

# Siddharth Chandak | CV

✉ [chandaks@stanford.edu](mailto:chandaks@stanford.edu) • 🌐 [chandak1299.github.io](https://github.com/chandak1299)

**Research Interests:** Probability, optimization, statistics machine learning, learning theory, and communication.  
**Current Projects:** Multi-agent control, reinforcement learning and stochastic approximation.

## EDUCATION

- **Stanford University** **Stanford, CA, USA**  
2021–present  
*PhD, Electrical Engineering, Advisor: Prof. Nick Bambos*
- **Stanford University** **Stanford, CA, USA**  
2021–2023  
*MS, Electrical Engineering, GPA: 4.15/4*
- **Indian Institute of Technology Bombay** **Mumbai, India**  
2017–2021  
*Bachelor of Technology in Electrical Engineering, CPI 9.89/10*
  - President of India Gold Medal
  - Honours in Electrical Engineering & Minor in Computer Science

## Academic Achievements

- Recipient of the **3Com Corporation Stanford Graduate Fellowship**.
- **President of India Gold Medal** at IIT Bombay for best academic standing in B.Tech. in 2021.
- **Prof. K. C. Mukherjee Award** at IIT Bombay for best B.Tech. project among EE students in 2021.
- Among the **top 50** candidates in the **Indian National Olympiads in Chemistry and Physics** and chosen to attend respective **Selection Camps** for **International Olympiads** in 2017.
- **All India Rank 346** in JEE Advanced 2017 among 220,000 students.
- **All India Rank 73** in JEE Main 2017 among 1.18 million students.
- Recipient of **KVPY Fellowship** by Govt. of India with an **All India Rank 86** in 2016.
- **NTSE Scholar** (National Talent Search Exam conducted by NCERT, Govt. of India) since 2015.

## Publications

### Conference

- S. Chandak, I. Bistritz and N. Bambos, "Tug of Peace: Distributed Learning for Quality of Service Guarantees," to be presented at *2023 IEEE Conference on Decision and Control (CDC)*.
- S. Chandak, I. Bistritz and N. Bambos, "Equilibrium Bandits: Learning Optimal Equilibria of Unknown Dynamics," *2023 International Conference on Autonomous Agents and Multiagent Systems (AAMAS)*, 2023, pp. 1336-1344.

### Journal

- S. Chandak, V. S. Borkar and H. Dolhare, "A Concentration Bound for LSPE( $\lambda$ )", in *Systems and Control Letters*, vol. 171, 105418, Jan. 2023.
- S. Chandak, V. S. Borkar and P. Dodhia, "Concentration of Contractive Stochastic Approximation and Reinforcement Learning", in *Stochastic Systems*, vol. 12:4, pp. 411-430, Dec. 2022.
- S. U. Haque, S. Chandak, F. Chiariotti, D. Günduz and P. Popovski, "Learning to Speak on Behalf of a Group: Medium Access Control for Sending a Shared Message," in *IEEE Communications Letters*, vol. 26, no. 8, pp. 1843-1847, Aug. 2022.
- V. S. Borkar and S. Chandak, "Prospect-theoretic Q-learning", in *Systems and Control Letters*, vol. 156, 105009, Oct. 2021.
- S. Chandak, F. Chiariotti and P. Popovski, "Hidden Markov Model-Based Encoding for Time-Correlated IoT Sources", in *IEEE Communications Letters*, vol. 25, no. 5, pp. 1463-1467, May 2021.

### Preprints

- S. Chandak, P. Shah, V. S. Borkar and P. Dodhia, "Reinforcement Learning in Non-Markovian Environments", *arXiv* (2022), 2211.01595. Submitted to *Systems and Control Letters*.

## Teaching Experience

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### Stanford University

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Served as course assistant for the following courses:

- ENGR 76: Information Science and Engineering Spring 2022-23
- MS&E 130: Information Networks and Services Winter 2022-23

### IIT Bombay

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Served as undergraduate teaching assistant for a batch of 50 freshmen, conducting weekly tutorial sessions, special doubt sessions, and grading answer sheets for the following courses:

- MA106: Linear Algebra Spring 2019-20
- MA105: Calculus Autumn 2019-20
- PH108: Basics of Electricity and Magnetism Spring 2018-19
- PH107: Quantum Physics and Applications Autumn 2018-19

## Experience

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- **Aalborg University** Apr. - Jul. 2020  
*Guide - Prof. Petar Popovski, Department of Electronic Systems*  
Proposed encoding and decoding scheme for transmitting short IoT packets with time correlation across a noisy channel by modeling source dynamics using Hidden Markov Models.
- **Imperial College London** May - Jul. 2019  
*Guide - Prof. Nick S. Jones, Department of Mathematics*  
Investigated the difference between social networks in UK, ICL and "Hackspace" - a smaller technical community at ICL, by analyzing survey data on friendships, and modeling social networks using Stochastic Block Models.

