

Applications: Project presentation

Please don't Circulate !

Anticipated presentation to provide more time for the project

Presentazione anticipata per fornire maggior tempo per il progetto

Alessio Micheli

micheli@di.unipi.it

2025



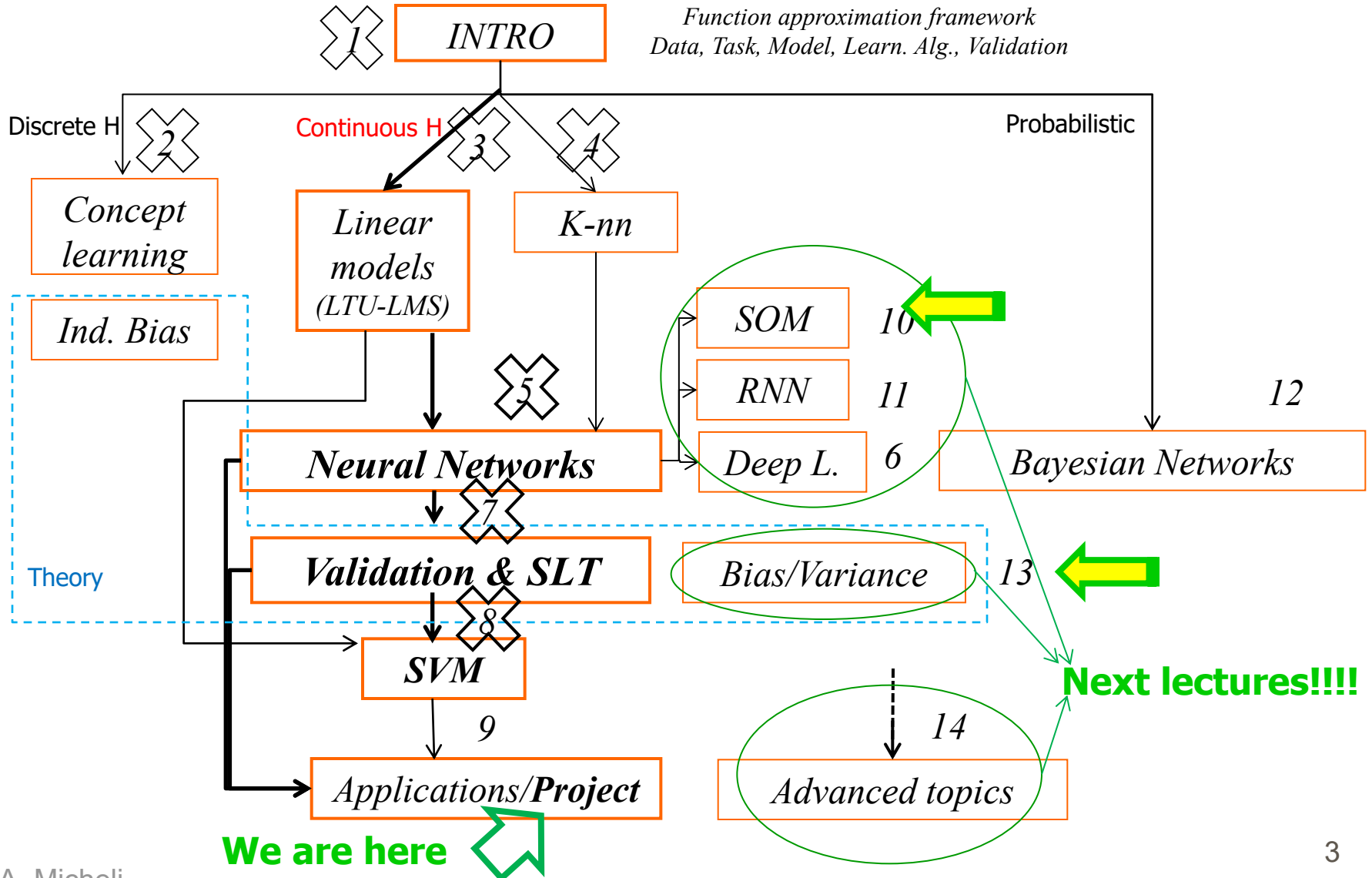
Dipartimento di Informatica
Università di Pisa - Italy

ML Course structure

Where we go



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa



This Lecture

Sec. 1. The Exam (resume and details)

Sec. 2. The Project

Sec. 3. FAQ & other info (read by yourself)

Sec. 1. The Exam

Exam: schematic synthesis

(REPETITA from introduction)

Summarizing, the exam will consist in:

- The project delivery by each group
- A general (pre)-Test for all the candidates at the date of the official exam sessions (as in esami.unipi.it, when the sessions will be published)
 - *ONLY FOR IN PRESENCE STUDENTS, not remote connection is allowed*
- Oral (group by group)

Exam: details

(REPETITA from introduction)

In the following order:

1. **Course lectures** (stay on-line with them!)
 - And perform the **Intermediate tests** during the course → I can assess your active participation to the course
2. **Project work** (you can start around in the middle of the semester)
3. **Project package delivery:** results, slides report etc. at the date specified in the Moodle for each session
4. **Oral:** start at the date of the official exam session, with questions in written form [in class **general (pre)-Test** at the date in esami.unipi.it] (it is in the same session of the prj delivery).
5. **Project presentation and discussion, and oral finalization,** according to a specific calendar for each group, i.e. as soon as possible in one of the following days/weeks (ALL the students of the group must be present for the exam, i.e. making the exam in the same session).

See more in the first Lecture and I also updated the FAQ section in the Moodle with the "pipeline for the project/exam"

Assessment methods

(REPETITA from introduction)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

Exam:

- **Project** (Written exam)
 - Students have the **opportunity** to develop a project realizing/applying a learning system simulator (typically a simple neural network) and to validate it through benchmarks. A written report (slides) will show the results.
 - Great *opportunity* to apply the concepts by yourself
 - Great *opportunity* to show your concrete understanding and effort for the exam
 - **Deadline:** (around/or **more than**) 10/14 working days before the oral exam session (see the Moodle folder of your session for the exact deadline)
 - **See details in the lecture for project presentation → TODAY**
 - We include a **competition** with *blind-test*
 - which is part of the benchmark results in the prj
 - also some joint proposals with CM course
- **Oral exam** (dates according to the exams sessions)



Exam (II): Some details

(REPETITA from introduction)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **Project:** we will discuss in a *specific lecture* all the details but from now it useful to know that:
 - It is made by a team of (2 or) 3 students (exceptions are very rare, subject to restrictions, **MUST** be justified by serious impairments and authorized in advance: **see later**)
 - A shared document *is open* to find partners (see Moodle)
 - It is made just one time, i.e. with 1 delivery
 - It is corrected/discussed jointly with the oral exam (at the exam session)
 - So all the team members need to do the exam in the session
 - It is an implementation of a NN/ML model or an application of ML SW (type A or B)
- ... (see Intro lectures and **later in this lecture**)

The main hint

(REPETITA from introduction)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

A major hint *from past students*:

1. **FIRST** study the course content
2. **THEN** apply for the project

Good news



- This year we have **two** ML course assistants:
 - Domenico Tortorella <domenico.tortorella@phd.unipi.it>
 - Alessandro Dipalma <alessandro.dipalma@phd.unipi.it>
 - to help for the project development (but **not** for questions on the course!)
- Take the opportunity to interact with them during the course



- Available via email or de-visu or video-call each Wednesday 14.30-15.30, better by fixing an appointment by email in advance **with your group**

Delivery and deadlines for Exam and the Project

Deadlines and important notes: <formal exam> subscription and prj



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

1. Date for the **exams**: esami.unipi.it portal
 - Therein you will find the “session date” = date for the oral (period beginning) (this holds for all the students) → General (pre) **Test slot!**
 - Take care to register your name in the official UNIPi (esami.unipi.it) portal for exams (check the **deadline** in large advance): *It is a must, only registered student can be admitted to the exam* (all students rule)
2. The prj delivery has a different **deadline** (automatic in the Moodle): the deadline is *typically* = session date – (minus) ~10-14 working days (but see the exact deadline date and hour in the Moodle folder for your session, check it in large advance!):
 - especially at the first sessions a *greater time* is need to correct all the projects (or sometimes due to other, often formal, commitments)
 - Of course, you CAN always deliver before the deadline!
 - The 3 dates/deadlines are different: two are for you (to register and to do the test at session date), one is for the prj delivery

Notes on timing (prj)

