

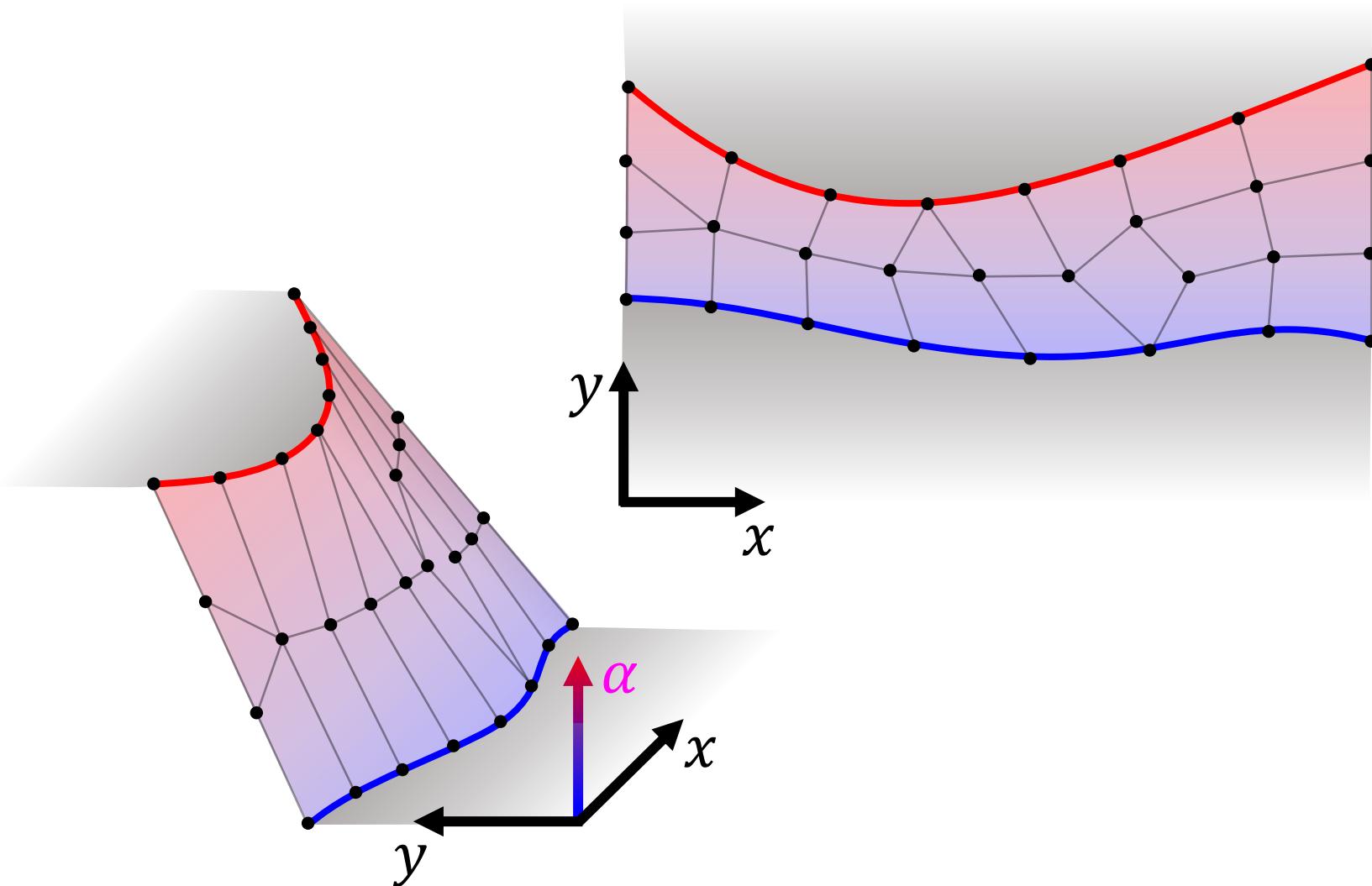
Brian Doran Giffin
Assistant Professor
Structural Engineering & Mechanics
Oklahoma State University



July 2-4, 2025

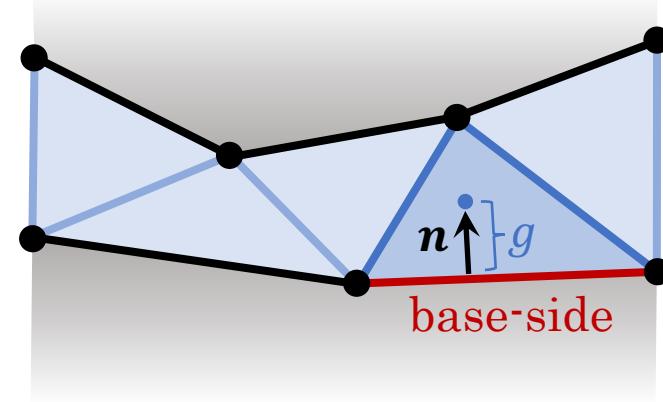
8th International
Conference on
Computational Contact
Mechanics

Hyper-dimensional Gap Finite Elements for the Enforcement of Frictionless Contact Constraints

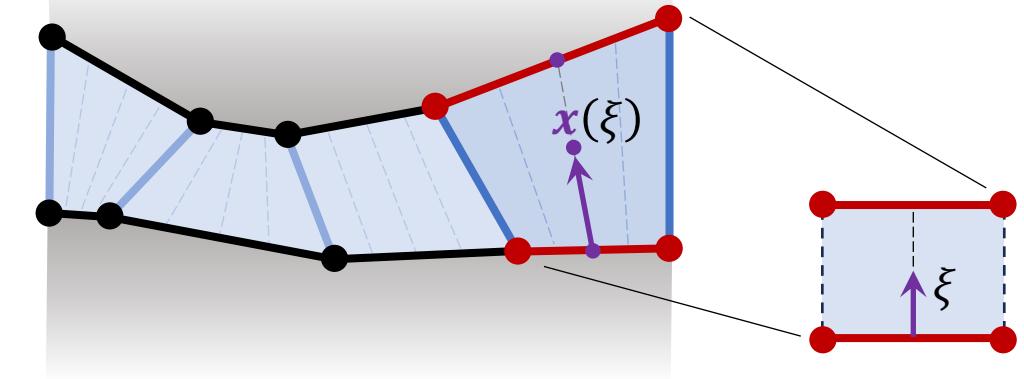


Comparison of volume-based contact discretization methods

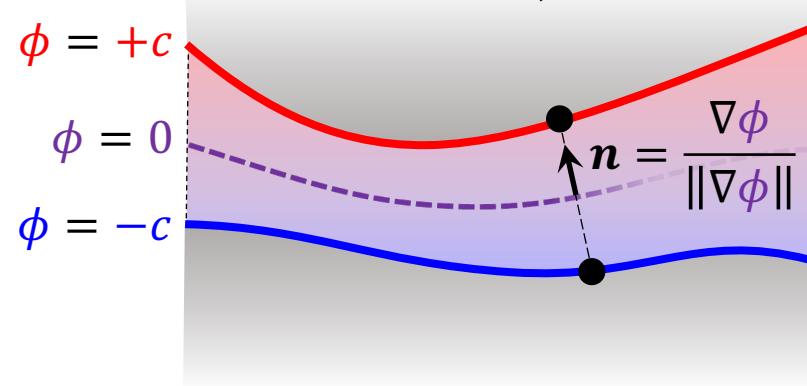
Contact domain method
(Oliver et al., 2009)



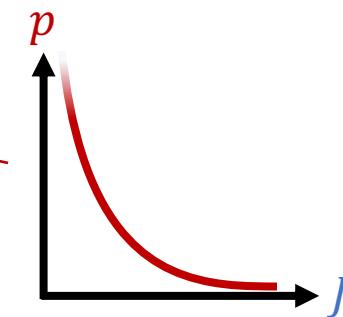
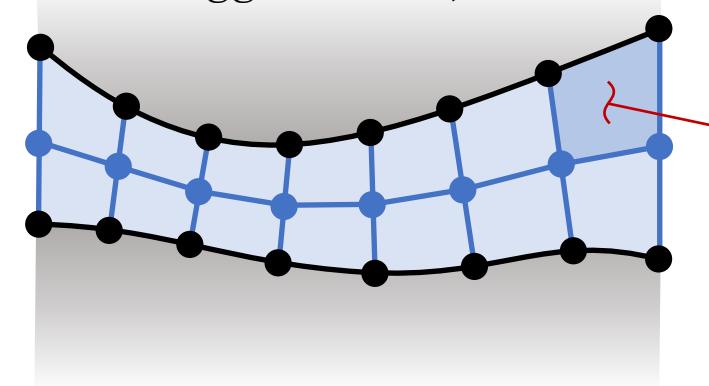
Contact layer elements
(Weißenfels & Wriggers, 2015)



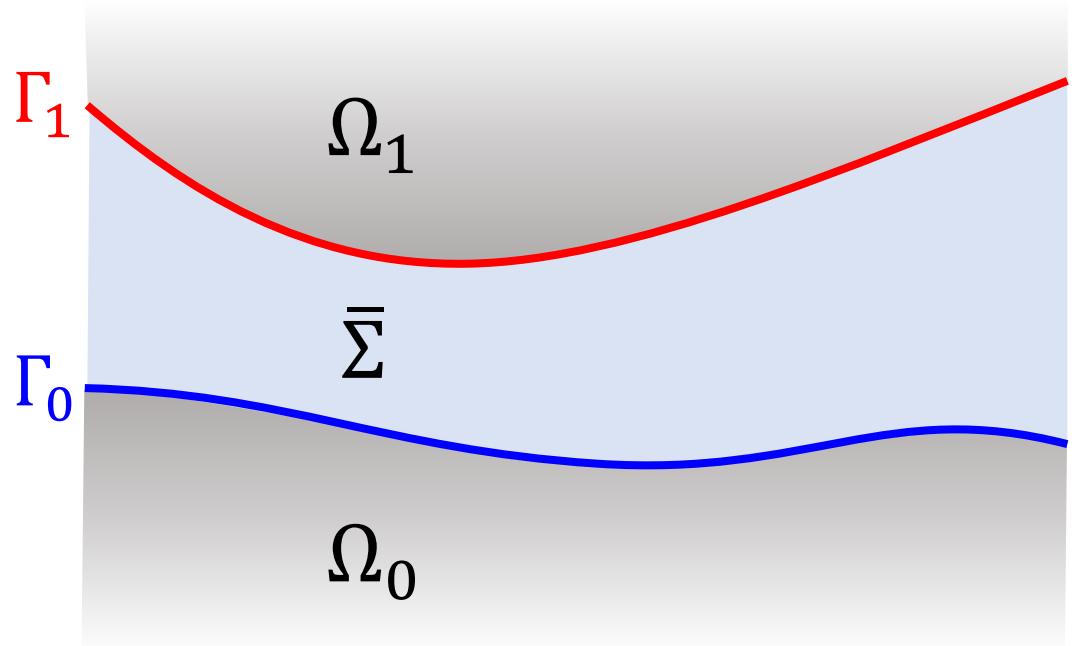
Level set method
(Chi et al., 2014)



