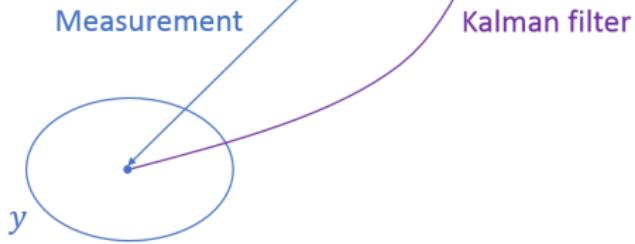


Figure 8. Object Correlation in State Space

Distance Metrics in State Space

- Mahalanobis:

$$d_M(D_1, D_2) = (\mu_2 - \mu_1)^T (\Sigma_1 + \Sigma_2 - 2\text{Cov}(D_1, D_2))^{-1} (\mu_2 - \mu_1)$$

Essentially the same as measurement space, but includes a term to account for the correlation between the two states

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- Optimal control distance (OCD):

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$$\ddot{r} = f(t, r(t)) + u(t)$$

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- The metric is

$$d_{OCD}((t_0, s_0), (t_1, s_1)) = \inf_{u \in U} \int_{t_0}^{t_1} \frac{1}{2} \|u(t)\|^2 dt$$

where U is the space of all control functions that take state s_0 at time t_0 to state s_1 at time t_1

Experiment Design

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How do the metrics perform on clusters of satellites?

- CLUSTER-OUT: Satellites begin in a cluster at time t_0 and disperse as they are propagated to a later time t_1



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- CLUSTER-IN: Satellites begin dispersed at time t_0 and become clustered as they are propagated to a later time t_1



Specifications

- 10 space-based sensors at equal longitudinal intervals above the equator in geosynchronous orbit

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- 20 ground-based sensors at major cities chosen to have a relatively even distribution of latitudes and longitudes

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- 10 space-based sensors at equal longitudinal intervals above the equator in geosynchronous orbit
- 20 ground-based sensors at major cities chosen to have a relatively even distribution of latitudes and longitudes
- Generate cluster of satellites at time t_0 by the following process:
 - Randomly select cluster mean state μ_C at a given altitude alt_C
 - Set the state covariance of the cluster to be

$$\Sigma_C = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_r^2 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_r^2 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \sigma_r^2 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_v^2 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_v^2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_v^2 \end{pmatrix}$$

- For each i , sample a state deviation $\xi_i \sim N(\vec{0}, \Sigma_C)$ and set the state of satellite i to be $\vec{x}_i = \mu_C + \xi_i$.

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- Set to these values when varying:
 - Observation gap $t_1 - t_0$ (seconds): 300, 1800, 3600, 7200
 - Altitude alt_C (km): 350, 762.5, 1175, 1587.5, 2000
 - Dispersal σ_r^2 (m^2): $10^6, 10^8, 10^{10}$
 - Satellite *a priori* uncertainty σ_{ap}^2 (m^2): $10^0, 10^2, 10^4$
 - Sensor measurement error σ_{meas}^2 (m^2): $10^0, 10^2, 10^4$

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 - Sensor measurement error σ_{meas}^2 (m^2): $10^0, 10^2, 10^4$
- Set to nominal values when not varying:
 - Observation Gap: 3600 s
 - Altitude: 750 km
 - Dispersal: 10^8 m^2
 - Satellite *a priori* uncertainty: 10^2 m^2
 - Sensor measurement error: 10^2 m^2

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- If we pick 2 parameters to vary, we can vary them in higher resolution
- Use same nominal values when fixed
- Vary across these ranges in 20 equal increments:
 - Observation gap: [300, 7200] s
 - Altitude: [350, 2000] km
 - Dispersal: $[10^4, 10^{10}] \text{ m}^2$ (log scale)
 - Satellite *a priori* uncertainty: $[10^0, 10^4] \text{ m}^2$ (log scale)
 - Sensor measurement error: $[10^0, 10^4] \text{ m}^2$ (log scale)

Results

CLUSTER-OUT: Determining Impactful Variables



- Run 30 trials, with 50 satellites leaving a cluster

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- For each metric and modality, use Least Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator (LASSO) to determine 3 most impactful parameters

