Local Search

Computer Science cpsc322, Lecture 14

(Textbook Chpt 4.8)

February, 3, 2010

Announcements

- Assignment1 due now!

- **I will be away this Fri (attending conference in HK)**
  - Postdoc Gabriel Murray will give lecture
  - TA will offer my office hour (in X150)

Lecture Overview

- Recap solving CSP systematically
- Local search
- Constrained Optimization
- Greedy Descent / Hill Climbing: Problems

Systematically solving CSPs: Summary

- Build Constraint Network
- Apply Arc Consistency
  - One domain is empty → no sol
  - Each domain has a single value → unique sol
  - Some domains have more than one value → ?!

    may or maynot have a solution

- Apply Depth-First Search with Pruning
- Split the problem in a number of disjoint cases
  - Apply Arc Consistency to each case

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Local Search motivation: Scale

- Many CSPs (scheduling, DNA computing, more later) are simply too big for systematic approaches
- If you have 10^5 vars with dom(var_i) = 10^4

- Systematic Search

  $b = 10^4$ branching factor

  $d = 10^5$ depth

  $(10^4)^{10^5}$

- Constraint Network

  var nodes, constraint nodes

  $10^5 + 10^5 * 10^5$

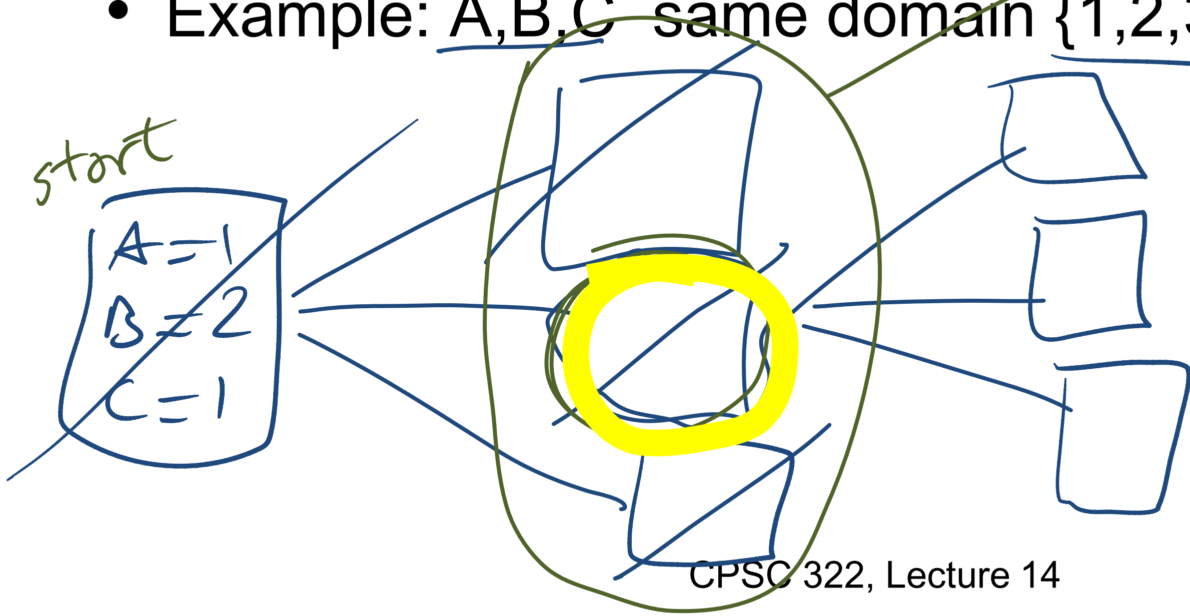
  10^{10} max # of nodes

- but if solutions are densely distributed…….

Local Search: General Method

Remember , for CSP a solution is…..

- Start from a possible world
- Generate some neighbors ("similar" possible worlds)
- Move from the current node to a neighbor, selected according to a particular strategy
  - Example: A,B,C same domain {1,2,3}

