

# Analysis and Control of Functional Brain Networks

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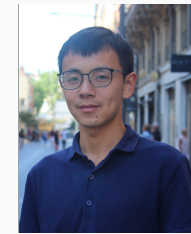
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
University of California at Riverside



## Who really did the work



Tommaso Menara



Yuzhen Qin



Giacomo Baggio

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## Reverse-Engineer the Human Brain

One of the greatest challenges of modern science, and the key to ...



(credit Ellen Weinstein)

## Why should we reverse-engineer the brain?

- personalized therapies & reversal of cognitive decline



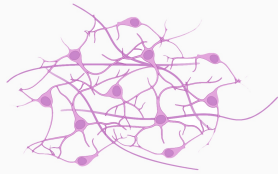
[Medtronic]

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## Why should we reverse-engineer the brain?

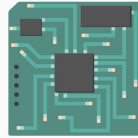
- personalized therapies & reversal of cognitive decline
- efficient computing systems & brain-computer interfaces

energy:  $\sim 10$  W



vs

energy:  $\sim 100$  W



[von Neumann, 2012, The Computer & the Brain]

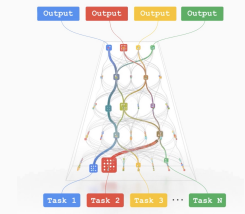
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## Why should we reverse-engineer the brain?

- personalized therapies & reversal of cognitive decline
- efficient computing systems & brain-computer interfaces
- next generation machine intelligence



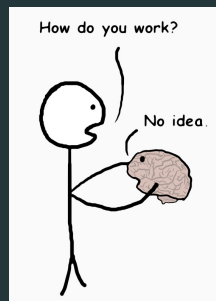
[Deepmind]



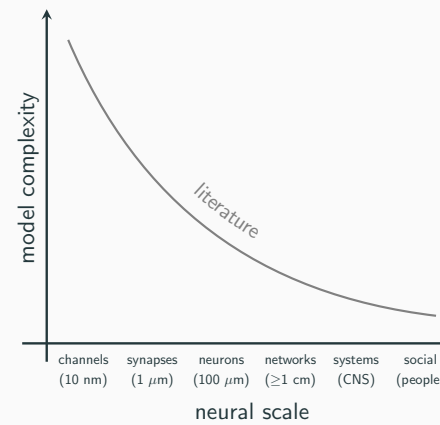
[Google Research]

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## How to reverse-engineer the brain?



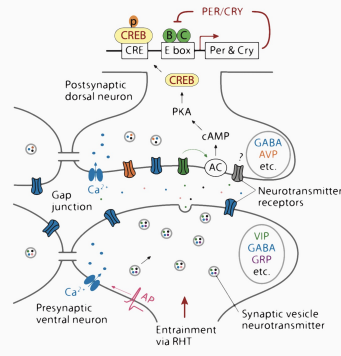
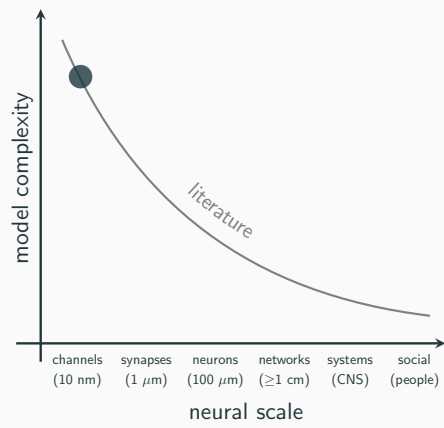
## Models and scales of interest



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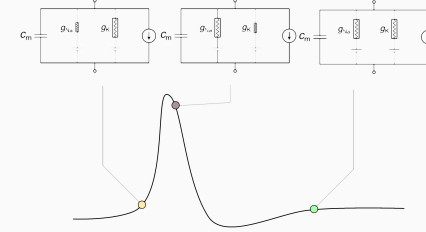
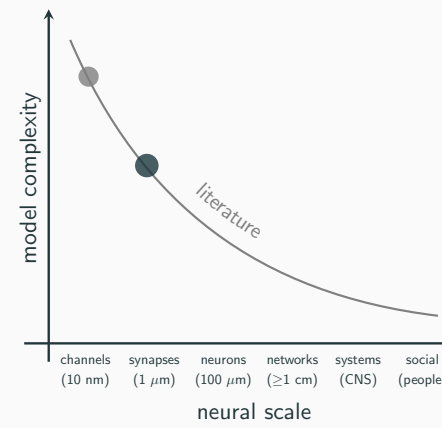
## Models and scales of interest



[Welsh et al., 2010, Ann Rev Physiol]

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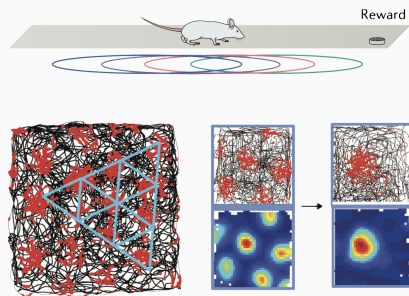
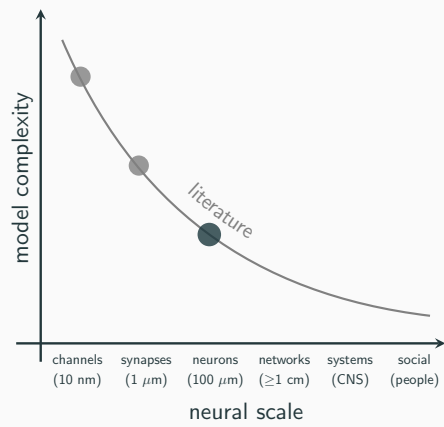
## Models and scales of interest



[Kumar et al., 2010, Closed Loop Neuroscience]

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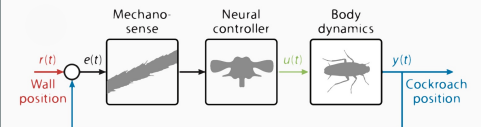
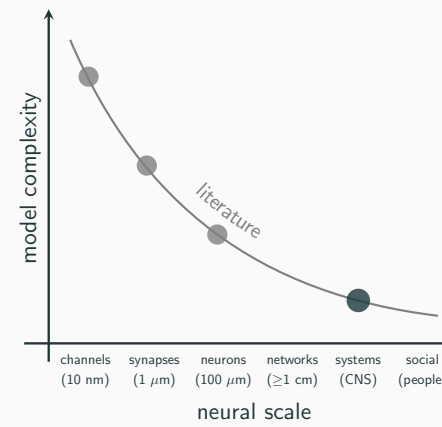
## Models and scales of interest



[Moser et al., 2015, Cold Spring Harb Perspect Biol]

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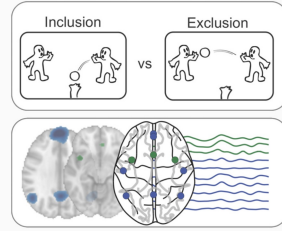
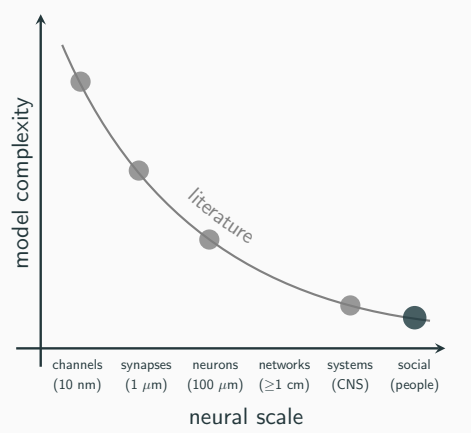
## Models and scales of interest



[Madhav & Cowan, 2020 Ann Rev Contr Rob Aut Sys]

