

Review of random variables

- A random variable X associates a number with each outcome of an experiment
- A random variable is a fixed map from the sample space to the real line
- Random because we do not know exactly which outcome of the experiment will be observed on the next trial, and thus which value the random variable will have
- Observed value of X varies at random

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Discrete random variables

- A discrete random variable takes on a finite number or a countably infinite number of discrete values
- The values taken on by a discrete random variable are discretely spaced
- If u_1, u_2, \dots are the values taken on by a discrete random variable, then for each choice of j , $u_j < u_{j+1}$

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Probability mass functions (pmfs)

- The probabilistic behavior of a discrete random variable X is described by its probability mass function $p_X(u)$ or $p(u)$
- $p_X(u) = p(u) = 0$ unless u is one of the values u_j that X takes on
- $p_X(u_j) = p(u_j) = P\{X = u_j\}$
- $p(u) = 0$ for all u ; $\sum_j p(u_j) = 1$

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Everything you always wanted to know about X

- All the probabilistic information about the discrete random variable X is summarized in its pmf
- The pmf can be used to answer questions such as
 - “What is the probability that X has value between a and b ?”
 - “What is the probability that X is an even number?”

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... but were afraid to ask!

- Example: X is a random variable taking on integer values 0 through 8
 - $p_X(0) = p_X(1) = p_X(7) = p_X(8) = 0.05$
 - $p_X(2) = p_X(3) = p_X(5) = p_X(6) = 0.15$; $p_X(4) = 0.2$
 - $P\{3 < X < 6\} = p_X(4) + p_X(5) = 0.35$
 - $P\{3 \leq X < 6\} = p_X(3) + p_X(4) + p_X(5) = 0.5$
 - $P\{X \text{ is odd}\} = p_X(1) + p_X(3) + p_X(5) + p_X(7) = 0.4$
 - $P\{X = 3.13\} = 0$ because $p_X(3.13) = 0$

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I'm leaving on a jet plane ...

- Example (continued): Suppose that X is the number of passengers (with confirmed reservations) who show up for a flight on a 5-passenger plane. Let Y denote the number of passengers who board the flight. Then, $Y = X$ if $X \leq 5$ and $Y = 5$ if $X > 5$
- The random variable Y is said to be a function of the random variable X
- The pmf of Y can be found from $p_X(u)$

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Why, oh why, oh why?

- Example (continued):
 $p_X(0) = p_X(1) = p_X(7) = p_X(8) = 0.05$
 $p_X(2) = p_X(3) = p_X(5) = p_X(6) = 0.15$; $p_X(4) = 0.2$
- $Y = X$ if $X \leq 5$; $Y = 5$ if $X > 5$
- $p_Y(0) = p_X(0) = 0.05$; $p_Y(1) = p_X(1) = 0.05$;
 $p_Y(2) = p_X(2) = 0.15$; $p_Y(3) = p_X(3) = 0.15$;
 $p_Y(4) = p_X(4) = 0.2$
 $p_Y(5) = p_X(5) + p_X(6) + p_X(7) + p_X(8) = 0.4$
- Sanity check: Is $p_Y(u) = 1$? **Yes**

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Catching a few Z's

- Example (continued): For reasons of aircraft stability, control, and balance, the pilot insists that the plane must have an **odd** number of passengers. Let Z denote the number of passengers left behind (to sleep in the terminal while waiting for the next flight?)
- $Z = 0$ if $X = 0, 1, 3, 5$; $Z = 1$ if $X = 2, 4, 6$
 $Z = 2$ if $X = 7$; $Z = 3$ if $X = 8$