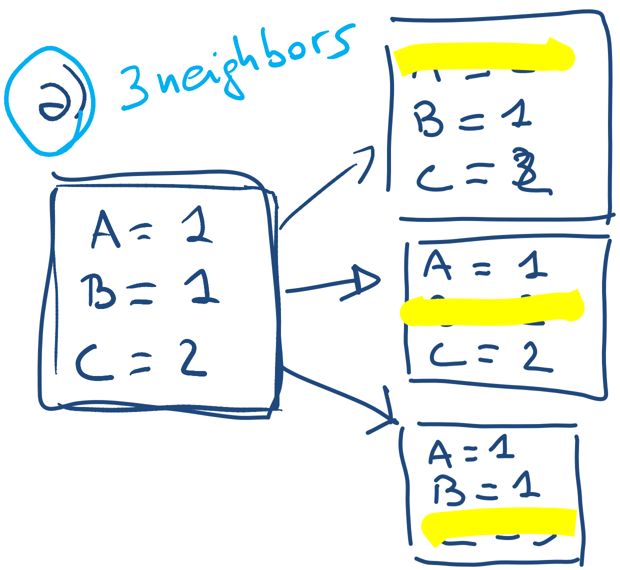


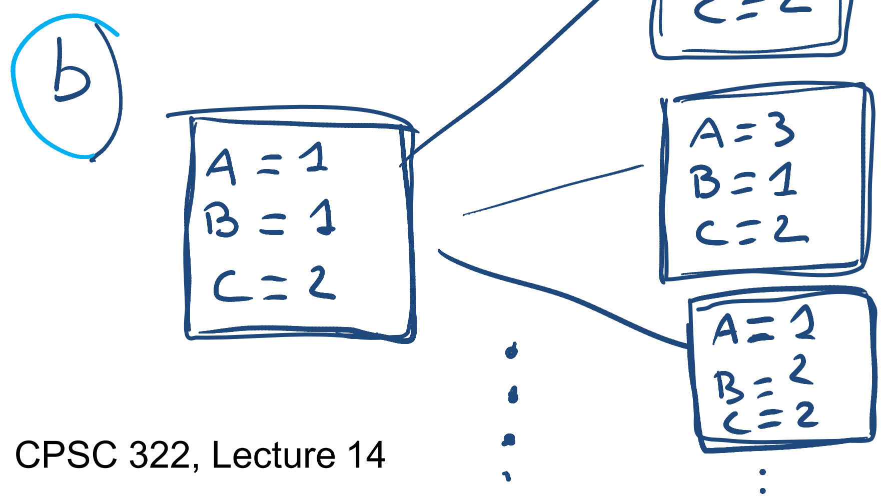
Local Search: Selecting Neighbors

How do we determine the neighbors?

- Usually this is simple: some small incremental change to the variable assignment
  - a) assignments that differ in one variable's value, by (for instance) a value difference of +1
  - b) assignments that differ in one variable's value
  - c) assignments that differ in two variables' values, etc.

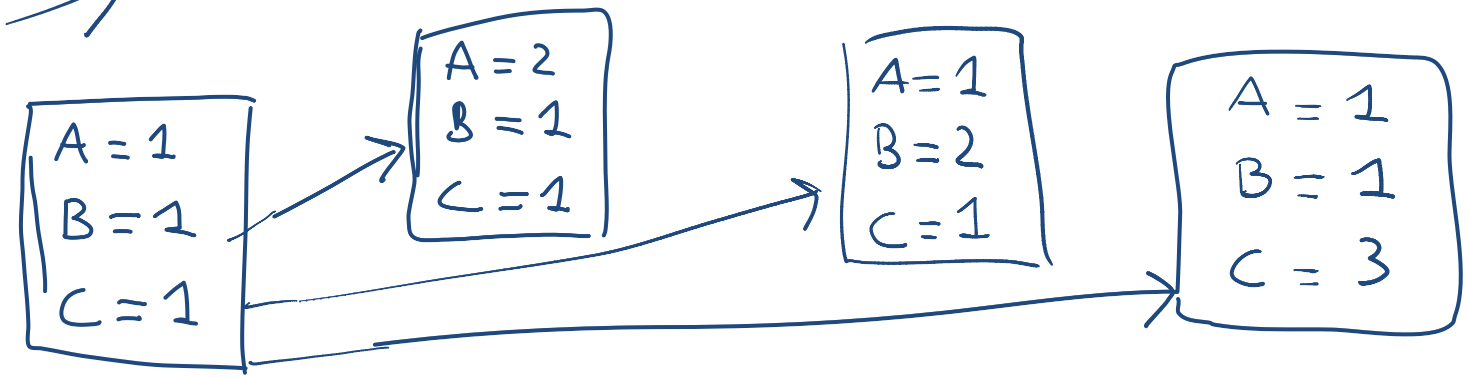
- Example: A,B,C same domain {1,2,3}





Selecting the best neighbor

- Example: A,B,C same domain {1,2,3} , (A=B, A>1, C≠3)

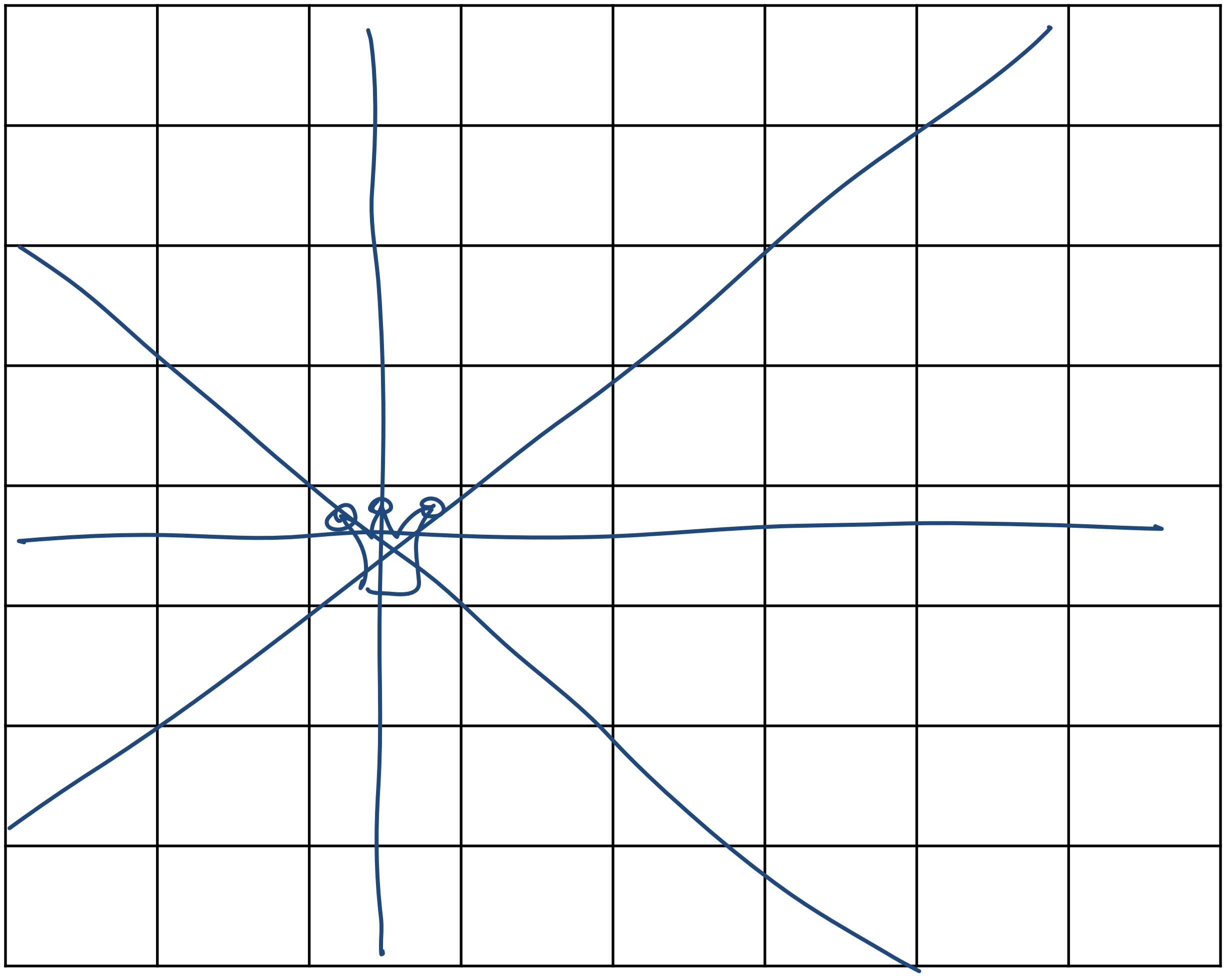


A common component of the scoring function (heuristic) => select the neighbor that results in the ……

- the min conflicts heuristics

Queens in Chess

Positions a queen can attack



Example: *n*-queens

Put *n* queens on an *n*   *n* board with no two queens on the same row, column, or diagonal (i.e attacking each other)

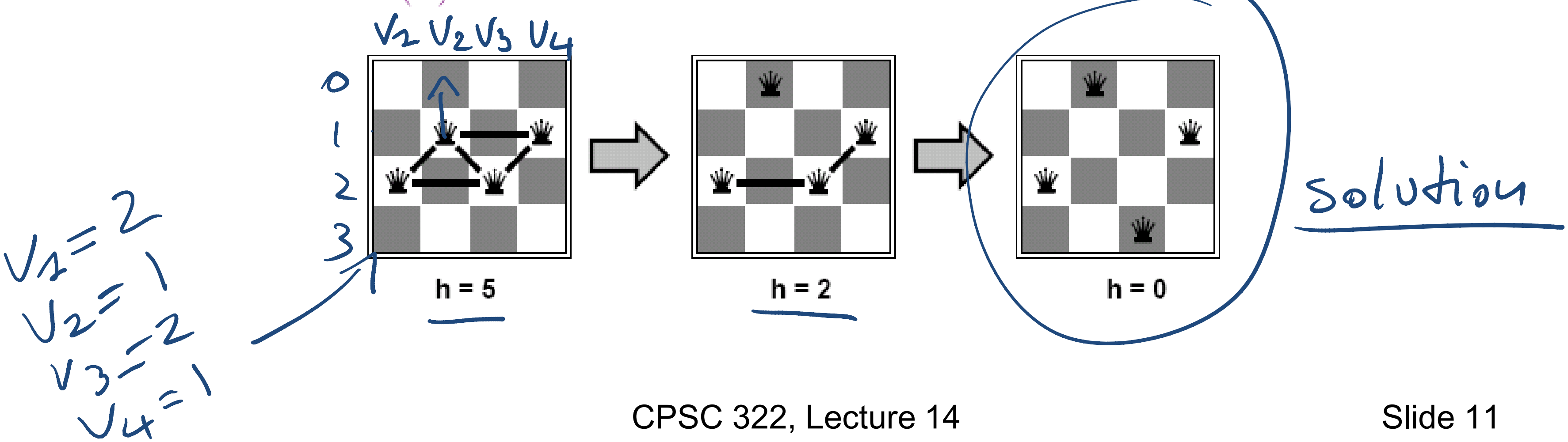
Example: 4-Queens

States: 4 queens in 4 columns ($4^4 = 256$ states)

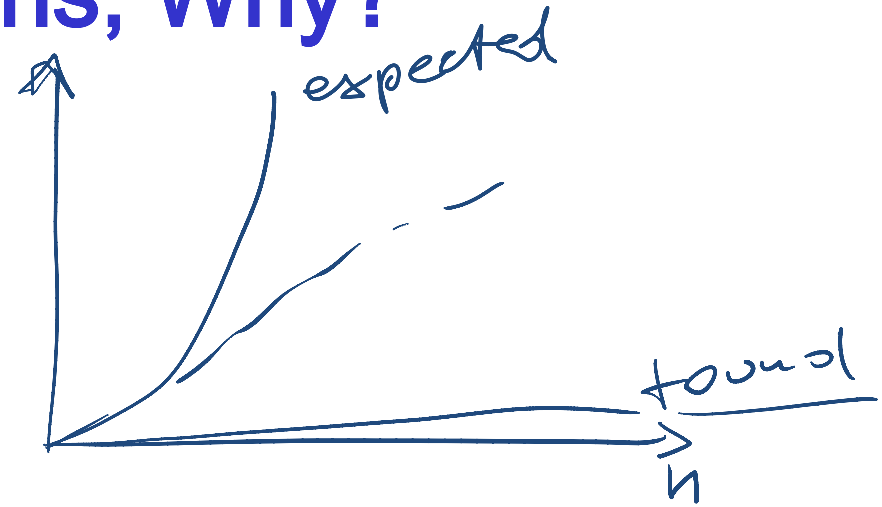
Operators: move queen in column *(to generate neighbors)*

Goal test: no attacks

Evaluation: $h(n)$ = number of attacks



n-queens, Why?



Why this problem?

Lots of research in the 90' on local search for CSP was generated by the observation that the run-time of local search on n-queens problems is **independent of problem size!**

Given random initial state, can solve n-queens in almost constant time for arbitrary n with high probability (e.g., $n = 10{,}000{,}000$)

Lecture Overview

- Recap
- Local search
- **Constrained Optimization**
- Greedy Descent / Hill Climbing: Problems

Constrained Optimization Problems

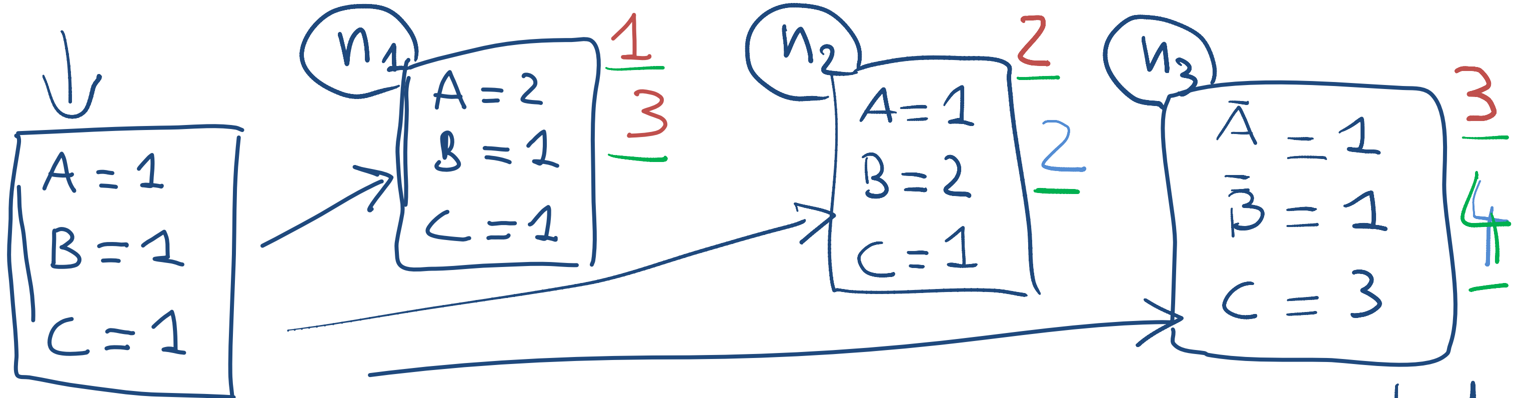
So far we have assumed that we just want to find a possible world that satisfies all the constraints.

But sometimes solutions may have different values / costs

- We want to find the optimal solution that
  - maximizes the value or
  - minimizes the cost

Constrained Optimization Example

- Example: A,B,C same domain {1,2,3} , (A=B, A>1, C≠3)
- Value = (C+A) so we want a solution that maximize that



The scoring function we'd like to maximize might be:

f(n) = (C + A) - #-of-conflicts

Hill Climbing means selecting the neighbor which best improves a (value-based) scoring function.

Greedy Descent means selecting the neighbor which minimizes a (cost-based) scoring function.

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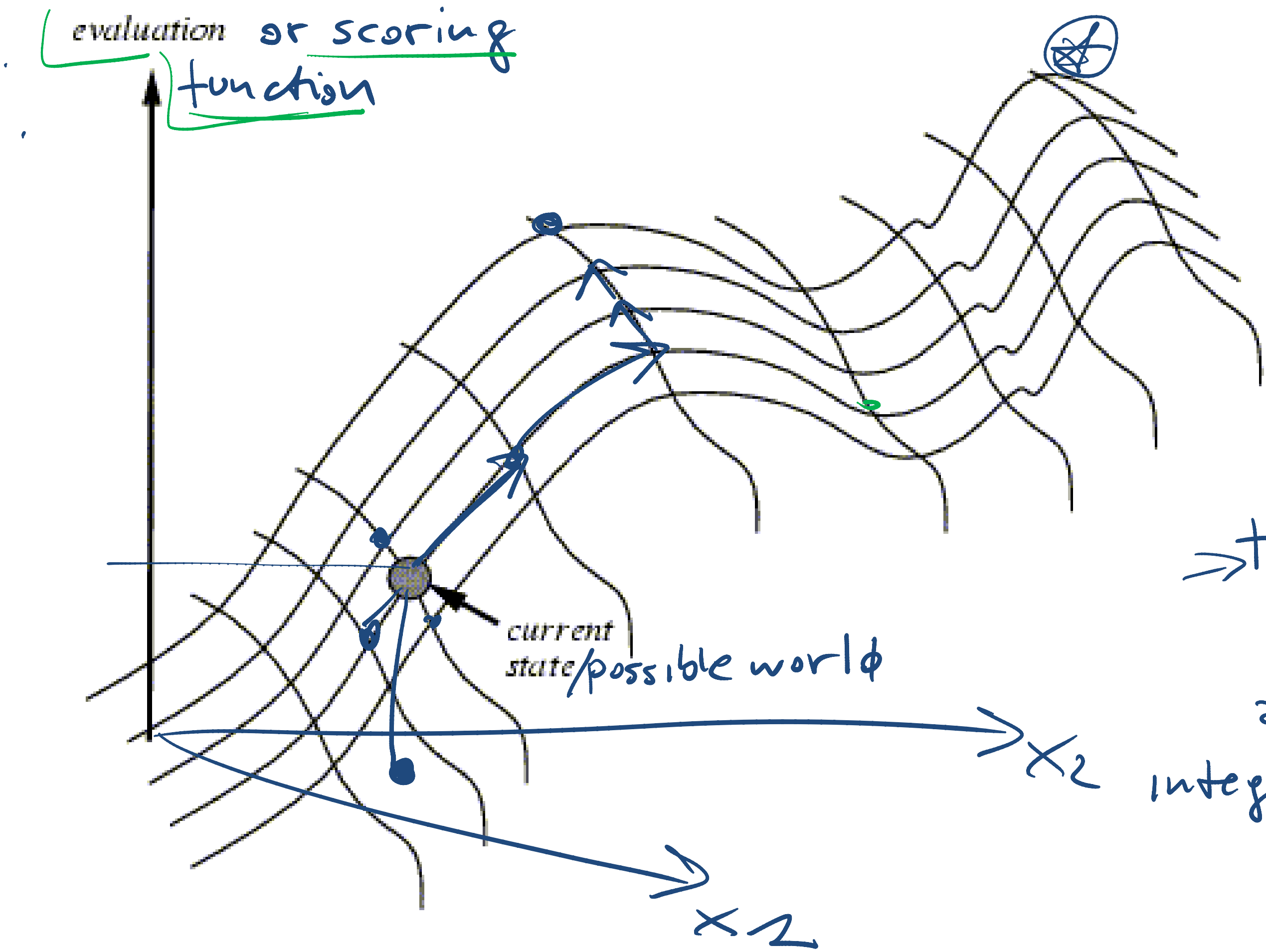
- **Greedy Descent / Hill Climbing: Problems**