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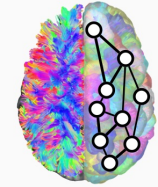
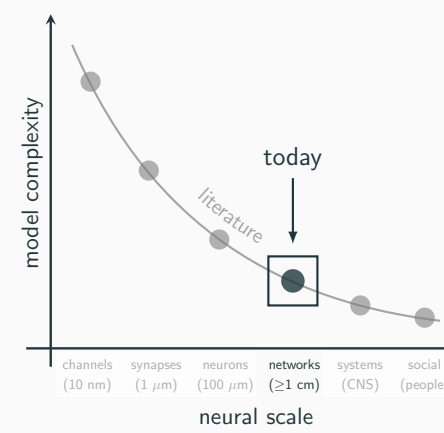
## Models and scales of interest



[Schmälzle et al., 2017 PNAS]

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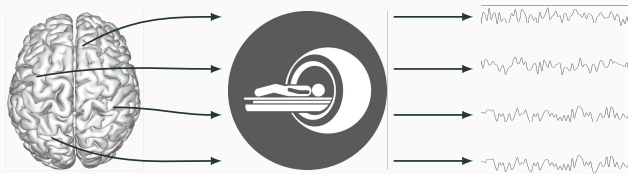
## Models and scales of interest



- brain-wide process (*functional patterns*)
- models retain biological compatibility
- models remain analytically tractable

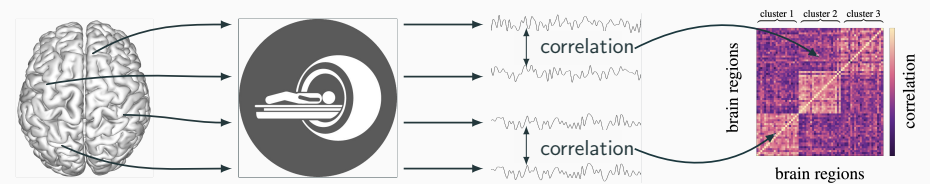
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## Functional patterns of brain activity



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## Functional patterns of brain activity



- synchrony between brain regions long known (EEG, fMRI, [Berger & Gray, 1929])
- rich repertoire of synchrony patterns (transient, long-range, clustered)
- different patterns are biomarkers of health and disease (epilepsy, Parkinson's)

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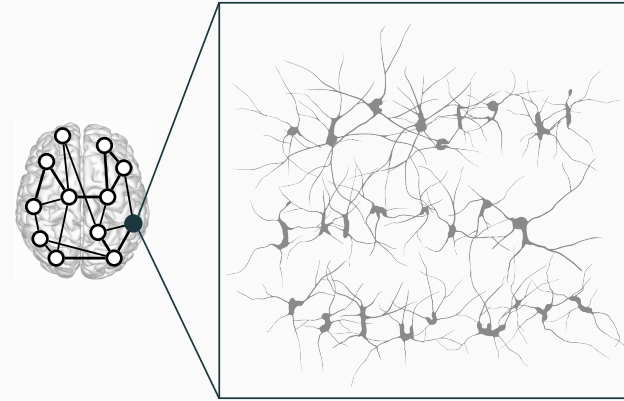
## Modeling functional patterns



- nodes = brain regions; edges = bundles of white matter fibers
- static brain networks carry structural and statistical information
- *dynamic* brain networks are useful for the prediction & control of neural dynamics

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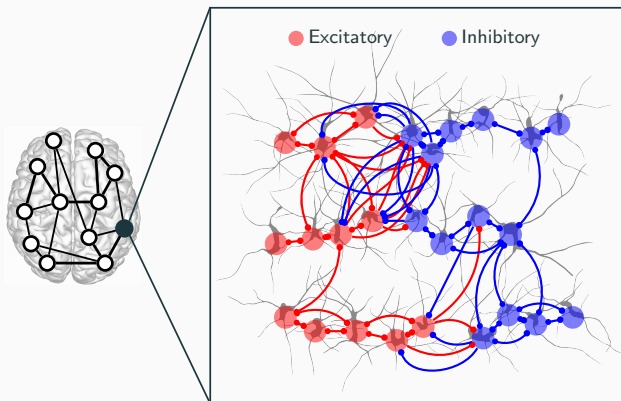
## Resting-state activity modeled by phase oscillators



each node of the brain network captures the dynamics of a population of neurons

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## Resting-state activity modeled by phase oscillators



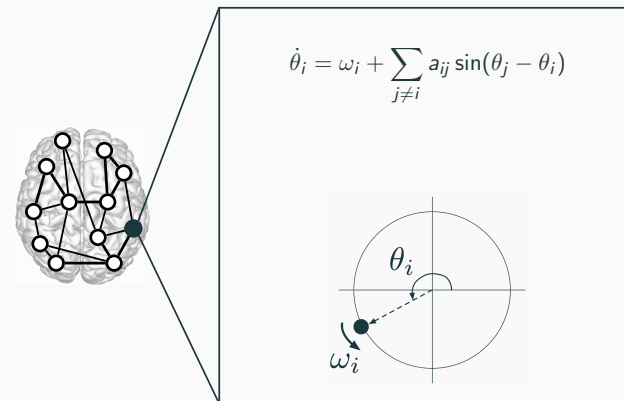
excitatory and inhibitory communities are in a regime of self-sustained oscillations  
(weakly coupled Wilson-Cowan)  
[Hoppensteadt and Izhikevich, 1997]

neurons' firing rates describe a limit cycle

dynamics approximated by a single phase variable  
[Cabral *et al.*, 2011]

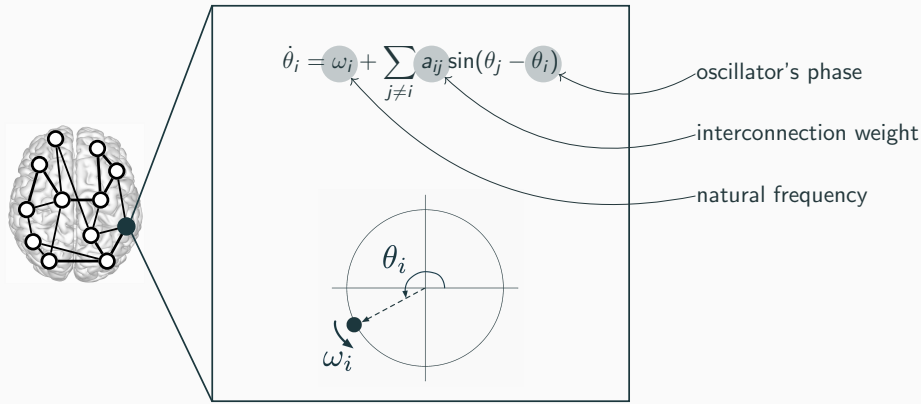
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## Resting-state activity modeled by phase oscillators



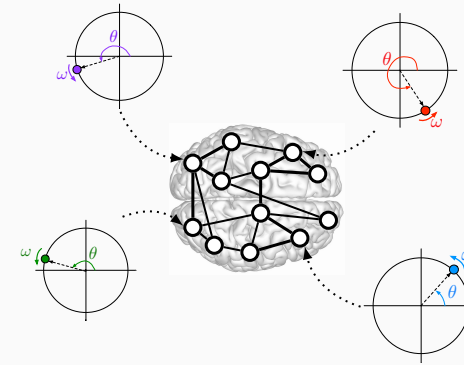
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## Resting-state activity modeled by phase oscillators



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## Dynamical brain network to simulate neural activity

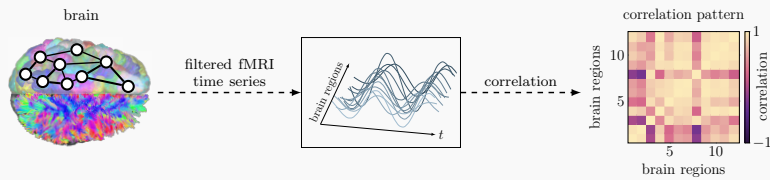


dynamical brain network with:

