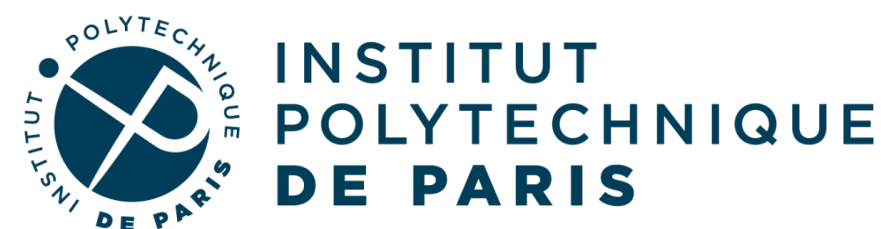
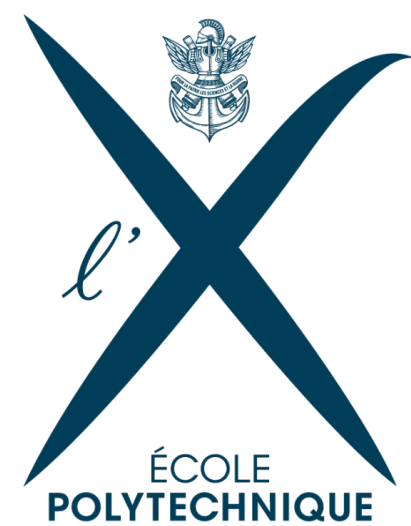


# Unsupervised learning for Optimal Transport plan prediction between unbalanced graphs

Sonia Mazelet, Rémi Flamary, Bertrand Thirion

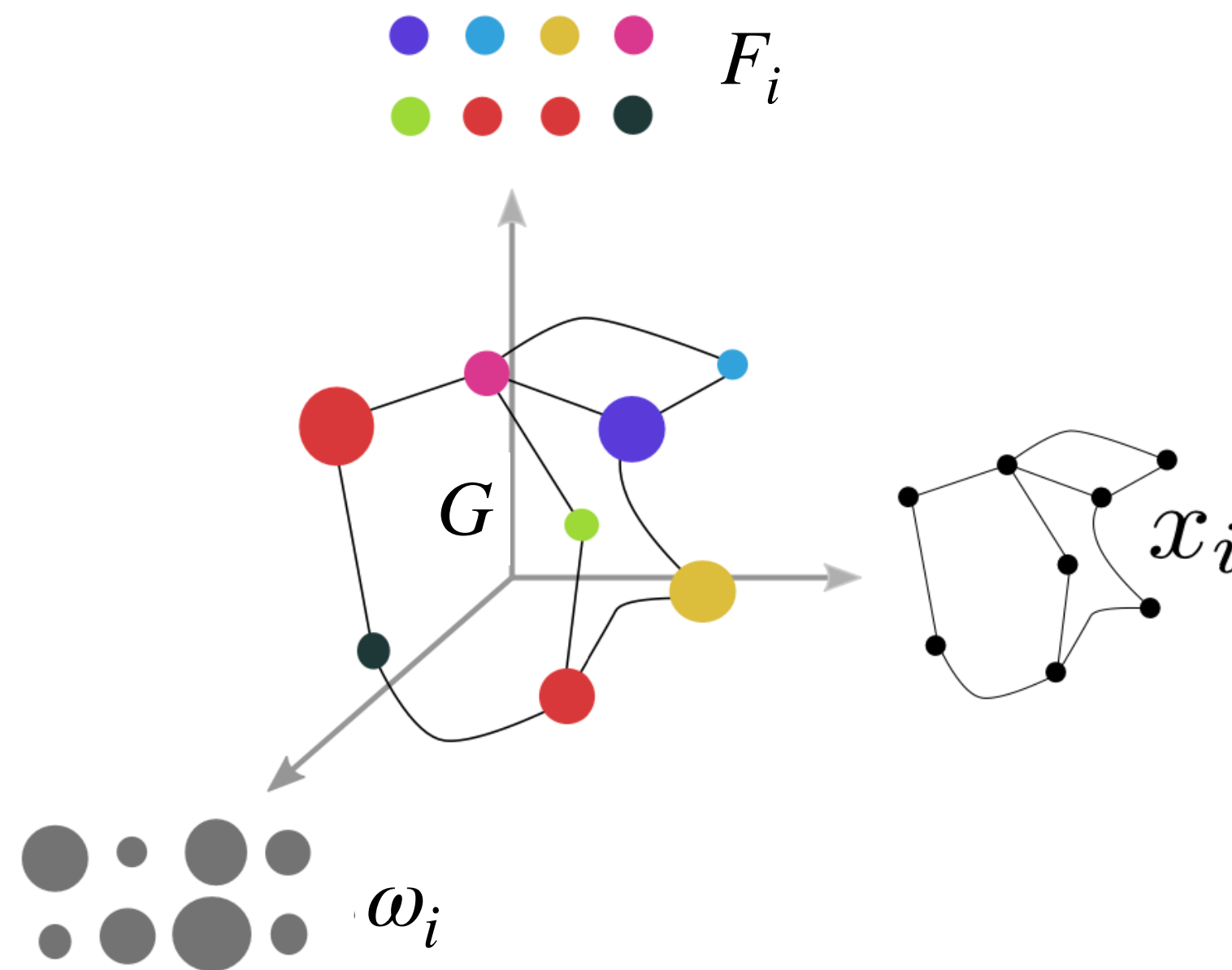
Workshop Fondements mathématiques de l'IA - 10/12/2025



# Optimal transport on graphs

Graphs modeled as probability measures [Vayer et al., 2019] characterized by:

- geometry (adjacency matrix, shortest path distance matrix...):  $D$
- node features:  $F$
- node weights:  $\omega$



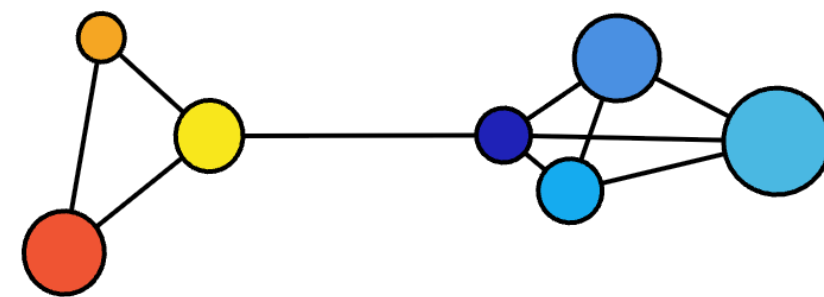
$$\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{Feature matrix} \\ \text{Graph structure} \\ \text{Weight matrix} \end{array} \right\} \mu = \sum_i \omega_i \delta_{(x_i, F_i)}$$

$$\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{Feature matrix} \\ \text{Weight matrix} \end{array} \right\} \mu_F = \sum_i \omega_i \delta_{F_i}$$

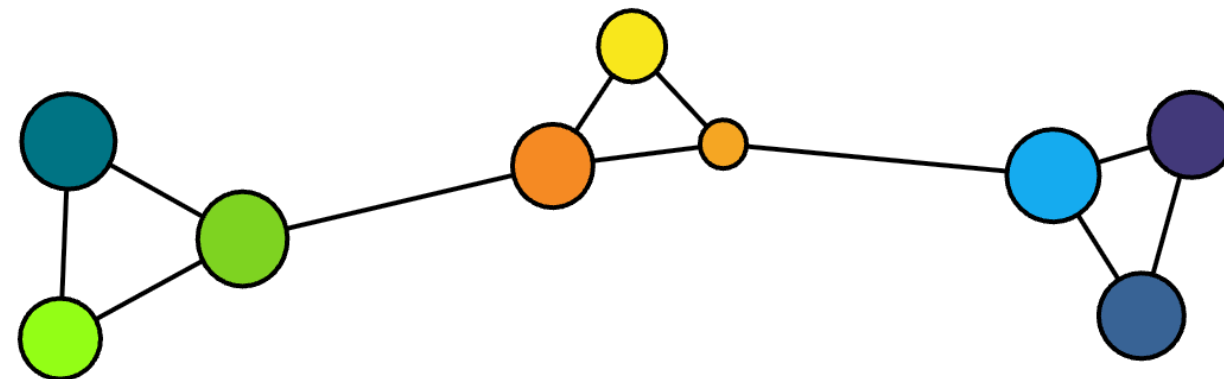
$$\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{Graph structure} \\ \text{Weight matrix} \end{array} \right\} \mu_X = \sum_i \omega_i \delta_{x_i}$$

# Graph matching

**Goal:** given a pair of graphs, find a matching between the nodes that preserves the graph geometry, node features and discards nodes that do not have a good matching.