Hill Climbing

NOTE: Everything that will be said for Hill Climbing is also true for Greedy Descent

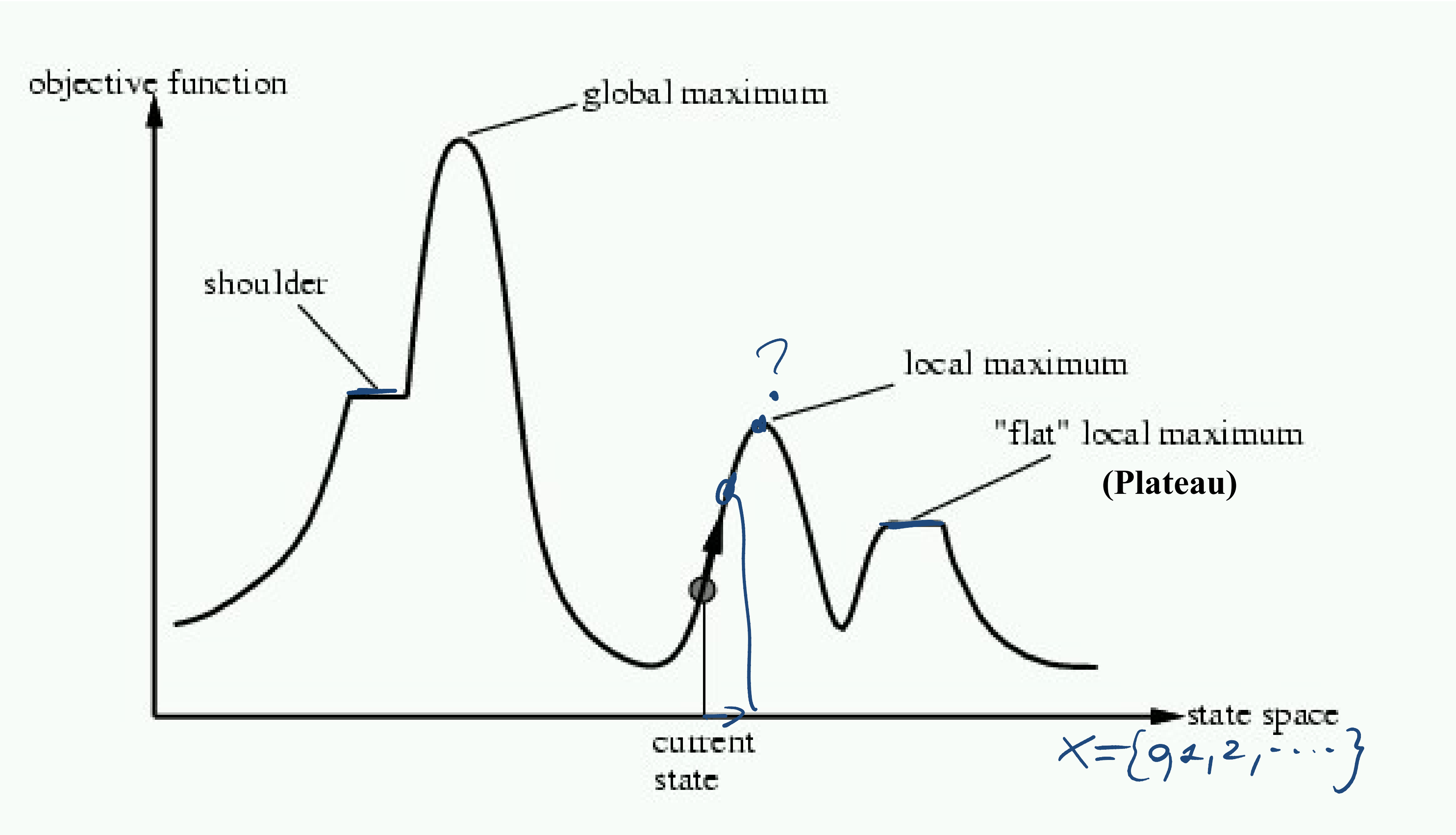


→ two vars
X_1 X_2
assume domain
integer [0, 1, 2 . . . .]