- nodes = brain regions
- edges = white matter fibers
- node dynamics = Kuramoto

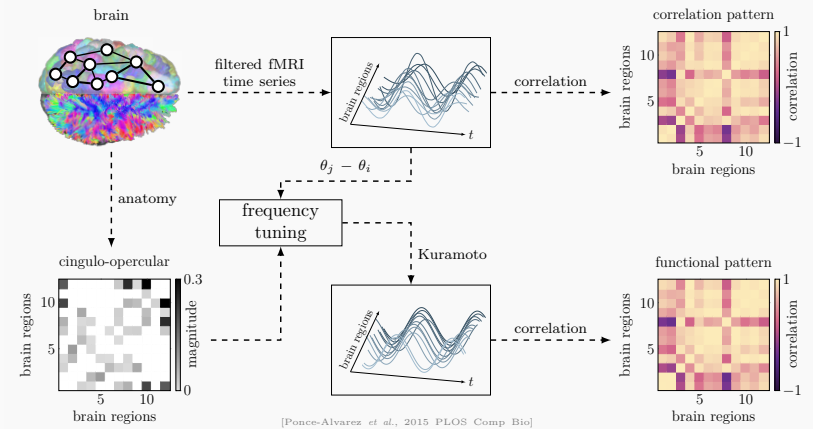
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## Sanity check



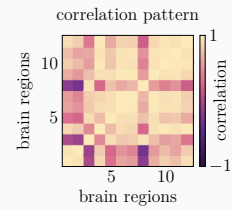
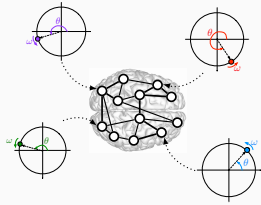
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## Sanity check



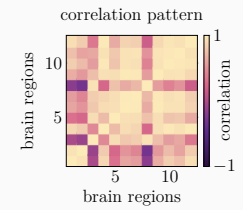
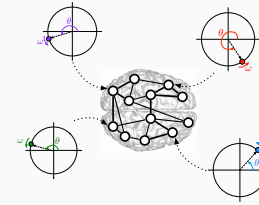
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## Oscillator properties and functional patterns



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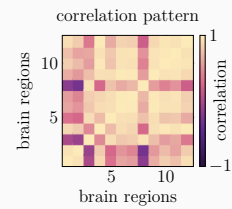
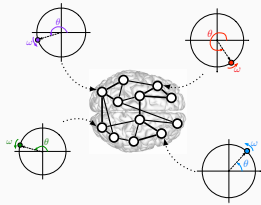
## Oscillator properties and functional patterns



- correlated brain regions  $\Leftrightarrow$  synchronized oscillators
- correlated regions typically form disjoint clusters

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- correlated brain regions  $\Leftrightarrow$  synchronized oscillators
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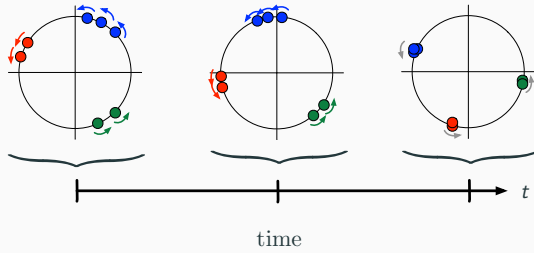
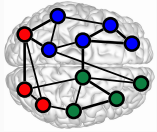
cluster synchronization in oscillator networks as a proxy for correlated neural activity

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## Analysis of cluster synchronization

## Cluster synchronization

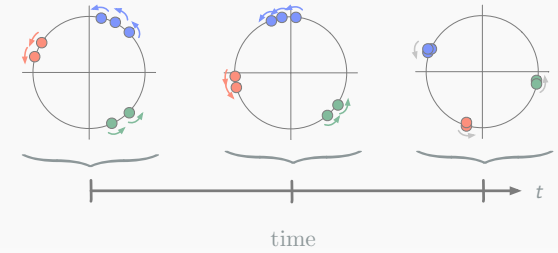
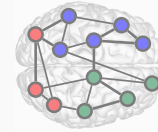
Network partition  
 $\mathcal{P} = \{C_1, C_2, C_3\}$



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## Cluster synchronization

Network partition  
 $\mathcal{P} = \{C_1, C_2, C_3\}$

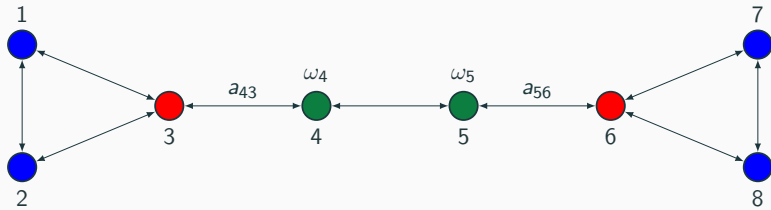


cluster synchronization manifold for  $\mathcal{P} = \{C_1, \dots, C_m\}$ :

$$S_{\mathcal{P}} = \{\theta \in \mathbb{T}^n : \theta_i = \theta_j \text{ for all } i, j \in C_k, k = 1, \dots, m\}$$

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## Invariance of cluster synchronization

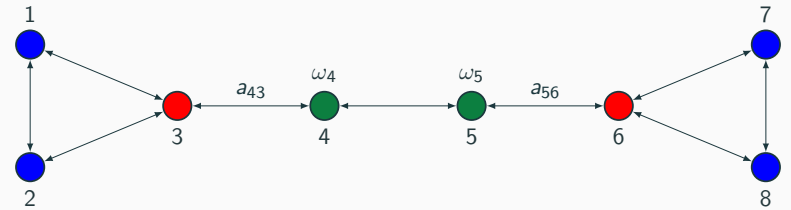


$$\dot{\theta}_4 = \omega_4 + a_{43} \sin(\theta_3 - \theta_4) + a_{45} \sin(\theta_5 - \theta_4)$$

$$\dot{\theta}_5 = \omega_5 + a_{56} \sin(\theta_6 - \theta_5) + a_{54} \sin(\theta_4 - \theta_5)$$

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## Invariance of cluster synchronization



$$\dot{\theta}_4 - \dot{\theta}_5 = \underbrace{\omega_4 - \omega_5}_{\text{diff. nat. freq.}} + \underbrace{a_{43} \sin(\theta_3 - \theta_4) - a_{56} \sin(\theta_6 - \theta_5)}_{\text{diff. external coupling}}$$

oscillators 4 and 5 remain phase synchronized if:

- diff. of natural frequencies = - diff. external coupling at all times
- equal natural frequencies ( $\omega_4 = \omega_5$ ) and equal coupling ( $a_{43} = a_{56}$ )

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## Invariance of cluster synchronization

Invariance of the cluster synchronization manifold  $\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{P}}$  iff:

- $\omega_i = \omega_j$  for all oscillators in the same cluster
- the network weights are balanced

[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS]

balanced weights for partition  $\mathcal{P} = \{C_1, C_2, \dots\}$ :

$$\sum_{z \in C_\ell} a_{iz} - a_{jz} = 0 \text{ for all } i, j \in C_k \text{ and all partitions } C_\ell \neq C_k$$

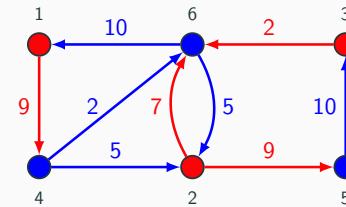
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[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS]



$$C_1 = \{1, 2, 3\}, \quad C_2 = \{4, 5, 6\}$$

$$C_1 \rightarrow C_2^i = C_1 \rightarrow C_2^j$$

$$C_2 \rightarrow C_1^i = C_2 \rightarrow C_1^j$$

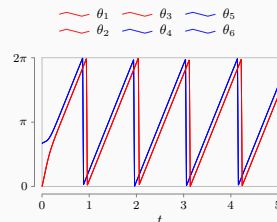
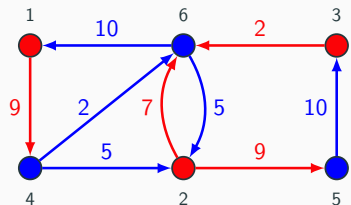
13/35

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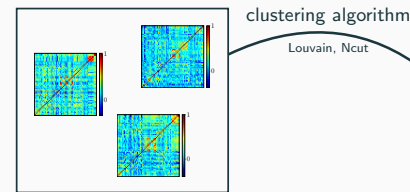
[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS]