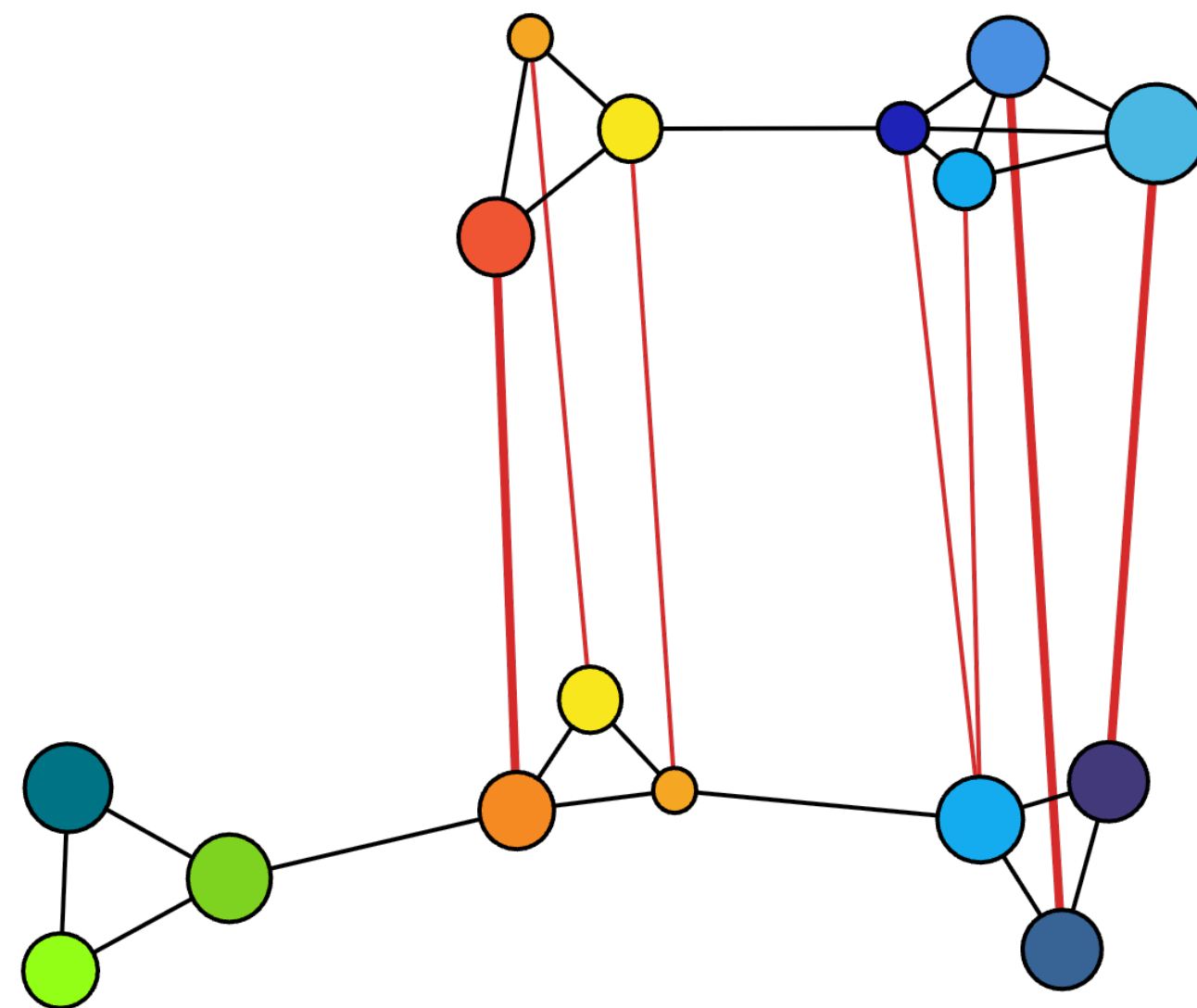
$$G_1 = (F_1, D_1, \omega_1)$$



$$G_2 = (F_2, D_2, \omega_2)$$

# Graph matching

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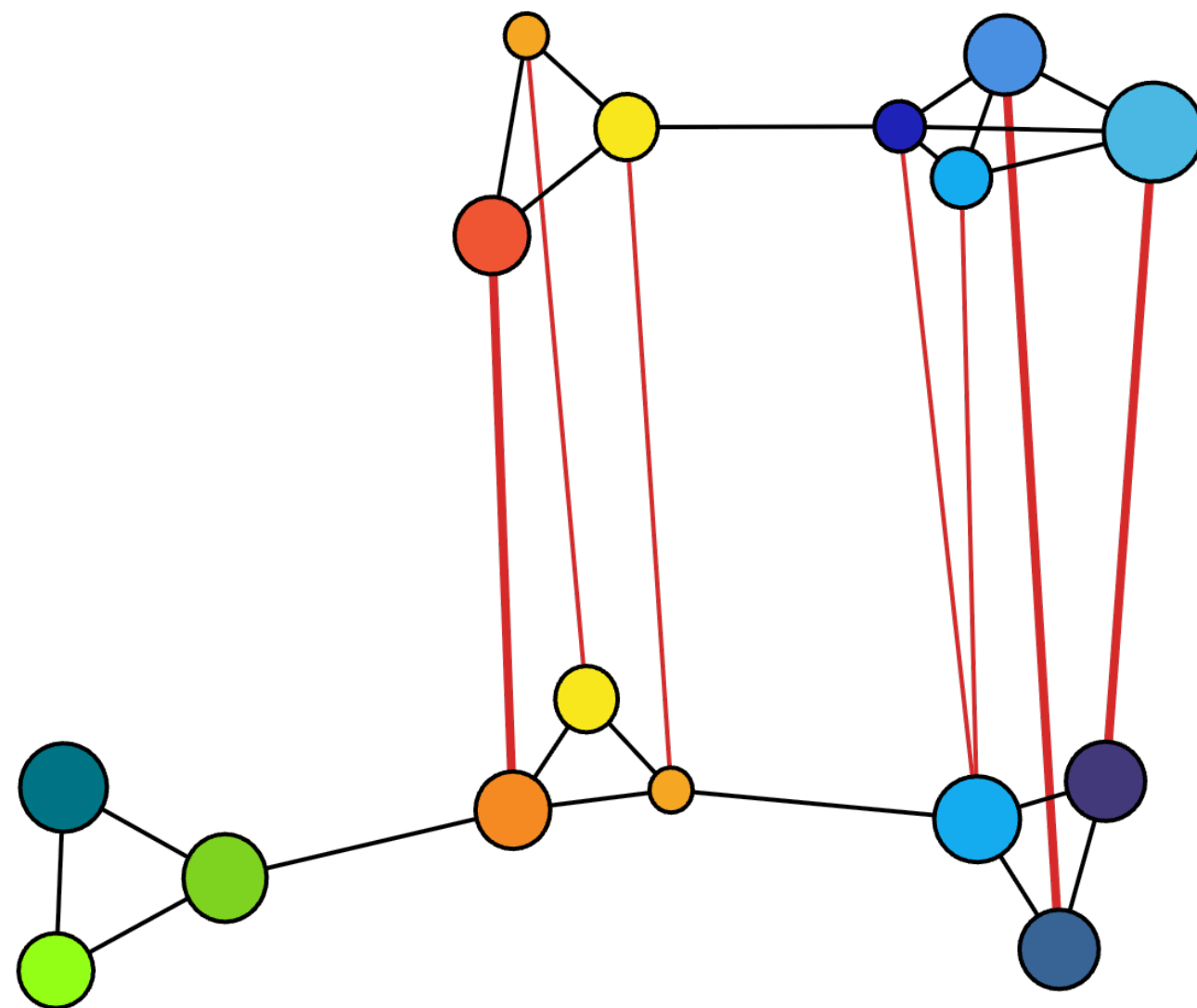


$$G_1 = (F_1, D_1, \omega_1)$$

$$G_2 = (F_2, D_2, \omega_2)$$

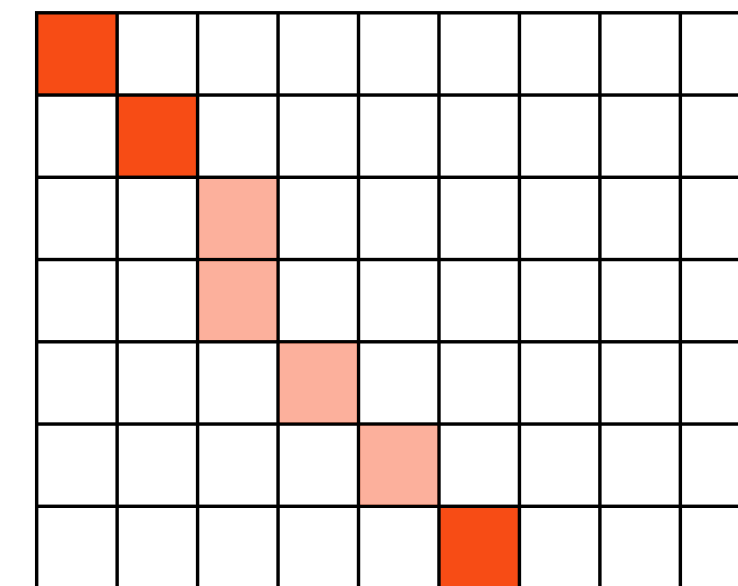
# Graph matching

**Goal:** given a pair of graphs, find a matching between the nodes that preserves the graph geometry, node features and discards nodes that do not have a good matching.