- You will have all the sessions of the academic year to deliver your project and make the exam
- For the first session (on January), I will take in account the shorter time you have to complete the project,
 - with a larger tolerance on the “quantity” (extension of your investigation)

Project General Rules: Material



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Deliver the report and material according to the **deadline** in the Moodle folder, with a **zip package** including (see also FAQ II):
 - **Code** (the code developed by you, usually well commented)
 - **The slides** (report) describing the implementation and the experimental aspects:
 - Details later for presentation time, slides, font, demo etc.
(a file describing in detail the report, and a demo, is in the folder for the project)
 - Name of slides and zip files: See FAQ II (use team's surnames)
 - **Files** for the ML-CUP: "blind test set" result (1 file *team-name_ML-CUP25-TS.csv*) + a short abstract (see the next slides with details)
- Bring with yourself the code to the oral exam (printed or electronic version)

Project General Rules: How to deliver it



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

1. Use the Moodle (elearning platform) to deliver the Project (PRJ) a zip package: code, report, cup-files, short-abstract
 - See in Moodle the Section **Prj Student Material**
 2. After the last upload (until the deadline):
Send email at both micheli@di.unipi.it, domenico.tortorella@unipi.it,
alessandro.dipalma@phd.unipi.it
Subject: **[ML-2025]** Report by <your names>
Include in the main text:
 - Your name(s) & email contact information in the main text
 - Your degree course (master programme)
 - The name of file used in Moodle (to find it)
- It is a must (!)
to use this **tag**
- Don't forget a CC to your colleague (*all the group members* must be included in *all* the communications).
 - Use the Moodle to deliver all the other files, do ***not*** attach them by email!!!
 - Projects no announced by an e-mail will not be considered !!!
 - (be sure I received it: resend the email if I do not reply with an ack. after 5/6 days)

Notes on Oral: Modality

- The **orals** will be made group by group ***in presence*** (the room will be specified before each oral slot, typically in **my office** at the Dept. of Computer Science).
 - For special cases, due to *serious* and *motivated* logistic reasons, please advice me in the project delivery e-mail.
- Style: I'll ask answer **first** by **math language** (e.g. in the form of *equations* due to clarity, synthesis, ...), **then** we can discuss on them

Notes on Oral: Timing

- Oral: as said before, I'll communicate the **date and time slot of the oral** interview and project discussion (for each group) as soon as possible after the project delivery
- First sessions: due to the high number of candidates the slots of the final orals of (the first sessions) especially the second session will be distributed over an extended **period of time** (from mid-February to over March, even if *most* of them will be earlier).
- If you have special cases for the dates, please **anticipate your problems** with the project delivery e-mail: i.e.
 - If necessary, you can express (motivated) need for an early oral priority or a preference for a late oral session (or no preference, i.e. also no reply to my email for prj ack., if your group has no special needs nor specific preferences).
 - *I'll try to help you* if the overall scheduling of requests allow me to do it.

Notes on Oral: FAQ

- **Do I need to have a prj approval (passed/not passed) before to come to the general rest?**
 - No, after project delivery, you can do the general Test.
The prj and general test results will be discussed at the oral.
- **What happens if a student of the team at the general test gets a low score?**
 - I assume that all students are well-prepared after completing the project (see the slide "*The main hint*"). So, very low scores should be rare.
 - In any case, ALL team members will come to the oral and discuss the prj
 - Then *we will discuss case by case* (each student will be evaluated on his or her own, including the possibility of redoing an oral, which, however, fortunately is necessary only in very rare cases).

Sec. 2. The Project

The project at a glance

- In the following: A top-down presentation (first general info/rules than details)

In short (the **phases**):

- I. Form a **group**
 - II. Prepare a **simulator**, made by you (prj type A) or from software libraries (prj type B)
 - III. Apply (**experimental part**) to all the benchmarks (including the CUP)
 - IV. Write your **slides** report (with all the info indicated in the demo & info files) and the **results for the cup** (following the provided file format)
 - V. Deliver the **package** till the deadline (see slides in Sec. 1)
 - VI. You will **present or discuss the slides** at the beginning of your oral
- *It is easy*, all the rest are details (although important)

The project

- **Premise** (“experimental”, main aim, etc.)
- **Form a group (phase I)**
- **Type A, B, etc. (phase II)**
 - The simulators
- **The application (phase III)**
- **The slides (format, style, etc.) (phase IV)**
- **And slides presentation (phase VI)**

First premise

On the empirical approach (I)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Experimental method (using **empirical** evidence, from experiments) is the basis of the "*scientific method*" per-se
- In our case, the *experiments* are the numerical simulations to test your hypothesis on the models and its quantitative parameters
 - You don't know the result in advance, you have to formulate your hypothesis and then to measure the empirical results/observations, to compare and to reason on the results etc.
 - Don't worry if this is a new experience for you (for many Computer scientists)
 - In any case, this experience will be useful to you as a ground for *your thesis*



First premise

On the empirical approach (II)

- You don't know the result in advance, ...
- So, *"I feel lost", what have I to expect?*
If you don't have any experience with *"experiments"*, this is new for you, but it is *not* negative but REALLY a nice and useful experience you take the opportunity to gain !!!
- Exciting or lost? Break the ice !!!
- Nothing explodes: explore different cases, it is not dangerous! It is a numerical experiments 😊



Students: *"The challenging of implement different solvers and hyperparameters selection figured out to be interesting and one thing that makes us learn a lot.*

Initially the experience was a little disorienting for the huge amount of point to test, but going ahead the funny part was the same that at the start scare us."



Second premise:

The **real aim** of the project

The real aim of the project is not to achieve a state –of–the art result (least of all frustrating you with your first ML experience)

- The NN or ML models implementation or usage is a mean, your understanding is my/ the objective
- Learning with NN or ML models is a mean, your learning on how such models work is my/the aim



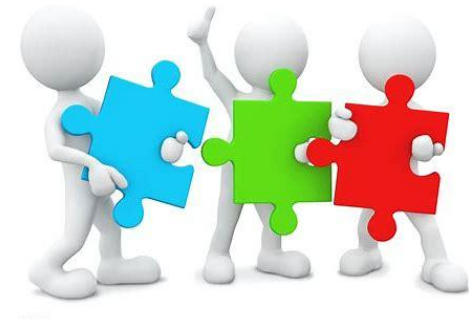
**YOU are the
objective!**

The project

- **Premise** (“experimental”, main aim, etc.)
- **Form a group (phase I)**
- **Type A, B, etc. (phase II)**
 - The simulators
- **The application (phase III)**
- **The slides** (format, style, etc.) **(phase IV)**
- **And slides presentation (phase VI)**

I. Form a group (I)

- **Groups:** it is assumed groups of (2 or) 3 students
 - For the prj with CM see later
- Advantages of a team work:
 - The result is greater than the sum
 - Increase autonomy and never discourage
 - Mutual enrichment of experience
 - Best results (in the general sense) in the past editions
 - Of course, the evaluation (final mark) can be different for the students (the orals are different for each student)



I. Form a group (II)

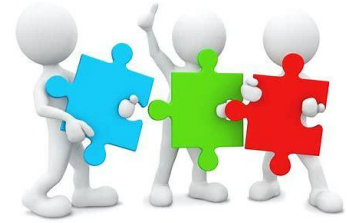
- **Groups:** it is assumed groups of (2 or) 3 students



- [Repetita] Please, remember that the project is corrected/discussed *jointly* with all the students within the final oral exam and hence the oral is given at the same session (in the same day) for all the group candidates.
- Special (and are) case:
To participate to the *extraordinary sessions (spring & autumn)* ALL team members must be eligible
 - Note: The extraordinary sessions are ONLY for the protected categories of students, see <https://didattica.di.unipi.it/en/extraordinary-exam-sessions/>

I. Form a group (III)

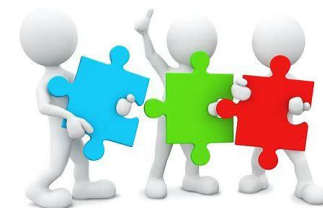
FAQ: Can you help me to find partners to form a team?

- To find partners (a team or the third partner) see the shared document with a link in the Moodle [**Prj partners searching page**].
 - You can fill it with your preferences and contacts so that other students can contact you (and you the others) with a good matching.
 - Connect with the **UNIPi account** to edit it.
 - You can use it also after the first sessions!
- 
- An illustration of three white 3D figures standing and holding three large, interlocking puzzle pieces in blue, green, and red. The figure on the left holds the blue piece, the middle figure holds the green piece, and the figure on the right holds the red piece. They are all facing forward, and the green piece is slightly behind the other two.
- 3 students are preferred: I invite also students in a team of two members to see the **Prj partners searching page** to form a team with 3 students

I. Form a group (IV)

Can we do a group of **1 student (by myself)**? **NO**

- **No prj can be done alone**, the project is a team work
- You lose the *opportunity* to do a prj, in case you will have instead an *additional exam part, we will decide on singular case basis* *
- Moreover, the qualification in this "*individual student*" category needs to satisfy 2 conditions:
 1. a preventive trial to search partners through the "Partners searching page"
 2. a preventive (I mean largely before the prj delivery deadline) agreement with the teacher (by email), motivated by a very special (serious and rare) impairments



The project

- **Premise** (“experimental”, main aim, etc.)
- **Form a group (phase I)**
- **Type A, B, etc. (phase II)**
 - The simulators
- **The application (phase III)**
- **The slides (format, style, etc.) (phase IV)**
- **And slides presentation (phase VI)**

II. Possible Aims: Type of projects



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

A) Realize a ML/NN model simulator and apply it (**implementation**)

- Especially useful for students that will go to develop new models *
- Programming language is a free choice (C++, Python are popular for ML, or even environments as Matlab or R can be considered)
- A) with CM: a coordinate prj with CM

B) Extensive experimental applications of existing ML/NN simulators (**comparison**)

- Especially useful for students that will go to apply ML in other fields
- Simulator is a free choice (a list will be discussed in the next slides)

C) Contact me. Only in case there are serious reasons/impediment not to apply to A and B. Or special cases, e.g. for PhD students

Both **A)** or **B)**: participate to the “**ML-2025 cup**” competition.

There is **no** difference in the grade and in the global effort (≠aim)

Let us see details for A) and B) and then the cup details.

Type A) Model implementation

Realize 1 ML model simulator : typically a **MLP Neural Networks (with regularization techniques)**

*This is the **typical project case**, allowing you to realize a simple models by your original code, and to experiments all the variants that you like, and have fun;-)*

Examples:


- [typical case] **Implement a (multilayer) MLP with backpropagation, momentum, and L2 regularization:**
try the regularization and other hyper-parameters effects
- Backprop with variants for the weights upgrade : Quick-prop, Rprop, ... or other gradient based techniques. Or Cas-Cor, etc.

Other models:

- MLP for classification: LMS versus Cross-entropy*
- Bayesian models: contact me.
- **SVM**: see A) with CM

General note: you can exploit numerical libraries,
e.g. NumPy, Armadillo (C++), ..

A) Model implementation (II)

- With a group of 3 students take the opportunity to try something *more than* the basic setting (I expected to see these), see the NN-part2 lectures with many variants *beyond* the topic with the **(!) symbol**, e.g. see cases with the  symbol), examples:
 - Comparison among different strategies for learning rate
 - Consider also the Nesterov momentum and compare
 - Comparison among different regularization approaches
 - Different architectures (the minimum is 1 and 2 hidden vs multilayers)
 - Different activation functions
 - Any variants to the training algorithm (beyond SGD, e.g. R-prop, Quick-prop, Cascade Correlation but see also CM projects)
 - Type A for NN + 1 other model from libraries (as for type B) to compare
 - Type <A with CM> (also implementing 2 models, e.g. NN and SVM)
 - ...
- Not necessarily all them, e.g. just two, and then ... *it is up to you!*
- Of course, a group of 2 can anyway consider some of them as well!

Special case <A> with CM>



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

A) with CM: A coordinate prj between ML and CM

- See a detailed list of proposals within the CM course
- You will provide **1 report for ML** with the basic A) results + the new results with the CM technique (comparison)
- AND **1 report for CM** (according to CM teachers' rules, and a different aim)

Categories (examples) [through CM approaches] :

- (improved) NN training by other gradient descent methods algorithms
 - see many examples in the lectures NN2 Heuristics (Conjugate gradients, ...) [comparing w.r.t. the basic gradient descent with momentum and L2 regularization]
- Non-differentiable optimization for Piece-Wise linear functions
 - PWL or ReLU activation function or *L1 regularization* [comparing w.r.t. the basic gradient descent with momentum and L2 regularization]
- SVM/SVR implementation (through different approaches), applied with kernels...
 - [for this case see the FAQ for the NN comparison with NNs]
- **If** it is not in the CM list, or it includes a ML part not considered as basic prj A (see the FAQ), the proposal must be agreed by ML **AND** CM teachers!!!
- You can still compete for the ML-CUP with your results.

Notes on <A> with CM>

Further details on <A> with CM>:

- **More effort?** It is because *you like to try and show something more* (a volunteer challenging choice) and not something less! This fully exercises your full understanding of the singular parts (by adapting them to the combined construction)
- For many cases it is useful to refine the **literature** basis (provided by us) to see previous studies of the impact of the used methods for the ML area.
- So, we consider this **a plus** (if it is well done)

Notes:

- L2 regularization is the Tikhonov with norm-2 penalty
- L1 uses norm-1 penalty (we will discuss it later) (see lecture on linear models and NN-part2)
- Also ask for PWL if you are interested → ReLU will be (re)discussed also later
- Note that the aim is **not** to improve the performance/results obtained with the basic approach, but to critically exercise the use of CM approaches for ML (the aim is a critical analysis of the results)*
- Unforeseen issues? You can go back: discussed by a case-based approach*

Notes on <A> with CM>: groups

You can do <A> with CM> either:

- In group of **3** (you have to agree this with the CM teachers with the modality specified by them)
- In a group of **3**, but only 2 are making the prj with CM, the third one is making only the ML prj (for my side)
- A group of 2
- Note: these are **two different** projects →
 - you are NOT forced to sustain the exam of ML and CM at the same session
 - provided that the results will be already present for ML in the report sent to me, you can do CM in any other time.

Type B) Compare models

- **Extensive experimental applications of existing ML/NN simulators** or *code made by LLM* (NEW):
- Compare different models/ existing tools, e.g.:
 - SVM and/or NN by a standard library versus basic models (linear, k-nn, naïve bayes, ...) implemented by yourself or by standard software tools
 - Compare NN vs SVM vs other models (even not included in the ML program) within the same software tool
 - Compare 3 or more models even from different sw tools
 - Compare different software tools for the same model (e.g. SVM or NN)
 - Compare different software tools.
- (also for fairness wrt A) the B case implies a **larger effort on the comparison** among models (including accurate validation) and to the experimental part
- The report can include also evaluation on the sensitivity to the hyperparameters values (for different models), efficacy, efficiency, predictive performance (of course!) but also issues of tool usage, usability, richness of the set of hyperparameters etc. (for different tools)
- Repetita: you can still apply to the *CUP competition* just selecting the best model to apply.
- The code written by yourself (to use the libraries) must be included in the package

Further notes

- **LLM:** We well know that is possible to wrote code by LLM. In this case it is not a problem for us, it is PRJ B
Of course, if you declare that is type A with your code and type A, but it is generated by LLM (or copied), etc → **The prj fail**, not passed → next session of exam

See the FAQ section (Sec. 3, end of these slides) for further aspects:

- On the boundary between A and B according to the usage of different libraries
- On the applications of different models for PRJ B to the provided benchmarks

FAQ:

When is a project A or B?



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- If you program the NN model and back-propagation (or any training algorithm), and the CV approach, from scratch and by your-self (independently from the software environment) is *type A*. E.g.:
 - A NN made by you within the standard Matlab is *type A* (but see in the FAQ on Matlab)
 - Instead, a NN using Matlab NN/DL *toolbox* is *type B*
 - The same for TensorFlow, PyTorch, Keras and other frameworks (see later): it is *type B*.
- Using high level libraries (SciKit learn, Keras etc.) is *type B*
 - However, if for example you just exploit part of the PyTorch features (e.g. the “automatic differentiation”) but you implement the main training loop, the CV etc. you can indicate it in the report.
- Using LLM is type B
- Using numerical or graphical libraries in your code maintains it of *type A* prj.