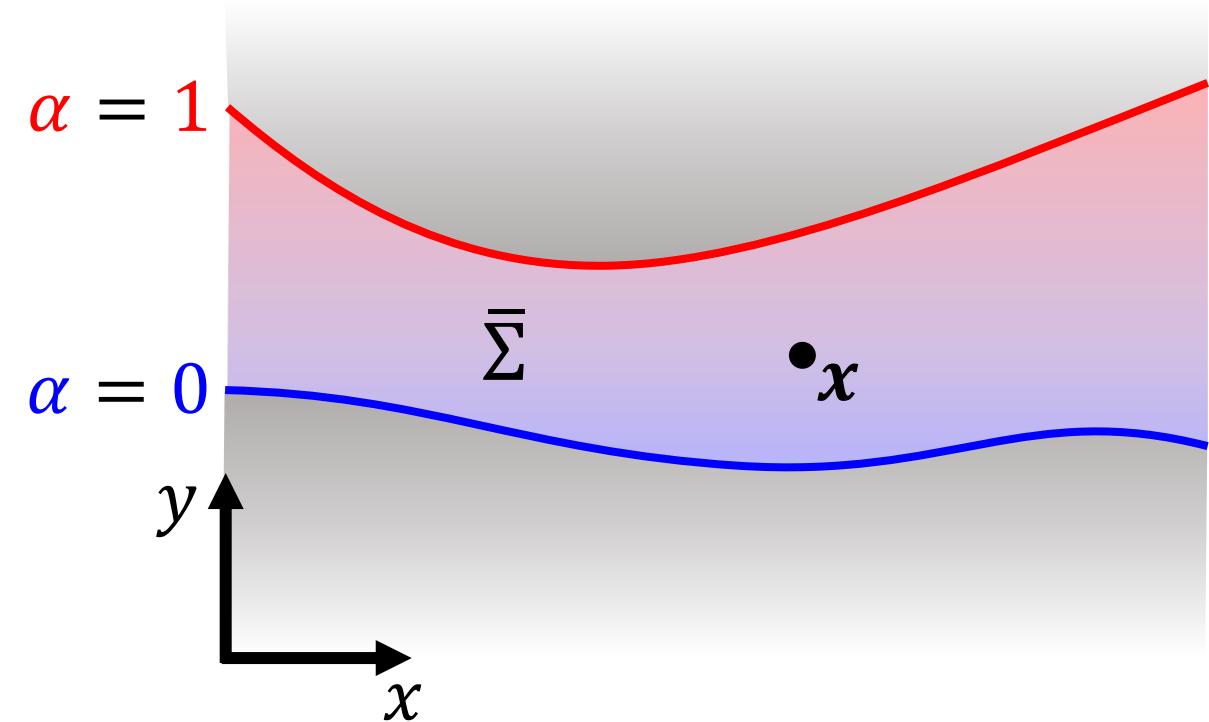
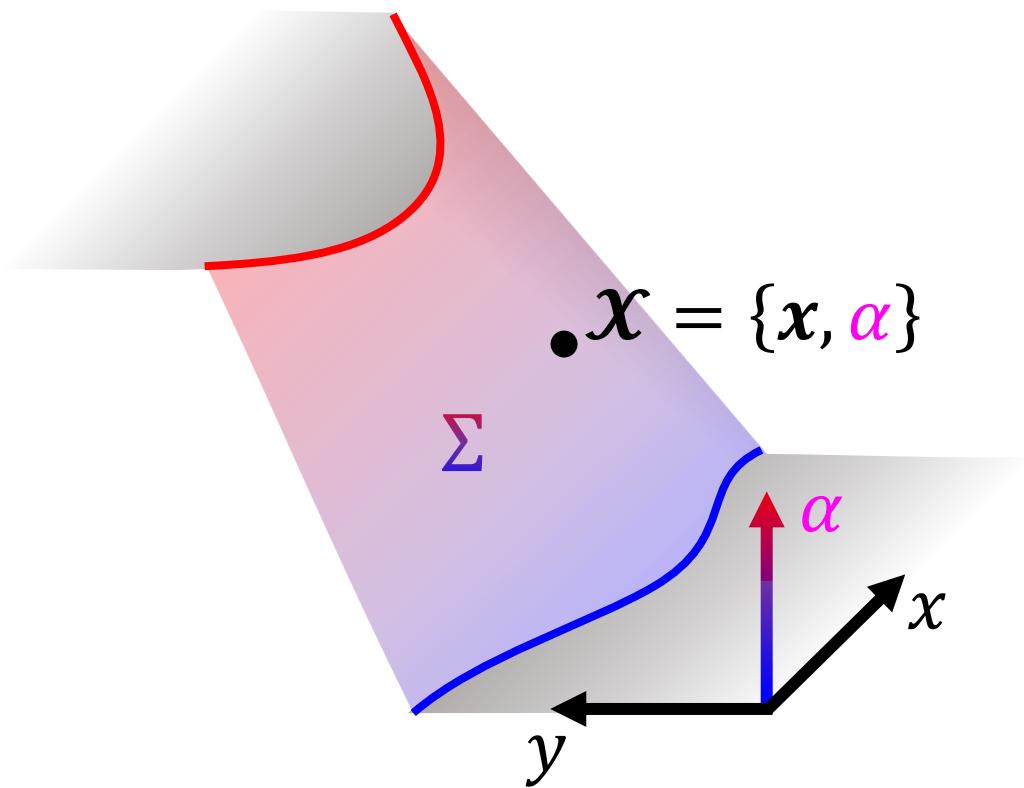
Third medium contact
(Wriggers et al., 2013)



Define an intermediate volume $\bar{\Sigma}$ between two bodies in unilateral contact



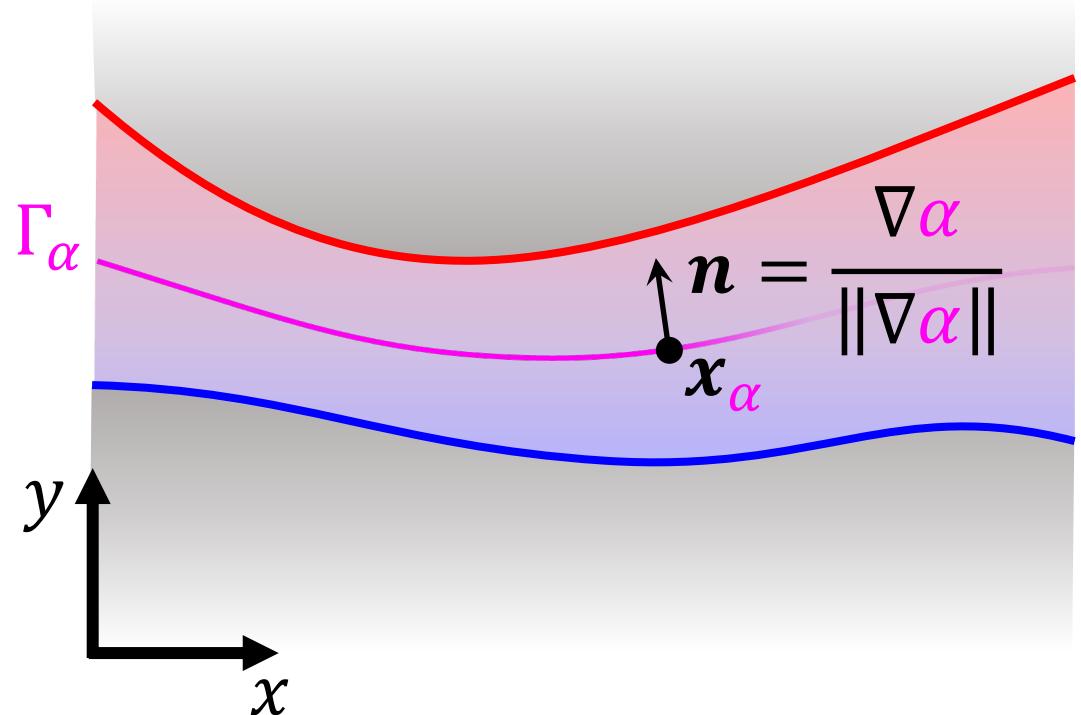
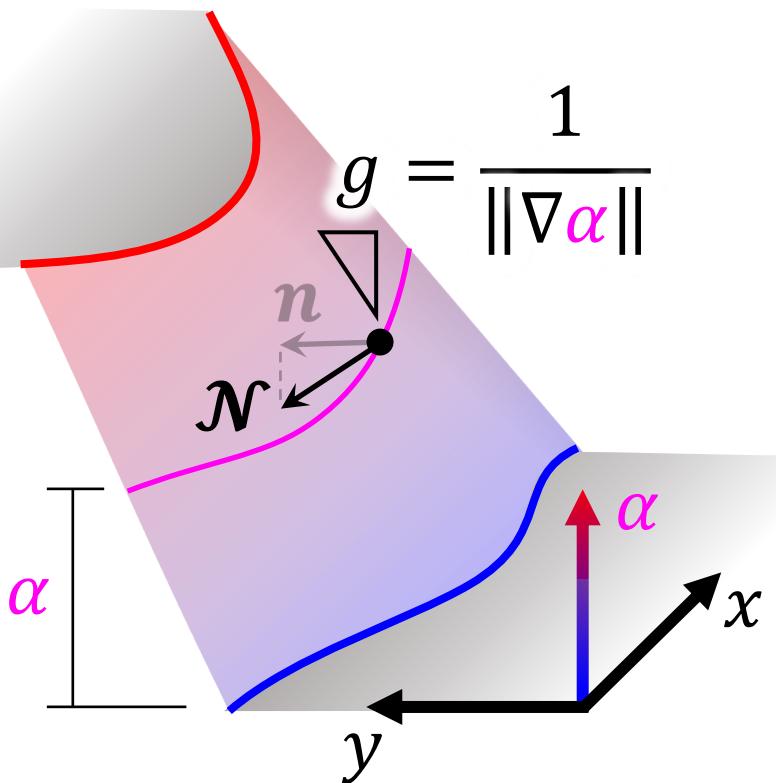
Introduce an additional coordinate $\alpha \in [0,1]$ such that $\Sigma \subset \mathbb{R}^{d+1}$ represents a d -dimensional manifold with hyper-dimensional coordinates $\mathcal{X} = \{x, \alpha\} \in \Sigma$