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## Cluster invariance in empirical brain networks

fMRI data correlations



...distance from balanced network weights

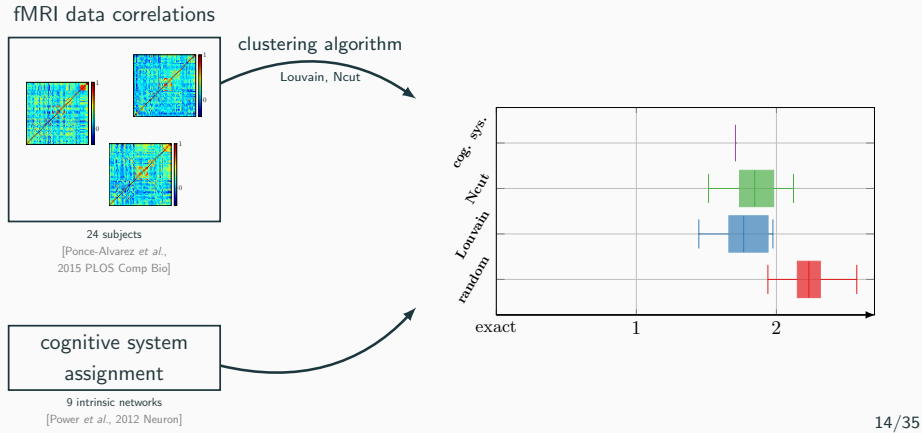
cognitive system assignment

9 intrinsic networks [Power et al., 2012 Neuron]

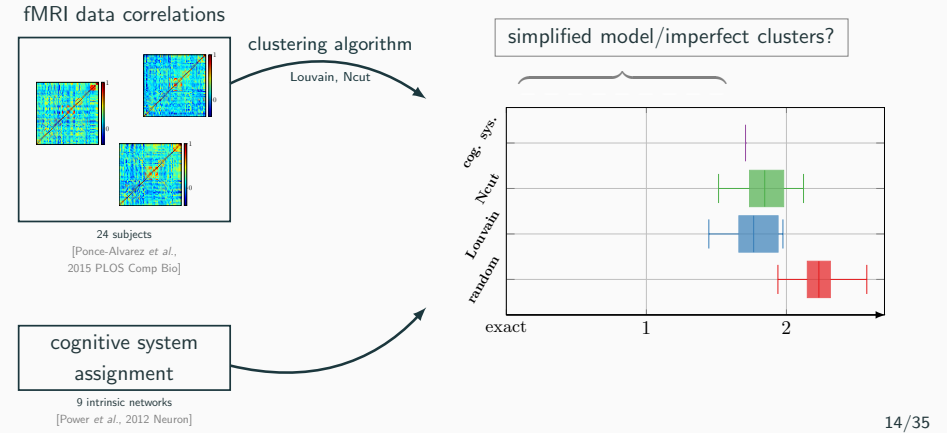
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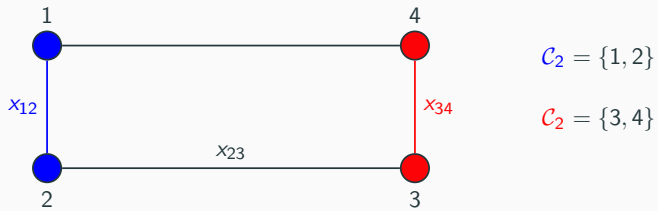
## Cluster invariance in empirical brain networks



## Cluster invariance in empirical brain networks



## Local stability of cluster synchronization



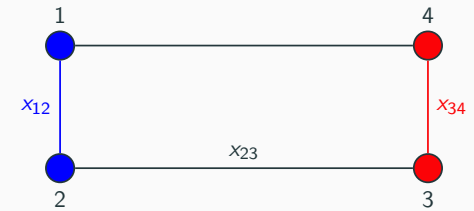
$$\dot{x}_{12} = \dot{\theta}_1 - \dot{\theta}_2 = -(a_{12} + a_{21}) \sin(x_{12}) + a_{13} \sin(x_{23}) - a_{13} \sin(x_{12} + x_{23} + x_{34})$$

$$\dot{x}_{34} = \dot{\theta}_3 - \dot{\theta}_4 = -(a_{34} + a_{43}) \sin(x_{34}) + a_{31} \sin(x_{23}) - a_{31} \sin(x_{12} + x_{23} + x_{34})$$

$$\dot{x}_{23} = \dot{\theta}_1 - \dot{\theta}_3 = (\omega_2 - \omega_1) + a_{43} \sin(x_{34}) + a_{21} \sin(x_{12}) - (a_{42} + a_{24}) \sin(x_{23})$$

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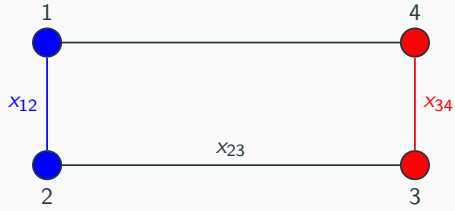
## Local stability of cluster synchronization



$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{x}_{12} \\ \dot{x}_{34} \end{bmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} -(a_{12} + a_{21}) \sin(x_{12}) \\ -(a_{34} + a_{43}) \sin(x_{34}) \end{bmatrix}}_{F(x_{\text{intra}})} + \underbrace{(\sin(x_{23}) - \sin(x_{12} + x_{23} + x_{34}))}_{G(x_{\text{intra}}, x_{\text{inter}})} \begin{bmatrix} a_{13} \\ a_{31} \end{bmatrix}$$

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## Local stability of cluster synchronization

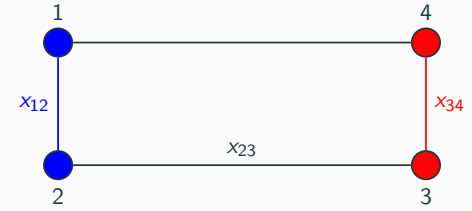


$$\dot{x}_{\text{intra}} = F(x_{\text{intra}}) + G(x_{\text{intra}}, x_{\text{inter}})$$

- $F$  = intra-cluster dynamics;  $G$  = inter-cluster dynamics
- the origin of  $F$  is exponentially stable with rate dep. on intra-cluster weights  
(from homogeneous Kuramoto dynamics)
- $G$  is vanishing ( $G(0, x_{\text{inter}}) = 0$ ) and lin. bounded ( $\|G(x_{\text{intra}}, x_{\text{inter}})\| \leq \gamma \|x_{\text{intra}}\|$ )

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## Local stability of cluster synchronization

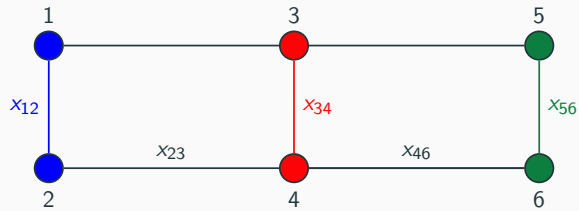


If intra-cluster weights  $\gg$  inter-cluster weights, then  $x_{\text{intra}} = 0$  is locally exponentially stable, and the cluster synchronization manifold is locally exponentially stable.

