

Kevin Lu

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Education

- May 2027 **Stanford University**
Aug 2023 Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Computer Science (CS)
Deferred admission. Supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) GRFP fellowship.
- Aug 2021 **University of California, Berkeley**
Aug 2018 Bachelor of Science (BS) in Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences (EECS)
GPA: Overall 3.95/4.00; EECS 4.00/4.00
Graduate-level courses: Unsupervised Learning, Natural Language Processing, Robotics, Theory of Bandits & RL, Population Games, Robust and Nonparametric Statistics, Theoretical Statistics
Undergraduate-level courses: Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Convex Optimization, Probability and Random Processes, Efficient Algorithms, Discrete Math, Machine Structures

Experience

- Present **Hudson River Trading**
Aug 2022 Algorithm Developer
- Mar 2022 **Facebook Artificial Intelligence Research (Meta AI)**
Aug 2021 AI Resident (Advisors: Amy Zhang, Yuandong Tian)
Fundamental research on methods for better generalization in reinforcement learning.
- Aug 2021 **Robot Learning Lab**
Jun 2019 Undergraduate Researcher (Advisors: Igor Mordatch, Pieter Abbeel)
Published work on reinforcement learning, universal models, and sequence modeling.
- Mar 2019 **Hearst Lab**
Sep 2018 Undergraduate Researcher (Advisors: Katie Stasaski, Marti Hearst)
Worked on engineering for a tutoring project leveraging language models and collected data.

Highlighted Publications

- Jun 2021 **Decision Transformer: Reinforcement Learning via Sequence Modeling**
L. Chen* and K. Lu* (equal contribution), ..., P. Abbeel, A. Srinivas[†], I. Mordatch[†]
Summary: simple language modeling can do offline RL, matching traditional dynamic programming (temporal difference learning) methods on recent benchmarks.
This work was presented at Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) 2021. It was also independently covered on [YouTube](#) and by assorted press ([The Batch](#), [The Gradient](#), [SyncedReview](#)).
- Mar 2021 **Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines**
K. Lu, A. Grover, P. Abbeel, I. Mordatch
Summary: pretrained language sequence models can exhibit [cross-modal transfer](#) to distinct non-language modalities, improving performance on random initialization.
Presented at the AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence 2022 as an oral presentation. It was also independently covered on [YouTube](#) and by assorted press ([The Batch](#), [VentureBeat](#)).

Teaching

- May 2021 **University of California, Berkeley (EECS Department)**
Jan 2019 Head Teaching Assistant for Probability and Random Processes (EECS 126) (Sp21, Fa20)
Head TA for upper division probability course EECS 126, responsible for organizing course, managing staff, creating content, and communicating with students.
Teaching Assistant for Probability and Random Processes (EECS 126) (Sp20, Fa19)
Reader for Discrete Math and Probability (CS 70) (Sp19)

All Publications

- Dec 2021 **Pretraining for Language-Conditioned Imitation with Transformers**
A. Putterman, K. Lu, I. Mordatch, P. Abbeel.
NeurIPS Offline Reinforcement Learning Workshop, 2021.
Summary: unsupervised sequence pretraining improves language-conditioned behavior policies.
- Oct 2021 **URLB: Unsupervised Reinforcement Learning Benchmark**
M. Laskin* and D. Yarats*, H. Liu, K. Lee, A. Zhan, K. Lu, C. Cang, L. Pinto, P. Abbeel.
Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2021.
Summary: we benchmark unsupervised RL algorithms on downstream finetuning performance.
- Jun 2021 **Decision Transformer: Reinforcement Learning via Sequence Modeling**
L. Chen*, K. Lu*, A. Rajeswaran, K. Lee, A. Grover, M. Laskin, P. Abbeel, A. Srinivas†, I. Mordatch†.
Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2021.
Summary: simple language modeling can do offline RL, matching traditional dynamic programming.
- Mar 2021 **Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines**
K. Lu, A. Grover, P. Abbeel, I. Mordatch.
AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (Oral Presentation), 2022.
Summary: pretrained language models can exhibit cross-modal transfer to non-language modalities.
- Jan 2021 **Efficient Empowerment Estimation for Unsupervised Stabilization**
R. Zhao, K. Lu, P. Abbeel, S. Tiomkin.
International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR), 2021.
Summary: unbiased empowerment estimator representing stability better than variational methods.
- Dec 2020 **Reset-Free Lifelong Learning with Skill-Space Planning**
K. Lu, A. Grover, P. Abbeel, I. Mordatch.
International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR), 2021.
Summary: model-based planning over a space of model-free skills improves reset-free performance.
- Dec 2019 **Adaptive Online Planning for Continual Lifelong Learning**
K. Lu, I. Mordatch, P. Abbeel.
NeurIPS Deep Reinforcement Learning Workshop, 2019.
Summary: model-based planning outperforms model-free acting in dangerous reset-free settings.

Invited Talks

- Jun 2022 CLEAR Ventures: "Advances in Robotic and Reinforcement Learning Research"
- Jan 2022 Adept AI (Startup): "Towards a Universal Paradigm for Decision Making"
- Jan 2022 Google: "Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines"
- Jan 2022 Facebook AI Research: "Towards a Universal Paradigm for Decision Making"
- Jul 2021 Intel AI Labs: "Decision Transformer: Reinforcement Learning via Sequence Modeling"
- Jul 2021 Eindhoven RL: "Decision Transformer: Reinforcement Learning via Sequence Modeling"
- Apr 2021 IBM: "Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines"
- Apr 2021 Facebook AI Research: "Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines"
- Apr 2021 Berkeley Vision Group: "Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines"
- Mar 2021 Cohere AI: "Pretrained Transformers as Universal Computation Engines"

Academic Activities

Reviewer:

Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)
International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR)
International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML)