Christopher Amato

IFAAMAS Board Nomination Statement

Bio

Christopher (Chris) Amato is an Assistant Professor at Northeastern University where he leads the Lab for Learning and Planning in Robotics. He received a BA from Tufts University and an MS and a PhD from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Before joining Northeastern, Chris was a Research Scientist at Aptima, Inc. and a Postdoc and Research Scientist at MIT as well as an Assistant Professor at the University of New Hampshire. He has published papers in leading artificial intelligence and robotics conferences (including winning a best paper prize at AAMAS-14 and being nominated for the best paper at RSS-15). He has also successfully co-organized several tutorials on team decision making and co-authored a book on the same subject (*A Concise Introduction to Decentralized POMDPs* with Frans Oliehoek). His research focuses on decision making under uncertainty in multi-agent and multi-robot systems.

Service to the community

Chris has attended 8 of the last 10 AAMAS conferences and has been on the program committee from 2011-2015, the senior program committee in 2016, robotics track co-chair (with Alessandro Farinelli) for AAMAS 2017 and tutorial co-chair (with Bo An) for AAMAS 2018. He has also organized numerous tutorials and workshops at AAMAS (including the Workshop on Multi-Agent Sequential Decision Making in Uncertain Domains (MSDM) at AAMAS 2009 and 2010 and tutorials on Decision Making in Multiagent Settings at AAMAS 2011-2014). More generally, Chris has been on the JAIR editorial board since 2016 and an Associate Editor for Robotics and Autonomous Systems since 2016 and is active in the machine learning, AI and robotics communities (e.g., PC or SPC for AAAI, IJCAI, ICAPS, NIPS, ICML, RSS, etc.).

Issues to address

Issues related to autonomous agents and multi-agent systems are increasingly popular in the research community. AAMAS is uniquely positioned to welcome researchers working in related areas. In particular, Chris will focus on increasing the representation of 1) underrepresented groups (based on gender and ethnicity) and 2) researchers that work on AAMAS-related issues, but do not typically publish in or come to AAMAS. For both cases, he plans to promote events at AAMAS for networking and discussion. For example, multi-robot systems and multi-agent learning are two natural communities with strong overlaps with AAMAS, but many researchers in these areas do not visit AAMAS. For these and other groups, Chris plans to seek methods to make AAMAS more visible in these communities and more desirable to attend. The result should improve knowledge and transfer across communities, strengthening those involved.