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- Run 30 trials, with 50 satellites leaving a cluster
- For each metric and modality, use Least Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator (LASSO) to determine 3 most impactful parameters
- Will run finer pairwise investigation on observation gap, dispersal, and sensor variance

CLUSTER-OUT: Grid Plots

- Run 30 trials of each test

CLUSTER-OUT: Grid Plots

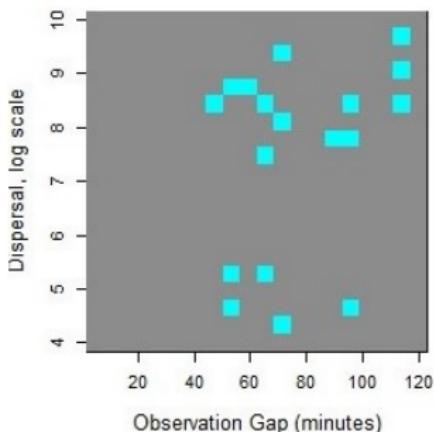
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- Run 30 trials of each test
- For each parameter pair, find the metric with the highest average success rate
- Conduct a one-sided paired t -test with $\alpha = 0.05$ for determining whether the winning metric has a significantly higher mean than the losing metrics
- If the null hypothesis is rejected for all losing metrics, color the cell according to the metric
- Else, color the cell gray since the win is insignificant