**optimal transport plan P:**

$P_{i,j}$  = mass transported from  $n_1(i)$  to  $n_2(j)$

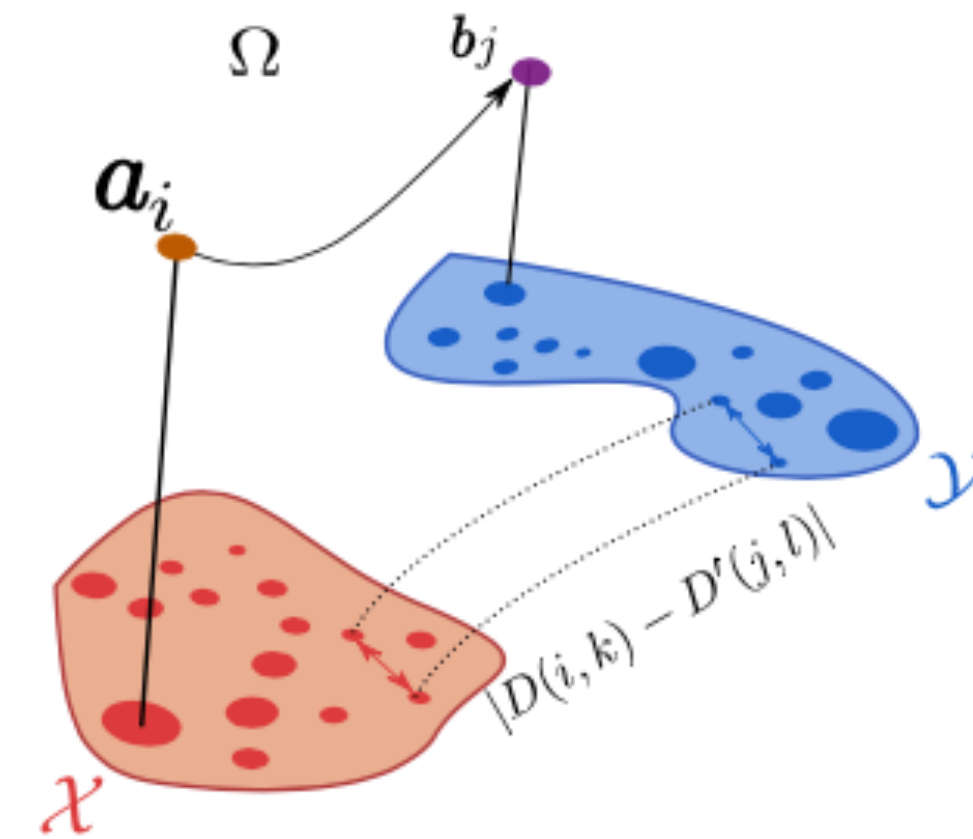
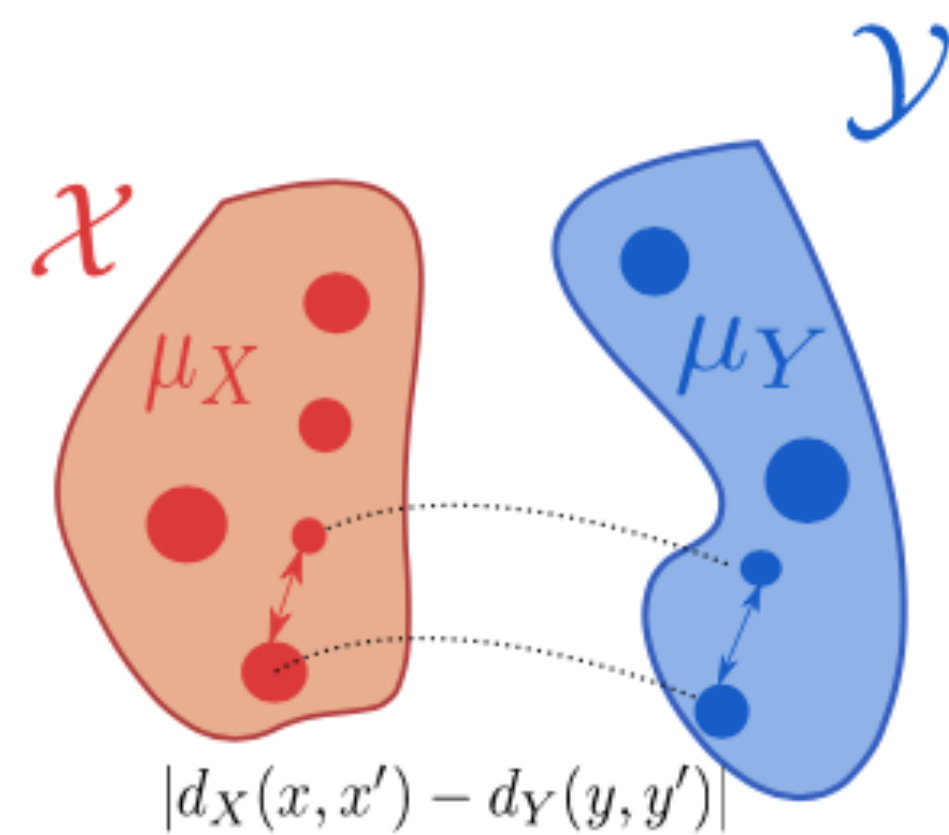


