

MATH 390.4 / 650.2 Spring 2020 Homework #4

Professor Adam Kapelner

Due Sunday, April 20, 2020 11:59PM by email

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Instructions and Philosophy

The path to success in this class is to do many problems. Unlike other courses, exclusively doing reading(s) will not help. Coming to lecture is akin to watching workout videos; thinking about and solving problems on your own is the actual “working out.” Feel free to “work out” with others; **I want you to work on this in groups.**

Reading is still *required*. For this homework set, read Chapters 7-11 of Silver’s book. You should be googling and reading about all the concepts introduced in class online. This is your responsibility to supplement in-class with *your own* readings.

The problems below are color coded: **green** problems are considered *easy* and marked “[easy]”; **yellow** problems are considered *intermediate* and marked “[harder]”, **red** problems are considered *difficult* and marked “[difficult]” and **purple** problems are extra credit. The *easy* problems are intended to be “giveaways” if you went to class. Do as much as you can of the others; I expect you to at least attempt the *difficult* problems.

This homework is worth 100 points but the point distribution will not be determined until after the due date. See syllabus for the policy on late homework.

Up to 7 points are given as a bonus if the homework is typed using L^AT_EX. Links to installing L^AT_EX and program for compiling L^AT_EX is found on the syllabus. You are encouraged to use **overleaf.com**. If you are handing in homework this way, read the comments in the code; there are two lines to comment out and you should replace my name with yours and write your section. The easiest way to use overleaf is to copy the raw text from hwxx.tex and preamble.tex into two new overleaf tex files with the same name. If you are asked to make drawings, you can take a picture of your handwritten drawing and insert them as figures or leave space using the “\vspace” command and draw them in after printing or attach them stapled.

The document is available with spaces for you to write your answers. If not using L^AT_EX, print this document *including this first page* and write in your answers. **I do not accept homeworks which are *not* on this printout.**

NAME: _____

Problem 1

These are questions about the rest of Silver's book, chapters 7–11. You can skim chapter 10 as it is not so relevant for the class. For all parts in this question, answer using notation from class (i.e. $t, f, g, h^*, \delta, \epsilon, e, z_1, \dots, z_t, \mathbb{D}, \mathcal{H}, \mathcal{A}, \mathcal{X}, \mathcal{Y}, X, y, n, p, x_1, \dots, x_p, x_1, \dots, x_n$, etc.) as well as in-class concepts (e.g. simulation, validation, overfitting, etc.)

Note: I will not ask questions in this assignment about Bayesian calculations and modeling (a large chunk of Chapters 8 and 10) as this is the subject of Math 341. It is obviously important in Data Science (that's why Math 341 is a required course in the data science and statistics major).

- (a) [easy] Why are flu fatalities hard to predict? Which type of error is most dominant in the models?
- (b) [easy] In what context does Silver define extrapolation and what term did he use? Why does his terminology conflict with our terminology?
- (c) [easy] Give a couple examples of extraordinary prediction failures (by very famous people who were considered heavy-hitting experts of their time) that were due to reckless extrapolations.
- (d) [easy] Using the notation from class, define “self-fulfilling prophecy” and “self-canceling prediction”.
- (e) [easy] Is the SIR model of infectious disease under or overfit? Why?
- (f) [easy] What did the famous mathematician Norbert Wiener mean by “the best model of a cat is a cat”?
- (g) [easy] Not in the book but about Norbert Wiener. From Wikipedia:

Norbert Wiener is credited as being one of the first to theorize that all intelligent behavior was the result of feedback mechanisms, that could possibly be simulated by machines and was an important early step towards the development of modern artificial intelligence.

What do we mean by “feedback mechanisms” in the context of this class?

- (h) [easy] I’m not going to both asking about the bet that gave Bob Voulgaris his start. But what gives Voulgaris an edge (p239)? Frame it in terms of the concepts in this class.
- (i) [easy] Why do you think a lot of science is not reproducible?
- (j) [easy] Why do you think Fisher did not believe that smoking causes lung cancer?
- (k) [easy] Is the world moving more in the direction of Fisher’s Frequentism or Bayesianism?
- (l) [easy] How did Kasparov defeat Deep Blue? Can you put this into the context of over and underfitting?
- (m) [easy] Why was Fischer able to make such bold and daring moves?