Important:

For both A) and B) cases



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- For **NN heuristics** see the lectures on “Neural Networks: part 2”
Try the effects of different configurations/ hyperparameters values according to your experimental schema
(and explain the schema in the report)
 - In any case, for NN, include the momentum and a regularization approach (weight decay, early stopping, ...). See all the (!) indications
 - For type A: consider examples in the previous slide “A) Model implementation (II)”
 - For type B (*ça va sans dire*): if you use a library, please do not limit yourself to default values!
- You are free to choose the **model selection/assessment-evaluation** strategy:
whose fitness for the problem at hand *is evaluated*:
 - Directly from the description in the report
 - Through the results on the blind test set

The project

- **Premise**
- **Type A, B, etc. (phase II)**
 - **The simulators (ML tools)**
- **The application (phase III)**
- **The slides (phase IV)**
- **And slides presentation (phase VI)**

Simulators/Software Tools

- Software / ML Tools to be used for the **B case**
- Or you can use a tool as an “*oracle*” to compare with your simulator for the **A case** (helping in assessing its correctness)
- If you use a library you must specify in the report the complete link to the source !!! (for both A and B cases, use a READ-ME file in the code package)
- In the following some examples: an exhaustive list is out of our scope and it is even impossible to keep it updated!!!
 - Developers make changes everyday!!! (big companies have a major role)
- The best one is the one that is more useful **FOR YOU**.
 - Check also the documentation and if it still have maintenance/developments (new releases, support, ...)
 - Some of them have a reference in [JMLR]= <http://jmlr.csail.mit.edu/mloss/>

Textbook and material

Software Tools **[Repetita from Lect. 1]**



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

For software libraries:

- Books that describe **Keras / Scikit-Learn**



- "Deep Learning with Python" (F. Chollet)
- "Hands-on Machine Learning with Scikit-Learn, Keras & Tensorflow" (A. Geron).

- Using **PyTorch**, NumPy/MXNet, JAX, and TensorFlow

```
@d2l.add_to_class(LinearRegressionScratch)
def loss(self, y_hat, y):
    l = (y_hat - y) ** 2 / 2
    return l.mean()
```



- "Dive into Deep Learning" (A. Zhang, Z. Lipton, M. Li, and A. Smola) (2023). Cambridge University Press. Freely available from the website.

- We will have an introduction to the main libraries later (by the course assistants) → [Dates are ...](#)**

Many technical books/blogs exists, take care of the scientific quality!

Simulators/Software

Main (ML & NN & Deep NN)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **Keras** was a high-level Neural Networks/Deep Learning library (Python) capable of running on top of either TensorFlow, Microsoft Cognitive Toolkit (formerly CNTK), Theano and others, (+Wrappers versus Scikit-Learn API).
Nowadays it acts as an interface for TensorFlow library (see below) !
- **TensorFlow** (*Google*), open source, C++/Python like (API, interface). Include deep neural networks. Released as open since November 2015. Now: *TensorFlow 2.**.
 - Used by Google for all their products, Photos, Gmail, speech recognition, ...
- **PyTorch** is an open-source machine learning library for Python, based on Torch (was in C++). Neural Networks, Deep Learning. It exploits “automatic differentiation”*. Developed by *Facebook AI* research group (and Uber)!
 - **Torch** (NN, SVM, AdaBoost, K-nn, Bayesian, ...renewed for deep learning/GPU, coll. with Facebook, Google, Twitter ...development stopped in 2018)
- **Theano** (and Pylearn2): also for deep learning, GPU etc. wrappers with scikit-learn, ... (stop dev. on 9/17)
- **Caffe** is a deep learning framework, originally developed at UC Berkeley. It is open source, C++, with a Python and MATLAB interfaces
- Others: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_deep_learning_software

Simulators/Software

Main (ML & NN & Deep)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **Scikit-learn** [JMLR 2011]: Python open source, many tools for preprocessing, model selection, linear models, regularization, SVM, DT, ... NN was very limited, but from version 1.5 has been improved, still improving (but it is not comparable with the flexibility and completeness of Pytorch and Keras)
 - very *good documentation* with graphical examples: HAVE A LOOK!

Environments:

- **R** (Statistical Computing language): programming language and free software environment for statistical computing
- **Matlab**: multi-paradigm numerical computing environment and proprietary programming language (available at Unipi),
 - or as a simulator for NN (“Deep Learning Toolbox”)
- and **GNU Octave** (free, Matlab compatible)
- **Wolfram Mathematica** (mathematical computation integrated tools)

Others ... (often old) (**not read in class**)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **MXNet**: by Apache, is open-source deep learning software framework. Deep neural networks. Multiple programming languages.
Related to Gluon : Amazon + Microsoft (2017)
- **MLlib** Spark scalable ML library (NumPy, R, Hadoop), NO NN yet [JMLR 2016]
- **Shark** (evolutionary and gradient-based algorithms, NN, kernel-based learning methods, SVM, ...[JMLR 2008]): C++ library
- **Dlib-ml** (Bayesian networks and kernel-based methods, clustering, anomaly detection, and feature ranking, ... [JMLR Jul 2009]): C++ library
- **Shogun** (SVM, HMM, K-NN, LDA,...[JMLR 2010]): C++/Python
- **Mlpack** (C++, armadillo matrix library, basic models, no NN/SVM, [JMLR 2013])
- **OpenNN** (Open Neural Networks Library) C++ (bugs!)
- Eclipse **Deeplearning4j** is a deep learning programming library written for Java
- Others for Python: e.g. PyMVPA, MLPY , PyML, Plearn, **PyBrain** [JMLR 2010]: ,
... check if still supported)

See also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_deep-learning_software

Historical:

- **Stuttgart Neural Network Simulator: C**, since 1995!
- **SOM_PAK: C++** / SOM toolbox (free)

Other examples (cnt) (**not read in class**)



And many other...(started as DM tools).

- Weka (DM and ML Software in Java)
 - (not well suited for us in terms of hyperparameters control)
- RapidMiner
- Orange (JMLR 2013, C++/Python)
-
- Many commercial software ! ...→ “*predictive analytics*”

Visual workbench approaches are popular for commercial tools:

- E.g. **Knime**: data analytics platform: DM but also ML/NN (open source/commercial!)
- Major sw developers have now a ML branch: azure (Microsoft), google, facebook, IBM, Amazon

Just to witness the interest of the big companies



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa




Just to witness what happens (not for your prj *):

- **Google**: google prediction (service) / **TensorFlow** *
- **IBM**: Watson
- **Microsoft** : Azure (platform and services)/ The Microsoft Cognitive Toolkit (formerly CNTK), is a deep learning framework developed by Microsoft Research.
- **Amazon** Machine Learning (service) / (old) DSSTNE: Deep Scalable Sparse Tensor Network Engine (open, Deep ML)
- **Facebook** (AI research lab): ~~FB Learner Flow~~, → **PyTorch**...
 - (used by FB for computer vision and NLP, and also by Tesla, Uber, ...)
-

Simulators for SVM

- **LIBSVM** (C++)
- SVM light (C)
- Torch (C++)
- JKernelMachines (Java library for learning with kernels [JMLR 2013])
- **Scikit-learn**
- Weka (Java)
- mySVM
- SVM in R
-
- http://www.support-vector-machines.org/SVM_soft.html

Popular Supporting Libraries

- **Pandas**: software library written for the Python programming language for data manipulation and analysis 
- **NumPy** (*popular for NN!*) (**SciPy**), **Armadillo** (C++):   numerical/linear algebra libraries: suggested also for prj of type A!!!
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_numerical_libraries
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_linear_algebra_libraries

General note: you can exploit such numerical libraries for your code!

The project

- **Premise** (“experimental”, main aim, etc.)
- **Form a group (phase I)**
- **Type A, B, etc. (phase II)**
 - The simulators
- **The applications (phase III)**
 1. MONK
 2. CUP
- **The slides** (format, style, etc.) **(phase IV)**
- **And slides presentation (Phase VI)**

III. Applications for the PRJ

Your results will include

- 1) MONK benchmarks results
- 2) The CUP data set results (competition)

In the report: results for **1)** and **2)**
for **both** prj A and B type

III. 1) MONK benchmark [repetita]



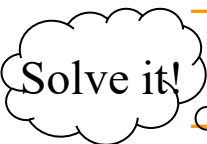
Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Difficulty of assessing implementation correctness:
- A first test ("*collaudo*") **Monk's data set**
 - The results *must* be reported in the prj report: **performance and learning curve plots for the 3 monk tasks**

<https://archive.ics.uci.edu/dataset/70/monk+s+problems>



- 3 tasks of binary classification, small artificial data set, "not difficult" (a small NN with few units achieve a very high accuracy, up to 100%, with small time of convergence)
- There is a report with previous results using MLP (and others ML models)
 - Chapter 9, "The MONK's Problems», S.B Thrun et al., CMU-CS-91-197, 123 pages
- Input encoding: 6 variables with 2, 3 or 4 symbolic values each: **1-of-k** → correspond to introduce 17 input units (see also sec 1.1 and check it!)
- TS includes TR, which is a bad practice, but does not change here (since 100% accuracy is 100% accuracy also on the test set !!)