# Optimal transport distance between graphs

**Fused Unbalanced Gromov Wasserstein (FUGW) optimal transport loss** [Thual et al., 2022]

$$\mathcal{L}^{\alpha, \rho}(G_1, G_2, \mathbf{P}) = (1 - \alpha) \sum_{i,j=1}^{n_1, n_2} \left\| (\mathbf{F}_1)_i - (\mathbf{F}_2)_j \right\|_2^2 \mathbf{P}_{i,j} + \alpha \sum_{i,j,k,l=1}^{n_1, n_2, n_1, n_2} \left| (\mathbf{D}_1)_{i,k} - (\mathbf{D}_2)_{j,l} \right|^2 \mathbf{P}_{i,j} \mathbf{P}_{k,l} + \rho (\mathbf{KL}(\mathbf{P}_{\#1} \otimes \mathbf{P}_{\#1} | \omega_1 \otimes \omega_1) + \mathbf{KL}(\mathbf{P}_{\#2} \otimes \mathbf{P}_{\#2} | \omega_2 \otimes \omega_2))$$

match nodes with similar node features      preserve local geometry      discard nodes that do not have a good match



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match nodes with similar node features      preserve local geometry      discard nodes that do not have a good match

**FUGW distance:**  $\text{FUGW}^{\alpha,\rho}(G_1, G_2) = \min_{P \geq 0} \mathcal{L}^{\alpha,\rho}(G_1, G_2, \mathbf{P})$

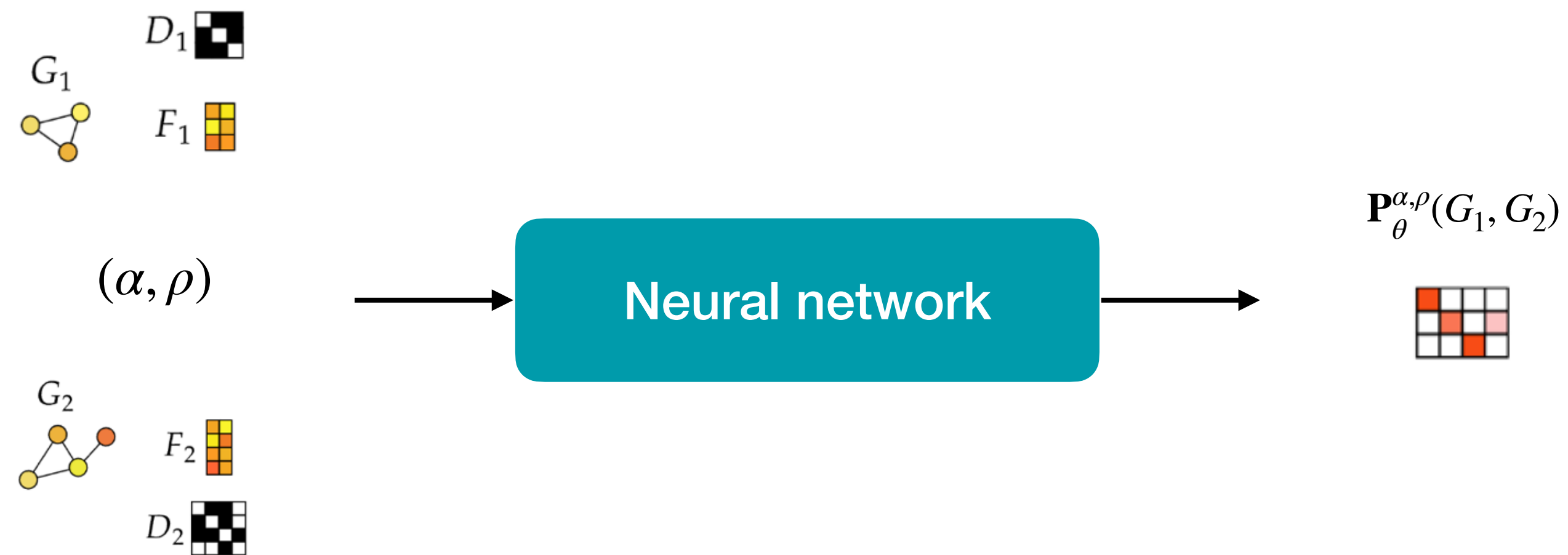
**Solve the OT problem:** batch coordinate descent with complexity  $O(kn^3)$  for  $k$  the number of iterations and  $n$  the number of graph nodes.

→ unscalable for large graphs

# Predicting FUGW plan

**Goal:** learn to predict FUGW plan  $\mathbf{P}_{\theta}^{\alpha, \rho}(G_1, G_2)$  for all graph pairs  $(G_1, G_2) \sim \mathcal{D}$  and parameters  $(\alpha, \rho) \sim \mathcal{P}$ .