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The pmf of Z

- Example (continued):
 $p_X(0) = p_X(1) = p_X(7) = p_X(8) = 0.05$
 $p_X(2) = p_X(3) = p_X(5) = p_X(6) = 0.15$; $p_X(4) = 0.2$
- $Z = 0$ if $X = 0, 1, 3, 5$; $Z = 1$ if $X = 2, 4, 6$
 $Z = 2$ if $X = 7$; $Z = 3$ if $X = 8$
- $p_Z(0) = p_X(0) + p_X(1) + p_X(3) + p_X(5) = 0.4$;
 $p_Z(1) = p_X(2) + p_X(4) + p_X(6) = 0.5$;
 $p_Z(2) = p_X(7) = 0.05$; $p_Z(3) = p_X(8) = 0.05$
- Sanity check: Is $p_Z(u) = 1$? **Yes**

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Repeated trials of the experiment

- Let X denote a discrete random variable with pmf $p_X(u)$
- X can take on values in $\{u_1, u_2, \dots, u_n, \dots\}$
- The experiment was repeated N times
- On these N trials, X was observed to have taken on values x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N respectively
- Each x_i is **some** number in the set $\{u_1, u_2, \dots, u_n, \dots\}$. It is possible that the same value is observed more than once

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Average of the N observed values

- On N trials, X was observed to have taken on values x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N respectively
- The **average** of these N numbers is just
$$\frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_N}{N}$$
- If we were to do **another** set of N trials, the **values** taken on by X on these trials would not be the same as x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N
- But, the **average** would be fairly close!

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Repeated additions = multiplication!

- On N trials, X was observed to have taken on values x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N respectively
- The **average** of these N numbers is just
$$\frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_N}{N}$$
- Some of the x_i happen to be u_1 , others are u_2 , still others are u_3 , and so on
- If a_1 of the x_i happen to have value u_1 , they will contribute a total of $a_1 u_1$ to the sum in the numerator

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The sum of identical numbers

- On N trials, X was observed to have taken on values x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N respectively
- The **average** of these N numbers is just
$$\frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_N}{N}$$
- The average can also be expressed as
$$\frac{a_1 u_1 + a_2 u_2 + \dots + a_n u_n + \dots}{N}$$
 where for each k , u_k occurred a_k times among the N numbers being added

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Where's the probability?

- On N trials, X was observed to have taken on values x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N respectively
- What does probability mean? On N trials, an event of probability p is **expected** to occur **roughly** pN times
- The event $\{X = u_k\}$ is expected to occur **roughly** $P\{X = u_k\}N = p_X(u_k)N$ times
- Moral: We **expect** that a_k , the number of times that X had value u_k on the N trials, is **approximately** $p_X(u_k)N$

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...and the average is approximately

- On N trials, X was observed to have taken on values x_1, x_2, \dots, x_N respectively
- The average of these numbers is
$$\frac{a_1 u_1 + a_2 u_2 + \dots + a_n u_n + \dots}{N}$$
 where for each k , u_k occurs a_k times among the N numbers being added
- $a_k = N \cdot p_X(u_k)$. Also, for each k , $a_k \approx p_X(u_k)N$
- Moral: The **average value** of X over many trials is **approximately** $\sum_k u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$

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Definition of expectation

- The **average** value of the discrete random variable X , averaged over many trials, is **approximately** $\sum_k u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$
- We **cannot guarantee** that the average value will be exactly this number, but we **expect** it to be fairly close
- This notion is enshrined in probability theory by **defining** the **expectation** of X as $E[X] = \sum_k u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$

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I say what I mean ...

- The **expectation** of the discrete random variable X is given by
$$E[X] = \sum_k u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$$
 where the sum is over all values of X
- Read as "E of X " or "E X "
- Other names for **expectation** are
 - the **expected value** of X
 - the **mean** or **mean value** of X
 - the **average** or the **average value** of X

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... and I mean what I say

- The **expectation** of the discrete random variable X is
$$E[X] = \sum_k u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$$
- The operational meaning of $E[X]$ is exactly what we have discussed in this lecture: $E[X]$ is **approximately** what we **expect** to observe as the **average value** of X over many trials
- But there are no guarantees

