

Probability and Statistics: Practice Set 3

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1. (2 points each) Consider the function $f(x) = cx^5$ on $[0, 1]$.

(a) Find the value of c for which this is a probability density function.

Solution.

$$\int_0^1 cx^5 dx = 1 \implies c \int_0^1 x^5 dx = 1 \implies c \left[\frac{x^6}{6} \right]_0^1 = 1 \implies c \cdot \frac{1}{6} = 1 \implies c = 6.$$

(b) Using this value of c , determine $E(X)$.

Solution.

$$E(X) = \int_0^1 x \cdot 6x^5 dx = 6 \left[\frac{x^7}{7} \right]_0^1 = \frac{6}{7}.$$

(c) Again, using this c , determine $\text{Var}(X)$.

Solution.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Var}(X) &= \int_0^1 \left(x - \frac{6}{7} \right)^2 6x^5 dx \\ &= \int_0^1 \left(x^2 - \frac{12}{7}x + \frac{36}{49} \right) 6x^5 dx \\ &= \int_0^1 6x^7 - \frac{72}{7}x^6 + \frac{216}{49}x^5 dx \\ &= \frac{6}{8} - \frac{72}{49} + \frac{36}{49} \\ &= \frac{3}{196}. \end{aligned}$$

(d) Find $\pi_{0.25}$.

Solution.

$$\int_0^b 6x^5 dx = 0.25 \implies 6 \left[\frac{x^6}{6} \right]_0^b = 0.25 \implies b^6 = 0.25 \implies b = 0.25^{\frac{1}{6}} \implies b \approx 0.7937.$$

Therefore, $\pi_{0.25} \approx 0.7937$.

2. (2 points) Consider the function $f(x) = \frac{\ln(x)}{x^2}$ on the interval $[1, \infty)$.

(a) Show that this is a probability distribution. [Hint: You will likely need integration by parts here.]

Solution. We choose $u = \ln(x)$ so that $du = \frac{1}{x}$, and $dv = \frac{1}{x^2}$ so that $v = -\frac{1}{x}$. This leaves us with the following:

$$\begin{aligned} [uv]_1^\infty - \int_1^\infty v du &= \left[-\frac{\ln(x)}{x} \right]_1^\infty + \int_1^\infty \frac{1}{x^2} dx \\ &= \left(\frac{\ln(1)}{1} - \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\ln(x)}{x} \right) - \left(\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{x} - \frac{1}{1} \right) \\ &= (0 - 0) - (0 - 1) \\ &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

Since $f(x) \geq 0$ for all $x \in [1, \infty)$ and the integral over this interval is 1, this is a valid probability density function.

(b) Show that $E(X)$ is undefined.

Solution.

$$E(X) = \int_1^\infty x \cdot \frac{\ln(x)}{x^2} dx = \int_1^\infty \frac{\ln(x)}{x} dx.$$

For this problem, we can use u -substitution. Let $u = \ln(x)$, then $du = \frac{1}{x} dx$, which transforms the limits from 1 to ∞ into 0 to ∞ :

$$E(X) = \int_0^\infty u du = \left[\frac{u^2}{2} \right]_0^\infty = \infty.$$

Therefore, $E(X)$ is undefined.

3. (2 points) A pdf is given by $f(x) = \frac{1}{2}$ for $x \in [0, 1] \cup [2, 3]$, and 0 otherwise. [i.e., this is like a uniform distribution, but with a “gap” from 1 to 2.] Determine $E(X)$ and $\text{Var}(X)$.

Solution.

$$E(X) = \int_0^1 x \frac{1}{2} dx + \int_2^3 x \frac{1}{2} dx = \left[\frac{x^2}{4} \right]_0^1 + \left[\frac{x^2}{4} \right]_2^3 = \left[\frac{1}{4} - 0 \right] + \left[\frac{9}{4} - 1 \right] = \frac{3}{2}$$

$$\text{Var}(x) = \int_0^1 x^2 \frac{1}{2} dx + \int_2^3 x^2 \frac{1}{2} dx - \frac{9}{4} = \left[\frac{x^3}{6} \right]_0^1 + \left[\frac{x^3}{6} \right]_2^3 - \frac{9}{4} = \left[\frac{1}{6} - 0 \right] + \left[\frac{27}{6} - \frac{8}{6} \right] - \frac{9}{4} = \frac{13}{12}$$

4. (2 points each) We have shown in class that the gamma function Γ has the two properties:

- $\Gamma\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) = \sqrt{\pi}$.
- $\Gamma(x) = (x-1)\Gamma(x-1)$.