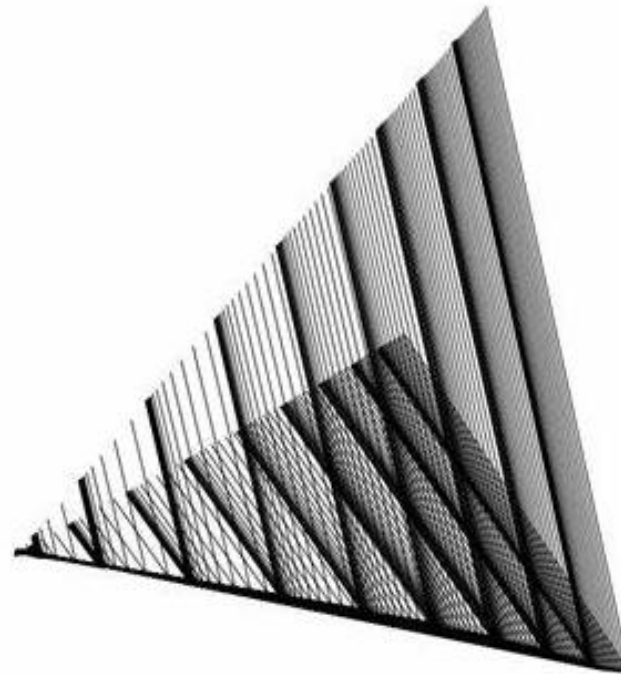
- Other sources of data sets for software tests: <http://archive.ics.uci.edu/ml/>
UCI Machine Learning Repository (hundreds of data sets !)

III. 1) MONK benchmark The Tech. Report



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- S.B Thrun et al., «The MONK's Problems-A Performance Comparison of Different Learning Algorithms», CMU-CS-91-197, 123 pages



The MONK's Problems

A Performance Comparison of Different Learning Algorithms

S.B. Thrun, J. Bala, E. Bloedorn, I. Bratko, B. Cestnik, J. Cheng, K. De Jong, S. Dzeroski, S.E. Fahlman, D. Fisher, R. Hamann, K. Kaufman, S. Keller, I. Kononenko, J. Kreuziger, R.S. Michalski, T. Mitchell, P. Pachowicz, Y. Reich, H. Vafaie, W. Van de Welde, W. Wenzel, J. Wnek, and J. Zhang

Carnegie Mellon University CMU-CS-91-197, December 1991

Monk data set results

- Please see examples of plots (learning curves for MSE and Accuracy) in previous lecture on NN:
the "Neural Networks: part 2" lecture (**file**: ML-**-NN-part2-...pdf)
 - See "Other suggestions for your first trials" in the same lecture
 - and examples of hyperparameters were specified in the slides
- ❖ Good results on the MONK benchmark does not guarantee the simulator correctness
- ❖ Bad results on the MONK benchmark for sure require your revision of the code/setting
- Also: the results on Monk should be achieved using a **small network** (2-4 units): The test works if you achieve the state of the art results with few units (you have to not to improve the accuracy).
- For the CUP task, on the other hand, there are no constraints, because instead you have to do the best performance ...

III. 2) ML CUP !



ML CUP 2025



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- I provide to you a **data set for the CUP**, with a training set and a blind test set (examples without target values)
- Apply the models that you are investigating selecting the final one that you think it is more accurate through the training set (used for training and validation, and your *internal test* *) (*see the FAQ).
- Report in the “report (slides)” the TR/VALIDATION and your internal TEST errors, in the original scale i.e. MEE for the 2025 cup (see next slides).
- Apply your final model to the blind test producing an output for each example of the blind test set and record them into an output file
- Provide with the report and the output file containing the blind test results
- Test result: the accuracy on the blind test set will be automatically computed
- The final results will be summarized on the web site using your nicknames
- Glory to the winners! ;-)



Tasks and Data



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **Regression** on 4 target variables, i.e. t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4 in a 4D space
 - **4** target variables: 1 NN with 4 *linear* output units, or 3 NNs, 3 SVR,
- **500 training examples**
 - **Column 1**: pattern name (id)
 - **12 central columns**: **12** variables with continuous values (from a noise source)
 - **Last 4 columns**: target of **4** continuous value variables : t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4
- **Blind test set**: 1000 patterns, with the same input format (of course without the 4 target columns)

Task & Errors 2025

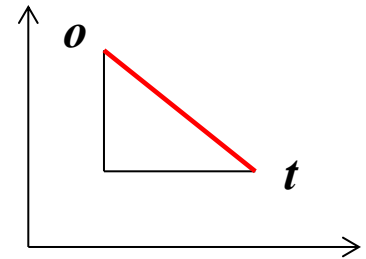


Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

Report in the **original scale** the following error measure (**Euclidian distance**):

- **Mean Euclidian Error** (it is the error used for the competition performance evaluation), where l =number of data, p =pattern, o =output, t =target

$$E_{MEE} = \frac{1}{l} \sum_{p=1}^l \|o_p - t_p\|_2 = \frac{1}{l} \sum_{p=1}^l \sqrt{\sum_{m=1}^4 (o_{p,m} - t_{p,m})^2}$$



E.g. Distance between
2 points in 2 dim space

- Typically you will also observe the (root) mean squared error (that is the typical loss used for the LMS training approach)

$$E_{MSE} = \frac{1}{l} \sum_{p=1}^l \|o_p - t_p\|_2^2 = \frac{1}{l} \sum_{p=1}^l \sum_{m=1}^4 (o_{p,m} - t_{p,m})^2$$

Note that $MEE \neq \text{RootMSE}$ since $\text{sum}(\text{root}(a), \text{root}(b)) \neq \text{root}(\text{sum}(a,b))$

What is provided 2025



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Training set
 - ML-CUP25-TR.csv
- Blind test set (without target)
 - ML-CUP25-TS.csv



!!!!!!



WHERE:

- **ML section on Moodle:** <https://elearning.di.unipi.it/>
- **Folder:** ML-25-PRJ lecture & package *
- With files for cup data, info (slides and txt), slides-demo & report-info, cup results template
- Note: past editions **are NOT valid for this edition/ year**

What to produce 2025 (I)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **Output file** (blind test results) in a simple text/*txt* format (comma-separated values, see FAQ III). The name must be: ***team-name_ML-CUP25-TS.csv***
 - Using the following format
 - First 4 rows are for comments:
 - # your names
 - # team (nickname max 8-10 char) for the web results
 - # data set name (ML-CUP25 v1)
 - # date (e.g. 2 Jan 2025)
 - Table with 1000 rows and 5 columns (comma separated values):
 - id, o_1 , o_2 , o_3 , o_4 (i.e. 4 outputs of your models)
 - id ordered from 1 to 1000 (exactly as for the file ML-CUP25-TS.csv)
- See the demo file: ***template-example-with-random-outputs_ML-CUP25-TS.csv*** (which is filled with random-output values for demo)

PLEASE, double check the output file format!!!!

- If it is not OK we cannot evaluate it automatically
→ jump to the bottom of the rank !
- Repetita: you can send **only 1** *team-name_ML-CUP-25-TS.csv* file (assuming it is your best result)



What to produce (II)




Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- File: `team-name_abstract.txt`, in a simple text/*txt* format
- With a very short (5 rows) description of the **used final model** (e.g. NN/SVR/...) and validation technique.
- HENCE, you have to send (for the cup):
 - ***team-name_ML-CUP25-TS.csv***
 - ***team-name_abstract.txt***
- Along with (see the “Project general rules” slide at the beginning of this lecture)
 - Your code
 - Your written slides report (with results on 3 MONKs and the CUP)

Results



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Initially I will personally communicate the result to the single participant during each oral (for fairness with participants following in time)
- At the end of next year it is possible to award *the winners!* 
- Criteria for the winner on the task: accuracy (MEE) and possibly the quality of final plot of the results (at the discretion of the jury ;-))

The project

- **Premise** (“experimental”, main aim, etc.)
- **Form a group (phase I)**
- **Type A, B, etc. (phase II)**
 - The simulators
- **The application (phase III)**
- **The slides** (format, style, etc.) **(phase IV)**
 - And template demo & info files
- **And slides presentation (phase VI)**