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Easy examples I

- Consider an experiment of rolling a fair die
- If the outcome is {1, 4}, you **win** \$1; if the outcome is {2, 3, 5, 6}, you **lose** \$1
- The random variable X that denotes your winnings takes on values +1 and -1
- $p_X(u) = 1/3$ if $u = +1$; $p_X(u) = 2/3$ if $u = -1$
- $E[X] = (+1) \cdot (1/3) + (-1) \cdot (2/3) = -1/3$
- Note that in this experiment, X will always differ from its mean $E[X]$ on every trial

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Easy examples II

- Example: X is a Bernoulli random variable with parameter p , $0 < p < 1$
- $p_X(u) = p$ if $u = 1$; $p_X(u) = 1-p$ if $u = 0$
- $E[X] = 0 \cdot (1-p) + 1 \cdot (p) = p$
- Here too, X can never be equal to its mean on any trial

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Easy examples III

- Example: X is a random variable taking on integer values 0 through 8
- $p_X(0) = p_X(1) = p_X(7) = p_X(8) = 0.05$
 $p_X(2) = p_X(3) = p_X(5) = p_X(6) = 0.15$; $p_X(4) = 0.2$
- $E[X] = 0 \cdot (0.05) + 1 \cdot (0.05) + \dots + 8 \cdot (0.05) = 4$
- In this case, X can equal its mean on some trials (in fact, $X = E[X]$ on roughly 20% of the trials)

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The moment about the origin

- The **expectation** of the discrete random variable X is
$$E[X] = \sum u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$$
- The pmf defines a **set of point masses**
- The point mass $p_X(u_k)$ is at distance u_k from the origin and has a **moment** of $u_k \cdot p_X(u_k)$ **about the origin**
- **Total** moment of all the point masses is $E[X]$, the expectation of X

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Location of the center of mass

- Total moment of all the point masses is just $E[X]$, the expectation of X
- **Center of mass** is defined by the equation
Total moment = total mass \times center of mass
- But total probability mass is 1
- Hence, $E[X] =$ location of center of mass
- There need not be any actual mass at the center of mass
- Practical example: consider a doughnut!

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Fair entry fee for playing the game

- You stake \$1 on the roll of a fair die
- If the outcome is {1, 4}, you **get** \$2 back if the outcome is {2,3,5,6}, you **get** \$0 back
- The random variable Z denotes the **return** on your stake or investment
- $E[Z] = (2) \cdot (1/3) + (0) \cdot (2/3) = 2/3$
- \$1 stake means a **loss** of \$1/3 **on average**
- A **fair entry fee** for playing this game (that is, your stake) would be \$2/3

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How many passengers get to fly?

- Example (continued): Y denotes the number of passengers who board the flight. Then, $Y = X$ if $X \leq 5$ and $Y = 5$ if $X > 5$
- $p_Y(0) = p_Y(1) = 0.05$; $p_Y(2) = p_Y(3) = 0.15$; $p_Y(4) = 0.2$; $p_Y(5) = 0.4$
- $E[Y] = 0 \cdot p_Y(0) + 1 \cdot p_Y(1) + 2 \cdot p_Y(2) + 3 \cdot p_Y(3) + 4 \cdot p_Y(4) + 5 \cdot p_Y(5) = 3.6$
- On average, 4 passengers show up for the flight but only 3.6 get to fly!

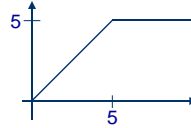
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Y is a function of X

- Example (continued) Y is a function of X given by $Y = X$ if $X \leq 5$ and $Y = 5$ if $X > 5$
- We can write $Y = g(X)$ where $g(\cdot)$ is the function shown below