[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS]

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## Stability of multiple clusters



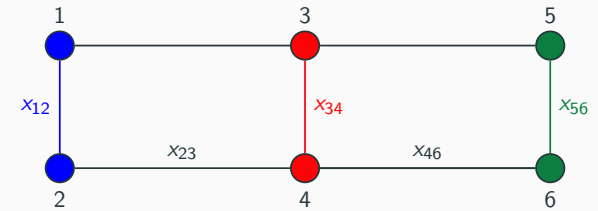
$$\dot{x}_{\text{intra}}^{(k)} = F^{(k)}(x_{\text{intra}}^{(k)}) + G^{(k)}(x_{\text{intra}}, x_{\text{inter}})$$

$J_k$  : Jacobian of  $F$  at  $x_{\text{intra}}^{(k)} = 0$        $X_k$  : solution to  $J_k^T X_k + X_k J_k = -I$

$$\gamma^{(k\ell)} : \|G^{(k)}(x_{\text{intra}}, x_{\text{inter}})\| \leq \sum_{\ell=1}^m \gamma^{(k\ell)} \|x_{\text{intra}}^{(\ell)}\|$$

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## Stability of multiple clusters



If the following matrix is an  $M$ -matrix,

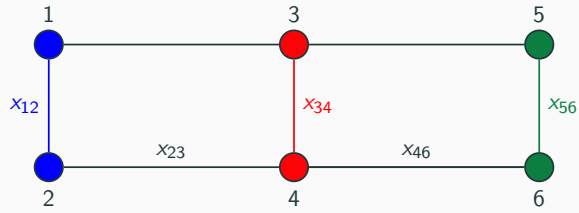
$$S = [s_{k\ell}] = \begin{cases} \lambda_{\max}^{-1}(X_k) - \gamma^{(kk)} & \text{if } k = \ell, \\ -\gamma^{(k\ell)} & \text{if } k \neq \ell, \end{cases}$$

then the synchronization manifold is locally exponentially stable.

[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS]

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## Stability of multiple clusters



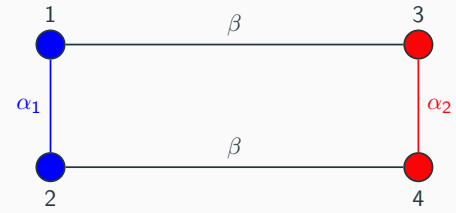
If the following matrix is an  $M$ -matrix,

intra-cluster weights  $\gg$  inter-cluster weights  $\Rightarrow$  stability

then the synchronization manifold is locally exponentially stable.

[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS] 16/35

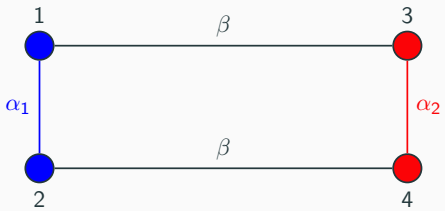
## An example



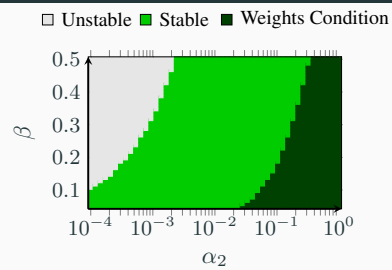
- fix  $\alpha_1, \omega_1, \omega_2$  and vary  $\alpha_2, \beta$

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## An example

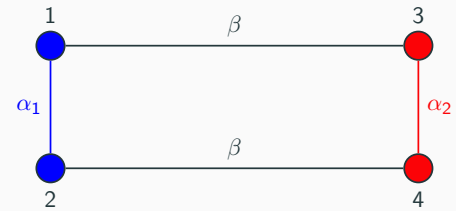


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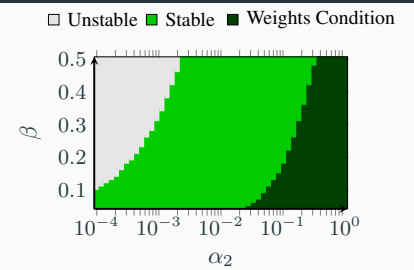
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## An example



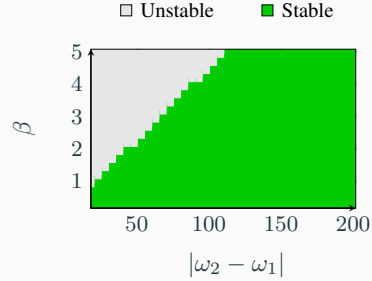
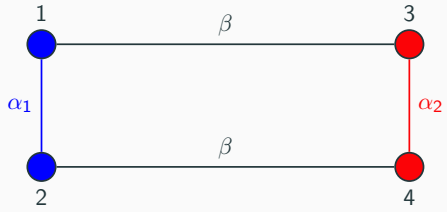
- fix  $\alpha_1, \omega_1, \omega_2$  and vary  $\alpha_2, \beta$

- network weights provide conservative estimates of stability. frequencies?



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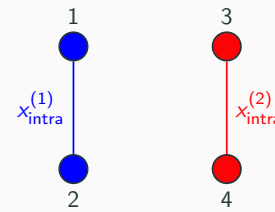
## An example



- fix  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2$ , and vary  $\beta, |\omega_2 - \omega_1|$
- network weights provide conservative estimates of stability. frequencies?
- large frequency differences promote stability. why?

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## Approximate stability of cluster synchronization



- isolated clusters are stable oscillatory systems

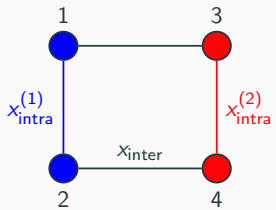
- linearized dynamics:

$$\dot{x}_{\text{intra}}^{(1)} = J_1 x_{\text{intra}}^{(1)}$$

- connectivity + homogeneous frequencies  $\Rightarrow$  intra-cluster synchronization

18/35

## Approximate stability of cluster synchronization



- isolated clusters are stable oscillatory systems
- clusters subject to inter-cluster perturbation

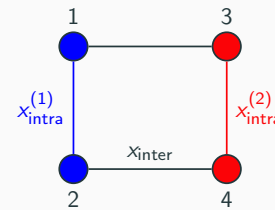
- linearized dynamics:

$$\dot{x}_{\text{intra}}^{(1)} = J_1 x_{\text{intra}}^{(1)} + \eta_{12} \cos(x_{\text{inter}}) x_{\text{intra}}^{(2)}$$

- $x_{\text{inter}} \rightarrow (\omega_2 - \omega_1)t$  as  $|\omega_2 - \omega_1|$  grows

18/35

## Approximate stability of cluster synchronization



- isolated clusters are stable oscillatory systems
- clusters subject to inter-cluster perturbation

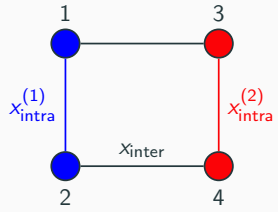
- linearized dynamics:

$$\dot{x}_{\text{intra}}^{(1)} \approx J_1 x_{\text{intra}}^{(1)} + \eta_{12} \cos((\omega_2 - \omega_1)t) x_{\text{intra}}^{(2)}$$

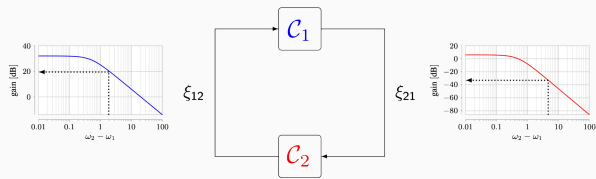
- inter-cluster perturbation is modulated by  $\omega_2 - \omega_1$

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## Approximate stability of cluster synchronization

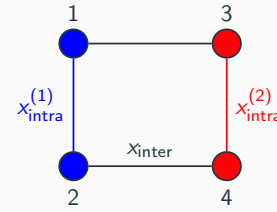


- isolated clusters are stable oscillatory systems
- clusters subject to inter-cluster perturbation
- isolated clusters behave as **low-pass filters**



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## Approximate stability of cluster synchronization



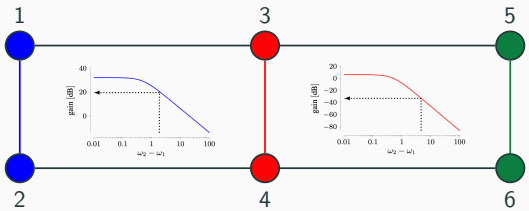
- isolated clusters are stable oscillatory systems
- clusters subject to inter-cluster perturbation
- isolated clusters behave as **low-pass filters**

If  $|\omega_j - \omega_i| \rightarrow \infty$  for all clusters, then the synchronization manifold is locally exponentially stable.