■ Mahalanobis ■ KL1 ■ Insignificant
■ Bhattacharyya ■ KL2

CLUSTER-OUT: Results

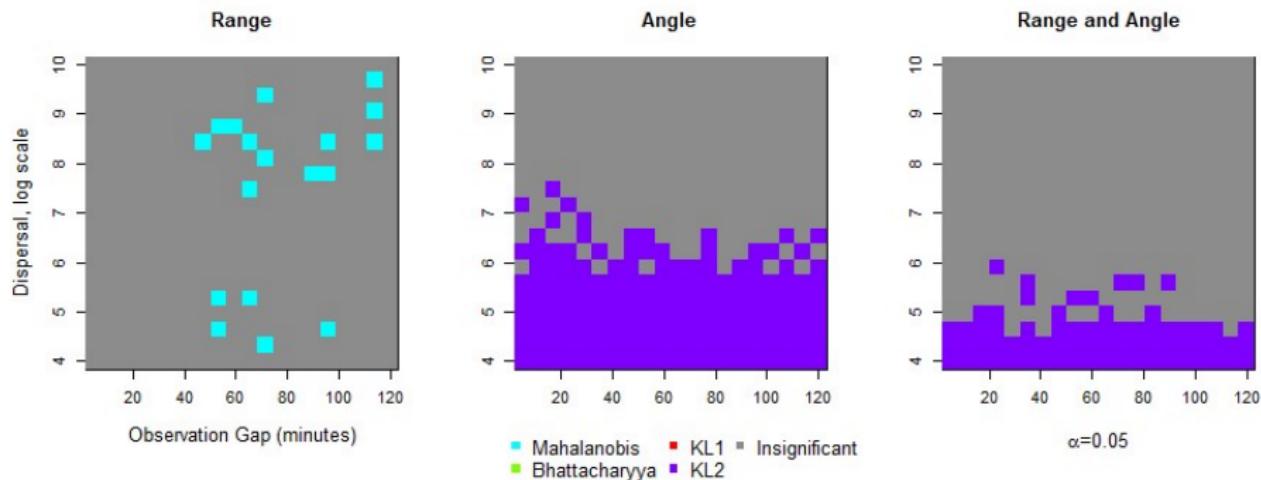


Figure 9. CLUSTER-OUT Test: Observation Gap vs Cluster Dispersal

CLUSTER-OUT: Results

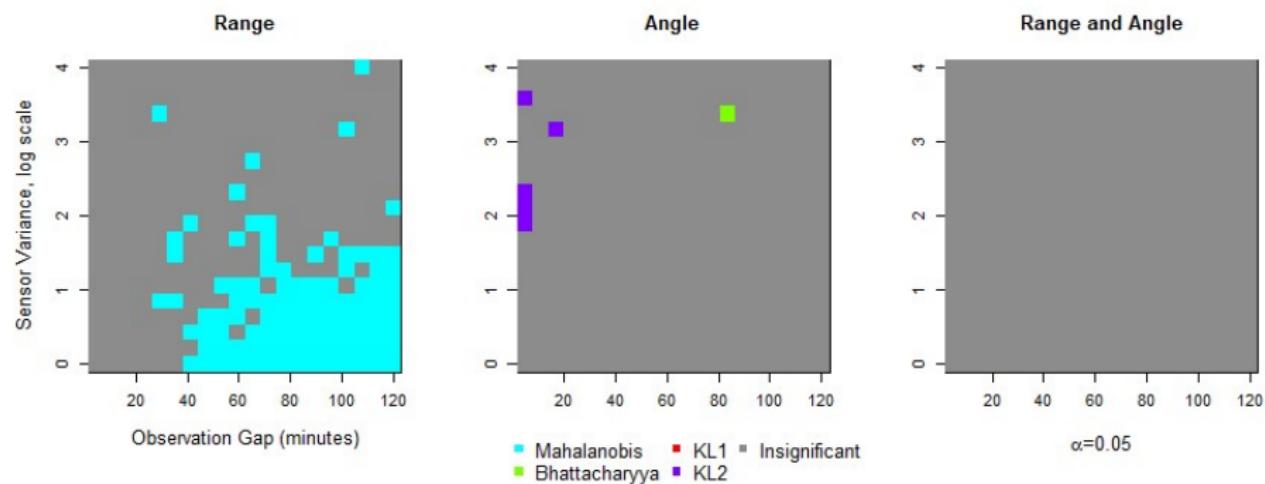


Figure 10. CLUSTER-OUT: Observation Gap vs Sensor Variance

CLUSTER-OUT: Results

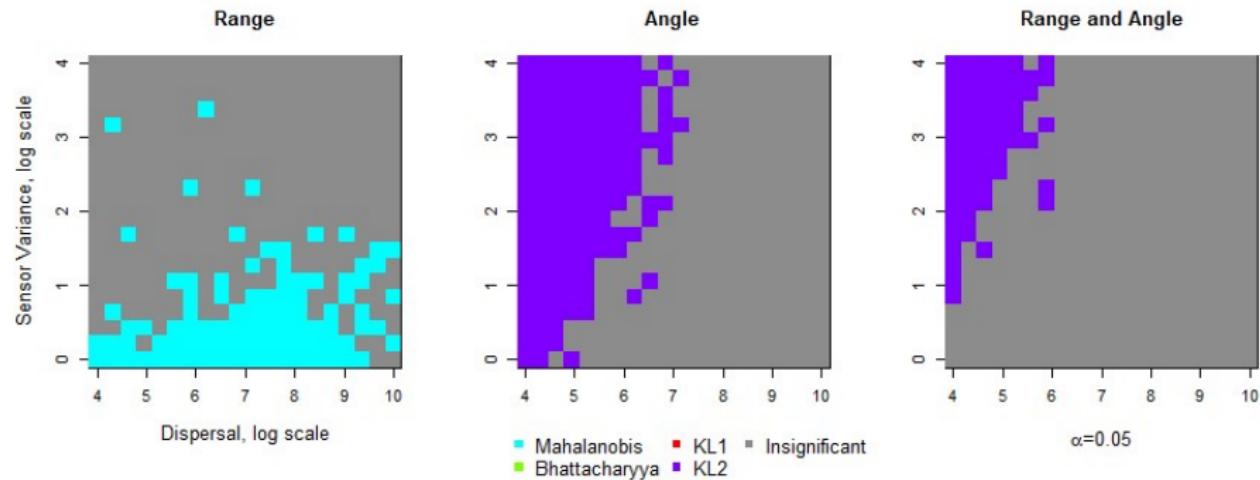


Figure 11. CLUSTER-OUT: Cluster Dispersal vs Sensor Variance

CLUSTER-OUT: Results

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- Range measurements: Mahalanobis wins for sensor variance $\log(\sigma_{meas}^2) < 1.5$, and in other regions hard to describe
- Angle measurements: KL2 wins for dispersal $\log(\sigma_r^2) < 6.5$
- Range and angle measurements: KL2 wins for dispersal $\log(\sigma_r^2) < 5.5$