The report: slides

- To help you: see the demo/template of the slides file: **ML-2025-PRJ-Slides-Demo**
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11dcEY9uq8fOqWfRqLosXQIEI9cHM54nOQPYYOet6Dag>
 - Check the last version (Vx.y)
 - Don't change the demo (**make your copy!**)
 - Use your UniPi account to connect
 - A copy will be part of the package
- The demo file includes descriptions of the information to be provided:
 - these are mandatory to accept the report as valid for the exam
 - **double check in the demo files if you reported all the needed information** (see also the next slide)
- Please follow such basic organization for your slides
- English language



An other auxiliary file

- Use also this document with useful info for your project and slides content, file:
ML-25-Report-info-v*.pdf
- It helps you, it is in the form of a report since in the past we used a report style (instead of slides), ...
- But, this year don't write a report in that form, ***you have to prepare only slides and present/discuss them at your oral session***

Slide presentation/discussion(*): mandatory rules



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Time: you will have sharp time to present (or discuss *)
 - **Max. 16 minutes** for a group of 2 students
 - **Max. 18 minutes** for a group of 3 students
- I'll interrupt the presentation after this time, due to conciseness and fairness reasons
- I expect that all the members will present for the same time (so ~8 min. each for a group of two, or 6 min. each for a group of three)
- (*) In some cases, the presentation will be changed into a discussion. I'll advise you directly at the oral, so be prepared for a presentation
- This typically correspond to around
 - **Around 16-18** slides for a group of 2 students (no more, see appendix in the demo)
 - **Around 20** slides for a group of 3 students (no more, see appendix in the demo)
- Font: **font** ≥ 14 for the text (exception for some rare cases to 12 for secondary things), typically a **PDF** file (include a pdf copy in any case)
 - Small font slides will be rejected (we will control also with a tool)
 - Too full slides are not useful for our aims (see later)

Slide presentation: **strong** suggestions!



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- Synthesis issue:
 - **Focus on what is relevant to show!**
 - Given that you provide all the necessary information in the slides (see the demo & info files), the choices regarding the synthesis of the all the other results depends on *your decisions/preferences*.
 - The *time and space limit* must not be forced, also because it is the constraint that imposes the synthesis in order to *exercise/test your choices*.
- Don't forget to ***empathize the novelties*** that you introduced in your model and/or any **significant/critical analyses** and ***any interesting finding/insight***
 1. [model/approach/techniques/implementation **novelties**] It is important to stress what you have been investigated beyond ordinary techniques (if any)
 2. [**Discussion**] Evaluate the effects of the novelties on the results.
Also, don't forget a "**Discussion/Analysis**" answering "*what did you learn?*" on the Models/Hyperparameters/Results/Efficacy/Efficiency, selecting/highlighting what is *more significant in your opinion* (again, time and space constrains helps!)

Look at ...

I'll in particular evaluate (not necessarily in this order):

- Completeness: adherence to requests (in particular see the [*] sign in the ML-25-Report-info file for the mandatory info)
- Correctness with respect to the ML concepts
 - In particular, clarity and correctness of the *validation/assessment procedure* and choice of the final model
- Depth: *introduced novelties supported by evidences*, and quality of the *analysis and discussion*
- Synthesis: focus on interesting aspects!
- Autonomy of the group
- Code quality & MONK results, Efficiency of your implementation
- Effort to achieve the best CUP result (not necessarily the result in itself)
- CUP results: The *blind test* result is just one of the possible parameters (not the most important): however, *very often* it strongly depends on the quality of the model and of the validation approach.
- Quality/clarity of the oral presentation and/or of the discussion
- (further details in Sec. 3)

*The ultimate aim is to evaluate the **maturity** of your approach*

Finally

Other hints/request for the prj

Screening phase

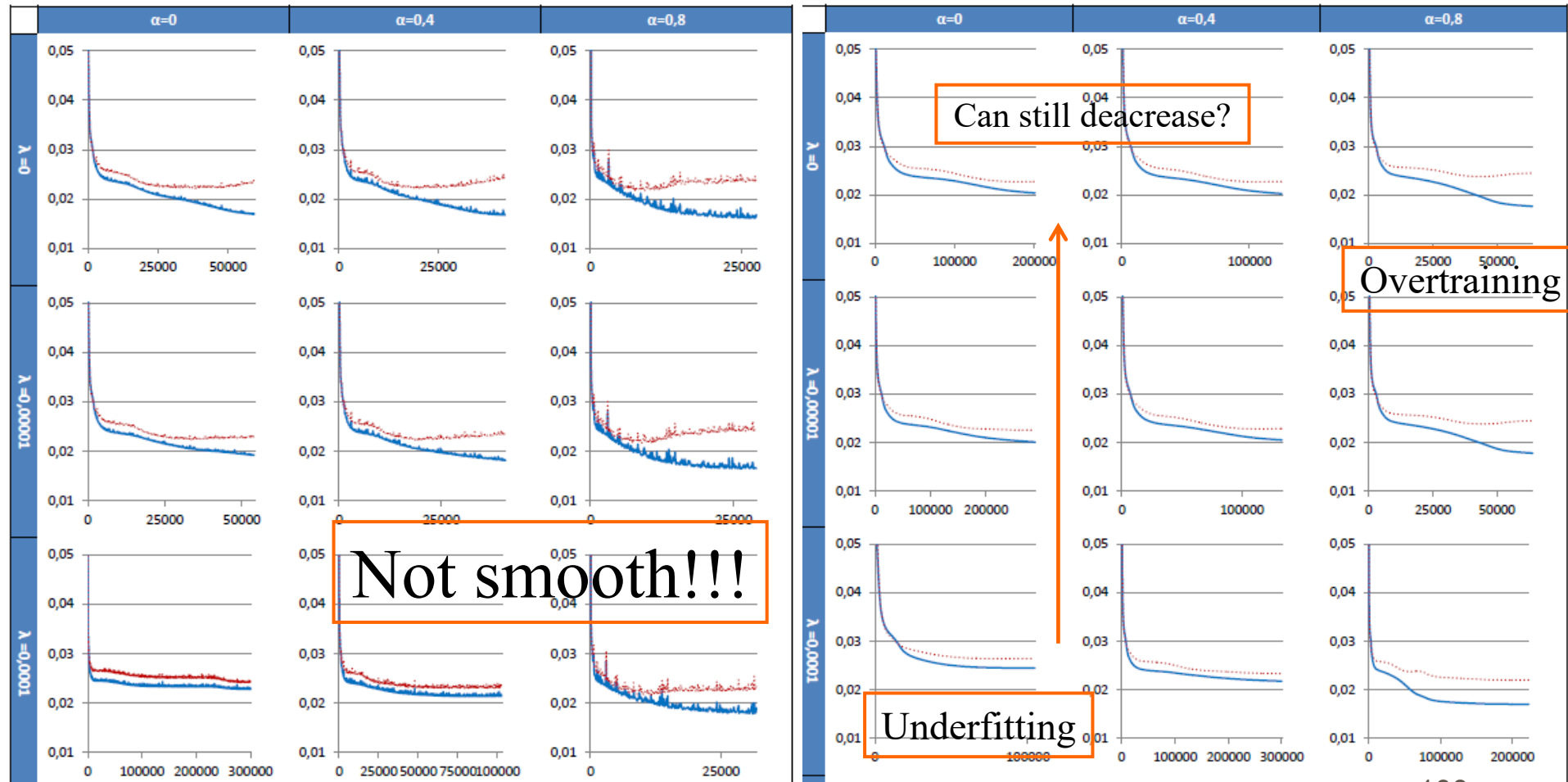
- Initially you will try different values of hyper-parameters
- (if you think interesting) significant cases of learning curves can be reported in the report
- **but for yourself** plot them for various combination*
 - →the screening phase is essential for yourself to learn from this experience [see next slide demo]



- Results of this kind (also from the grid search) could be part of the appendix

Screening demo

- Some instances of screening phase (don't mind of the specific demo hyper. values, look to behavior changes...and make the same with your values)



How many rules?