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$E[Y]$ revisited

- $p_Y(0) = p_X(0)$; $p_Y(1) = p_X(1)$; $p_Y(2) = p_X(2)$; $p_Y(3) = p_X(3)$; $p_Y(4) = p_X(4)$; $p_Y(5) = p_X(5) + p_X(6) + p_X(7) + p_X(8)$
- $E[Y] = 0 \cdot p_Y(0) + 1 \cdot p_Y(1) + 2 \cdot p_Y(2) + 3 \cdot p_Y(3) + 4 \cdot p_Y(4) + 5 \cdot p_Y(5)$
 $= 0 \cdot p_X(0) + 1 \cdot p_X(1) + 2 \cdot p_X(2) + 3 \cdot p_X(3) + 4 \cdot p_X(4) + 5 \cdot [p_X(5) + p_X(6) + p_X(7) + p_X(8)]$
 $= g(0) \cdot p_X(0) + g(1) \cdot p_X(1) + g(2) \cdot p_X(2) + g(3) \cdot p_X(3) + g(4) \cdot p_X(4) + g(5) \cdot p_X(5) + g(6) \cdot p_X(6) + g(7) \cdot p_X(7) + g(8) \cdot p_X(8)$

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Conclusion from the messy formula

- To find $E[Y]$, where $Y = g(X)$, we can find the pmf of Y from the pmf of X , and then use the standard result that

$$E[Y] = \sum v_j \cdot p_Y(v_j)$$
 where sum is over all values v_j of Y
- Alternatively, we can find $E[Y]$ via the formula $E[Y] = E[g(X)] = \sum g(u_k) \cdot p_X(u_k)$ where the sum is over all values u_k of X
- The new formula is just a re-arrangement of the terms in the standard sum for $E[Y]$

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It bears repeating that...

- The standard definition $E[Y] = \sum v_j \cdot p_Y(v_j)$ requires finding/knowing the pmf of Y
- To find $E[Y]$, where $Y = g(X)$, it is **not necessary to first find the pmf of Y** from the pmf of X . Instead, we can use

$$E[Y] = E[g(X)] = \sum g(u_k) \cdot p_X(u_k)$$
 where the sum is over all values u_k of X
- We have **avoided the extra step** of finding $p_Y(v_j)$ to use in the standard definition

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Expected value of a function of X

- If $Y = g(X)$, the expected value of Y , which is given by $E[Y] = \sum v_j \cdot p_Y(v_j)$, can often be more easily computed as

$$E[Y] = E[g(X)] = \sum g(u_k) \cdot p_X(u_k)$$
 where the sum is over all values u_k of X
- It is **not necessary** to find $p_Y(v_j)$ to use in the standard definition of $E[Y]$; the pmf of X and the function $g(\cdot)$ suffice
- This theorem is called **LOTUS**
- LOTUS makes it easy to find $E[Z]$ (slide 8)

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Political correctness and LOTUS

- Many statistics texts define $E[g(\mathbf{X})]$ as $E[g(\mathbf{X})] = \sum g(u_k) \cdot p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k)$ where the sum is over all values u_k of \mathbf{X} , apparently without realizing that $g(\mathbf{X})$ is a random variable \mathbf{Y} , and hence its expected value is, by definition, $E[\mathbf{Y}] = \sum v_j \cdot p_{\mathbf{Y}}(v_j)$
- That both computations give the same result is a theorem of probability theory
- The first four editions of Ross call this the Law of the Unconscious Statistician

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Applications of LOTUS I

- $\mathbf{Y} = a\mathbf{X} + b$, where a and b are constants.
- $E[\mathbf{Y}] = E[g(\mathbf{X})] = \sum g(u_k) \cdot p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k) = \sum (a \cdot u_k + b) \cdot p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k) = a \cdot \sum u_k \cdot p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k) + b \cdot \sum p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k) = a \cdot E[\mathbf{X}] + b$
- $E[a\mathbf{X} + b] = a \cdot E[\mathbf{X}] + b$
- Expectation is a linear operation: the expectation of a sum is the sum of the expectations
- $E[b] = b$

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Applications of LOTUS II

- Suppose that $\mathbf{Y} = \mathbf{X} - a$, where a is some constant. Then,
- $E[\mathbf{Y}] = E[\mathbf{X}] - a$
- The mass $p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k)$ is at distance $u_k - a$ from the point a on the real line
- $(u_k - a) \cdot p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k)$ is the moment of the mass $p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k)$ about the point a on the real line
- $E[\mathbf{X} - a] =$ total moment about a