The hypersurface normal vector $\mathcal{N} \in \mathbb{R}^{d+1}$ is defined such that its orthographic projection $n \in \mathbb{R}^d$ is the unit vector normal to the level surface $\Gamma_\alpha \subset \mathbb{R}^d$

Hypersurface normal:

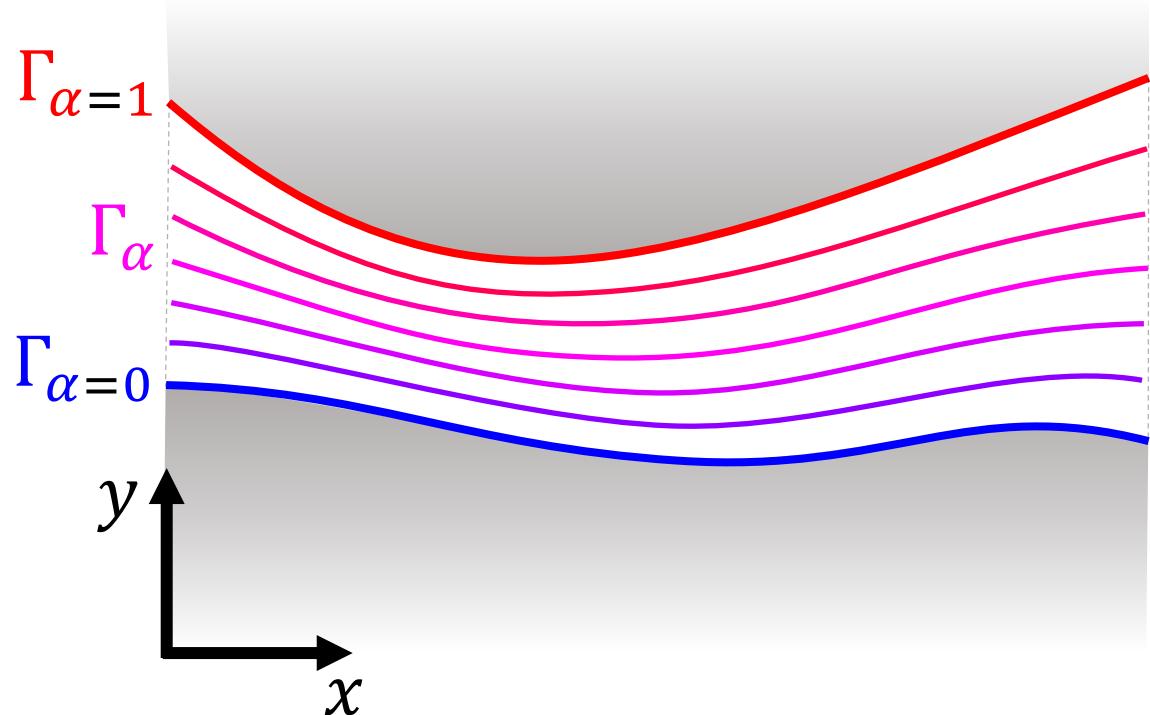
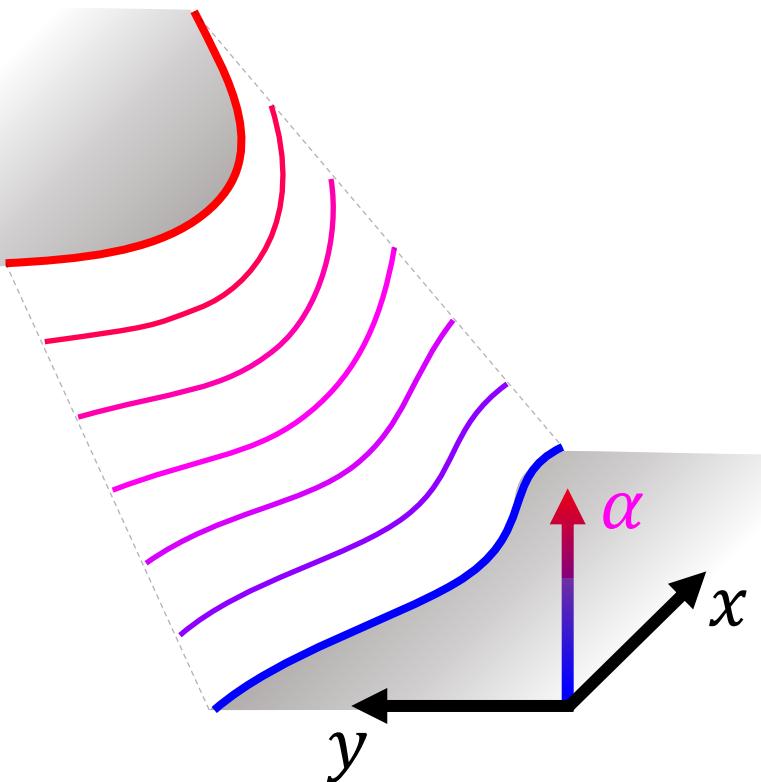
$$\mathcal{N} = \{n, -g\}$$



The family of surfaces Γ_α parameterized by α defines a *foliation* of the intermediate volume

Co-area formula:
(Federer, 1959)

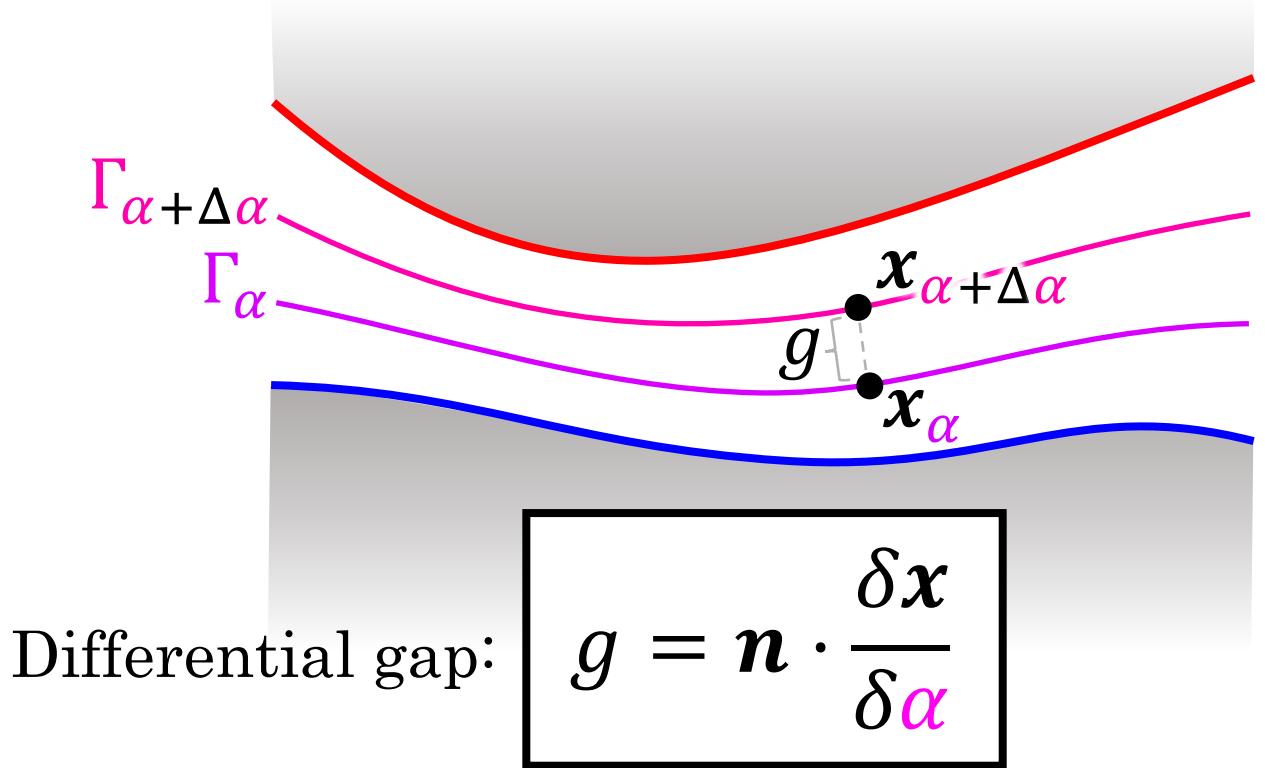
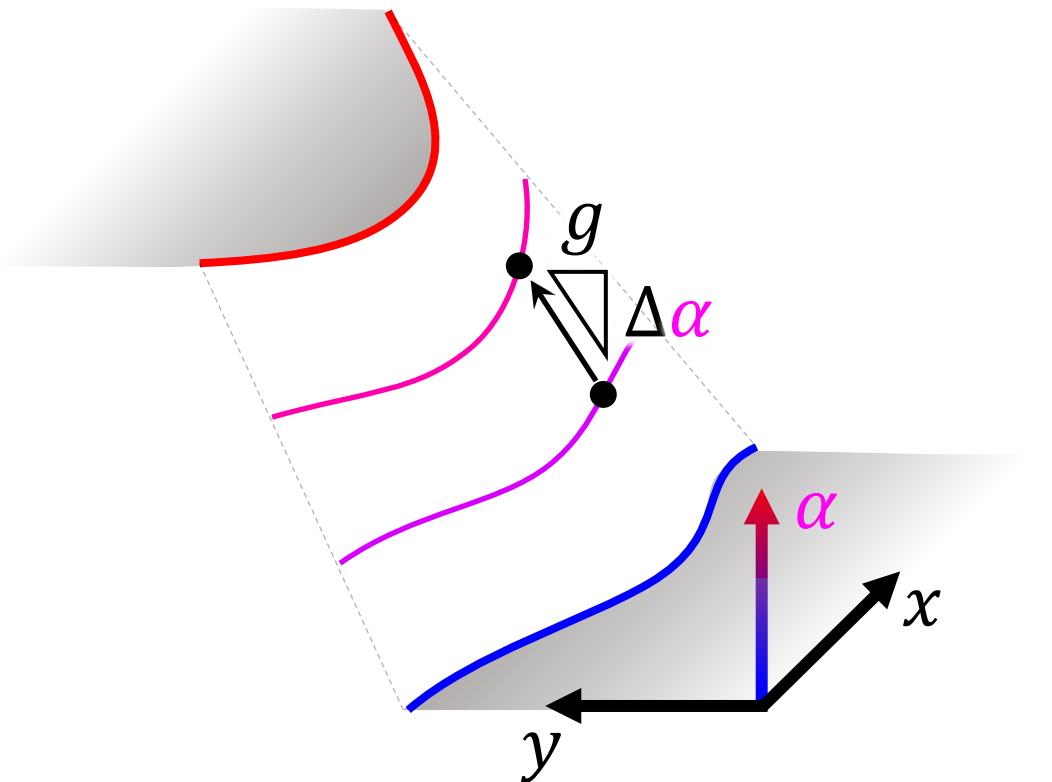
$$\int_{\bar{\Sigma}} f(x) \|\nabla \alpha\| dV = \int_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1} \left(\int_{\Gamma_\alpha} f(x_\alpha) d\Gamma_\alpha \right) d\alpha$$