**Method:** Neural Network based cross attention and Graph Convolutional Networks that predicts OT plans.

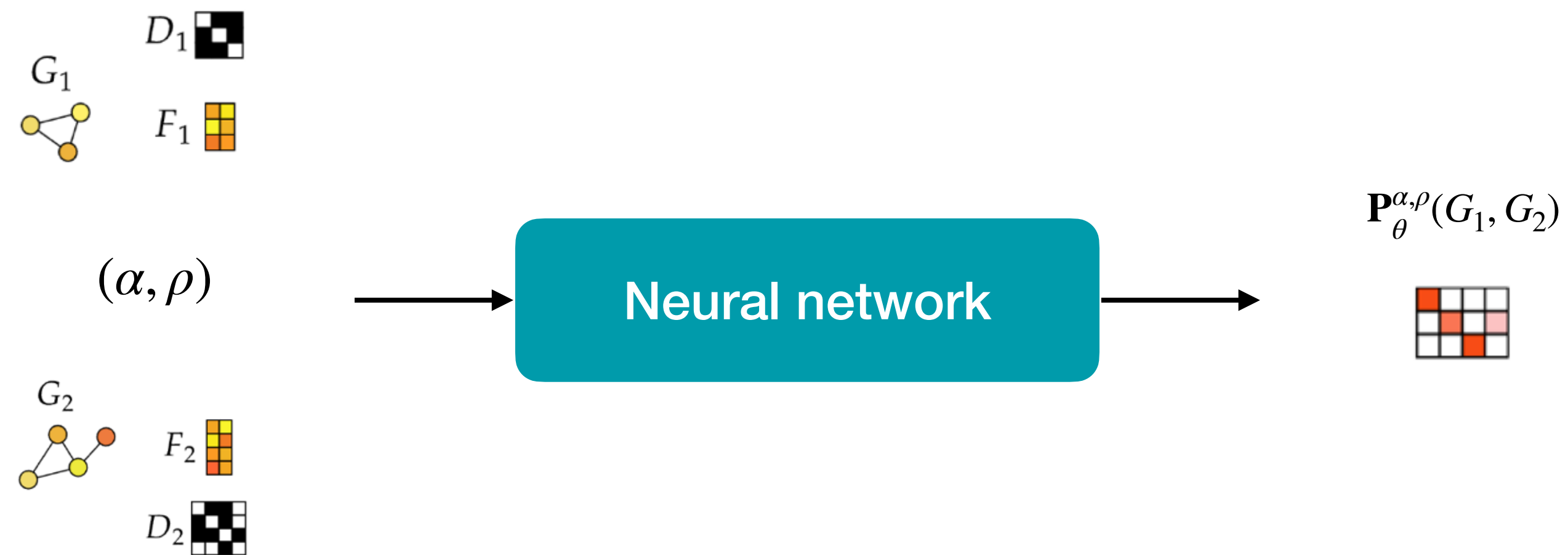




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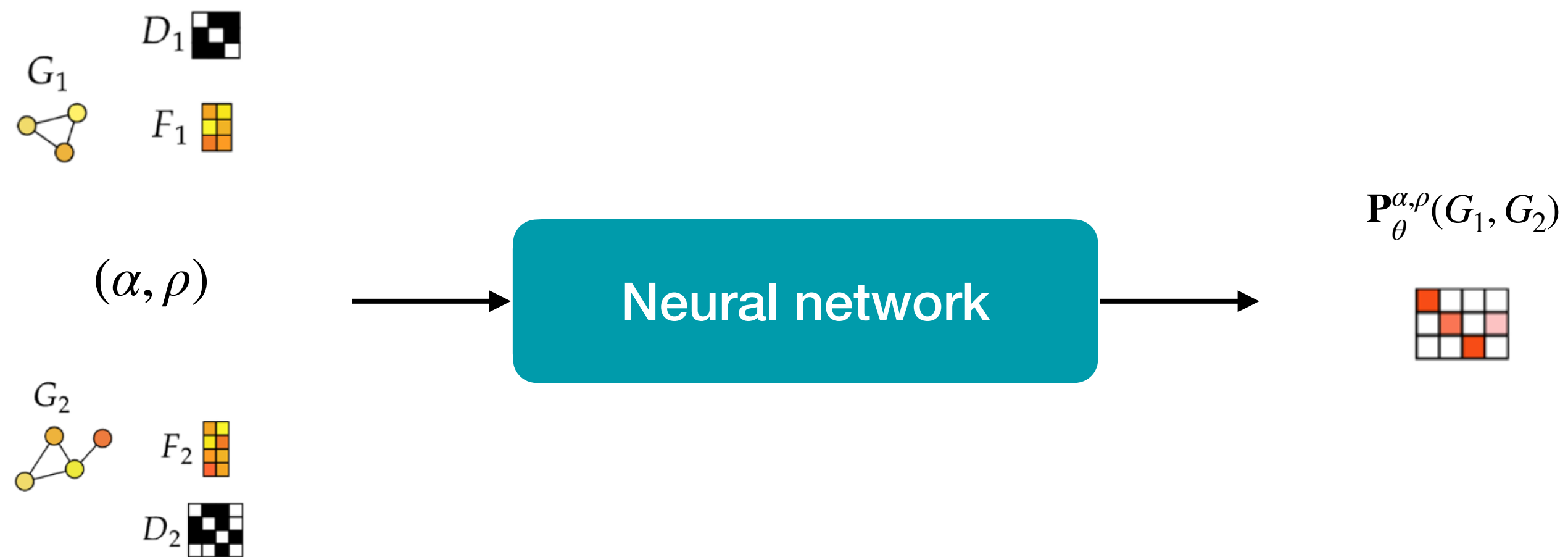


**Supervised training?** Unscalable

# Predicting FUGW plan

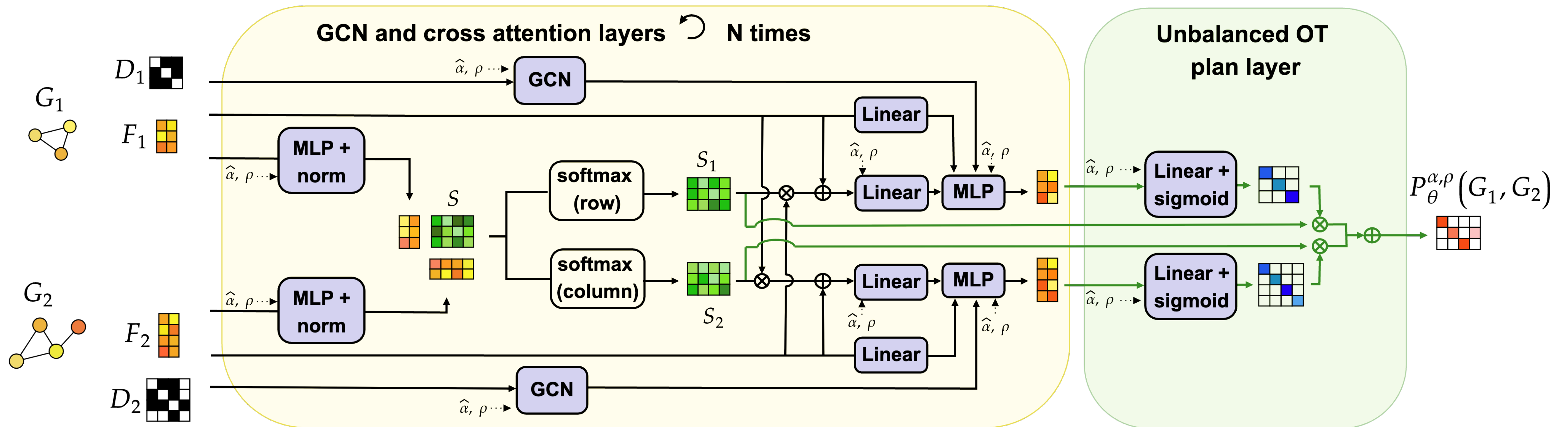
**Goal:** learn to predict FUGW plan  $\mathbf{P}_{\theta}^{\alpha,\rho}(G_1, G_2)$  for all graph pairs  $(G_1, G_2) \sim \mathcal{D}$  and parameters  $(\alpha, \rho) \sim \mathcal{P}$ .