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- For each metric and modality, use LASSO to determine 3 most impactful parameters
- Dispersal and sensor variance appear in all models
- Altitude appears 7 out of the 12 times, with observation gap appearing 5 times

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- Will run finer pairwise investigation on altitude, dispersal, and sensor variance

CLUSTER-IN: Results

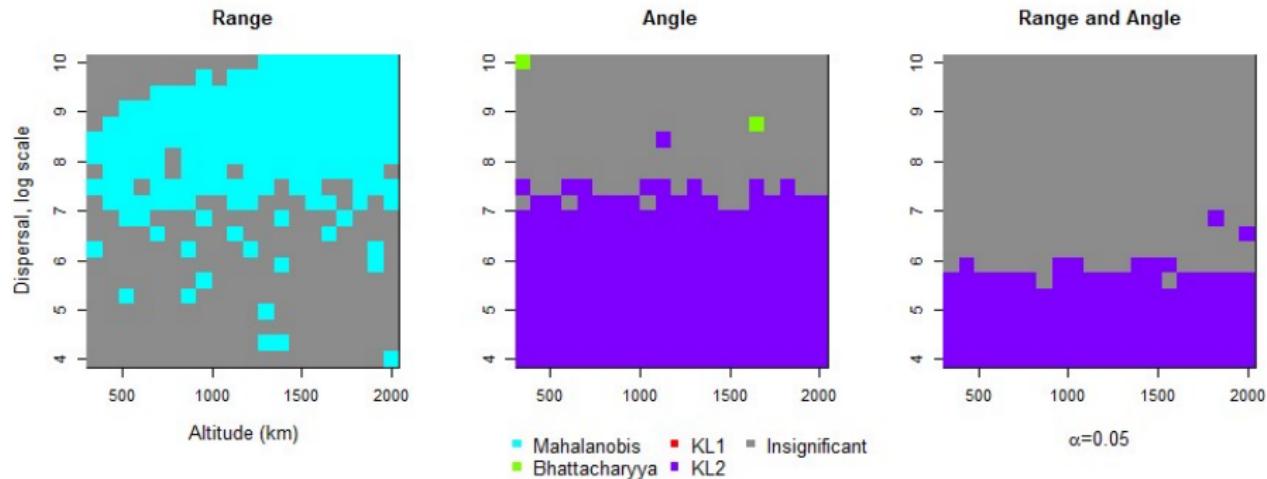


Figure 12. CLUSTER-IN: Altitude vs Cluster Dispersal

CLUSTER-IN: Results

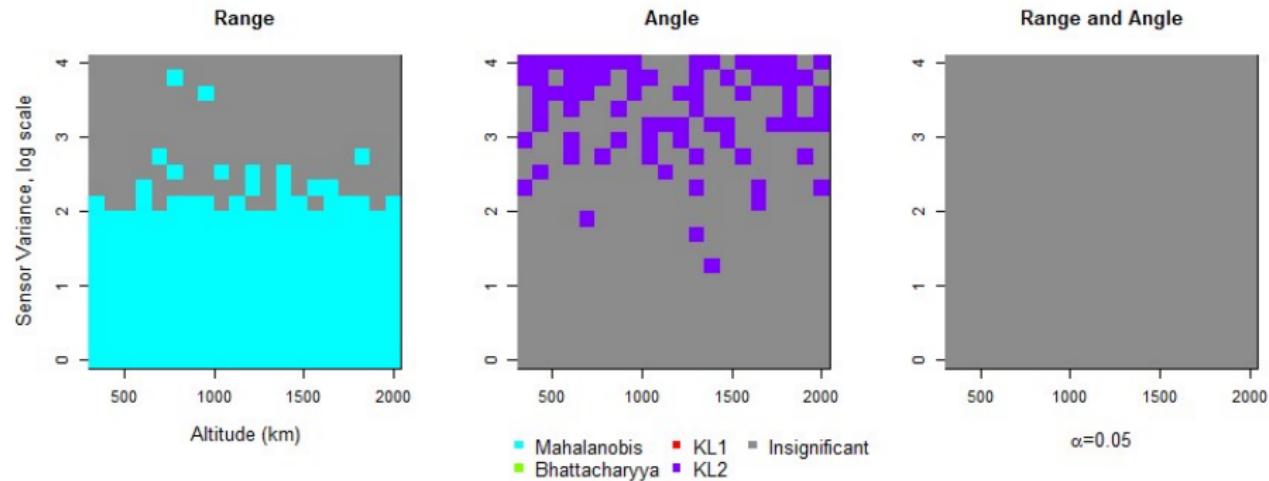


Figure 13. CLUSTER-IN: Altitude vs Sensor Variance

CLUSTER-IN: Results

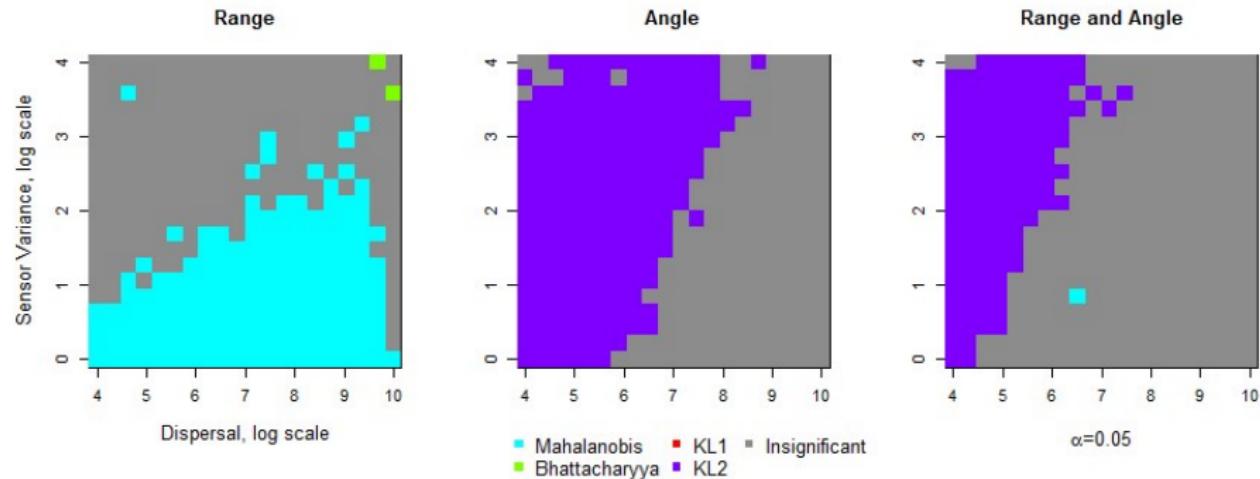


Figure 14. CLUSTER-IN: Cluster Dispersal vs Sensor Variance

CLUSTER-IN: Results

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- Angle measurements: KL2 wins for dispersal $\log(\sigma_r^2) < 7$, any altitude, and sensor variance $\log(\sigma_{meas}^2) > 2$
- Range and angle measurements: KL2 wins for dispersal $\log(\sigma_r^2) < 6$ and any altitude

OPTIMAL-CONTROL-DISTANCE

- Same experiment setup as CLUSTER-IN, but only with < 5 satellites
- Perform object correlation in state space
- Consider only Mahalanobis and OCD

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- Perform object correlation in state space
- Consider only Mahalanobis and OCD
- OCD always achieves 100% accuracy, while Mahalanobis achieves varied results across trials
- Due to time constraints, it is difficult to examine the behavior of OCD for larger clusters

SIMULATING-LEO: Experiment Specifications

- A more realistic space environment: 1000 satellites
- Generate 30 clusters of 25 satellites
 - 15 clusters as in CLUSTER-OUT
 - 15 clusters as in CLUSTER-IN
- Generate 250 single satellites with randomly selected elliptical orbits
- Run 30 trials of this test, averaging the success rates across trials for each metric and modality

