Individual reflection and feedback

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Reflection

Challenges: The most difficult part of the project was the beginning. Perhaps also due to our limited background in this field, we struggled to understand, just from the paper, how each sequence was encoded, and how each of the three logistic regression models contributed to the prediction of repair outcomes. It was not until we dedicated time to reading the code that we understood how microhomology features were determined for each sequence. Having to re-train each component of Lindel also shed light on how these features were used and how prediction outcomes were combined. I certainly have an improved understanding now of the relevance of sequence context in the automated prediction of CRISPR/Cas9 repair outcomes, and I believe it will be much easier for me to read other literature on the topic.

Individual research: The part I found most interesting was the authors' approach to feature engineering, which I believe is Lindel's strength compared to other models. This is also why I chose to focus on this in my own research contribution.

Teamwork: I feel that we worked well as a team and each of us had an equal contribution to the project. The lab was the most productive setting for us to work in, and so most of our group progress was achieved there. If I were to change anything, it would be perhaps to make more use of the earlier labs, by having each team member prepare beforehand.

Takeaways: The key takeaway for me is that, while reproducing a paper is time-consuming, it is also valuable, not just for your own understanding, but for the entire research community. It is unfortunate that this cannot be integrated into the reviewing process.

Course feedback

The project: I appreciated that we had a lot of support for the project, with weekly labs and the chance to contact the TAs online. The course staff were very patient and helpful. It was also great that we had 2 chances to present our progress and get your feedback on it. The only thing I would suggest would be to publish a rubric on how the project/report will be graded (i.e. how much you account for code documentation, writing style, individual research questions, and other criteria).

The lectures: I liked the format of the lectures because it encourages discussion and motivates you to keep up. At the same time, I think that participation should count for a smaller percentage of your grade. It was also unclear to me what counts as participation: whether you have to ask a question or just speak up during the lecture. Instead of asking questions on the spot, I think the students should submit their questions beforehand, such that the presenters have a chance to compile a list of questions and organize a discussion.