

Planning and Optimization

E8. Operator Counting

Malte Helmert and Gabriele Röger

Universität Basel

November 25, 2020

Planning and Optimization

November 25, 2020 — E8. Operator Counting

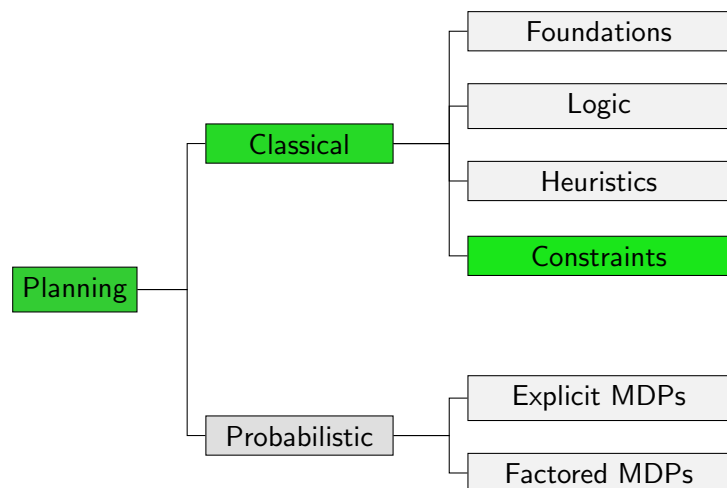
E8.1 Introduction

E8.2 Operator-counting Framework

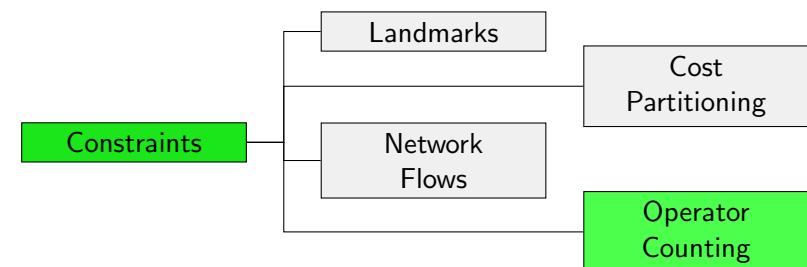
E8.3 Properties

E8.4 Summary

Content of this Course



Content of this Course: Constraints



E8.1 Introduction

Reminder: Flow Heuristic

In the previous chapter, we used **flow constraints** to describe how often operators must be used in each plan.

Example (Flow Constraints)

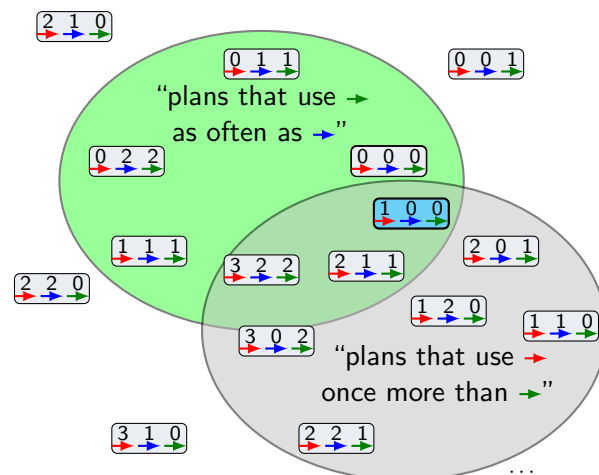
Let Π be a planning problem with operators $\{O_{\text{red}}, O_{\text{green}}, O_{\text{blue}}\}$. The flow constraint for some atom a is the constraint

$$1 + \text{Count}_{O_{\text{green}}} = \text{Count}_{O_{\text{red}}}.$$

In natural language, this flow constraint expresses that every plan uses O_{red} **once more** than O_{green} .

Reminder: Flow Heuristic

Let us now observe how each flow constraint alters the operator count solution space.