- (n) [easy] What metric y is Google predicting when it returns search results to you? Why did they choose this metric?
- (o) [easy] What do we call Google’s “theories” in this class? And what do we call “testing” of those theories?
- (p) [easy] p315 give some very practical advice for an aspiring data scientist. There are a lot of push-button tools that exist that automatically fit models. What is your edge from taking this class that you have over people who are well-versed in those tools?
- (q) [easy] Create your own 2×2 luck-skill matrix (Fig. 10-10) with your own examples (not the ones used in the book).
- (r) [easy] [EC] Why do you think Billing’s algorithms (and other algorithms like his) are not very good at no-limit hold em? I can think of a couple reasons why this would be.
- (s) [easy] Do you agree with Silver’s description of what makes people successful (pp326-327)? Explain.
- (t) [easy] Silver brings up an interesting idea on p328. Should we remove humans from the predictive enterprise completely after a good model has been built? Explain

- (u) [easy] According to Fama, using the notation from this class, how would explain a mutual fund that performs spectacularly in a single year but fails to perform that well in subsequent years?
- (v) [easy] Did the Manic Momentum model validate? Explain.
- (w) [easy] Are stock market bubbles noticable while we're in them? Explain.
- (x) [easy] What is the implication of Shiller's model for a long-term investor in stocks?
- (y) [easy] In lecture one, we spoke about "heuristics" which are simple models with high error but extremely easy to learn and live by. What is the heuristic Silver quotes on p358 and why does it work so well?
- (z) [easy] Even if your model at predicting bubbles turned out to be good, what would prevent you from executing on it?
- (aa) [easy] How can heuristics get us into trouble?

Problem 2

These are some questions related to validation.

- (a) [easy] Assume you are doing one train-test split where you build the model on the training set and validate on the test set. What does the constant K control? And what is its tradeoff?
- (b) [harder] Assume you are doing one train-test split where you build the model on the training set and validate on the test set. If n was very large so that there would be trivial misspecification error even when using $K = 2$, would there be any benefit at all to increasing K if your objective was to estimate generalization error? Explain.
- (c) [easy] What problem does K -fold CV try to solve?
- (d) [E.C.] Theoretically, how does K -fold CV solve it?

Problem 3

These are some questions related to polynomial-derived features and logarithm-derived features in use in OLS regression.

- (a) [harder] What was the overarching problem we were trying to solve when we started to introduce polynomial terms into \mathcal{H} ? What was the mathematical theory that justified this solution? Did this turn out to be a good solution? Why / why not?

- (b) [harder] We fit the following model: $\hat{\mathbf{y}} = b_0 + b_1x + b_2x^2$. What is the interpretation of b_1 ? What is the interpretation of b_2 ? Although we didn't yet discuss the "true" interpretation of OLS coefficients, do your best with this.

- (c) [difficult] Assuming the model from the previous question, if $x \in \mathcal{X} = [10.0, 10.1]$, do you expect to "trust" the estimates b_1 and b_2 ? Why or why not?

- (d) [difficult] We fit the following model: $\hat{\mathbf{y}} = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2 \ln(x_2)$. We spoke about in class that b_1 represents loosely the predicted change in response for a proportional movement in x_2 . So e.g. if x_2 increases by 10%, the response is predicted to increase by $0.1b_2$. Prove this approximation from first principles.
- (e) [easy] When does the approximation from the previous question work? When do you expect the approximation from the previous question not to work?
- (f) [harder] We fit the following model: $\ln(\hat{\mathbf{y}}) = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2 \ln(x_1)$. What is the interpretation of b_1 ? What is the interpretation of b_2 ? Although we didn't yet discuss the "true" interpretation of OLS coefficients, do your best with this.
- (g) [easy] Show that the model from the previous question is equal to $\hat{\mathbf{y}} = m_0m_1^{x_1}x_2^{b_2}$ and interpret m_1 .

Problem 4

These are some questions related to the model selection procedure discussed in lecture.

- (a) [easy] Define the fundamental problem of “model selection”.
- (b) [easy] Describe the first procedure we introduced to solve it.
- (c) [easy] Discuss possible problems with this procedure.
- (d) [easy] Describe how you would use this model selection procedure to find hyperparameter values in algorithms that require hyperparameters.
- (e) [easy] Does using both inner and outer folds in a double cross-validation procedure solve some of these problems?