SIMULATING-LEO: Results

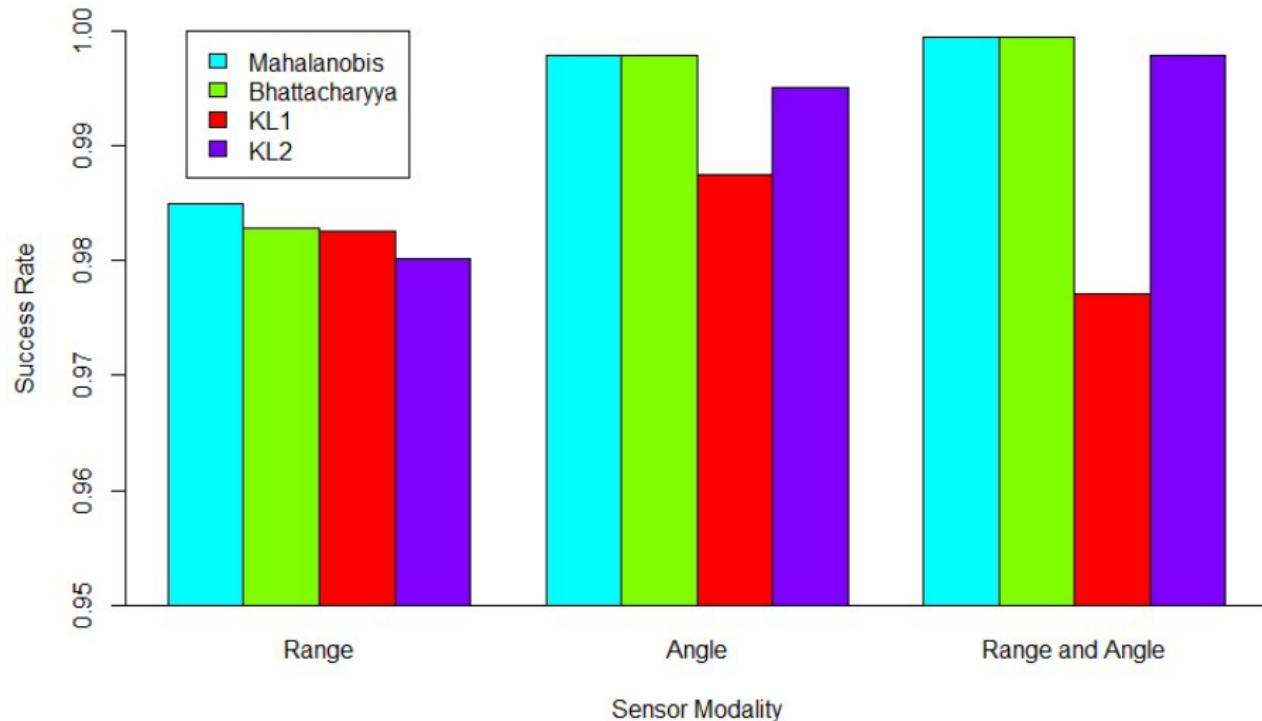


Figure 15. SIMULATING-LEO

SIMULATING-LEO: Results

- Success rates for range are lower than success rates for angle and range-and-angle by $\approx 1\%$

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- Bhattacharyya performs surprisingly well, given its absence in previous figures
- For range KL1 beats KL2 slightly, while KL2 beats KL1 by a wider margin for angle and range-and-angle

Conclusion

General Results

- CLUSTER-IN and CLUSTER-OUT:
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General Results

- CLUSTER-IN and CLUSTER-OUT:
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- OPTIMAL-CONTROL-DISTANCE: OCD performs very well, but is extremely slow computationally
- SIMULATING-LEO: Mahalanobis is consistently the best metric

Deliverables

- Simulation framework
 - Dynamical model
 - Satellite and sensor classes
 - Distance metrics and object correlation

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Future Work

- Efficiently implementing optimal control distance
- More realistic dynamical system
- Range and angle rate sensors

Acknowledgements



Questions?

References

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Figures

Figure 1. Catalogued Objects in Space Surveillance Network. G. Peterson, M. Sorge, and W. Ailor, *Space Traffic Management in the Age of New Space*, tech. rep., The Aerospace Corporation, April 2018.

Figure 2. Collision Probabilities. G. Peterson, M. Sorge, and W. Ailor, *Space Traffic Management in the Age of New Space*, tech. rep., The Aerospace Corporation, April 2018.

Figure 5 Joshua Cesa

(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Azimut_altitude.svg),
“Azimut altitude”, Text,

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Figures 3, 4, and 6-15 were generated by our own simulation framework, using Plot.ly and R.