[Menara et al., 2020 TCNS]

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## Stability of multiple clusters using weights and frequencies



$\xi_{ij} = | \text{frequency gain from cluster } C_j \text{ to cluster } C_i |$

If  $\lambda_{\max}([\xi_{ij}]) < 1$ , then the sync. manifold is locally exp. stable.

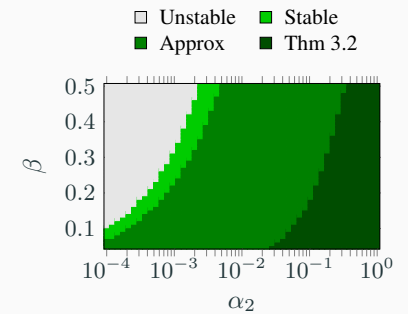
[Menara et al., 2019 ACC]

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## An example



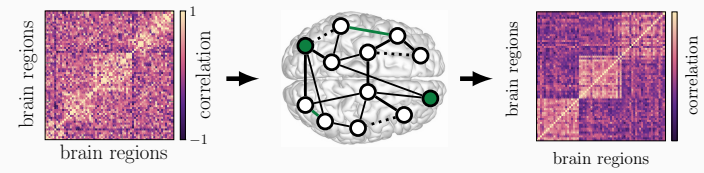
- fix  $\alpha_1, \omega_1, \omega_2$  and vary  $\alpha_2, \beta$
- combine weights and frequency gains into small-gain condition
- combined weights/frequency conditions are consistently tight



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## Control of cluster synchronization

## Control of functional patterns

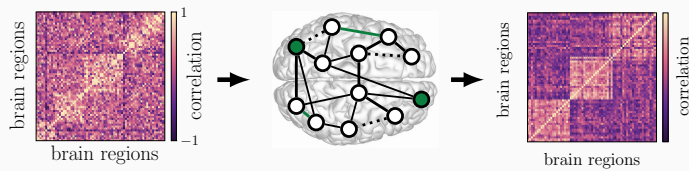


so far...

- modeling of neural activity through oscillator network
- modeling of functional patterns via cluster synchronization
- conditions for invariance/stability of cluster synchronization

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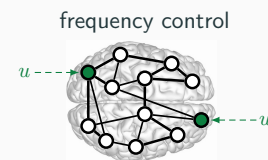
## Control of functional patterns



how do we restore healthy functional patterns?

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## Control of functional patterns

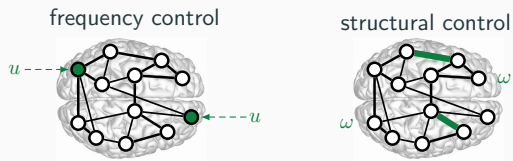


- external control of oscillator frequency

[Menara et al., 2020 LCSS]

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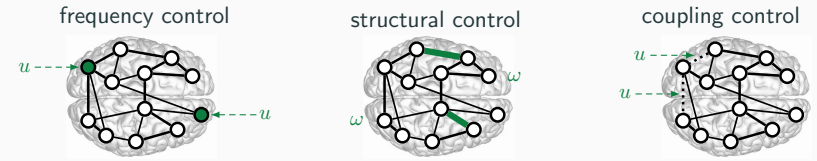
## Control of functional patterns



- external control of oscillator frequency [Menara et al., 2020 LCSS]
- design of structural weights and oscillator frequencies [Menara et al., 2019 CDC & 2022 NatComm]

22/35

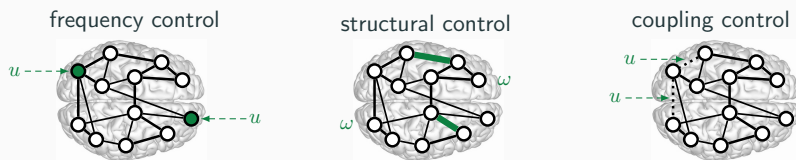
## Control of functional patterns



- external control of oscillator frequency [Menara et al., 2020 LCSS]
- design of structural weights and oscillator frequencies [Menara et al., 2019 CDC & 2022 NatComm]
- external control of oscillators coupling [Qin et al., 2022 CDC]

22/35

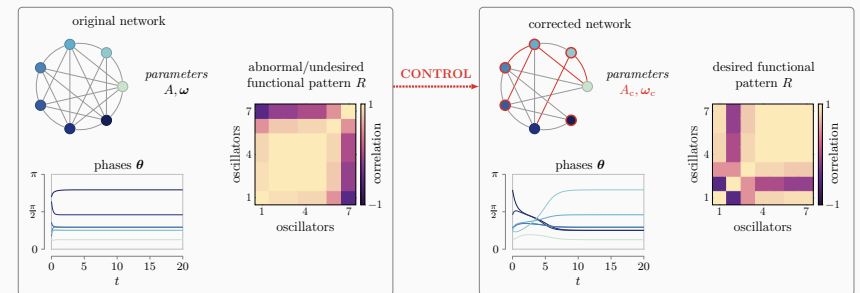
## Control of functional patterns



- external control of oscillator frequency [Menara et al., 2020 LCSS]
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## Structural control of functional patterns

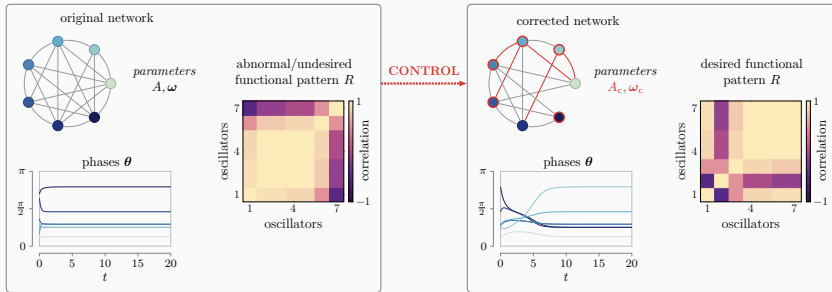


- control knobs = network weights + oscillator frequencies
- biological constraints: positive weights, sparsity of interventions
- reference signal is  $n \times n$  matrix of the phase correlation values (time-varying)

23/35



## Structural control of functional patterns



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- biological constraints: positive weights, sparsity of interventions
- reference signal is  $n \times n$  matrix of the phase correlation values (time-varying)

focus on time-invariant patterns, equilibrium assignment <sup>23/35</sup>

## Frequency-synchronization and functional patterns

network dynamics in matrix form ( $B =$  incidence matrix):

$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{\theta}_1 \\ \vdots \\ \dot{\theta}_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \omega_1 \\ \vdots \\ \omega_n \end{bmatrix} - B \begin{bmatrix} \ddots & & \\ & \sin(\theta_j - \theta_i) & \\ & & \ddots \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \vdots \\ a_{ij} \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix}$$

24/35

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when oscillators are frequency-synchronized:

- oscillator frequencies are all equal to  $\omega_{\text{mean}} = \frac{1}{n} \sum \omega_i$
- functional correlations are defined by phase differences
- feasible functional patterns have only  $n - 1$  degrees of freedom

24/35

## Frequency-synchronization and functional patterns

frequency-synchronized configuration:

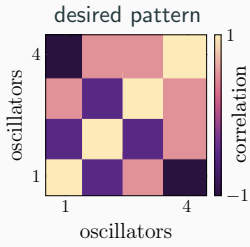
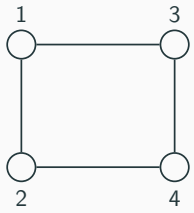
$$B \begin{bmatrix} \ddots & & \\ & \sin(\theta_j - \theta_i) & \\ & & \ddots \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \vdots \\ a_{ij} \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \omega_1 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \vdots \\ \omega_n - \omega_{\text{mean}} \end{bmatrix}$$

to generate a desired functional pattern:

- compute  $n - 1$  phase differences corresponding to desired functional values
- determine feasibility of the desired equilibrium (sign/sparsity constraints)
- find network weights and frequencies to satisfy the above equation

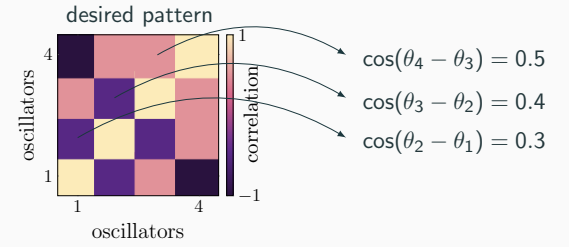
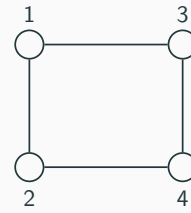
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## Feasibility of a functional pattern



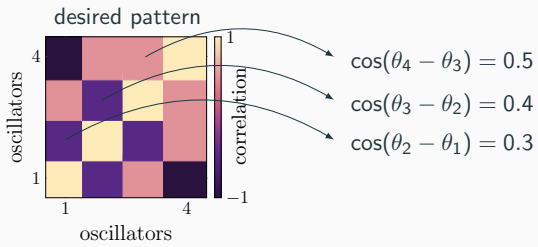
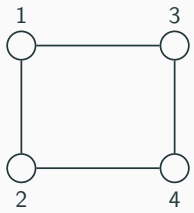
25/35

## Feasibility of a functional pattern



25/35

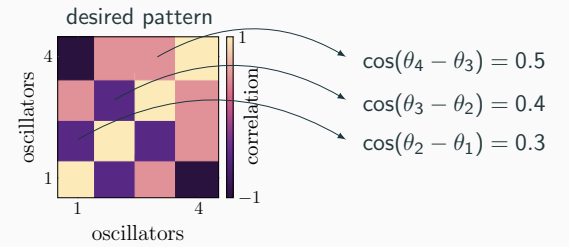
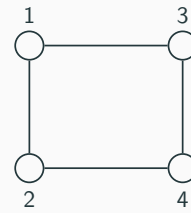
## Feasibility of a functional pattern



$$\begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \sin(\theta_2 - \theta_1) \\ \sin(\theta_3 - \theta_2) \\ \sin(\theta_4 - \theta_3) \\ \sin(\theta_1 - \theta_4) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} a_{12} \\ a_{23} \\ a_{34} \\ a_{41} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \omega_1 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_2 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_3 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_4 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \end{bmatrix}$$

25/35

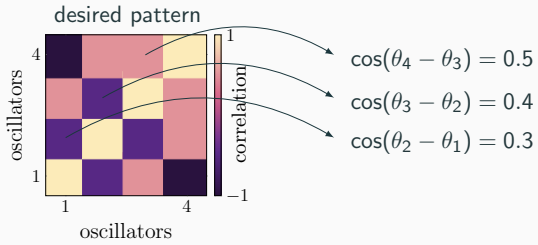
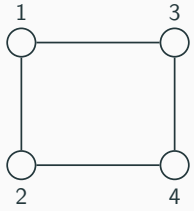
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25/35

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25/35

## Feasibility of a functional pattern with positive weights

$$\begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \sin(\theta_2 - \theta_1) \\ \sin(\theta_3 - \theta_2) \\ \sin(\theta_4 - \theta_3) \\ \sin(\theta_1 - \theta_4) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} a_{12} \\ a_{23} \\ a_{34} \\ a_{41} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \omega_1 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_2 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_3 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_4 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \end{bmatrix}$$

26/35

## Feasibility of a functional pattern with positive weights

scaled incidence matrix  $\bar{B}$

$$\begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \sin(\theta_2 - \theta_1) \\ \sin(\theta_3 - \theta_2) \\ \sin(\theta_4 - \theta_3) \\ \sin(\theta_1 - \theta_4) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} a_{12} \\ a_{23} \\ a_{34} \\ a_{41} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \omega_1 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_2 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_3 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \\ \omega_4 - \omega_{\text{mean}} \end{bmatrix}$$

26/35

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The functional pattern is feasible with pos. weights if:

- the network  $\bar{B}$  contains a Hamiltonian path  $\mathcal{H}$
- $\omega^\top \bar{B}_{\mathcal{H}} > 0$

[Menara et al., 2022 NatComm]

26/35

## Feasibility of a functional pattern with positive weights

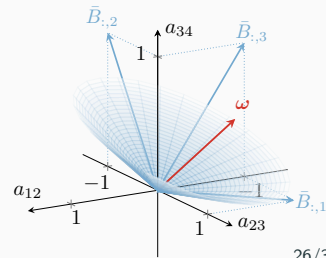
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26/35

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[Menara et al., 2022 NatComm]

If pattern is feasible, solve (convex):

$$\begin{aligned} &\min J(a) \\ &\text{s.t. } a > 0 \text{ and } \bar{B}a = \omega \end{aligned}$$

26/35

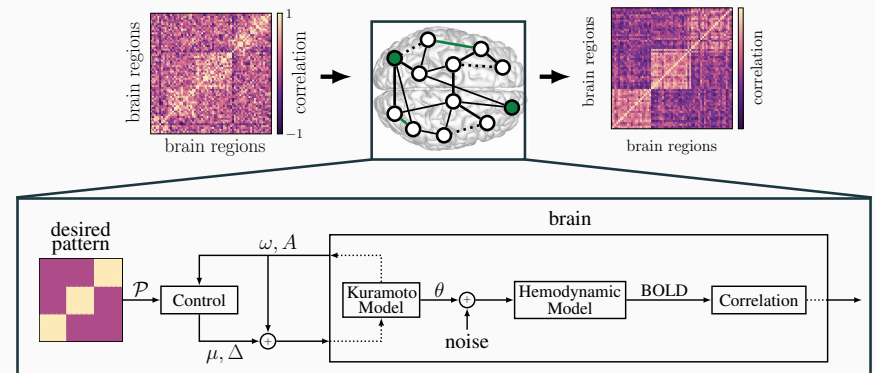
## Restoring functional connectivity in the damaged brain



- structural data from Human Connectome Project
- (synthetic) functional data inspired by brain injury
- Balloon-Windkessel hemodynamic model for BOLD signals

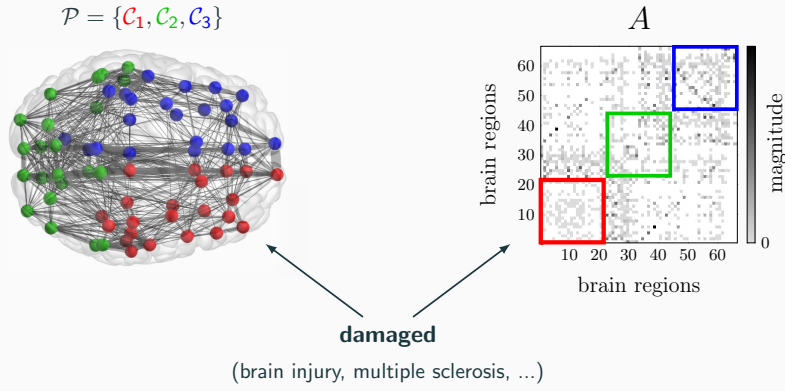
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## Restoring functional connectivity in the damaged brain



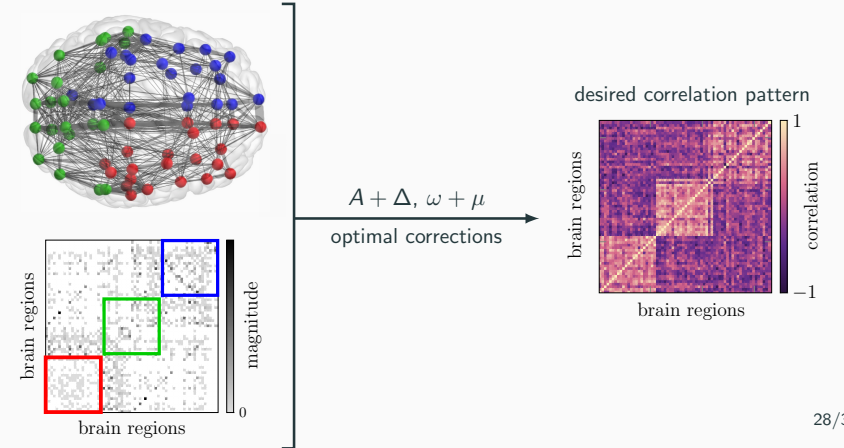
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## Restoring functional connectivity in the damaged brain



