Lecture 3: Information Inequalities

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Jan. 6th., 2023

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1 Information Theory Basics

1.1 Entropy, Relative Entropy, and Mutual Information

• **Definition** (Shannon Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let $(\Omega, \mathcal{F}, \mathbb{P})$ be a probability space and $X : \mathbb{R} \to \mathcal{X}$ be a random variable. Define p(x) as the probability density function of X with respect to a base measure μ on \mathcal{X} . The Shannon Entropy is defined as

$$H(X) := \mathbb{E}_p \left[-\log p(X) \right]$$
$$= \int_{\Omega} -\log p(X(\omega)) d\mathbb{P}(\omega)$$
$$= -\int_{\mathcal{X}} p(x) \log p(x) d\mu(x)$$

• **Definition** (*Conditional Entropy*) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] If a pair of random variables (X, Y) follows the joint probability density function p(x, y) with respect to a base product measure μ on $\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{Y}$. Then **the joint entropy** of (X, Y), denoted as H(X, Y), is defined as

$$H(X,Y) := \mathbb{E}_{X,Y} \left[-\log p(X,Y) \right] = -\int_{\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{V}} p(x,y) \log p(x,y) d\mu(x,y)$$

Then the conditional entropy H(Y|X) is defined as

$$H(Y|X) := \mathbb{E}_{X,Y} \left[-\log p(Y|X) \right] = -\int_{\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{Y}} p(x,y) \log p(y|x) d\mu(x,y)$$
$$= \mathbb{E}_X \left[\mathbb{E}_Y \left[-\log p(Y|X) \right] \right] = \int_{\mathcal{X}} p(x) \left(-\int_{\mathcal{Y}} p(y|x) \log p(y|x) d\mu(y) \right) d\mu(x)$$

- Proposition 1.1 (Properties of Shannon Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let X, Y, Z be random variables.
 - 1. (Non-negativity) $H(X) \geq 0$;
 - 2. (Chain Rule)

$$H(X,Y) = H(X) + H(Y|X)$$

Furthermore,

$$H(X,Y|Z) = H(X|Z) + H(Y|X,Z)$$

3. (Sub-Additivity)

$$H(X,Y) \leq H(X) + H(Y)$$

4. (Concavity) $H(p) := \mathbb{E}_p[-\log p(X)]$ is a concave function in terms of p.d.f. p, i.e.

$$H(\lambda p_1 + (1 - \lambda)p_2) > \lambda H(p_1) + (1 - \lambda)H(p_2)$$

for any two p.d.fs p_1, p_2 on \mathcal{X} and any $\lambda \in [0, 1]$.

• **Definition** (*Relative Entropy / Kullback-Leibler Divergence*) [Cover and Thomas, 2006]

Suppose that P and Q are probability measures on a measurable space \mathcal{X} , and P is absolutely continuous with respect to Q, then the relative entropy or the Kullback-Leibler divergence is defined as

$$\mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) := \mathbb{E}_P \left[\log \left(\frac{dP}{dQ} \right) \right] = \int_{\mathcal{X}} \log \left(\frac{dP(x)}{dQ(x)} \right) dP(x)$$

where $\frac{dP}{dQ}$ is the Radon-Nikodym derivative of P with respect to Q. Equivalently, the KL-divergence can be written as

$$\mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) = \int_{\mathcal{X}} \left(\frac{dP(x)}{dQ(x)} \right) \log \left(\frac{dP(x)}{dQ(x)} \right) dQ(x)$$

which is the entropy of P relative to Q. Furthermore, if μ is a base measure on \mathcal{X} for which densities p and q with $dP = p(x)d\mu$ and $dQ = q(x)d\mu$ exist, then

$$\mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) = \int_{\mathcal{X}} p(x) \log \left(\frac{p(x)}{q(x)}\right) d\mu(x)$$

• **Definition** (*Mutual Information*) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Consider two random variables X, Y on $\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{Y}$ with joint probability distribution $P_{(X,Y)}$ and marginal distribution P_X and P_Y . The mutual information I(X;Y) is the relative entropy between the joint distribution $P_{(X,Y)}$ and the product distribution $P_X \otimes P_Y$:

$$I(X;Y) = \mathbb{KL}\left(P_{(X,Y)} \parallel P_X \otimes P_Y\right) = \mathbb{E}_{P_{(X,Y)}}\left[\log \frac{dP_{(X,Y)}}{dP_X \otimes dP_Y}\right]$$