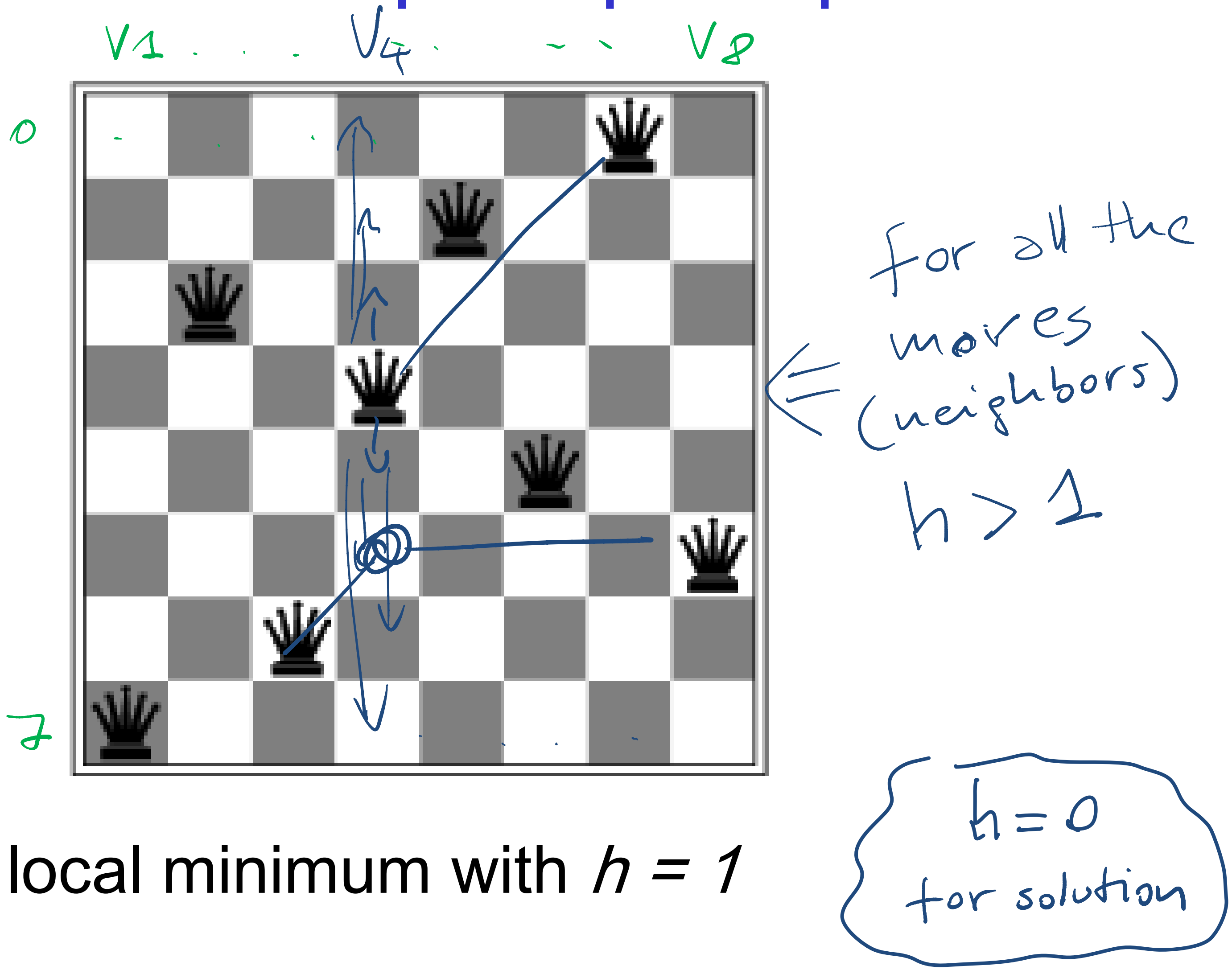
Problems with Hill Climbing

Local Maxima.