Again, everything is **easy**

1. You have a **task and dataset**
2. You have **to apply using your models** and to **report the results**
3. You have to respect the **deadlines**

But... many questions have been raised, so to help you I report the answer to many FAQ

- Please, consider them; the first rule of the FAQ: **read the FAQ!**
 - Please, *don't ask for questions already answered in the FAQ* in these slides or in the Moodle FAQ section (most of the questions that we typically receive can be answered with "Please, read the FAQ").
 - Also avoid to miss the described needs for the project
- Please, to avoid further rules "cluttering" *do not ask other rules ;-)*

Sec 3. FAQ & Other Info

How to evaluate your work: further info (Details I)

- **Autonomy** (is part of the evaluation)
- Soundness and quality of the (code) simulator (including any characteristics of modularity, efficiency, ...)
 - Note that more efficiency allows you to have more time for experimental part that is typically time demanding
- Proper operation and behavior:
 - e.g. see the regularity of learning behavior on the plots (see the FAQ), ...
- **Pertinence of the choice** for the model selection and evaluation
- Extension and/or depth of your investigation
 - Model and/or algorithms variants
 - Hyperparameters range
 - Validation and assessment ...(**accuracy/rigorousness of the validation**)

How to evaluate your work: further info (Details II)

- **Quality of the report:**

1. completeness (adherence to requests, see the demo & info files),
2. correctness, 3. synthesis, 4. depth.

And in general: organization, rigor, soundness and synthesis (no repetitions); motivations suitability; choices made; *breadth and depth* of the experimental investigation (although expressed in a concise way);

clarity of the validation schema

clarity on the choice of the final model used for the blind test

quality and depth of the analysis and discussion of your evidences & findings

- In case: difficulty of the challenge (if it is well done) can be a plus (e.g. <A> with CM>)

*The ultimate aim is to evaluate the **maturity** of your approach.*

FAQ 0 [repetita]



Typical serious matters to make possible the correction:

- Respect the presentation *time limits*
 - hence, take care of the **number of slides**
- Respect the *minimum font*
 - Too small font report will be rejected
- Respect the *format of the CUP results* (and range values):
see the file "template-example-with-random-outputs_ML-CUP2*-TS.csv"

FAQ I: Deadline [Repetita]



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **Deadline:** see the beginning slides
 - Check the **exact deadline** for the project material delivery **in large advance** in the Moodle folder for each session, i.e. in Prj Student Material → Session xx (your session of interest)
 - **Can be extended?** No, **later is indeed in advance for the next session** (using the proper folder).
 - It is a strict automatic deadline: please, check it in large advance!
 - I'm sorry, I cannot (*) reply to emails asking to move the date (or to extend it for personal issues) of the exam/session or the deadline of the prj delivery.
 - (*) Please, image the case: If I do it for you, I have to do it for all the candidates (it is also a fairness matter) & session organization is lost. If you (the group together) cannot come, you simply can come in the next session ("appello"). Please, in case advise me in advance.
 - Thank you in advance for your understanding.



FAQ II (Practical)



- Is there any **CHECK LIST** for material delivery?
 - Previous slides on <Delivery and deadlines for Exam and the Project> and < What to produce> (2 slides)
 - For the **report**: see the demo & info files with [*] for mandatory info on the results
 - ML-2025-PRJ-Slides-Demo* & ML-25-Report-info*
 - Check that cup **result file** has the proper name and **format**
 - Provide the following files:
 - Your **code** (if original, else use a link to libraries in the report, add it to READ-ME file in the code package)
 - Your written **slides** report (with results on 3 MONKS and the CUP)
 - *team-name_ML-CUP25-TS.csv*
 - *team-name_abstract.txt*
- Deliver the package only in the Moodle and only as **zip file!!!**
- Only **1 delivery** for each group, by 1 member of the group
 - Use the **surnames** of the group components for the package file name
 - And for the pdf slide report file
- Send confirmation email (slide: "Project General Rules: How to deliver it")



FAQ III (Practical)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **How the group communicate with teacher and assistants and for the final project delivery?**
All the group member must be included in cc of the email, no answer will be sent to a singular partner of a group (also to avoid partial info among the group components)
- **Do we need a supercomputer/server/GPU to run the prj?**
Not at all, this is a small task: you can use any machine or also external services (e.g. Colab) , **but typically your PC/laptops are sufficient** to conclude the prj in a reasonable time (also the constraints on the resources force you to focalize your effort, see the lect.s on validation)



FAQ III (Practical)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **CSV format for the CUP results:** see the files, it is a comma-separated values without spaces after the comma. Each pattern is a row. The header of input file has some rows of description beginning with #.
 - **Example:** output_template_example-with-random-output-ML-CUP25-TS.csv (which is filled with random-output values for demo)
- Executable programs, libraries, ... (**large files**): until the package is small size try to include everything in the package.
If you have problems include (in the READ-ME file of the code package) a link to download the *** accessories files *** of great dimension
 - Check the zip archive size before submitting it. Please try to stay **within 5 MB**. If it is above 5MB, make sure you've cleaned up notebook outputs or that you haven't included hidden files by mistake. **In any case, the limit for the package is 20 MB**
- **Plots , graphics etc.:** it is mandatory to distinguish lines in the plots also using different lines symbols/style (to see them also in Black&White)



FAQ IV



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- **How many hidden layers do you suggest for the CUP?**
I strongly suggest you to try also two (or more) and compare (even if a single hidden level can result sufficient)
- **How many trials (grid search dimension for the hyperparameters values)?**
How many you feel are useful in order to do a good model selection. Such choices are part of the quality of your work.
- **Which trials should I report?** All the significant cases with details (experimental evidences), the other can be mentioned/synthetized in the text. Such choices are part of the quality of your work.
- **MSE or MEE?** You can use MSE (LMS) for training and MEE to evaluate
- **Is “internal test” result needed? YES,** it is, so we can compare your results with the blind test results (for our didactics aims)
See also the ML-25-Report-info file.
- **Does the use of the (internal) test data for model selection aims influence our prj evaluation? YES!,** using “test” data in any form for the model selection is considered **a serious issue!**



FAQ V



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

- What if my model **does not work well**?
 - Check the learning curve to find clues
 - HINT: Try to compare with respect to a known tool in the same condition
 - Take advantage of the Q&A class (with also the assistant)
 - Help of the assistant
 - But...: Autonomy is part of the evaluation
- **PRJ A:** For **efficiency** reasons, it is suggested an implementation that uses a matrix approach (in terms of batch size and layers of units), exploiting NumPy, versus the use of “for” cycles on vectors e.g. considering individual units



FAQ VI



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

Even more QUESTIONS?

- Please, read the following slides (other FAQ) before the next Q&A lecture!!!!
- They are related to frequent past errors!
- Please, read other FAQ in the Moodle page (I can update them)



FAQ (NOT read in class I)

Please, read them by yourself :

- [Report] It is important to report the final Training, Validation and the internal Test error by the MEE measure?
Yes, it is a must. I cannot accept a report without these values.
- [Report] It is important to report how we obtained the final model (how selected)?
Yes, it is a must. I cannot accept a report without this information.
- Can you provide to me an idea of the basic result for the CUP? Should I have near 0 errors like Monk?
No, zero errors is ONLY for *some* of the Monks tasks, an exception. For reasons of equity, no indications can be given on the reference performance for the CUP.
- The error to be reported in the tables is without the penalty term? Yes, without it
- General note on plots in the report: to be comparable, use a point for each epoch (defined as the total number of training data): if you are using on-line or mini-batch provide the mean over an epoch for each point in the plot.
- What if my learning curve is unstable? Try to solve the issue! A smooth learning curve can be obtained for these tasks by a correct implementation and a suitable setting !
Else, I have to consider it as a *not good* result.

FAQ (NOT read in class II)

Please, read them by yourself :

- [Can we use other methods beyond grid search?](#)
Yes, but first grid search approach is mandatory. It is needed to teach to you the meaning of the hyperparameters! Others? Yes, e.g. Random search : see Validation 1 (Valid1) lecture. But if you like, and only after the result with grid search
- [Is it needed an advanced validation approach for Monks?](#)
No, Monk dataset is a benchmark to assess your code and system. You can also assess the validation process with Monk, but it is *not* needed to address this task by a complex CV approach.
- [Plots with MEE or MSE?](#)
MEE for the tables (and this is mandatory!), for plots up to you (typically the quality of the learning behavior does not change)
- [Usage of Early Stopping:](#)
See Validation 3 (Valid3) lecture

FAQ (NOT read in class III)

Please, read them by yourself:

- Does a NN for **Monk** converge always with few hundred of epochs"?
The model converge easily in "most of the case" with the suggested setting (and also with other settings). But not "always" due to the sensitivity to the random initialization using a large range of the initial weights. Use a very small range for weights init.!
Please see in the lecture NN2.
- So what accuracy have to be reported for the Monk, just the best over different trials/initializations?
No, the mean accuracy over that trials. See the discussion above.
- How many units for Monk? Very few. Follow the manual as baseline: see a slide in this lecture!
- How many units for the CUP? You have to search by yourself, but it is completed unrelated with respect to the Monk task!!!
- What if a use a scaling/normalization of target values for the CUP ? It is not need to do it; if you do it, remember to report the MEE in the **original scale** (for the test result file and the tables on the report). It is a must in order to make possible the evaluation, i.e. the comparison! Take care: it is "popular" way to fail on the results

FAQ (NOT read in class IV)

Please, read them by yourself:

- **Can we collaborate with other groups for specific issues?** We encourage to exchange ideas and to solve some common issues with other students (e.g. is the **W** update rule correct in my code)? However, of course, the project will be completely independent among different groups, and you must show your autonomy in developing it. We suggest to follow your original path and exploit in autonomy this experience!
- **What is the time to be reported when you say «Provide an estimation of the (training) computing time (and of your HW resources)” in the info doc for the report?**
A measure of the time like the mean time (e.g. in second/minutes/hours) for an epoch of training, or better for a full training of the final selected model, and/or a cycle of validation (and the description of the computer that you are using to make this training).