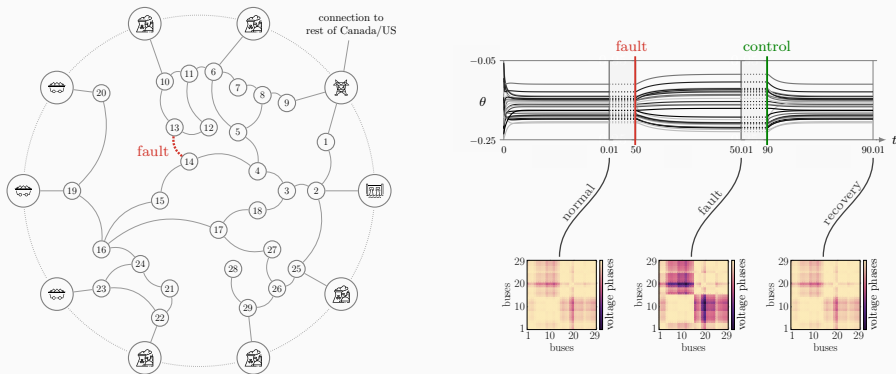
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## Restoring functional connectivity in the damaged brain



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## Beyond brain networks: power redistribution and fault recovery



[Menara et al., 2022 NatComm]

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## Summary

Modeling, analysis, control of functional connectivity via cluster synchronization:

30/35

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Invariance: **balanced weights + homogeneous intra-cluster frequencies**

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Stability: **intra-cluster coupling  $\gg$  inter-cluster coupling**  
**large inter-cluster frequency differences**  
**weights + frequencies  $\Rightarrow$  tight small-gain conditions**

30/35

## Summary

Modeling, analysis, control of functional connectivity via cluster synchronization:

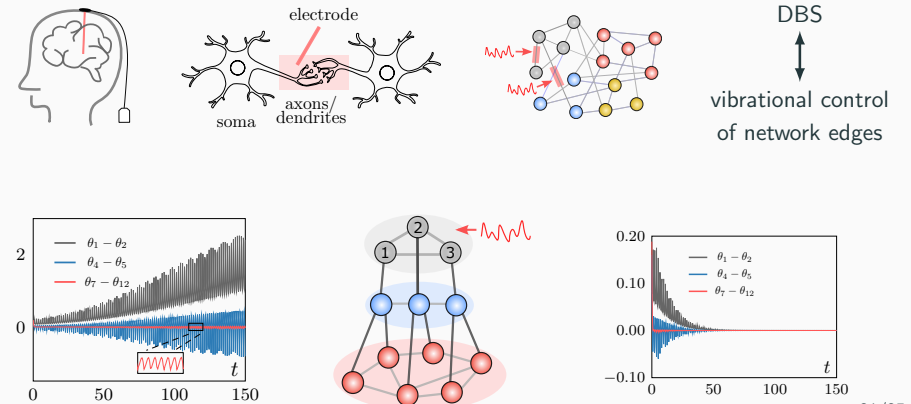
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Stability: **intra-cluster coupling  $\gg$  inter-cluster coupling**  
**large inter-cluster frequency differences**  
**weights + frequencies  $\Rightarrow$  tight small-gain conditions**

Control: **graph-theoretic cond. for feasibility of functional patterns**  
**structural control of functional patterns in brain/power**

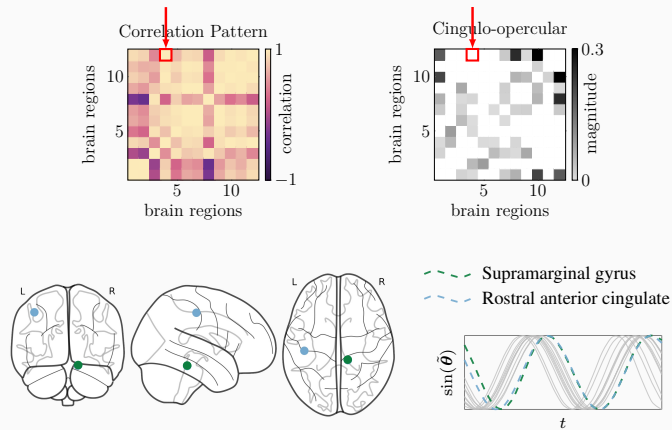
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## External control of oscillators coupling



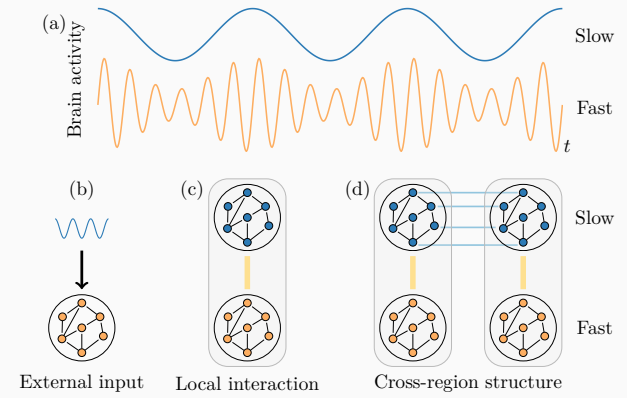
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## Remote (long-range) synchronization



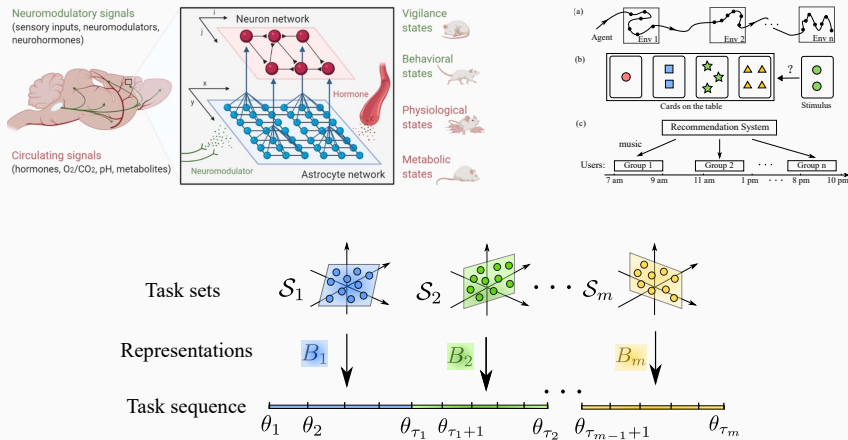
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## Phase-amplitude synchronization



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## Brain-inspired, context-aware reinforcement learning



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## References and acknowledgements



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# Analysis and Control of Functional Brain Networks

Fabio Pasqualetti

October 16, 2023

Department of Mechanical Engineering  
University of California at Riverside

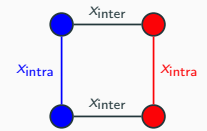
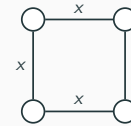


## Full vs cluster synchronization

Phase differences:  $x_{ij} = \theta_j - \theta_i$

full synchronization:  $x \rightarrow 0$

cluster synchronization:  $x_{intra} \rightarrow 0$   
 $x_{inter} = ?$



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 $x_{inter} = ?$

◇ Difference dynamics  
 $\dot{x} = F(x)$

◇ Difference dynamics  
 $\dot{x}_{intra} = F(x_{intra}) + G(x_{intra}, x_{inter})$

## Full vs cluster synchronization

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 $x_{inter} = ?$

◇ Difference dynamics  
 $\dot{x} = F(x)$

◇ Linearization around synchronized trajectory  
 $\dot{x} = Jx$

known ☺

unknown ☹

◇ Difference dynamics  
 $\dot{x}_{intra} = F(x_{intra}) + G(x_{intra}, x_{inter})$

◇ Linearization around cluster-synchronized trajectory  
 $\dot{x}_{intra} = (J_{intra} + J_{inter}(t))x_{intra}$

Hurwitz ☺

time-varying ☹ 35/35