Continuous Random Variables

General Information

- A function $f\colon \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R}$ is a *probability mass function* (pdf) of a continuous random variable X iff f is nonnegative and $\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x)\,dx = 1$.
- For any probability mass function f, we have $\mathrm{P}(a \le X \le b) = \int_a^b f(x)\,dx$. Whether the inequality is strict or nonstrict does not affect the above identity.
- A *mode* of X is any value m such that $f(m)$ is maximum.
- A *cumulative distribution function* (cdf) $F\colon \mathbb{R} \to [0,1]$ of a random variable X is defined by

$$F(x) := P(X \le x) = \int_{-\infty}^{x} f(x)\,dx.$$

- When writing out the cdf as a piecewise function, we explicitly write out the range of values for each case. We reserve the use of "otherwise" for pdf's.
- Any cdf is continuous and nondecreasing.
- Let X be a continuous random variable with cdf F. To find the pdf g of any $y(X)$, we first find its cdf, then differentiate. We achieve this by reverse engineering $y(X) \le y$ to find an inequality that relates X with y. E.g. $e^X \le y$ iff $X \le \ln(y)$.
- A *median* of X is any value m such that $\mathrm{P}(X \le m) = F(m) = 1/2$.
- Mean/Expectation:

$$\mu = \mathrm{E}(X) := \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} x f(x)\,dx \qquad \text{and} \qquad \mathrm{E}(g(X)) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} g(x) f(x)\,dx.$$

- Important property:

$$\mathrm{E}(ag(X) \pm bh(x)) = a\,\mathrm{E}(g(X)) \pm \mathrm{E}(h(X)).$$

- Variance:

$$\mathrm{Var}(X) := \mathrm{E}(X^2) - [\mathrm{E}(X)]^2.$$

- Important property:

$$\mathrm{Var}(aX \pm b) = a^2\,\mathrm{Var}(X).$$

Correlation and Linear Regression

Note

A good scatter diagram should follow the guidelines below.

- The relative position of each point on the scatter diagram should be clearly shown.
- The range of values for the set of data should be clearly shown by marking out the extreme x and y values on the corresponding axis.
- The axes should be labeled clearly with the variables.

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