Plateau - Shoulders



Corresponding problem for GreedyDescent
Local minimum example: 8-queens problem

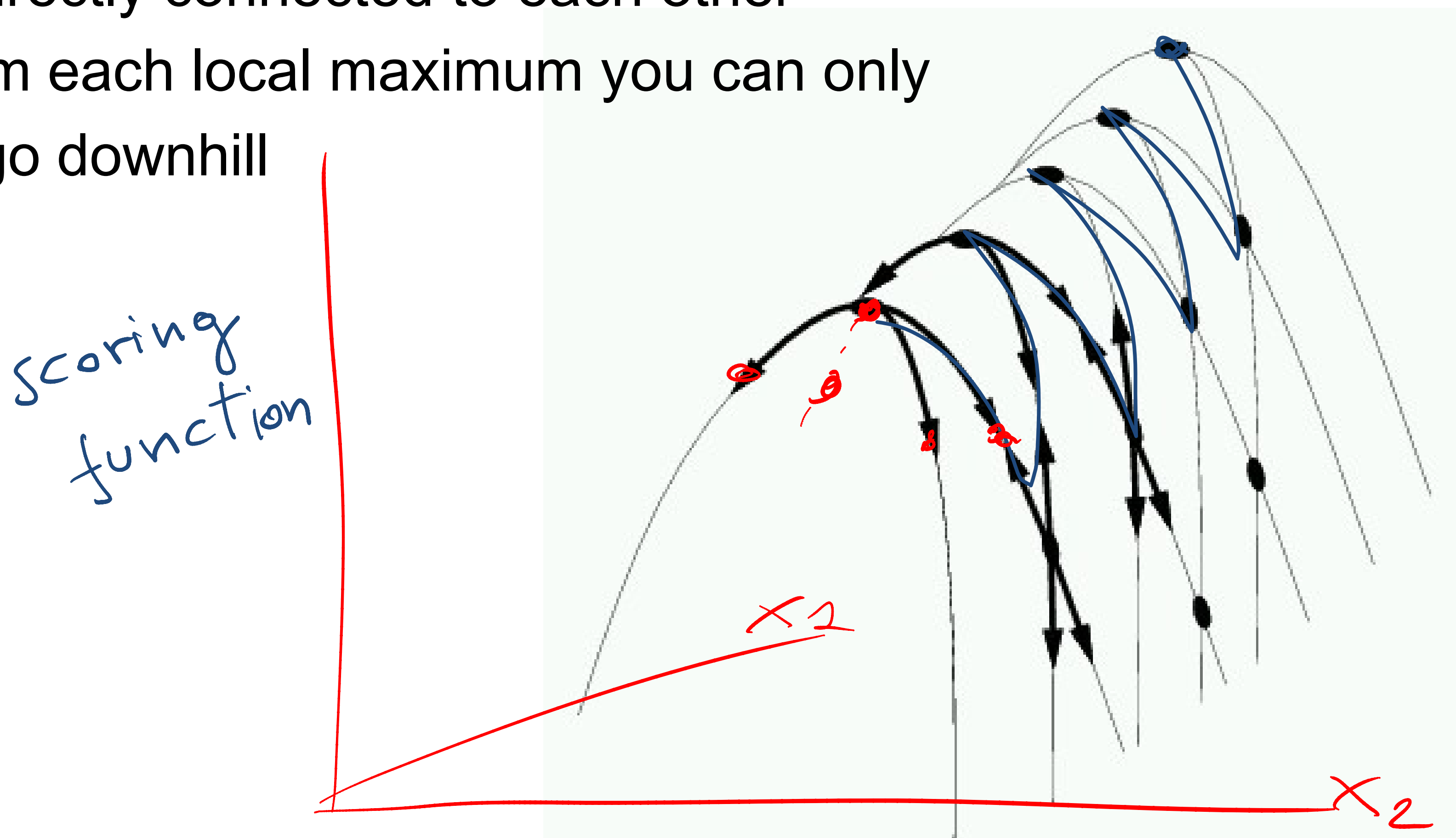


A local minimum with $h = 1$

Even more Problems in higher dimensions

E.g., Ridges – sequence of local maxima not directly connected to each other

From each local maximum you can only go downhill



Learning Goals for today's class

You can:

- Implement local search for a CSP.
  - Implement different ways to generate neighbors
  - Implement scoring functions to solve a CSP by local search through either greedy descent or hill-climbing.

Next Class

- How to address problems with Greedy Descent / Hill Climbing?

Stochastic Local Search (SLS)

322 Feedback ☺ or ☹

- Lectures
- Slides
- Practice Exercises
- Assignments
- AIspace
- ……
- Textbook
- Course Topics / Objectives
- TAs
- Learning Goals
- ……