E8.2 Operator-counting Framework

Operator Counting

Operator counting

- ▶ generalizes this idea to a framework that allows to **admissibly combine different heuristics**.
- ▶ uses **linear constraints** ...
- ▶ ... that describe **number of occurrences** of an operator ...
- ▶ ... and must be satisfied by **every plan**.
- ▶ provides declarative way to describe **knowledge about solutions**.
- ▶ allows **reasoning about solutions** to derive heuristic estimates.

Operator-counting Constraint

Definition (Operator-counting Constraints)

Let Π be a planning task with operators O and let s be a state. Let \mathcal{V} be the set of integer variables Count_o for each $o \in O$.

A linear inequality over \mathcal{V} is called an **operator-counting constraint** for s if for every plan π for s setting each Count_o to the number of occurrences of o in π is a feasible variable assignment.

Operator-counting Heuristics

Definition (Operator-counting IP/LP Heuristic)

The operator-counting integer program IP_C for a set C of operator-counting constraints for state s is

$$\text{Minimize } \sum_{o \in O} \text{cost}(o) \cdot \text{Count}_o \quad \text{subject to}$$

$$C \text{ and } \text{Count}_o \geq 0 \text{ for all } o \in O,$$

where O is the set of operators.

The **IP heuristic** h_C^{IP} is the objective value of IP_C , the **LP heuristic** h_C^{LP} is the objective value of its LP-relaxation.

If the IP/LP is infeasible, the heuristic estimate is ∞ .

Operator-counting Constraints

- ▶ Adding more constraints can only remove feasible solutions
- ▶ Fewer feasible solutions can only increase objective value
- ▶ Higher objective value means better informed heuristic

Are there operator-counting constraints other than flow constraints?

Reminder: Minimum Hitting Set for Landmarks

Variables

Non-negative variable Applied_o for each operator o

Objective

Minimize $\sum_o \text{cost}(o) \cdot \text{Applied}_o$

Subject to

$$\sum_{o \in L} \text{Applied}_o \geq 1 \text{ for all landmarks } L$$

Operator Counting with Disjunctive Action Landmarks

Variables

Non-negative variable Count_o for each operator o

Objective

Minimize $\sum_o \text{cost}(o) \cdot \text{Count}_o$

Subject to

$$\sum_{o \in L} \text{Count}_o \geq 1 \text{ for all landmarks } L$$

New: Post-hoc Optimization Constraints

For set of abstractions $\{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n\}$:

Variables

Non-negative variables Count_o for all operators $o \in O$

$\text{Count}_o \cdot \text{cost}(o)$ is cost incurred by operator o

Objective

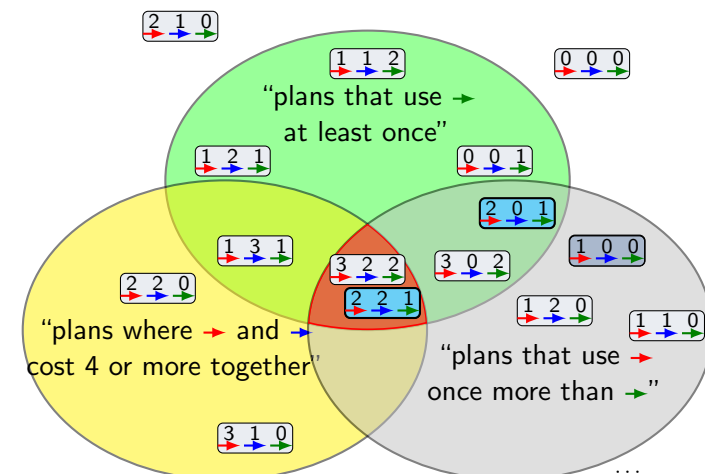
Minimize $\sum_{o \in O} \text{cost}(o) \cdot \text{Count}_o$

Subject to

$$\sum_{o \in O: o \text{ affects } \mathcal{T}^\alpha} \text{cost}(o) \cdot \text{Count}_o \geq h^\alpha(s) \text{ for } \alpha \in \{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n\}$$

$$\text{cost}(o) \cdot \text{Count}_o \geq 0 \text{ for all } o \in O$$

Example



Further Examples?

