Lecture

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References

THEORY

- Pham (2009) Continuous-time Stochastic Control maybe too finance
- Lecture notes
 - → Caldentey (????) Stochastic processes and optimal control nice lecture notes Enio uses
 them
 - → Ross (????) Stochastic Control in Continuous Time alternative to math books Fleming and Soner (2006), Øksendal (2003), Øksendal and Sulem (2007)

THEORY (MACRO)

- · Moll's website
- Bayer and Wälde (2015) recent discovery, dicuss the kind of SDE driven by a Markov chain
 Sennewald (2007) (theory paper), Walde (2008) (book on intertemporal optimization),
- Stokey (2009) book Impulse control Problem

Numeric

- Achdou, Han, Lasry, Lions, and Moll (2016) (mainly the numerical appendix), Moll's website (tons
 of examples and materials)
- Forsyth and Vetzal (2012) (Also has some slides) good introduction to "viscosity solutions"
- Interested? Check applications . . .
 - → HANK by Kaplan, Moll, and Violante (2016), PHACT
 - → Nuño and Moll (2017) (improved notation)
 - → Thomas and Nuño (2016) (impulse control)

Consumption Savings Problem

Problem of Household

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{\{c_t\}_{t\geq 0}} \mathbb{E}_0 & \int_0^\infty e^{-\rho t} u(c_t) dt \\ & \text{S.t } da_t = \left\{ ra_t + z_t - c_t \right\} dt \\ & z_t \text{: is a ct markov chain on } \left\{ b, w \right\} \text{ with intensities } \lambda_1, \lambda_2 \\ & dz_t = (w-b) dq - (w-b) dQ, \quad q \sim \text{Poisson}(\lambda_1), \ Q \sim \text{Poisson}(\lambda_2) \\ & a_t \geq a \end{aligned}$$

Individuals' consumption and saving decision is summarized by HJB equation

$$\rho v(a, z_k) = \max_{c} \left\{ u(c) + v_a(a, z) [ra + z_k - c] \right\} + \lambda_k \left[v(a, z_{-k}) - v(a, z_k) \right]$$
(1)

Where this came from? Check Lagos lecture notes for an heuristic argument.

Theoretical results analogous to discrete time:

- Value function satisfy the HJB equation
- ullet Verification theorems: solution of HJB $+\ldots o$ value function
- Alternatively, one can show HJB has a unique "nice" solution which is the value function (viscosity solution)

Before solving the HJB FE let's see what we can do. Analytical results from Bayer and Wälde (2015)

Envelope condition:

$$\rho V_{a}(a,b) = rV_{a}(a,b) + V_{aa}(a,b) \big\{ ra + b - c(a,b) \big\} + \lambda_{1} \Big[V_{a}(a,w) - V_{a}(a,b) \Big]$$

Differential of $V_a(a,z)$ — CVF, "Itô formula"

$$da_t = \{ra_t + z_t - c_t\}dt$$

 $dz_t = (w - b)dq - (w - b)dQ$, $q \sim \text{Poisson}(\lambda_1)$, $Q \sim \text{Poisson}(\lambda_2)$

$$\mathrm{d} V_{\mathsf{a}}(a,b) = \underbrace{V_{\mathsf{aa}}\big\{\mathit{ra} + b - \mathit{c}(a,b)\big\}}_{\mathsf{normal term}} \mathrm{d} t + \underbrace{\left[V_{\mathsf{a}}(a,w) - V_{\mathsf{a}}(a,b)\right]}_{\mathsf{jump terms}} \mathrm{d} q_t$$