Definition of the $\delta/\delta\alpha$ -derivative (Hadamard, 1903) via the calculus of moving surfaces (Grinfeld, 2010)

$\delta/\delta\alpha$ -derivative:

$$\frac{\delta f}{\delta \alpha} = \lim_{\Delta\alpha \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_{\alpha+\Delta\alpha}) - f(x_\alpha)}{\Delta\alpha}$$



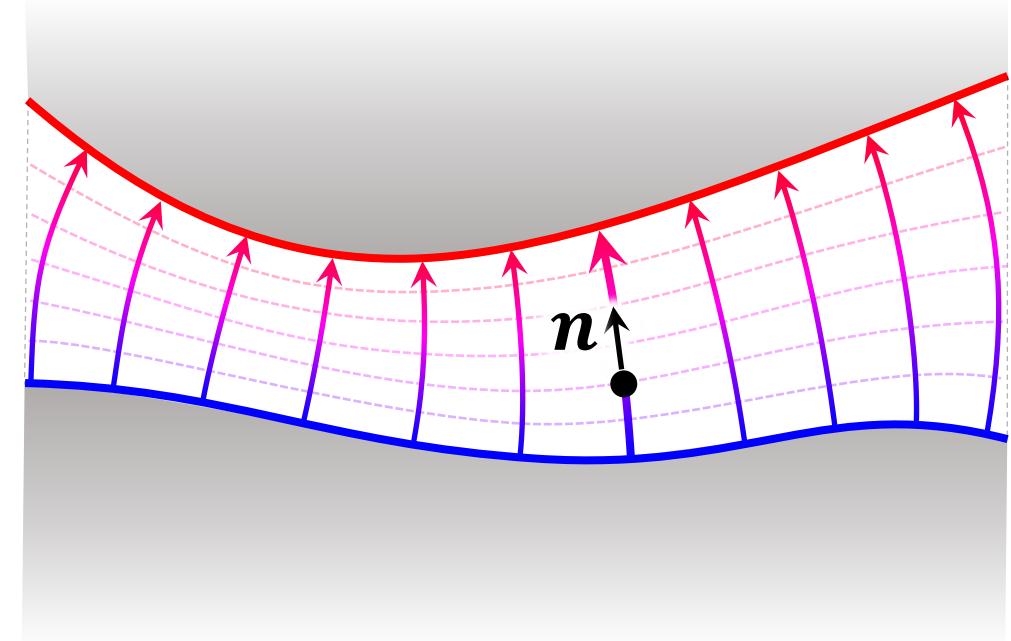
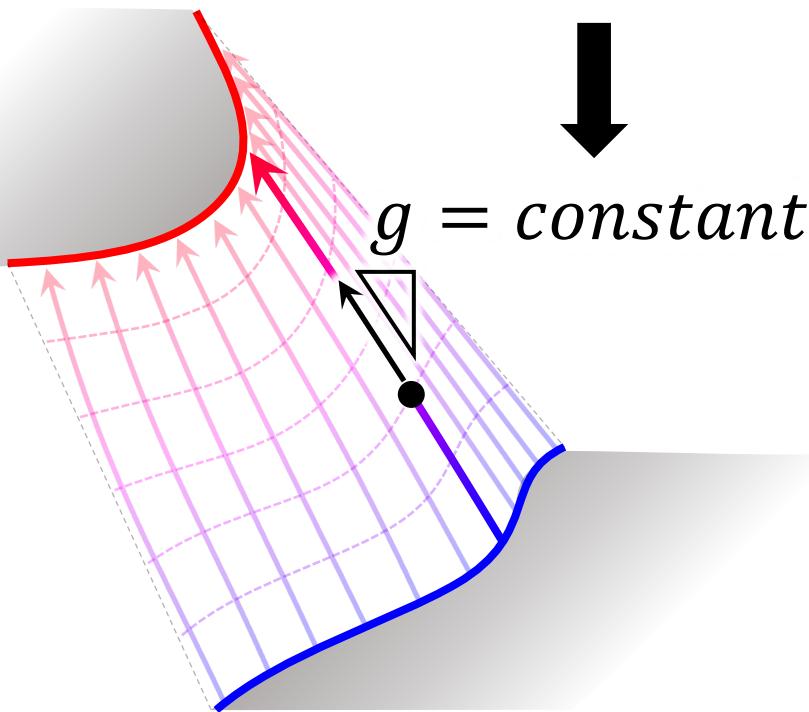
The hypersurface is uniquely defined such that g is *constant* along all gradient flow curves tangent to n

Zero normal curvature:

$$\frac{\delta g}{\delta \alpha} = 0$$



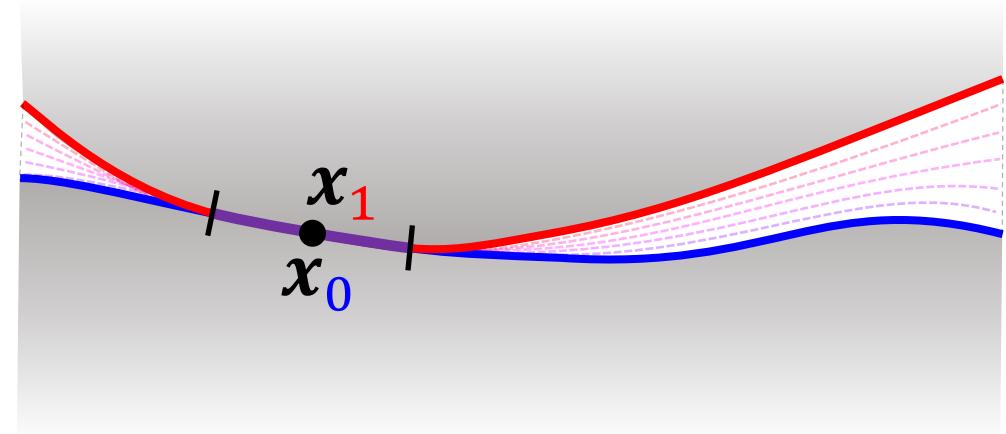
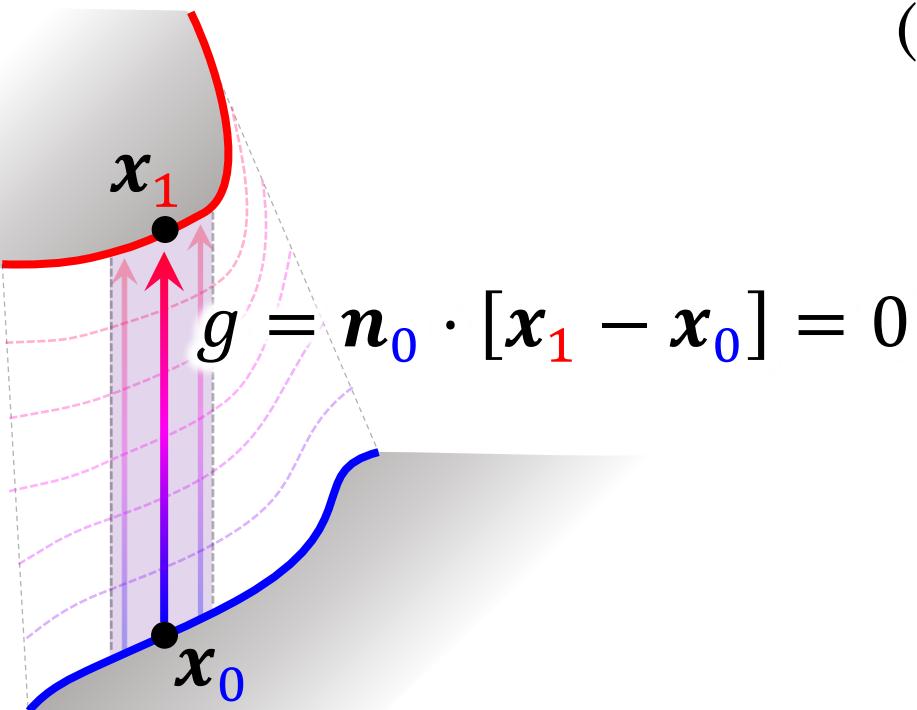
$$\min_x \int_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1} \left(\int_{\Gamma_\alpha} g^2 d\Gamma_\alpha \right) d\alpha$$



If $g = 0$ over a subset of Σ , projected point pairs on opposing surfaces will be joined by *straight* geodesic curves traversing the (locally “ruled”) hypersurface

If $g = 0 \rightarrow \frac{\delta n}{\delta \alpha} = 0$ gradient flow curves have *zero curvature*

(TY Thomas, 1957)

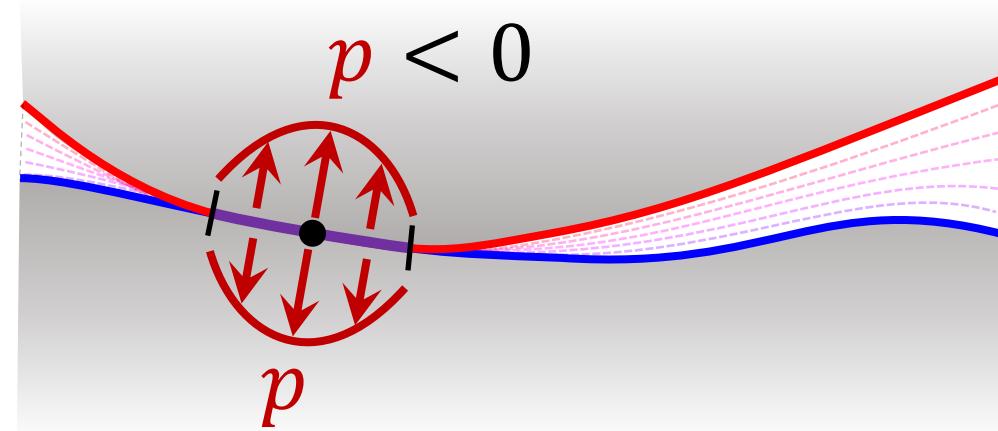
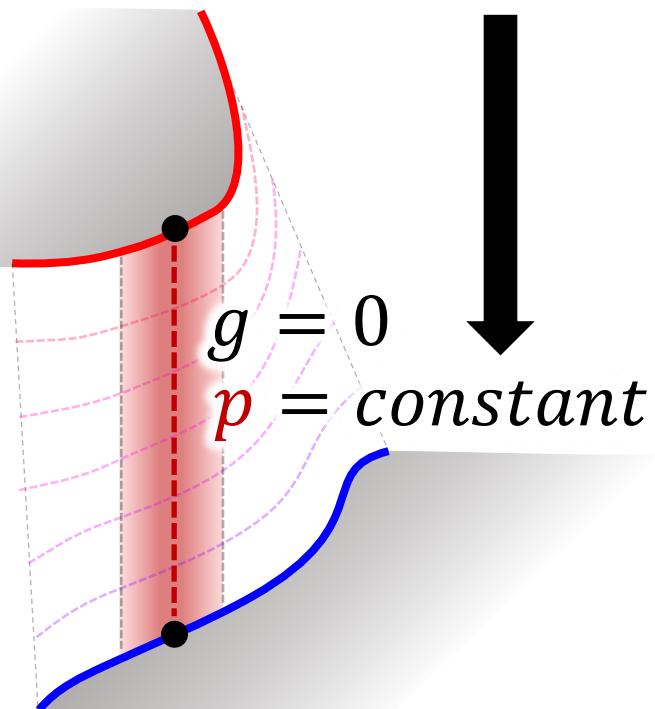


Introduce an extended *contact pressure field* p
 defined over the hypersurface, subject to the
Signorini conditions, and *regularity constraints*

$$\frac{\delta g}{\delta \alpha} = 0$$

$$\frac{\delta p}{\delta \alpha} = 0$$

$$g \geq 0 \quad p \leq 0 \quad pg = 0$$

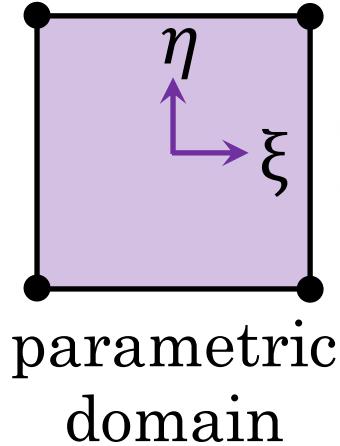
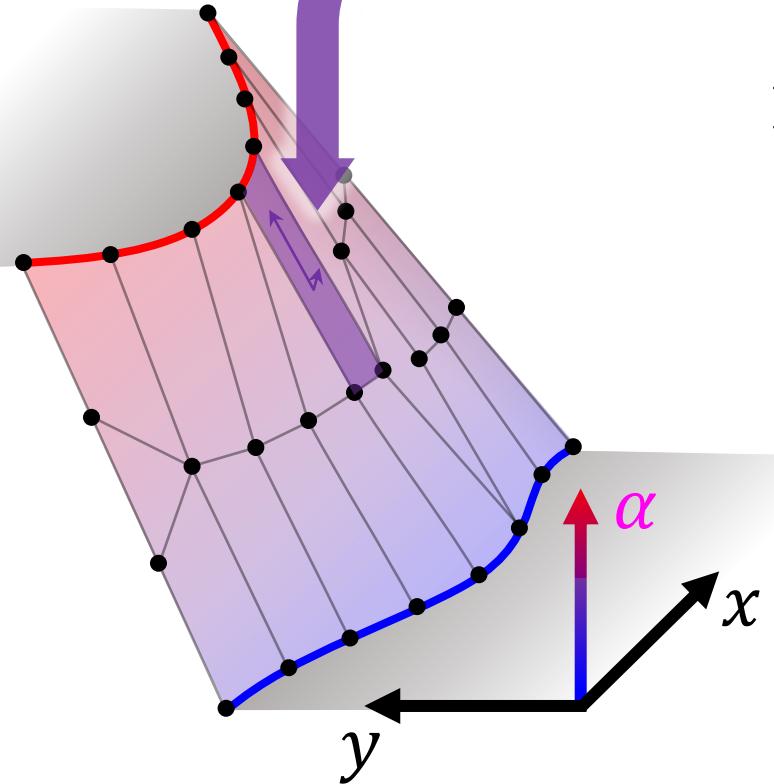


Hyper-dimensional formulations of frictionless contact are direct analogs of classical contact enforcement methods

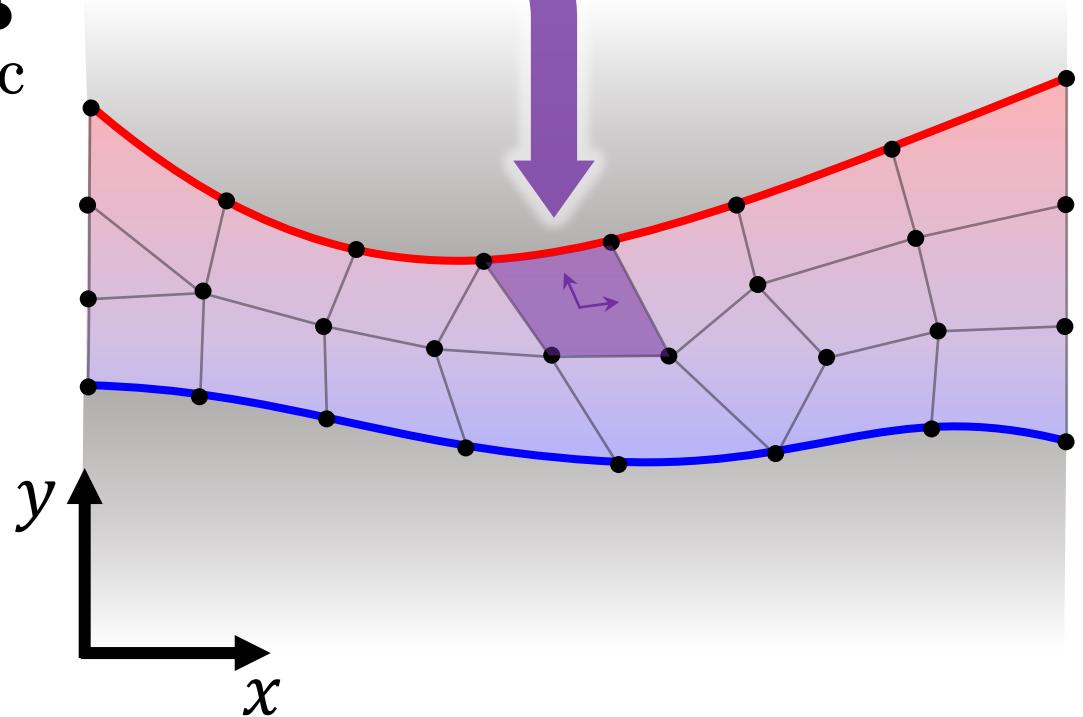
	Integration over a single <i>reference surface</i> Γ_0	Integration over the <i>foliated hypersurface</i> $\Sigma = \{\Gamma_\alpha\}_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1}$
Gap function:	$g = \mathbf{n}_0 \cdot [\mathbf{x}_1 - \mathbf{x}_0] \rightarrow$	$g = \mathbf{n} \cdot \frac{\delta \mathbf{x}}{\delta \alpha}$
Mortar method:	$\Pi + \int_{\Gamma_0} \cancel{p} g \, d\Gamma_0 \quad \text{Lagrange multiplier} \rightarrow$	$\Pi + \int_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1} \left(\int_{\Gamma_\alpha} p g \, d\Gamma_\alpha \right) d\alpha$
Penalty method:	$\Pi + \frac{1}{2} \int_{\Gamma_0} \cancel{\kappa} \langle -g \rangle^2 \, d\Gamma_0 \quad \text{penalty parameter} \rightarrow$	$\Pi + \frac{1}{2} \int_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1} \left(\int_{\Gamma_\alpha} \kappa \langle -g \rangle^2 \, d\Gamma_\alpha \right) d\alpha$