- ▶ The definition of operator-counting constraints can be extended to groups of constraints and auxiliary variables.
- ▶ With this extended definition we could also cover more heuristics, e.g., the perfect delete-relaxation heuristic h^+ .

E8.3 Properties

Admissibility

Theorem (Operator-counting Heuristics are Admissible)

The IP and the LP heuristic are *admissible*.

Proof.

Let C be a set of operator-counting constraints for state s and π be an optimal plan for s . The number of operator occurrences of π are a feasible solution for C . As the IP/LP minimizes the total plan cost, the objective value cannot exceed the cost of π and is therefore an admissible estimate. \square

Dominance

Theorem

Let C and C' be sets of operator-counting constraints for s and let $C \subseteq C'$. Then $IP_C \leq IP_{C'}$ and $LP_C \leq LP_{C'}$.

Proof.

Every feasible solution of C' is also feasible for C . As the LP/IP is a minimization problem, the objective value subject to C can therefore not be larger than the one subject to C' . \square

Adding more constraints can only improve the heuristic estimate.

Heuristic Combination

Operator counting as heuristic combination

- ▶ Multiple operator-counting heuristics can be combined by computing h_C^{LP}/h_C^{IP} for the **union of their constraints**.
- ▶ This is an **admissible** combination.
 - ▶ Never worse than maximum of individual heuristics
 - ▶ Sometimes even better than their sum
- ▶ We already know a way of admissibly combining heuristics: cost partitioning.
 - ⇒ **How are they related?**

Connection to Cost Partitioning

Theorem

Let C_1, \dots, C_n be sets of operator-counting constraints for s and $\mathcal{C} = \bigcup_{i=1}^n C_i$. Then $h_{\mathcal{C}}^{LP}$ is the **optimal general cost partitioning** over the heuristics $h_{C_i}^{LP}$.

Proof omitted.

Comparison to Optimal Cost Partitioning



- ▶ some heuristics are **more compact** if expressed as operator counting
- ▶ some heuristics **cannot be expressed** as operator counting
- ▶ **operator counting IP** even better than optimal cost partitioning
- ▶ Cost partitioning maximizes, so heuristics must be encoded perfectly to guarantee admissibility. Operator counting minimizes, so missing information just makes the heuristic weaker.

E8.4 Summary



Summary

- ▶ Many heuristics can be formulated in terms of **operator-counting constraints**.
- ▶ The operator counting heuristic framework allows to **combine the constraints** and to reason on the entire encoded declarative knowledge.
- ▶ The heuristic estimate for the combined constraints **can be better than the one of the best ingredient heuristic** but never worse.
- ▶ Operator counting is **equivalent to optimal general cost partitioning** over individual constraints.

Literature (1)

-  Florian Pommerening, Gabriele Röger and Malte Helmert.
Getting the Most Out of Pattern Databases for Classical Planning.
Proc. IJCAI 2013, pp. 2357–2364, 2013.
Introduces post-hoc optimization and points out **relation to canonical heuristic**.
-  Blai Bonet.
An Admissible Heuristic for SAS+ Planning Obtained from the State Equation.
Proc. IJCAI 2013, pp. 2268–2274, 2013.
Suggests combination of flow constraints and landmark constraints.

Literature (2)

-  Tatsuya Imai and Alex Fukunaga.
A Practical, Integer-linear Programming Model for the Delete-relaxation in Cost-optimal Planning.
Proc. ECAI 2014, pp. 459–464, 2014.
IP formulation of h^+ .
-  Florian Pommerening, Gabriele Röger, Malte Helmert and Blai Bonet.
LP-based Heuristics for Cost-optimal Planning.
Proc. ICAPS 2014, pp. 226–234, 2014.
Systematic introduction of operator-counting framework.