**Method:** Neural Network based cross attention and Graph Convolutional Networks that predicts OT plans.



**Amortized optimisation:**  $\min_{\theta} \mathbb{E}_{G_1, G_2 \sim \mathcal{D}, \alpha, \rho \sim \mathcal{P}} \left[ \mathcal{L}^{\alpha, \rho}(G_1, G_2, \mathbf{P}_{\theta}^{\alpha, \rho}(G_1, G_2)) \right] \longrightarrow \text{unsupervised}$

# Unbalanced learning of Optimal Transport plans (ULOT)



Complexity:  $O(n^2)$  for  $n$  the number of graph nodes

# Results on simulated graphs: effect of the $\rho$ parameter

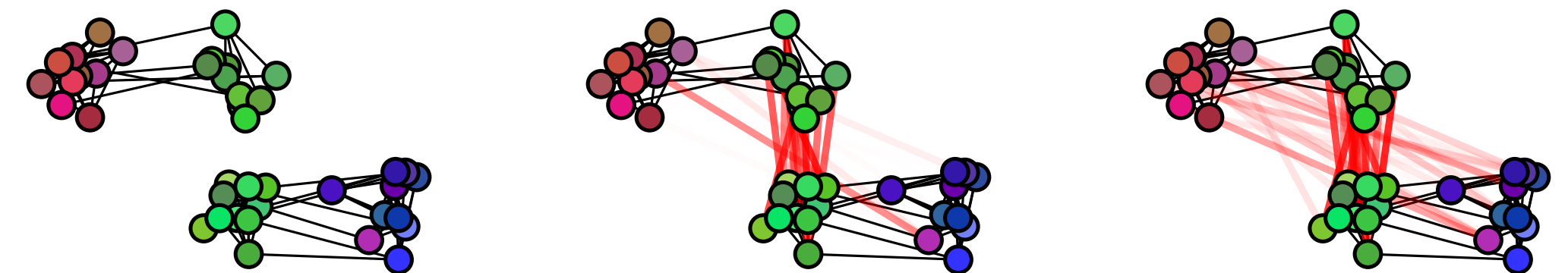
- ULOT trained on a dataset of Stochastic Block Model (SBM) graphs.
- Test on a pair of SBMs with one shared cluster
- ULOT plans similar to solver plans, sometimes better

$$\text{FUGW} = (1 - \alpha)W + \alpha GW + \rho M$$

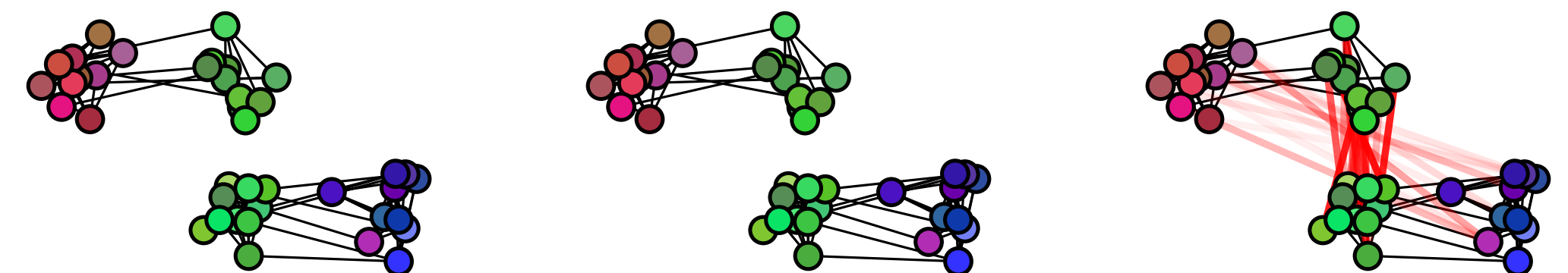
node features  $\swarrow$   
structure  $\nwarrow$  marginals regularization  $\nearrow$