From optimization $V_a(a,z)=u'\left(c(a,z)\right)$. Combining both equations to get rid of V_{aa} we have

$$du'(c(a,b)) = \left\{ (\rho - r)u'(c(a,b)) - \lambda_1 u'(c(a,b)) \left[\frac{u'(c(a,w))}{u'(c(a,b))} - 1 \right] \right\} dt +$$

$$+ \left[u'(c(a,w)) - u'(c(a,b)) \right] dq_t$$

Applying "Itô lemma" to get consumption over time

$$dc(a,b) = \frac{u'\left(c(a,b)\right)}{-u''\left(c(a,b)\right)} \left\{r - \rho - \lambda_1 \left[1 - \frac{u'\left(c(a,w)\right)}{u'\left(c(a,b)\right)}\right]\right\} dt + \left[c(a,w) - c(a,b)\right] dq_t \quad (2a)$$

$$dc(a, w) = \frac{u'(c(a, w))}{-u''(c(a, w))} \left\{ r - \rho + \underbrace{\lambda_2 \left[\frac{u'(c(a, b))}{u'(c(a, w))} - 1 \right]}_{\text{prec. savings}} \right\} dt + \underbrace{\left[c(a, b) - c(a, w) \right] dQ_t}_{\text{jumps}}$$
(3)

neoclassical growth model
$$\dot{c}(t) = \frac{u'(c)}{-u''(c)} \Big(r - \rho \Big)$$

Looking at period between jumps. What the signs tell us?

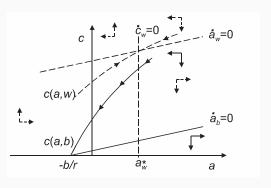
Proposition. Consider the case $0 < r \le \rho$. Define the threshold level a_w^* by

$$\frac{u'\left(c(a_{w}^{*},b)\right)}{u'\left(c(a_{w}^{*},w)\right)} = 1 + \frac{\rho - r}{\lambda_{2}} \tag{4}$$

Then (i) Consumption of employed workers is increasing on $[\underline{a}, a_w^*]$ and decreasing $a > a_w^*$; (ii) consumption of unemployed workers always decrease

Properties of this system can be illustrated in the usual phase diagram

Policies



Note:

Change

- Results help build some intuition on the problem. Look at Bayer and Wälde (2015) for much more...
- Now we change the approach.
 Instead of looking at households' saving behavior in terms of a differential equation for its consumption policy function, we will focus on the HJB equation for the value function and how to solve it numerically.
- draw heavily on Moll's notes

Problem of Household

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{\{c_t\}_{t\geq 0}} \mathbb{E}_0 & \int_0^\infty e^{-\rho t} u(c_t) dt \\ & \text{S.t } da_t = \big\{ ra_t + z_t - c_t \big\} dt \\ & z_t \text{ is a ct markov chain on } \{b,w\} \text{ with intensities } \lambda_1, \lambda_2 \\ & dz_t = (w-b) dq_\mu - (w-b) dq_s, \quad q_\mu \sim \mathsf{Poisson}(\lambda_1), \ q_s \sim \mathsf{Poisson}(\lambda_2) \\ & a_t \geq \mathsf{a} \end{aligned}$$

Individuals' value function must satisfy HJB equation¹

$$\rho v_k(a) = \max_{c} \left\{ u(c) + v'_k(a)[ra + z_k - c] \right\} + \lambda_k \left[v_{-k}(a) - v_k(a) \right]$$
 (5)

Borrowing constraint shows only as state constraint boundary condition

$$u'(c_i(\underline{\mathbf{a}})) = v_i'(\underline{\mathbf{a}}) \ge u'(r\underline{\mathbf{a}} + z_i) \tag{6}$$

which ensures $s_i(\underline{a}) = r\underline{a} + z_i - c_i(\underline{a}) \ge 0$ so that the borrowing constraint is <u>never violated</u>.

¹change notation

Continuous × Discrete time

Consider the first-order condition for consumption

$$u'(c) = \partial_a v(a, z) \tag{7}$$

$$u'(c) \ge \beta \int \partial_a v(a', z') dF(z'|z), \quad a' = z + (1+r)a - c$$
 (8)

Continuous time advantages:

- 1. "today" = "tomorrow" foc is static
- 2. HJB is not stochastic evolution of stochastic process is captured by additive terms
- 3. foc always holds with equality

Borrowing constraint shows only as state constraint boundary condition

$$u'(c_i(\underline{a},t)) = \partial_a v_i(\underline{a},t) \ge u'(r_t \underline{a} + z_i)$$
(9)

which ensures $c_i(\underline{a},t) \leq r_t \underline{a} + z_i$ so that the borrowing constraint is never violated.