Use these to find the exact values of:

(a) $\Gamma\left(\frac{5}{2}\right)$.

Solution.

$$\Gamma\left(\frac{5}{2}\right) = \left(\frac{3}{2}\right) \Gamma\left(\frac{3}{2}\right) = \left(\frac{3}{2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \sqrt{\pi} = \frac{3\sqrt{\pi}}{4}$$

(b) $\Gamma\left(-\frac{7}{2}\right)$.

Solution.

$$\begin{aligned} \Gamma(x) &= (x-1)\Gamma(x-1) \\ \frac{\Gamma(x)}{(x-1)} &= \Gamma(x-1) \end{aligned}$$

Let $z = x - 1$:

$$\frac{\Gamma(z+1)}{z} = \Gamma(z)$$

With this formula:

$$\Gamma\left(-\frac{2}{7}\right) = \left(-\frac{2}{7}\right) \left(-\frac{2}{5}\right) \left(-\frac{2}{3}\right) \left(-\frac{2}{1}\right) \sqrt{\pi} = \frac{16\sqrt{\pi}}{105}$$

5. (2 points each) Customers arrive at a certain bank according to an approximate Poisson process at a mean rate of 15 per hour.

- (a) What is the probability that between 10 and 13 customers come in a particular hour?

Solution. Let X count the number of customers in 1 particular hour. Then,

$$P(10 \leq X \leq 13) = P(X \leq 13) - P(X \leq 9) = 0.2934.$$

Therefore, there is a 29.3% chance that between 10 and 13 customers come in a particular hour.

- (b) What is the probability that the first customer comes between 5 and 10 minutes into the bank's opening?

Solution. Let X be the waiting time for the first customer to arrive. Using the following theta:

$$\theta = \frac{1 \text{ hour}}{15 \text{ customers}} \cdot \frac{60 \text{ minutes}}{1 \text{ hour}} = 4 \text{ minutes per customer},$$

we can plug this into the equation:

$$P(5 \leq X \leq 10) = P(X \leq 10) - P(X \leq 5) = 1 - e^{-10/4} - 1 + e^{-5/4} = 0.2044$$

Therefore, there is a 20.4% chance that the first customer comes between 5 and 10 minutes into the bank's opening.

- (c) What is the probability that the *third* customer arrives between 5 and 10 minutes into the bank's opening?

Solution. Let $\alpha = 3$ with same theta from the previous part. Then:

$$\int_5^{10} \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha)\theta^\alpha} \cdot x^{\alpha-1} e^{-x/\theta} dx = \int_5^{10} \frac{x^2 e^{-x/4}}{32} dx = 0.3247.$$

Therefore, there is a 32.5% chance that the third customer comes between 5 and 10 minutes into the bank's opening.

6. (1 point each) The mean airspeed of an unladen swallow is 30 ft/s, with a standard deviation of 4.3 ft/s. Assuming the distribution of speed is normal:

- (a) What is the probability that a randomly selected swallow will have a speed between 28 and 38 ft/s?

Solution.

$$P(28 \leq X \leq 38) = \frac{1}{4.3\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{28}^{38} \exp\left(-\frac{(t-30)^2}{2(4.3)^2}\right) dt = 0.6477.$$

- (b) Suppose that 12 swallows are selected at random. What is the probability that exactly 8 have their speed between 28 and 38 ft/s?

Solution. Let Y count the birds that have their speed between 28 and 38 ft/s. This implies $Y \sim \text{Binomial}(12, 0.6477)$. Hence,

$$P(Y = 8) = \binom{12}{8} 0.6477^8 (1 - 0.6477)^4 = 0.2361.$$

- (c) Determine $\pi_{0.90}$ for the swallow speed.

Solution.

$$\pi_{0.90} = \text{invNorm}(.9, 30, 4.3, \text{LEFT}) = 35.5107.$$