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Applications of LOTUS III

- $E[\mathbf{X} - a] =$ total moment about the point a
- If we choose a to be $E[\mathbf{X}]$, then we get that $E[\mathbf{X} - a] = E[\mathbf{X}] - a = E[\mathbf{X}] - E[\mathbf{X}] = 0$
- $E[\mathbf{X}]$ is the center of mass
- The moment about the center of mass is 0
- A body is "perfectly balanced" about its center of mass
- The quantity $\mathbf{X} - E[\mathbf{X}]$ is the deviation of \mathbf{X} from its mean
- The average deviation from the mean is 0

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Applications of LOTUS IV

- The average deviation from the mean is 0
- We shall often use μ or $\mu_{\mathbf{X}}$ to denote the mean, that is, expected value of \mathbf{X}
- In probability theory as well as in many other areas, the average value of the squared deviation from μ , that is, the expected value of $(\mathbf{X} - \mu)^2$ is important
- $E[(\mathbf{X} - \mu)^2]$ is called the variance of \mathbf{X}
- Variance is denoted by $\text{var}(\mathbf{X})$ or σ^2 or $\sigma_{\mathbf{X}}^2$ where σ is called the standard deviation

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The variance of a random variable

- $\sigma^2 = E[(\mathbf{X} - \mu)^2]$ is called the variance of \mathbf{X}
- LOTUS tells us that $\sigma^2 = E[(\mathbf{X} - \mu)^2] = \sum (u_k - \mu)^2 \cdot p_{\mathbf{X}}(u_k)$
- $\sigma^2 \geq 0$ since all the terms in the sum are nonnegative
- In fact, $\sigma^2 > 0$ except when the random variable happens to be a constant!
- If your computations give you negative variance or zero variance, you are likely to have made a mistake! Check your work!

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More on the variance

- $\sigma^2 = E[(X - \mu)^2]$ is called the **variance** of X
- LOTUS tells us that

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma^2 &= E[(X - \mu)^2] = E[X^2 - 2\mu X + \mu^2] \\ &= E[X^2] - E[2\mu X] + E[\mu^2] \\ &= E[X^2] - 2\mu \cdot E[X] + \mu^2 \\ \sigma^2 &= E[X^2] - \mu^2\end{aligned}$$
- Alternatively, expand out $(u_k - \mu)^2 \cdot p_X(u_k)$ and verify that you get the same result
- $\sigma^2 = E[(X - \mu)^2] = E[X^2] - \mu^2$
 $= E[X^2] - (E[X])^2$ or $E[X^2] - E^2[X]$

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What does the variance represent?

- $\sigma^2 = E[(X - \mu)^2]$ is called the **variance** of X
- $\sigma^2 = \sum (u_k - \mu)^2 \cdot p_X(u_k)$
- The point mass $p_X(u_k)$ is at distance $u_k - \mu$ from the center of mass
- Hence, this point mass has **moment of inertia** $(u_k - \mu)^2 \cdot p_X(u_k)$ about the center of mass
- σ^2 denotes the **moment of inertia about the center of mass**
- σ is also the **radius of gyration**

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What does large variance mean?

- σ^2 denotes the moment of inertia about the center of mass
- σ is also the radius of gyration: the system of point masses can be represented by a two half-unit masses at locations $\mu \pm \sigma$
- Since the total mass is always 1, a large variance means the total mass is spread widely and far away from the mean
- Small variance means mass is close to μ
- A zero variance means **all** the mass is at μ

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Summary

- How to **calculate probabilities** of various interesting events **from the pmf**
- How to **find the pmf of a function $g(X)$**
- The average value of X on repeated trials
- $E[X]$, the **expectation** of X
- Interpretations of $E[X]$
- Finding $E[g(X)]$ via **LOTUS**
- Variance of a random variable
- Properties of the variance

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