OT plan with respect to  $\rho$  for  $(1, 2) \rightarrow (2, 3)$

ULOT



Solver



$\rho=0.001$

$\rho=0.002$

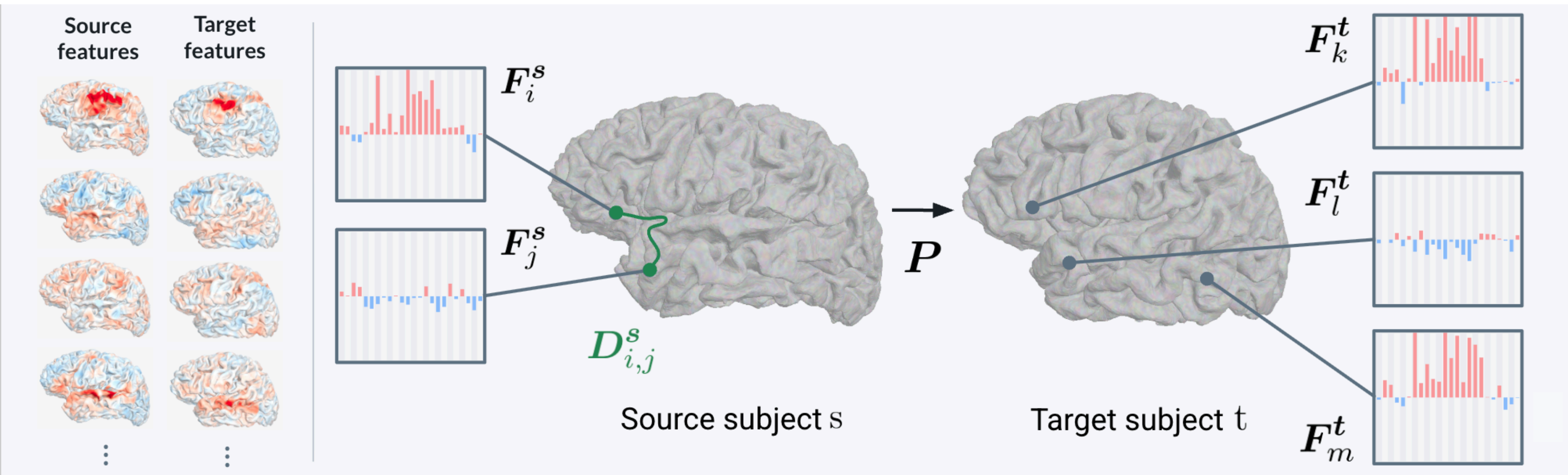
$\rho=0.007$



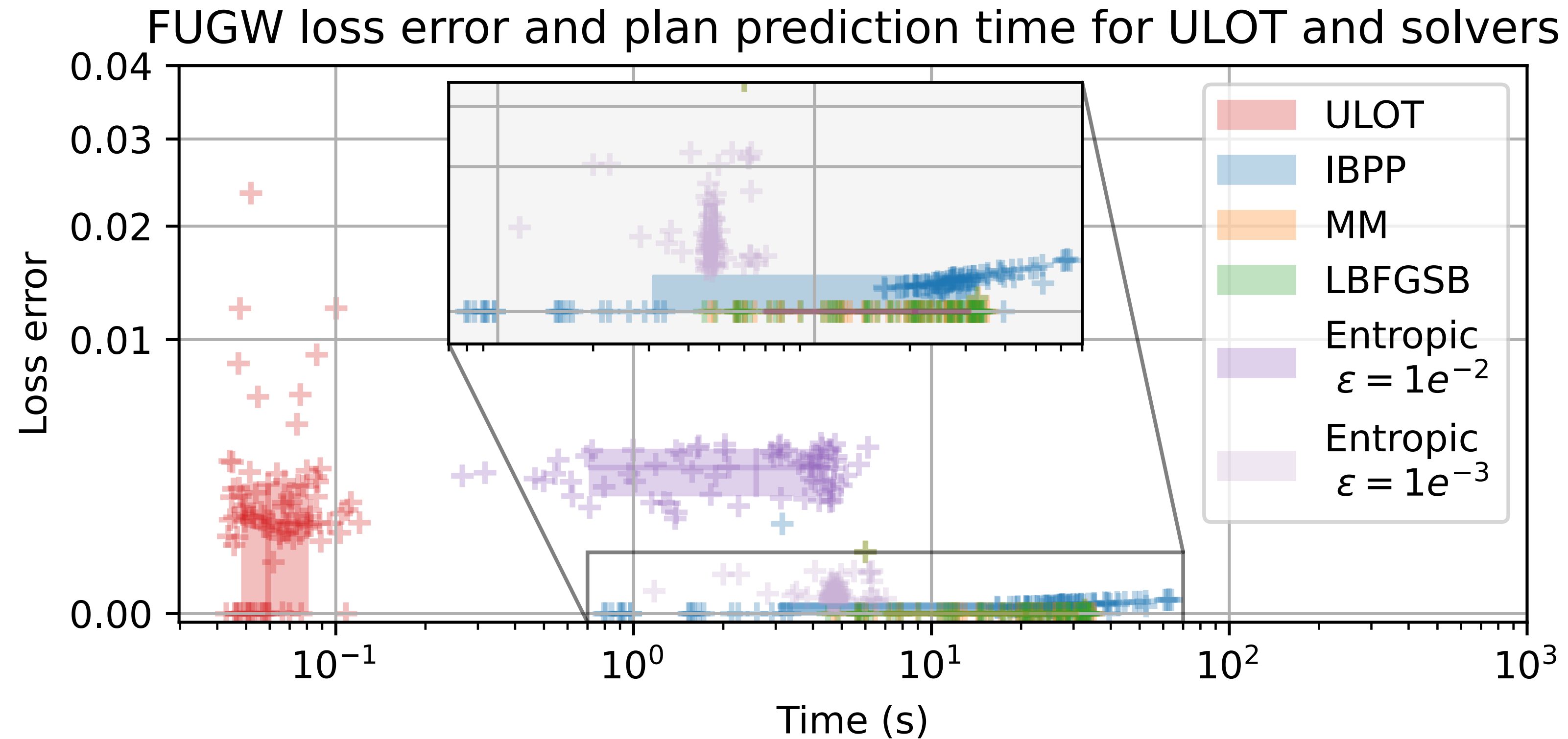
# FUGW for brain alignment

**[Thual et al., 2022]:** Brain alignment with FUGW transport plan.

Graphs constructed from the brain surface geometries and functional MRI activations for different tasks from the Individual Brain Charting dataset, 1000 nodes.



# Applications to fMRI data



ULOT predicted plans with low error compared to solvers, and up to 100 times faster: allows extensive parameter selection and scalability to large graphs.



# Conclusion



- Efficient method for transport plan prediction between graphs with low error and up to 100 times faster than classical solvers.
- Enables FUGW hyper parameter selection, and applications that involve computing many transport plans (barycenters, minimization of functionals of the transport plan).
- Limitations and future work:
  - transport plan error can still be a problem in some applications where high precision is needed.
  - applications to neural dataset is limited because of the small size of datasets: need to investigate further data augmentation techniques.



**paper**