Numeric solution HJB

Finite Difference

Finite difference methods: replace derivatives by differences. Simple right? Well developed theory... some slides on it

Recall our HJB equation

$$\rho v_k(a) - \sup_{c \in \Gamma_k(a)} \left\{ u(c) + \mathcal{D}^c v_k(a) \right\} = 0$$
 (10)

where

$$\mathcal{D}^{\mathsf{c}}\phi_k(\mathsf{a}) = \phi_k'(\mathsf{a})[\mathsf{r}\mathsf{a} + \mathsf{z}_k - \mathsf{c}] + \lambda_k \Big[\phi_{\mathsf{-}k}(\mathsf{a}) - \phi_k(\mathsf{a})\Big]$$

Define a grid $\{a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_i, \ldots\}$ and let $v_k = (v_k(a_1), \ldots, v_k(a_i), \ldots)'$. Discretizing this equation requires deciding upon

• which fd approximation to use: forward/backward differencing

$$v'_k(a) \approx \frac{v_{k,i+1} - v_{k,i}}{a_{i+1} - a_i}, \quad v'_k(a) \approx \frac{v_{k,i} - v_{k,i-1}}{a_i - a_{i-1}},$$

Let \mathscr{D}^c be the discrete form of the differential operator \mathcal{D}^c , so that

$$\left(\mathscr{D}^{c}v\right)_{k,i} = \alpha_{k,i}(c)v_{k,i-1} + \beta_{k,i}(c)v_{k,i+1} - \left(\alpha_{k,i}(c) + \beta_{k,i}(c) + \lambda_{k}\right)v_{k,i} + \lambda_{k}v_{-k,i}$$

and the discretization

$$\rho v_{k,i} - \sup_{c \in \Gamma_{k,i}} \left\{ u(c) + \left(\mathscr{D}^c v^{n(+1)} \right)_{k,i} \right\} = 0$$
 (11)

where discretization can use forward, backward or central discretization. If

$$\alpha_{k,i} \ge 0, \ \beta_{k,i} \ge 0$$

we say that (11) is *positive coefficient discretization*. We will search for a discretization that satisfies this condition — more on the reason later.

In order to ensure a *positive coefficient discretization* our choice of central/forward/backward differencing will depend, in general, on the control c. A useful rule for this problem is to use the so-called *upwind scheme*.

IDEA: Use forward difference whenever drift is positive, and use backward whenever it is negative.

Suppose that we have the value of consumption $c_{k,i}$ at a particular node. Let $s_{k,i} = ra_i + z_k - c_{k,i}$. In this case, the derivatives are approximated

$$\dots \frac{v_{k,i+1} - v_{k,i}}{a_{i+1} - a_i} s_{k,i}^+ + \frac{v_{k,i} - v_{k,i-1}}{a_i - a_{i-1}} s_{k,i}^- + \dots$$

which in terms of our α, β

$$\alpha_{k,i}^{up} = -\frac{s_{k,i}^{-}}{a_i - a_{i-1}} \ge 0, \quad \beta_{k,i}^{up} = \frac{s_{k,i}^{+}}{a_{i+1} - a_i} \ge 0$$

Discretized HJB equation is

$$\rho v_{k,i} = u(c_{k,i}) + \frac{v_{k,i+1} - v_{k,i}}{a_{i+1} - a_i} \left[s_{k,i}(c) \right]^+ + \frac{v_{k,i} - v_{k,i-1}}{a_i - a_{i-1}} \left[s_{k,i}(c) \right]^- + \lambda_k \left[v_{-k,i} - v_{k,i} \right]$$
(12)

which can be written in matrix notation

$$\rho v = u(c) + \mathbf{A}v$$

But we don't know $c_{k,j}$! Remember that c satisfy the foc everywhere on the grid

$$u'(c_{k,i}) = v'_k(a_i)$$

so c(v), A(v). HJB equation is highly nonlinear, so we need an iterative method to solve it.