Let the hypersurface coordinates be expressed in terms of a set of *parametric coordinates* $\xi \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ (e.g., using isoparametric finite elements)

$$x(\xi) = \sum_{\forall a} \varphi_a(\xi) x_a$$

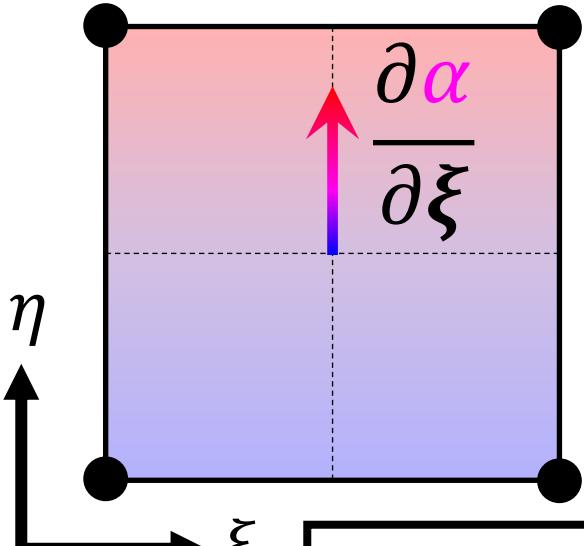


$$x(\xi) = \sum_{\forall a} \varphi_a(\xi) x_a$$



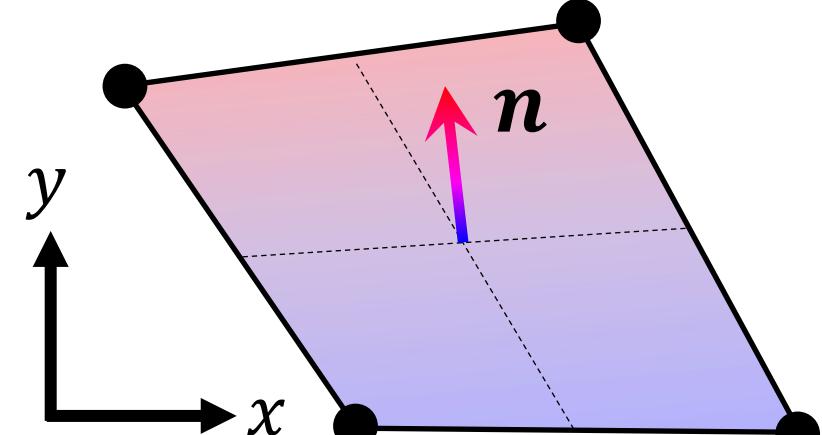
The Jacobian of the parametric map determines:

- (1) the normal n , gap g , and $\delta/\delta\alpha$ -derivative of ξ
- (2) integration over the foliated hypersurface



$$\mathbf{J} = \frac{\partial \mathbf{x}}{\partial \xi}$$

$$\mathcal{J} = \left\| \text{cof}(\mathbf{J}) \cdot \frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial \xi} \right\|$$



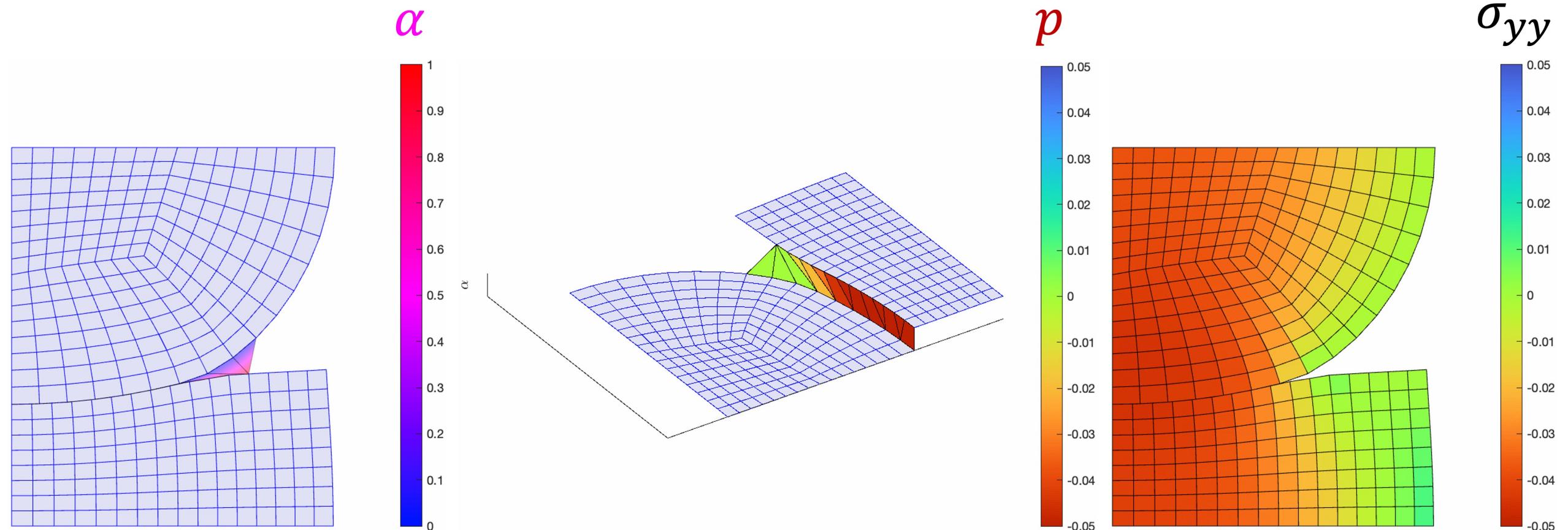
(1)

$\mathbf{n} = \frac{1}{\mathcal{J}} \text{cof}(\mathbf{J}) \cdot \frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial \xi}$	$g = \frac{1}{\mathcal{J}} \det(\mathbf{J})$	$\frac{\delta \xi}{\delta \alpha} = \mathbf{n} \cdot \frac{1}{\mathcal{J}} \text{cof}(\mathbf{J})$
--	--	--

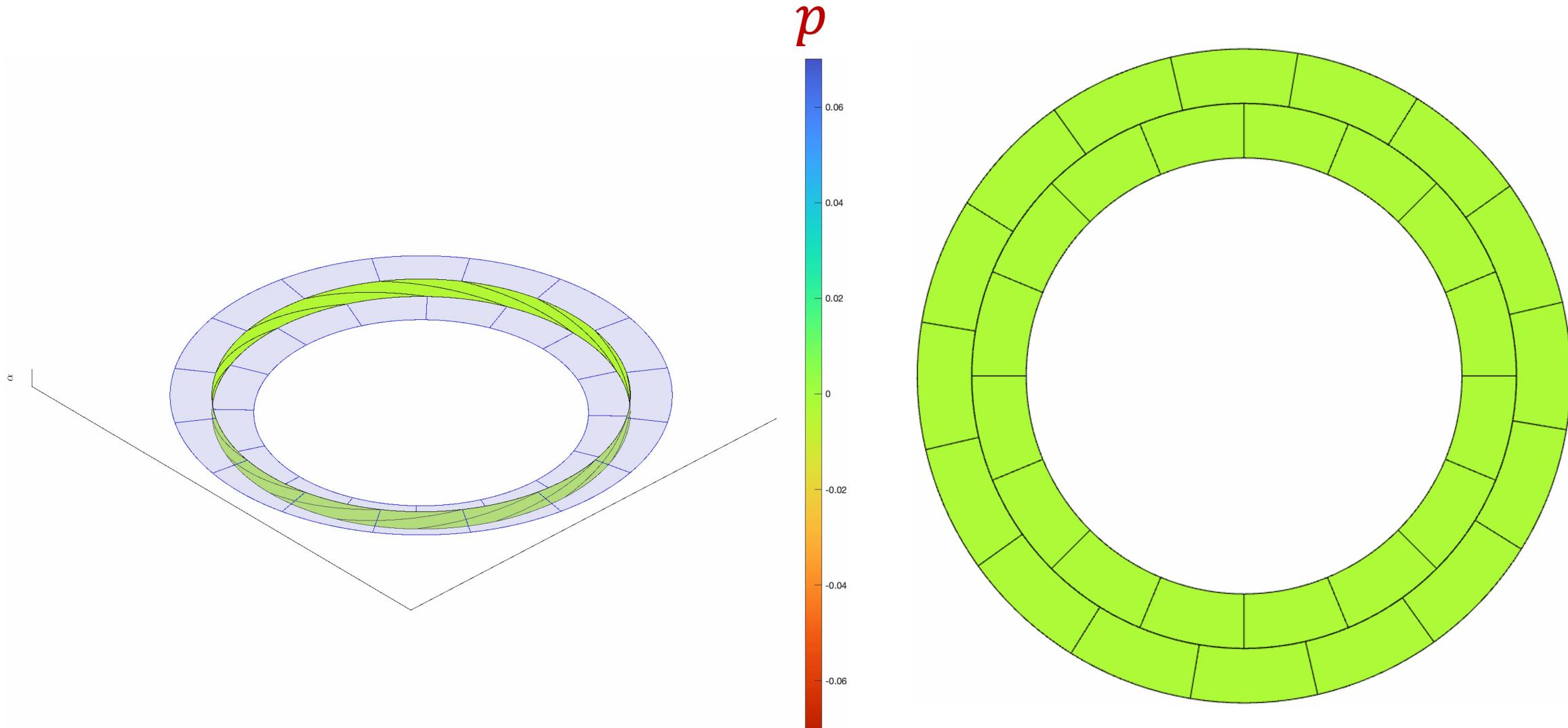
(2)

$\int_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1} \left(\int_{\Gamma_\alpha} f(x, \alpha) d\Gamma_\alpha \right) d\alpha = \int_{\square} f(\xi) \mathcal{J} d\square$