## Research Projects

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### Multi-Agent Control

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*Guide - Prof. Ilai Bistritz, Tel Aviv University and Prof. Nick Bambos, Stanford University*

- **Online Weighted Load Balancing for Resource Allocation Games** [ongoing] May 2023 - present  
Developed an online learning algorithm using which game manager can ensure convergence of players to a Nash equilibrium which balances the weighted load on each resource by adjusting the price of each resource.
  - Used tools from two time-scale contractive stochastic approximation to prove almost sure convergence to an equilibrium which satisfies constraints and also obtained regret bounds on finite time performance.
  - Simulated the algorithm for applications such as server pricing in data centers and power control game.
- **Quality-of-Service Guarantees for Tug-of-War Games** [IEEE CDC 2023] Jan. - Mar. 2023  
Developed a fully distributed online learning algorithm which allows players to converge to an equilibrium which satisfies QoS guarantees, i.e., each player has a minimum reward threshold.
  - Used tools from stochastic approximation, O.D.E. theory, and monotone dynamical systems to show convergence to desirable equilibria.
- **Equilibrium Bandits: Optimal Equilibria of Unknown Dynamics** [AAMAS 2023] Apr. - Oct. 2022  
Proposed a bandit-based algorithm for problems where the system converges to an equilibrium when an action is fixed, and the regret is defined based on the optimal reward at equilibrium.
  - Borrowed intuition from UCB algorithm to develop Upper Equilibrium Concentration Bound (UECB) algorithm which is optimal up to logarithmic factors for our problem.
  - Modeled epidemic control and policy making for multi-agent systems as equilibrium bandits problems.

### Reinforcement Learning and Stochastic Approximation

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*Guide - Prof. Vivek S. Borkar, IIT Bombay*

- **Reinforcement Learning in non-Markovian Environments** [submitted to SCL] Jan. 2022 - May 2023  
Designed a reinforcement learning agent for non-Markovian environments which achieves significant improvements in performance of Deep Q-Network when applied on partially observable systems.
  - Explicitly pinned down the error caused by non-Markovianity on both the asymptotic and finite-time performance of Q-learning.
  - Proposed an autoencoder-based scheme to approximate conditional laws which leads to error minimization.
  - Evaluated our agent on standard partially observable systems from POPGym.

- **Concentration Bounds for Reinforcement Learning and Stochastic Approximation**

Used novel martingale and Markov chain inequalities to obtain concentration bounds of form “from time  $n_0$  onwards” for reinforcement learning algorithms.

- Using conditional martingale inequalities to obtain bounds on performance of TD(0) algorithm [ongoing].
- Used mixing time based Markov chain inequalities for obtaining bounds on LSPE( $\lambda$ ) [[SCL](#)].
- Obtained concentration bounds for contractive SA and asynchronous Q-Learning [[Stochastic Systems](#)].

## Other Projects

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- **Tractable Probabilistic Multimodal Learning**

Spring 2022

*Course: Deep Learning for Computer Vision*

Used Probabilistic Circuits and encoder-decoder pairs trained separately for each modality to learn joint distribution over multiple modalities, while allowing for efficient sampling from the joint or any of the conditionals.

- **Improvements to Legendre Memory Units**

Spring 2021

*Course: Advanced Machine Learning*

Suggested and empirically evaluated improvements, based on Bernstein polynomials, to Legendre Memory Units, a memory cell for RNNs that stores information across long windows of time.

## Selected Courses

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- **Probability & Statistics:** Game Theory, Information Theory and Statistics, Statistical Signal Processing, Queuing Systems, Error Correcting Codes, Stochastic Approximation, Advanced Probability and Random Processes, Information Theory and Coding, Data Analysis
- **Machine Learning & Computer Science:** Deep Learning for Computer Vision, Reinforcement Learning, Convex Optimization, Learning Theory, Number Theory and Cryptography, Data Structures and Algorithms, Logic for CS, Computer Networks, Digital Image Processing, Operating Systems
- **Core EE Courses:** Digital Communication, Control Systems, Digital Systems, Microprocessors, Digital Signal Processing, Electronic Devices and Analog Circuits, Electrical Machines and Power Systems
- **Miscellaneous:** Economics, Sociology, Environmental Studies, Complex Analysis, Differential Equations

## Technical Skills

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- Proficient in: Python, NumPy
- Experience with: C++, PyTorch, VHDL, Assembly, Embedded C, MATLAB