FAQ (NOT read in class V)

Please, read them by yourself:

- [Making a prj with SVM, which plot can I do?](#)
See E.g. Slide “Critical role of Hyper-parameters on the performance” of <ML-**-SVM-other info> lecture (e.g. results w.r.t. hyper-parameters values, including epsilon-tube parameter in case of regression)
- [Project B \(or <A with CM>\): If the winner is not a NN \(or a methods with iterative training\) which plot can I do?](#)
See the answer on SVM above (you can show effects of the hyper-parameters). Moreover, if you are considering a NN in the set of models, even if it is not the winner, you can report the learning curve for the selected NN. Explain the case in the report.
- [Prj <A with CM>: comparison also on Monks?](#)
Using a NN the results on MONK are still needed (at least summarized if the not interesting for the basic or the advanced algorithms), and of course you have to apply to the CUP dataset. For the SVR (if only for regression) PRJs (with CM) applying to MONK is *not* required. But see the Q&A on [do we need to implement also the NN?](#) (next page) or you can also always use your SVM also in the form of a classifier.

FAQ (NOT read in class VI)

Please, read them by yourself:

- Making <A with CM> implementing a NN, do we implement the basic and advanced NN by ourselves? Yes. It is a type A prj.
 - In the CM report you will discuss the properties of the algorithms from the CM view point.
 - In the ML report you will discuss the "basic" NN and the *comparison* with the "advanced" algorithm developed with CM.
- Making <A with CM> implementing a SVM, do we need to implement also the NN? Up to you, in this case
 - you can develop the NN by yourself (type A prj) or
 - you can take the NN from a library (like for a type B prj, in this case it is a mix), but, in any case, you have to *compare* the results (for the ML report)

General note: the slide for <A with CM> said: "More effort? It is because you like to try and show something more and not something less!", hence I strongly suggest to compare also with a NN

FAQ (NOT read in class VII)

Please, read them by yourself:

Type B Prj:

- **Project B: Do we have to compare the models on both MONK and the CUP data sets? Yes**, you have to compare ALL the models on both the Monk datasets & on the CUP dataset. You can synthesize using only the most interesting results and you can use the appendix for details
- **Project B: Do we have to include the code?**
Yes, the code written by yourself, in case, e.g. to use the libraries/notebooks etc., must be included in the package
- **Package size:**
"Check the zip archive size before submitting it. Please try to stay **within 5 MB**. If it is above 5MB, make sure you've cleaned up notebook outputs or that you haven't included hidden files by mistake. In any case, the **limit for the package is 20 MB**"

FAQ (NOT read in class VIII)

- What changes using **MATLAB/OCTAVE/R?** [repetita]
 - If you code by yourself → prj type A,
but exploit your advantage (less time for the coding phase) to use more time in exploration/usage of advanced Matlab numerical computing functions/ possibly a comparison with other available models in the environment/extensive cross-validation/ impressive graphical results/...
 - If you use the NN/Deep Learning Toolbox → prj type B
- Can we apply our models also to a “personal” or other data sets?
 - It is not necessary. If someone wants to do it, it is always *appreciated* when students do more; however, such results should be included as appendix material in the appendix and only after the rest has been completed:
*It does **not** replace the main requirements*, i.e. the results the provided benchmarks for MONK and CUP.

FAQ (NOT read in class IX)

- Project delivery: For the type B project, because its analysis is more focused on the comparison of different models, for the software part, can we deliver a Jupyter Notebook (at least for the models used with Python library) or do we have to send "pure" Python script?
 - Since this is a project that lends itself to using different libraries and frameworks, I would very well expect a Jupyter or Colab Notebook (if you are using them) rather than pure python code with various requirements to install in order to test it.
 - It's different for project A, where you will use only numerical libraries.
 - But it is good to remember to remove the output of the cells before delivery, to avoid that you also save the images or plots of each run. Just run "Cell -> Output cells -> Clear" before saving the notebook for delivery (to avoid cluttering and huge delivery in terms of space).
- Package size (any kind of project):

Check the zip archive size before submitting it. **Please try to stay within 5 MB.** If it is above 5MB, make sure you've cleaned up notebook outputs or that you haven't included hidden files by mistake. In any case, the **limit for the package is 20 MB**

Motivational hints by past students (I)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

Selection of general nice hints/motivations by past students reports conclusions (when it was a report):

- “The powerful libraries available nowadays provide a high level of abstraction and while this is useful for quickly getting things done, a naive use of a user with no solid knowledge of **the theoretical ground** may lead to a disastrous outcome. [...] In conclusion, by implementing our own library, we feel that we are now much more aware of whats happening behind the scenes.”
- “The limited time and computing resources **has pushed us to think** more about reasonable choices or shortcuts to speed up the searching for a fine model selection for the Cup dataset, showing us how necessary is the integration between artificial and human intelligence.”
- “Last consideration is on how important is to **visualize results in the best way**. Not only it is fundamental for presentation itself, often it is the fastest way to understand how the model behaves in the hyperparameter space.”
- “... the «**DIY**» **approach** enabled us to really grasp concepts from the ground up, to establish deep knowledge on the mechanisms seen during the course.”
DIY “Do it yourself” aka “self-made-culture”

Motivational hints by past students (I)



Dip. Informatica
University of Pisa

Selection of general nice hints/motivations by past students reports conclusions (when it was a report):

- “Lo sviluppo di questo progetto è stato sicuramente un’ottima motivazione per mettere in pratica quanto affrontato nel corso, sia in termini di implementazione e comprensione degli algoritmi alla base delle tecniche più moderne di Machine Learning, sia in termini di applicazione di una rigorosa metodologia per la valutazione e soprattutto la validazione di un modello, indispensabile per raggiungere risultati plausibili e confrontabili con quanto studiato in teoria. **La coordinazione che un lavoro condiviso come questo richiede è inoltre un ottimo ‘training test’ per lo sviluppo in gruppo**, ed il confronto continuo durante le diverse fasi dell’implementazione e validazione ha beneficiato entrambi nella comprensione del lavoro svolto.”
- “I **concetti teorici trattati a lezione** di cui fanno parte ad esempio le tecniche di regularization [...] e le nozioni di underfitting/overfitting di un modello sui dati sono stati visti in un ambito più pratico e è stato molto utile ai fini didattici. Le richieste ci hanno permesso di scoprire più a fondo il mondo del Machine Learning e in particolare quello delle Neural Network, infatti abbiamo avuto l’occasione di mettere le mani su dinamiche e funzionamenti che dall’esterno risultano trasparenti.”
- «Sono abbastanza soddisfatto del risultato ottenuto, ma più di tutto, sono contento di aver fatto il progetto A perché mi ha permesso di capire nei minimi dettagli ogni aspetto del funzionamento di una rete neurale e, collateralmente, ha anche migliorato le mie capacità di scrivere codice.»

Enjoy !

- ... Now you can **enjoy** with ML !
- To stimulate your initiative, listen "rock music":
 - "La Follia" (Corelli)
 - Il "cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione", "L'estro armonico", "La stravaganza" (Vivaldi)



Future – just ahead



- CIML@UniPi
- Didactics: other courses (ISPR, HLT, CNS,...)
- General topics for ML applications
- CIML@Pisa research

**2025: THIS PART WILL
BE PRESENTED LATER,
Just wait**

DRAFT, please do not circulate!

For information

Alessio Micheli

micheli@di.unipi.it

www.di.unipi.it/groups/ciml



Dipartimento di Informatica
Università di Pisa - Italy



**Computational Intelligence &
Machine Learning Group**