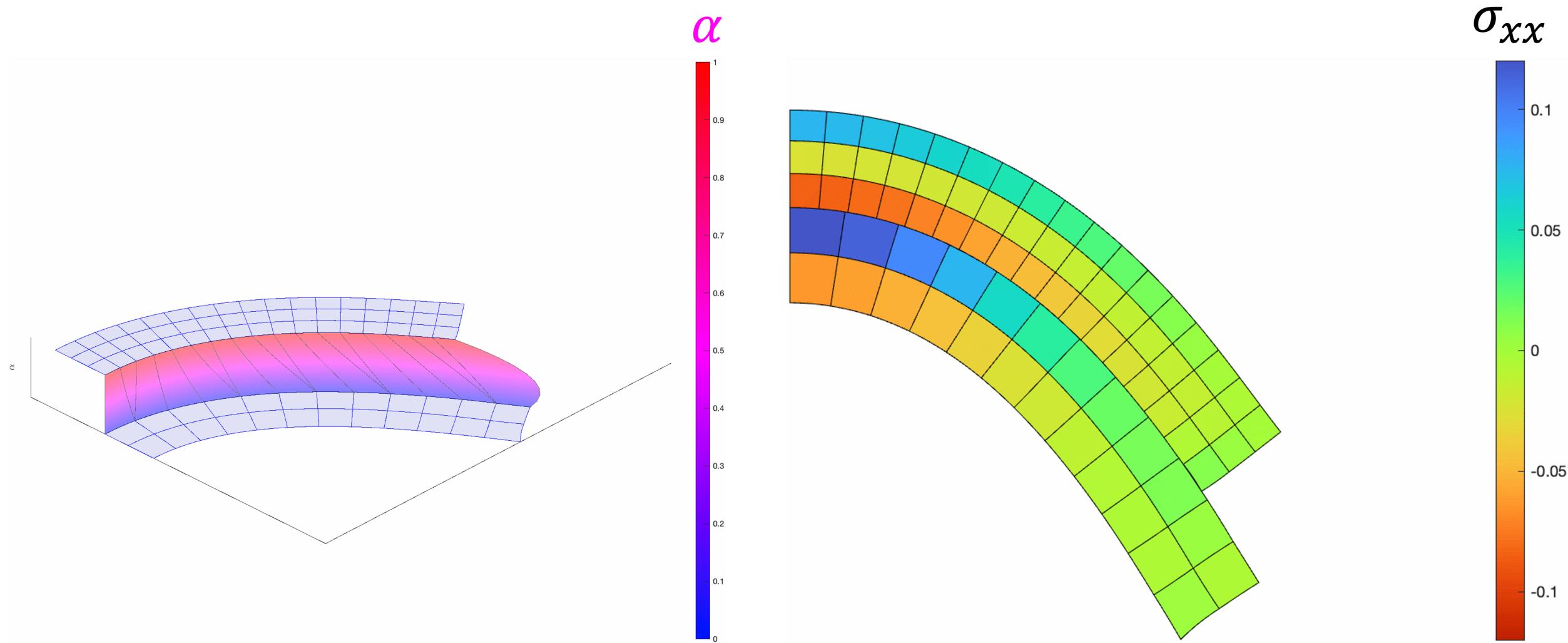
Demonstration of penalty-based hyper-dimensional frictionless contact enforcement



Demonstration of penalty-based hyper-dimensional frictionless contact enforcement



Demonstration of sliding-only hyper-dimensional frictionless mortar contact



Define $\frac{\delta}{\delta x} = \left\{ \bar{\nabla}, \frac{\delta}{\delta \alpha} \right\}$ as the $d + 1$ decomposition of the *hypersurface gradient operator*

$\delta/\delta\alpha$ -derivative:

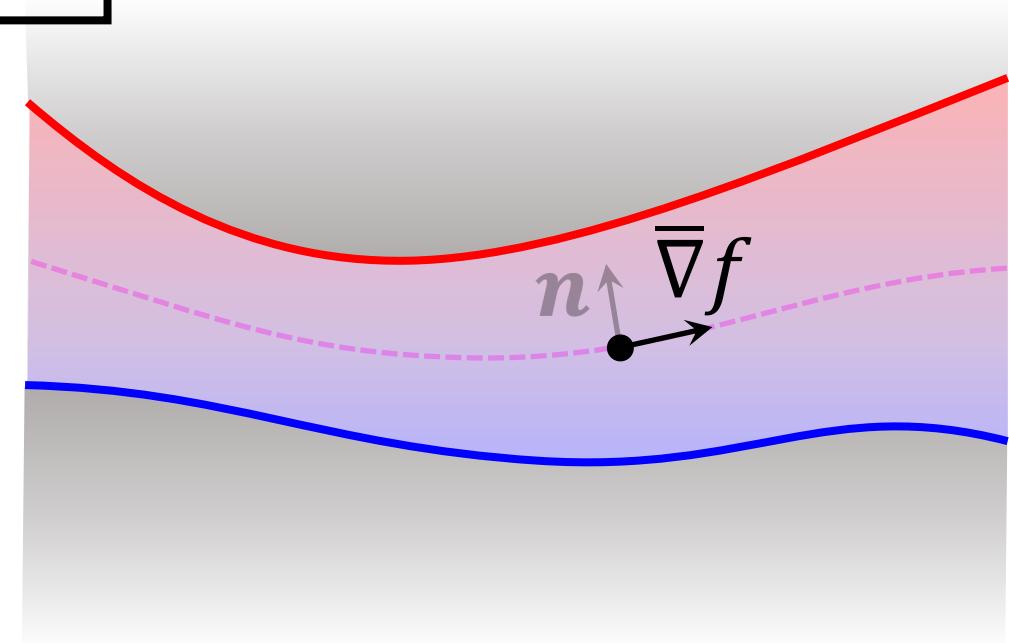
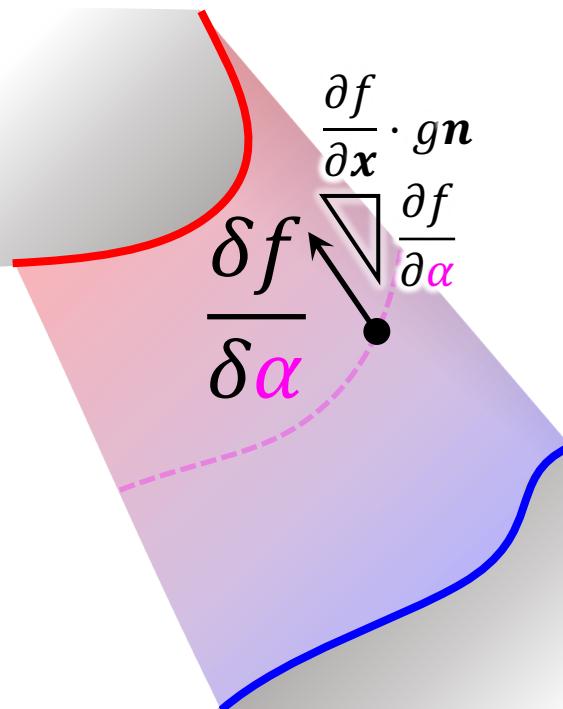
$$\frac{\delta f}{\delta \alpha} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial \alpha} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \cdot g n \rightarrow$$

Hypersurface gradient

$$\frac{\delta f}{\delta x} = \left\{ \bar{\nabla} f, \frac{\delta f}{\delta \alpha} \right\}$$

Surface gradient:

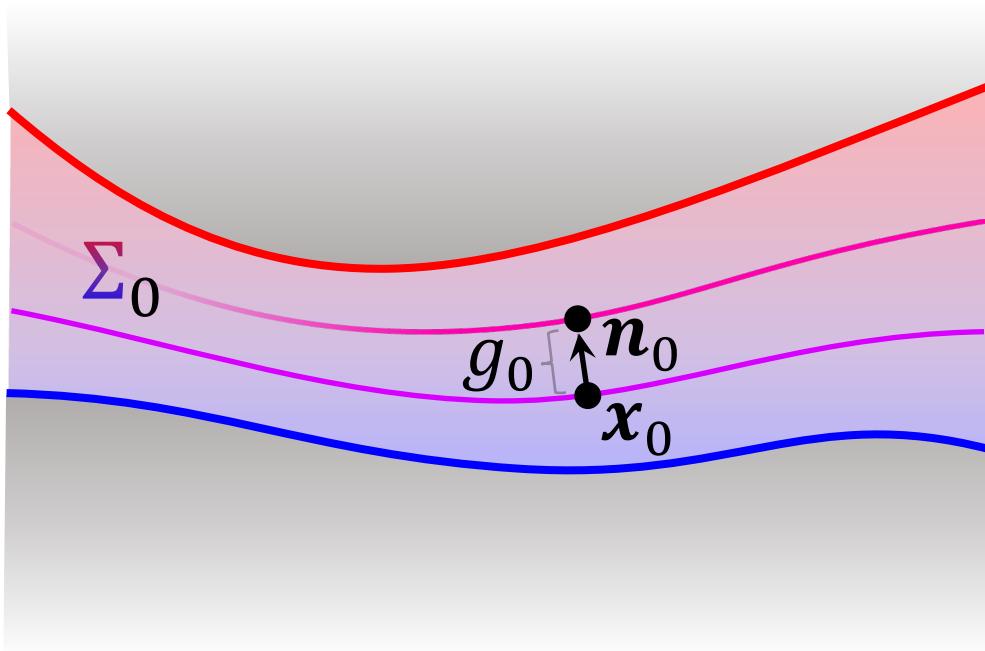
$$\bar{\nabla} f = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \cdot [1 - n \otimes n]$$



Suppose there exists a mapping $\chi(t) : \Sigma_0 \mapsto \Sigma(t)$ relating the *undeformed* coordinates $\mathcal{X}_0 \in \Sigma_0$ to the *deformed* coordinates $\mathcal{X}(t) \in \Sigma(t)$ of the hypersurface