If $P_{(X,Y)}$ has a probability density function p(x,y) with respect to a base measure μ on $\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{Y}$, then

$$I(X;Y) = \int_{\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{Y}} p(x,y) \log \left(\frac{p(x,y)}{p_X(x)p_Y(y)} \right) d\mu(x,y)$$

• Proposition 1.2 (Properties of Relative Entropy and Mutual Information) [Cover and Thomas, 2006]

1. (Non-negativity) Let p(x), q(x) be probability density function of P, Q.

$$\mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) \ge 0$$

with equality if and only if p(x) = q(x) almost surely. Therefore, the mutual information is non-negative as well:

with equality if and only if X and Y are independent.

Let X, Y be random variables.

2. (Finite Cardinality Domain) Let $|\mathcal{X}|$ be the number of elements in domain \mathcal{X} and X is a discrete random variables in \mathcal{X} . Then the relative entropy of probability distribution p with respect to uniform distribution u on \mathcal{X} is

$$\mathbb{KL}(p \parallel u) = \log |\mathcal{X}| - H(X) \ge 0$$

$$\Rightarrow H(X) \le \log |\mathcal{X}|$$

- 3. (Symmetry) I(X;Y) = I(Y;X)
- 4. (Information Gain via Conditioning) The mutual information I(X;Y) is the reduction in the uncertainty of X due to the knowledge of Y (and vice versa)

$$I(X;Y) = H(X) - H(X|Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - H(Y|X)$$

$$= H(X) + H(Y) - H(X,Y)$$
(1)

5. (Shannon Entropy as Self-Information) I(X;X) = H(X)

1.2 Chain Rules for Entropy, Relative Entropy, and Mutual Information

• Proposition 1.3 (Conditioning Reduces Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] From non-negativity of mutual information, we see that the entropy of X is non-increasing when conditioning on Y

$$H(X|Y) \le H(X) \tag{2}$$

where equality holds if and only if X and Y are independent.

• Proposition 1.4 (Chain Rule for Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let $X_1, X_2, ..., X_n$ be drawn according to $p(x_1, x_2, ..., x_n)$. Then

$$H(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) = \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_i | X_{i-1}, \dots, X_1)$$
(3)

• Proposition 1.5 (Sub-Additivity of Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let $X_1, X_2, ..., X_n$ be drawn according to $p(x_1, x_2, ..., x_n)$. Then

$$H(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) \le \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_i)$$
 (4)

with equality if and only if the X_i are independent.

• Proposition 1.6 (Chain Rule for Mutual Information) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let $X_1, X_2, ..., X_n, Y$ be drawn according to $p(x_1, x_2, ..., x_n, y)$. Then

$$I(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n; Y) = \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_i; Y | X_{i-1}, \dots, X_1)$$
 (5)

where the conditional mutual information is defined as

$$I(X;Y|Z) := H(X|Z) - H(X|Y,Z) = \mathbb{KL}\left(P_{(X,Y|Z)} \parallel P_{X|Z} \otimes P_{Y|Z}\right)$$

• Proposition 1.7 (Chain Rule for Relative Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let $P_{(X,Y)}$ and $Q_{(X,Y)}$ be two probability measures on product space $\mathcal{X} \times \mathcal{Y}$ and $P \ll Q$. Denote the marginal distributions P_X, Q_X and P_Y, Q_Y on \mathcal{X} and \mathcal{Y} , respectively. $P_{Y|X}$ and $Q_{Y|X}$ are conditional distributions (Note that $P_{Y|X} \ll Q_{Y|X}$). Define the conditional relative entropy as

$$\mathbb{E}_{X}\left[\mathbb{KL}\left(P_{Y|X} \parallel Q_{Y|X}\right)\right] := \mathbb{E}_{X}\left[\mathbb{E}_{P_{Y|X}}\left[\log\left(\frac{dP_{Y|X}}{dQ_{Y|X}}\right)\right]\right].$$

Then the relative entropy of joint distribution $P_{(X,Y)}$ with respect to $Q_{(X,Y)}$ is

$$\mathbb{KL}\left(P_{(X,Y)} \parallel Q_{(X,Y)}\right) = \mathbb{KL}\left(P_X \parallel Q_X\right) + \mathbb{E}_X\left[\mathbb{KL}\left(P_{Y|X} \parallel Q_{Y|X}\right)\right] \tag{6}$$

In addition, let P and Q denote two joint distributions for X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_n , let $P_{1:i}$ and $Q_{1:i}$ denote the marginal distributions of X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_i under P and Q, respectively. Let $P_{X_i|1...i-1}$ and $Q_{X_i|1...i-1}$ denote the conditional distribution of X_i with respect to $X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{i-1}$ under P and under Q.

$$\mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{P_{1:i-1}} \left[\mathbb{KL} \left(P_{X_i \mid 1...i-1} \parallel Q_{X_i \mid 1...i-1} \right) \right]$$
 (7)

1.3 Log-Sum Inequalities and Convexity

• Proposition 1.8 (Log-Sum Inequalities) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] For non-negative numbers a_1, \ldots, a_n and b_1, \ldots, b_n ,

$$\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_i \log \frac{a_i}{b_i} \ge \left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_i\right) \log \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} b_i}$$
 (8)

with equality if and only if $\frac{a_i}{b_i}$ is constant.

• Proposition 1.9 (Joint Convexity of Relative Entropy) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] $\mathbb{KL}(p \parallel q)$ is convex in the pair (p,q); that is, if (p_1,q_1) and (p_2,q_2) are two pairs of probability density functions, then for $\lambda \in [0,1]$,

$$\mathbb{KL}\left(\lambda p_1 + (1 - \lambda)p_2 \parallel \lambda q_1 + (1 - \lambda)q_2\right) \le \lambda \mathbb{KL}\left(p_1 \parallel q_1\right) + (1 - \lambda)\mathbb{KL}\left(p_2 \parallel q_2\right) \tag{9}$$

• Proposition 1.10 [Cover and Thomas, 2006] Let $(X,Y) \sim p(x,y) = p(x)p(y|x)$. The mutual information I(X;Y) is a **concave** function of p(x) for fixed p(y|x) and a **convex** function of p(y|x) for fixed p(x).

1.4 Data Processing Inequality

Definition (Data Processing Markov Chain)
Random variables X, Y, Z are said to form a Markov chain in that order (denoted by X → Y → Z) if the conditional distribution of Z depends only on Y and is conditionally independent of X. Specifically, X, Y, and Z form a Markov chain X → Y → Z if the joint probability mass function can be written as

$$p(x, y, z) = p(x)p(y|x)p(z|y)$$

• Proposition 1.11 (Data Processing Inequality) [Cover and Thomas, 2006] If $X \to Y \to Z$, then

$$I(X;Z) \le I(X;Y)$$

• Corollary 1.12 [Cover and Thomas, 2006] In particular, if Z = g(Y), we have

$$I(X; g(Y)) \le I(X; Y)$$

• Corollary 1.13 [Cover and Thomas, 2006] If $X \to Y \to Z$, then

$$I(X;Y|Z) \le I(X;Y)$$

Thus, the dependence of X and Y is **decreased** (or remains unchanged) by the observation of a "downstream" random variable Z.

2 Information Inequalities

2.1 Han's Inequality

• Proposition 2.1 (Han's Inequality) [Cover and Thomas, 2006, Boucheron et al., 2013] Let X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_n be random variables. Then

$$H(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) \le \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n)$$
 (10)

Proof: For any i = 1, ..., n, by the definition of the conditional entropy and the fact that conditioning reduces entropy,

$$H(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) = H(X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n) + H(X_i | X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n)$$

$$\leq H(X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n) + H(X_i | X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}).$$

Summing these n inequalities and using the chain rule for entropy, we get

$$nH(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) \le \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n) + \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_i | X_1, \dots, X_{i-1})$$

$$= \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n) + H(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n)$$

which is what we wanted to prove.

• Proposition 2.2 (Han's Inequality for Relative Entropy) [Boucheron et al., 2013] Let $(\mathcal{X}, \mathcal{B})$ be a measurable space, and P and Q be probability measures on \mathcal{X}^n such that $P = P_1 \otimes \ldots \otimes P_n$ is a **product measure**. We denote the element of \mathcal{X}^n by $x = (x_1, \ldots, x_n)$ and write $x_{(-i)} := (x_1, \ldots, x_{i-1}, x_{i+1}, \ldots, x_n)$ for the (n-1)-vector obtained by **leaving out** the i-th component of x (i.e. the i-th Jackknife sample of x). Denote $Q_{(-i)}$ and $P_{(-i)}$ the marginal distributions of Q and P. Let $p_{(-i)}$ and $q_{(-i)}$ denote the corresponding probability density function with respect to base measure μ on \mathcal{X} .

$$q_{(-i)}(x_{(-i)}) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{X}} q(x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, y, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_n) d\mu(y)$$

$$p_{(-i)}(x_{(-i)}) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{X}} p(x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, y, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_n) d\mu(y)$$

$$= \prod_{j \neq i} p_j(x_j).$$

Then

$$\mathbb{KL}(Q \parallel P) \ge \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{KL}(Q_{(-i)} \parallel P_{(-i)})$$
(11)

or equivalently,

$$\mathbb{KL}(Q \parallel P) \leq \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\mathbb{KL}(Q \parallel P) - \mathbb{KL}\left(Q_{(-i)} \parallel P_{(-i)}\right) \right)$$
(12)

Proof: From Han's inequality, we have

$$-H(Q) \ge -\frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} H(Q_{(-i)}).$$

Since

$$\mathbb{KL}(Q \parallel P) = -H(Q) + \mathbb{E}_Q \left[-\log P(X) \right]$$

and

$$\mathbb{KL}\left(Q_{(-i)} \parallel P_{(-i)}\right) = -H(Q_{(-i)}) + \mathbb{E}_{Q_{(-i)}}\left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)})\right],$$

it suffices to show that

$$\mathbb{E}_{Q}\left[-\log P(X)\right] = \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q_{(-i)}}\left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)})\right].$$

This may be seen easily by noting that by the product property of P, we have $p(x) = p_{(-i)}(x_{(-i)})p_i(x_i)$ for all i, and also $p(x) = \prod_i p_i(x_i)$, and therefore

$$\mathbb{E}_{Q} \left[-\log P(X) \right] = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q} \left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)}) - \log P_{i}(X_{i}) \right]$$

$$= \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q} \left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)}) \right] + \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q} \left[-\log P_{i}(X_{i}) \right]$$

$$= \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q} \left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)}) \right] + \frac{1}{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q} \left[-\log P(X) \right].$$

Rearranging, we obtain

$$\mathbb{E}_{Q}\left[-\log P(X)\right] = \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q}\left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)})\right]$$
$$= \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}_{Q_{(-i)}}\left[-\log P_{(-i)}(X_{(-i)})\right].$$

2.2 Applications of Han's Inequality

2.2.1 Combinatorial Entropies

2.2.2 Edge Isoperimetric Inequality on the Binary Hypercube

2.3 Φ-Entropy

• **Definition** $(\Phi$ -*Entropy*)[Boucheron et al., 2013] Let $\Phi : [0, \infty) \to \mathbb{R}$ be a *convex* function, and assign, to every *non-negative integrable*

Let $\Phi : [0, \infty) \to \mathbb{R}$ be a **convex** function, and assign, to every **non-negative** integrable random variable X, the Φ -entropy of X is defined as

$$H_{\Phi}(X) = \mathbb{E}\left[\Phi(X)\right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}\left[X\right]). \tag{13}$$

• Remark By Jenson's inequality, the Φ -entropy is non-negative

$$\Phi(\mathbb{E}[X]) \le \mathbb{E}[\Phi(X)]$$

$$\Rightarrow H_{\Phi}(X) = \mathbb{E}[\Phi(X)] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}[X]) \ge 0.$$

- Example (Special Examples for Φ -Entropy)
 - 1. For $\Phi(x) = x^2$, the Φ -entropy of X is the **variance** of X:

$$H_{\Phi}(X) = \mathbb{E}\left[X^2\right] - (\mathbb{E}\left[X\right])^2 = \operatorname{Var}(X).$$

2. For $\Phi(x) = x \log x$, the Φ -entropy of X is defined as the **entropy** of X

$$\operatorname{Ent}(X) := \mathbb{E}\left[X \log X\right] - \mathbb{E}\left[X\right] \log \left(\mathbb{E}\left[X\right]\right). \tag{14}$$

Let (Ω, \mathcal{B}) be measurable space, and P and Q are probability measures on Ω with $P \ll Q$. Define a random variable X by the $Radon-Nikodym\ derivative$ of P with respect to Q; that is,

$$X(\omega) := \begin{cases} \frac{dP}{dQ}(\omega) & Q(\omega) > 0 \\ 0 & \text{o.w.} \end{cases}.$$

We see that X is Q-measurable and dP = X dQ with $\mathbb{E}_Q[X] = 1$. Then the entropy of X is the relative entropy of P with respect to Q.

$$\operatorname{Ent}(X) = \mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) \tag{15}$$

2.4 Sub-Additivity of Φ -Entropy

• Remark (Sub-Additivity of Shannon Entropy) Let X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_n be drawn according to $p(x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n)$. Then

$$H(X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) \le \sum_{i=1}^n H(X_i)$$

with equality if and only if the X_i are independent.

• Proposition 2.3 (Sub-Additivity of The Entropy) [Boucheron et al., 2013] Let $\Phi(x) = x \log x$, for x > 0 and $\Phi(0) = 0$. Let Z_1, Z_2, \ldots, Z_n be independent random variables taking values in \mathcal{X} , and let $f: \mathcal{X}^n \to [0, \infty)$. Letting $X = f(Z_1, Z_2, \ldots, Z_n)$, we have

$$\mathbb{E}\left[\Phi(X)\right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}\left[X\right]) \le \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}\left[\mathbb{E}_{(-i)}\left[\Phi(X)\right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}_{(-i)}\left[X\right])\right],\tag{16}$$

where $\mathbb{E}_{(-i)}[\cdot]$ is the conditional expectation operator conditioning on $Z_{(-i)}$. Introducing the notation $Ent_{(-i)}(X) = \mathbb{E}_{(-i)}[\Phi(X)] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}_{(-i)}[X])$, this can be re-written as

$$\mathbb{E}\left[\Phi(X)\right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}\left[X\right]) \le \mathbb{E}\left[\sum_{i=1}^{n} Ent_{(-i)}(X)\right]. \tag{17}$$

Proof: The proposition is a direct consequence of Han's inequality for relative entropies. First note that if the inequality is true for a random variable X, then it is also true for cX where c is a positive constant. Hence, we may assume that $\mathbb{E}[X] = 1$. Now define the probability measure P on \mathcal{X}^n by its probability density function p given by

$$p(z) = f(z)q(z), \quad \forall z \in \mathcal{X}^n$$

where q denote the probability density of $Z := (Z_1, Z_2, ..., Z_n)$ and Q the corresponding probability measure. Then

$$\operatorname{Ent}(X) := \mathbb{E}\left[X \log X\right] - \mathbb{E}\left[X\right] \log \left(\mathbb{E}\left[X\right]\right) = \mathbb{KL}\left(P \parallel Q\right)$$

which, by Han's inequality for relative entropy

$$\operatorname{Ent}(X) = \mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) \le \sum_{i=1}^{n} (\mathbb{KL}(P \parallel Q) - \mathbb{KL}(P_{(-i)} \parallel Q_{(-i)}))$$

However, straightforward calculation shows that

$$\sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\mathbb{KL} \left(P \parallel Q \right) - \mathbb{KL} \left(P_{(-i)} \parallel Q_{(-i)} \right) \right) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E} \left[\mathbb{E}_{(-i)} \left[\Phi(X) \right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}_{(-i)} \left[X \right] \right) \right]$$

and the statement follows.

• Remark The Efron-Stein inequality is the special case of the inequality when $\Phi(x) = x^2$,

$$\mathbb{E}\left[\Phi(X)\right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}\left[X\right]) \le \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}\left[\mathbb{E}_{(-i)}\left[\Phi(X)\right] - \Phi(\mathbb{E}_{(-i)}\left[X\right])\right].$$

$$\Rightarrow \operatorname{Var}(X) \le \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathbb{E}\left[\operatorname{Var}_{(-i)}(X)\right]$$

- 2.5 Duality and Variational Formulas
- 2.6 Optimal Transport
- 2.7 Pinsker's Inequality
- 2.8 Birgé's Inequality
- 2.9 The Brunn-Minkowski Inequality

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