Start with a vector v^n , solve for foc and update v^{n+1} according to

$$\frac{v_{k,i}^{n+1} - v_{k,i}^{n}}{\Delta} + \rho v_{k,i}^{n+1} = u(c_{k,i}^{n}) + \frac{v_{k,i+1}^{n+1} - v_{k,i}^{n+1}}{a_{i+1} - a_{i}} \left[s_{k,i}^{F,n} \right]^{+} + \frac{v_{k,i}^{n+1} - v_{k,i-1}^{n+1}}{a_{i} - a_{i-1}} \left[s_{k,i}^{B,n} \right]^{-} + \lambda_{k} \left[v_{k,i}^{n+1} - v_{k,i}^{n+1} \right]$$
(13)

- Compute the policy from the foc $\left(u'\left(c_{k,i}^n\right)=\partial_a v_{k,i}^n\right)$ for the backward AND forward derivative of the value function.
- Define $s_{k,i}^{B,n} = ra_i + z_k c_{k,i}^{B,n}$, $s_{k,i}^{F,n} = ra_i + z_k c_{k,i}^{F,n}$. Set $c_{k,i}^n = \mathbb{1}\left\{s_{k,i}^{B,n} \leq 0\right\} \times c_{k,i}^{B,n} + \mathbb{1}\left\{s_{k,i}^{F,n} \geq 0\right\} \times c_{k,i}^{F,n} + \mathbb{1}\left\{s_{k,i}^{F,n} \leq 0 \leq s_{k,i}^{B,n}\right\} \times (ra_i + z_k)$
- Collecting terms with the same subscripts on the right-hand side

$$\frac{v_{k,i}^{n+1} - v_{k,i}^n}{\Delta} + \rho v_{k,i}^{n+1} = u(c_{k,i}^n) + \alpha_{k,i} v_{k,i-1}^{n+1} + \beta_{k,i} v_{k,i+1}^{n+1} - \left(\alpha_{k,i} + \beta_{k,i} + \lambda_k\right) v_{k,i}^{n+1} + \lambda_i v_{k,i}^{n+1}$$
(14)

where

$$\alpha_{k,i}^{up} = -\frac{\left[s_{k,i}^{B,n}\right]^{-}}{a_{i} - a_{i-1}} \ge 0, \quad \beta_{k,i}^{up} = \frac{\left[s_{k,i}^{F,n}\right]^{+}}{a_{i+1} - a_{i}} \ge 0$$

Equation (14) is just a system of linear equations on vⁿ⁺¹!!

Equation (14) can be written in matrix notation as

$$\frac{1}{\Delta}(v^{n+1}-v^n)+\rho v^{n+1}=u(c^n)+{\pmb A}^n v^{n+1}$$

where the sparse matrix A looks like

entries of row i

$$\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_{k,i} & -(\alpha_{k,i} + \beta_{k,i} + \lambda_k) & \beta_{k,i} \\ \text{inflow } i-1 & \text{outflow} & \text{inflow } i+1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} v_{k,i-1} \\ v_{k,i} \\ v_{k,i+1} \end{bmatrix}$$

Iterate until $v^{n+1} \approx v^n$

Backgroud Finite Difference

Time dependent version of HJB

$$\rho v_k(a) = \max_c \left\{ u(c) + v_k'(a)[ra + z_k - c] \right\} + \lambda_k \left[v_{-k}(a) - v_k(a) \right]$$

in a PDE notation

$$0 = F(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{v}, D\mathbf{v}, D^2\mathbf{v}) \tag{15}$$

where $\mathbf{x} := (a, z)$. Suppose we define a grid $\{a_0, a_1, \ldots, a_i, \ldots\}$. Let $v_{k,i} \approx v_k(a_i)$ be the approximate value of the solution. Then we can write a general **discretization** of the HJB equation at node (a_i, z_k)

$$0 = S_{k,i}\left(\tilde{\Delta}, v_{k,i}, \{v_{m,j}\}_{m \neq k, j \neq i}\right)$$
(16)

Sufficient Conditions Convergence

Condition (Monotonicity) . — The numerical scheme (16) is monotone if

$$S_{k,i}(\cdot, v_{k,i}, \{y_{m,j}\}) \le S_{k,i}(\cdot, v_{k,i}, \{z_{m,j}\})$$

for all $y \geq z$.

Condition (Stability) .— The numerical scheme (16) is stable if for every $\tilde{\Delta}>0$ it has a solution which is uniformly bounded independently of $\tilde{\Delta}$.

Condition (Consistency) .— The numerical scheme (16) is consistent if for every smooth function ϕ with bounded derivatives we have

$$S_{k,i}(\tilde{\Delta},\phi(\mathbf{x}_{k,i}),\{\phi(\mathbf{x}_{m,j})\}) \to F(\mathbf{x},\phi,D\phi,D^2\phi)$$

as $\tilde{\Delta} \to 0$ and $\mathbf{x}_{k,i} \to \mathbf{x}$.

Sufficient Conditions Convergence

Theorem Barles and Souganidis (1990). If the numerical scheme S (16) satisfies monotonicity, stability and consistency conditions, then its solution converges locally uniformly to the unique viscosity solution of (15).

- Convergence here is about $\tilde{\Delta} \to 0$
- For given $\tilde{\Delta}$, we have a system of I non-linear equations that we must solve somehow (Implicit scheeme). Theorem guarantees that the solution $\{v_{k,i}\}$ of this system converges to the "viscosity solution" of the original PDE as $\tilde{\Delta} \to 0$
- "viscosity solution" of the HJB is the the value function
- A positive coefficient discretization is also Monotone. To see it check that

$$S_{k,i}(\tilde{\Delta}, v_{k,i}, v_{k,i+1}, v_{k,i-1}, v_{k,i}, v_{-k,i})$$

is a nonincreasing function of the neighbor nodes $\{v_{m,j}\}$. Check a example!

Computing the Distribution

Distributions

- We now know how to solve the Household consumption/savings problem
- But interesting questions require dealing with distributions
- Denote by $g_i(a, t)$ i = 1, 2 the joint density of income z_i and welath a.
- The evolution of the density given a fixed initial distribution $g_i(a,0)$ is described by the Kolmogorov forward equation
 - time dependent

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t}g(a,t) = -\frac{\partial}{\partial a}\Big[s_k(a,t)g_k(a,t)\Big] - \lambda_k g_k(a,t) + \lambda_{-k}g_{-k}(a,t)$$
(17)

stationary

$$0 = -\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}a} \left[s_k(a) g_k(a) \right] - \lambda_k g_k(a) + \lambda_{-k} g_{-k}(a)$$
 (18)

Consider the stationary KFE

$$0 = -\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}a} \left[s(a, z_k) g(a, z_k) \right] - \lambda_k g(a, z_k) + \lambda_{-k} g(a, z_k)$$

with the following discretization

$$0 = -\frac{\left(s_{k,i}^{F}\right)^{+}g_{k,i} - \left(s_{k,i-1}^{F}\right)^{+}g_{k,i-1}}{\Delta a} - \frac{\left(s_{k,i+1}^{B}\right)^{-}g_{k,i+1} - \left(s_{k,i}^{B}\right)^{-}g_{k,i}}{\Delta a} - \lambda_{k}g_{k,i} + \lambda_{-k}g_{-k,i}$$
(19)

Collecting terms with the same subscripts on the right-hand side

$$0 = \underbrace{\frac{\left(s_{k,i-1}^F\right)}{\Delta_{\mathbf{a}}}}_{\beta_{k,i-1}} g_{k,i-1} + \underbrace{\left(\frac{\left(s_{k,i}^B\right)}{\Delta_{\mathbf{a}}} - \frac{\left(s_{k,i}^F\right)}{\Delta_{\mathbf{a}}} - \lambda_k\right)}_{\gamma_{k,i}} g_{k,i} + \underbrace{\left(-\frac{\left(s_{k,i+1}^B\right)}{\Delta_{\mathbf{a}}}\right)}_{\alpha_{k,i+1}} g_{k,i+1} + \lambda_{-k} g_{-k,i}$$

which in matrix notation reads $\mathbf{A}^T g = \mathbf{0}$. Numerically, this is very efficient bs we have already computed \mathbf{A} .

This makes sense: the operation is exactly the same as that used for finding the stationary distribution of a discrete Poisson process (continuous-time Markov chain). The matrix A captures the evolution of the stochastic process over a very short interval — it is our discretized *infinitesimal generator* of our state — and to find the stationary distribution, one solves the eigenvalue problem $A^Tg=0$.

[Pass slide to Transition dynamics]

Consider the time dependent

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t}g(a,t) = -\frac{\partial}{\partial a}\Big[s_k(a,t)g_k(a,t)\Big] - \lambda_k g_k(a,t) + \lambda_{-k}g_{-k}(a,t)$$

Given an initial condition, the KFE can be easily solve through a implicit method

$$\frac{g^{n+1} - g^n}{\Delta} = \left(\mathbf{A}^{n(+1)}\right)^T g^{n+1} \tag{20}$$

Stationary Equilibrium + Transion Dynamics

Experiment

Equilibrium (stationary)

$$\rho v_k(a) = \max_{c} \left\{ u(c) + \partial_a v_k(a) \right\} + \lambda_k \left[v_\ell(a) - v_k(a) \right]$$
 [HJB]

$$0 = \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}a} \big[s_k(a) g_k(a) \big] - \lambda_k g_k(a) + \lambda_\ell g_\ell(a)$$

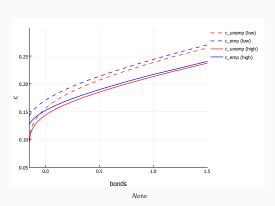
$$1 = \int_{\underline{a}}^{\infty} \Big(g_1(a) + g_2(a) \Big) da$$
[KFE]

$$0 = \int_{\underline{a}}^{\infty} a \Big(g_1(a) + g_2(a) \Big) da$$
 [Equil]

Experiment

Suppose an increase in the unemployment risk λ_2 . What would you expect has to happen to the interest rate? Distributional effect of more unemployed in equilibrium makes me converge to an higher interest rate!

Consumption Policy

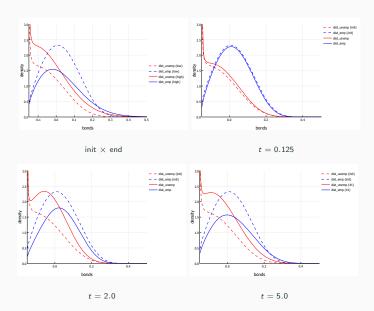


Transition

Definition and how to compute!!

•

Transition Dynamics



Note:

Why do I care??

Example

- looks nice, but why should I pay a cost if I can do discrete time?
- · It was my original tought, but recently...
- Consumption/savings problem + direct search labor market

$$\begin{split} V^{u}(a) &= \max_{c,\,a'} u(c) + \beta \mathcal{R}^{u}(a') \\ \text{S.t. } c &+ \frac{a'}{1+c} = b+a, \quad a' \geq \underline{a} \end{split}$$

euler equation for asset holdings

$$u'(c(\cdot)) \geq \beta(1+r) \left\{ \left(1 - p(\theta(a',\tilde{w}))\right) V_a^u(a') + p(\theta(a',\tilde{w})) V_a^e(a',\tilde{w}) + p'(\theta(a',\tilde{w}) \frac{\partial \theta(a',\tilde{w})}{\partial a} \left[V^e(a',\tilde{w}) - V^u(a',\tilde{w}) \right] \right\}$$

- EGM for consumption/savings, VFI for labor choice.
- Finding the equilibrium requires iterating over a lot of stuff

$$V(\cdot) \hookrightarrow \hat{\theta}(\cdot) \hookrightarrow \mathcal{J}(\cdot) \hookrightarrow \theta(\cdot)$$

• couldn't do it = (...

Example

How does this look in continuous time, today is tomorrow

$$\rho V^{u}(a) = \max_{c} \left\{ u(c) + V_{a}^{u}(b + ra - c) \right\} + \underbrace{\lambda_{u}}_{\text{rate of search}} \max_{\tilde{w}} \left\{ p(\theta(a, \tilde{w})) \left[V^{e}(a, w) - V^{u}(a) \right] \right\}$$
(21)

This is wayyyyy simpler and importantly it doesn't seem I am throwing away anything
of the economics

This is a title 10pt

Here is some content on the slide

$$f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$$

Some more content

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