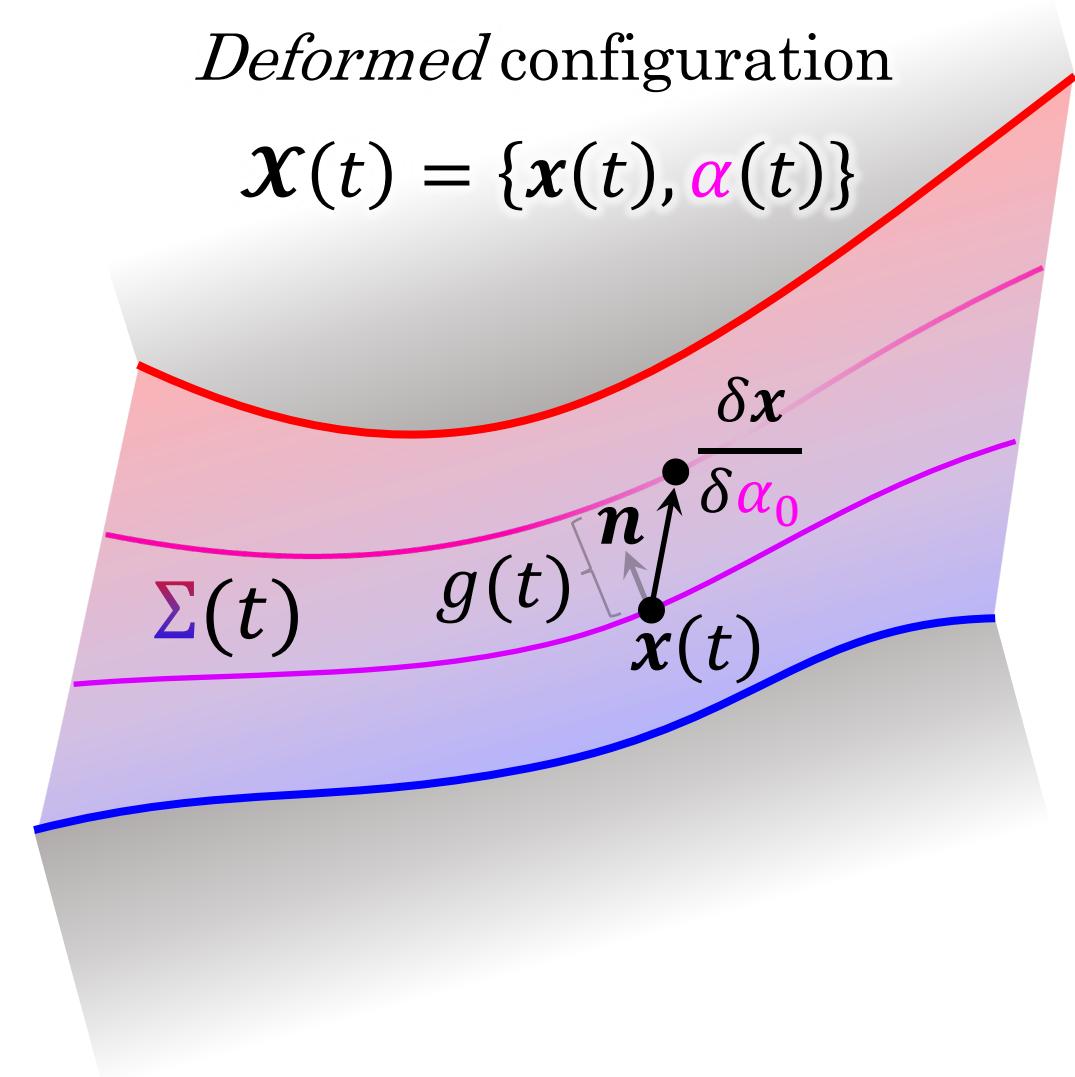
Undeformed configuration

$$\mathcal{X}_0 = \{x_0, \alpha_0\}$$



Deformed configuration

$$\mathcal{X}(t) = \{x(t), \alpha(t)\}$$



Define the *hypersurface deformation gradient*, decomposed in a block-structured format:

Hypersurface deformation gradient:

$$\mathcal{F} = \frac{\delta \boldsymbol{x}}{\delta \boldsymbol{x}_0} + \boldsymbol{n} \otimes \mathcal{N}_0$$

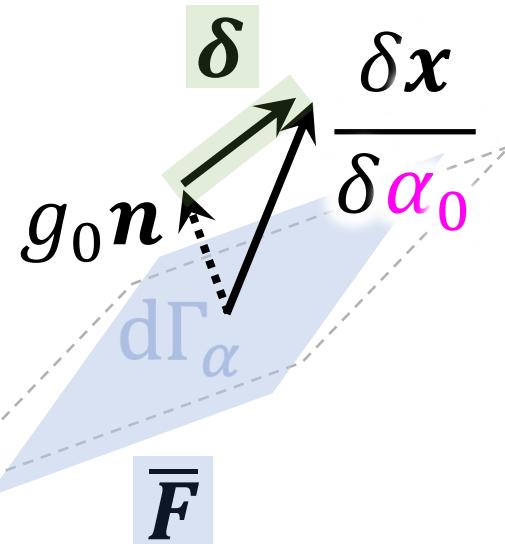
$$\mathcal{F} = \begin{bmatrix} \bar{\mathbf{F}} & \boldsymbol{\delta} \\ \bar{\nabla}_0 \boldsymbol{\alpha} & \delta \boldsymbol{\alpha} / \delta \boldsymbol{\alpha}_0 \end{bmatrix}$$

Undeformed:

$$g_0 \boldsymbol{n}_0$$

$$d\Gamma_{\boldsymbol{\alpha}_0}$$

Deformed:



Differential displacement vector:

$$\boldsymbol{\delta} = \frac{\delta \boldsymbol{x}}{\delta \boldsymbol{\alpha}_0} - g_0 \boldsymbol{n}$$

Surface deformation gradient:

$$\bar{\mathbf{F}} = \bar{\nabla}_0 \boldsymbol{x} + \boldsymbol{n} \otimes \mathbf{n}_0$$

The *hypersurface velocity gradient* is similarly decomposed in a block-structured format:

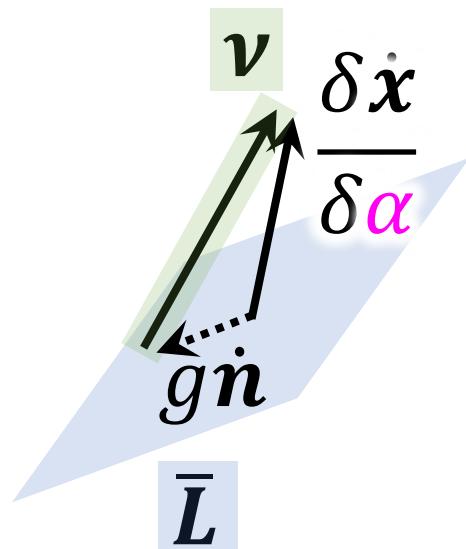
Hypersurface velocity gradient:

$$\mathcal{L} = \frac{\delta \dot{x}}{\delta x} + \dot{n} \otimes \mathcal{N}$$

$$\mathcal{L} = \begin{bmatrix} \bar{L} & \nu \\ \bar{\nabla} \dot{\alpha} & \delta \dot{\alpha} / \delta \alpha \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\dot{\mathcal{N}} = -\mathcal{N} \cdot \frac{\delta \dot{x}}{\delta x}$$

(TY Thomas, 1957)



Differential velocity vector:

$$\nu = \frac{\delta \dot{x}}{\delta \alpha} - g \dot{n}$$

Surface velocity gradient:

$$\bar{L} = \bar{\nabla} \dot{x} + \dot{n} \otimes n$$

The *hyper-dimensional Jacobian* and its inverse ease the computation of the hypersurface deformation and velocity gradients

Hyper-dimensional Jacobian:

$$\mathcal{J} = \frac{\partial \boldsymbol{x}}{\partial \boldsymbol{\xi}} + \mathbf{n} \otimes \mathbf{e}_\alpha \quad \rightarrow \quad \mathcal{J} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial \boldsymbol{x}}{\partial \boldsymbol{\xi}} & \mathbf{n} \\ \frac{\partial \boldsymbol{\alpha}}{\partial \boldsymbol{\xi}} & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\mathcal{J}^{-1} = \frac{\delta \boldsymbol{\xi}}{\delta \boldsymbol{x}} + \mathbf{e}_\alpha \otimes \mathcal{N} \quad \rightarrow \quad \mathcal{J}^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} \bar{\nabla} \boldsymbol{\xi} & \delta \boldsymbol{\xi} / \delta \boldsymbol{\alpha} \\ \mathbf{n} & -g \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\mathcal{F} = \mathcal{J} \mathcal{J}_0^{-1}$$

$$\mathcal{L} = \dot{\mathcal{J}} \mathcal{J}^{-1}$$

$$\frac{\delta \varphi_a}{\delta \boldsymbol{x}} = \frac{\partial \varphi_a}{\partial \boldsymbol{\xi}} \cdot \mathcal{J}^{-1} = \left\{ \bar{\nabla} \varphi_a, \frac{\delta \varphi_a}{\delta \boldsymbol{\alpha}} \right\}$$

Constitutive models for frictional sliding are formulated in terms of *hypersurface deformation and stress measures*

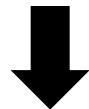
Hypersurface Green-Lagrangian strain:

$$\boldsymbol{\varepsilon} = \frac{1}{2} (\mathcal{F}^T \mathcal{F} - I)$$

$$\longrightarrow \boldsymbol{\varepsilon} = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 2\bar{\mathbf{E}} & \Delta \\ \Delta & \delta \cdot \delta \end{bmatrix}$$

$(\dot{\alpha} = 0)$

Frame invariant elastic potential: $\psi(\boldsymbol{\varepsilon})$



Hypersurface Kirchhoff stress:

$$\boldsymbol{\tau} = \mathcal{F} \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}} \mathcal{F}^T$$

Co-rotational differential displacement:

$$\Delta = \bar{\mathbf{F}}^T \cdot \delta$$

Surface Green-Lagrangian strain:

$$\bar{\mathbf{E}} = \frac{1}{2} (\bar{\mathbf{F}}^T \bar{\mathbf{F}} - I)$$

Variational consistency necessitates the use of hyper-dimensional stress and deformation measures to determine nodal forces

Contact stress power: $\dot{\psi} = \mathcal{T} : \mathcal{L}$

Contact
(virtual) work: $\dot{W} = \int_{\alpha=0}^{\alpha=1} \left(\int_{\Gamma_\alpha} \dot{\psi} \, d\Gamma_\alpha \right) d\alpha = \sum_{\forall a} f_a \cdot \dot{x}_a$

Variationally consistent nodal forces:

$$f_a = \int_{\square} \left(\mathcal{T} \cdot \frac{\delta \varphi_a}{\delta \chi} - \mathcal{N} \{ \bar{\nabla} \varphi_a \cdot \mathcal{T} \cdot \mathcal{N} \} \right) \mathcal{J} d\square$$

Ongoing and future work

- *Frictional sliding*
- Expanded theoretical framework (publication in preparation)
- Alternative enforcement methods (dual pass formulation)
- Alternative discretization methods (meshfree, IGA, BEM, etc.)
- Connections to the mathematics of general relativity:
 - ADM formalism (Arnowitt, Deser and Misner, 1962)

Questions?