

Lecture Scribe Creation



L8_S1_A (1).pdf
PDF

Generate a lecture scribe from this lecture slides which is to be used for exam preparation. I need you to reason step by step for definitions, assumptions, derivation, theorems, examples and formulas. Reasoning with proper step by step explanation should be included in scribe for better understanding during exam revisions, and none of the reasoning should come from out of the contents of the slides. The scribe should stick to the lecture slides and should be accurate. No content should be invented or self made. Keep the content in scribe in same structure and scope as lecture slides.

Lecture 8 Scribe: Gaussian, Uniform, Exponential, Gamma Rvs

CSE400 – Fundamentals of Probability in Computing

Lecture 8: Gaussian, Uniform, Exponential, and Gamma Random Variables

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1. Gaussian Random Variable: Definition and Properties

Definition

A *Gaussian (Normal) random variable* is a continuous random variable whose probability density function (PDF) is given by the general form:

$$f_X(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} \exp\left(-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}\right)$$

where:

- μ is the **mean** (location parameter),
- σ^2 is the **variance** (spread parameter),
- σ is the standard deviation,
- Notation: $X \sim \mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma^2)$.

This PDF is symmetric about $x = \mu$, which implies equal probability mass on both sides of the mean.

Properties

- **Mean:** $\mathbb{E}[X] = \mu$
- **Variance:** $\text{Var}(X) = \sigma^2$
- **Symmetry:** The distribution is symmetric around the mean.
- **Skewness:** Zero (due to symmetry).
- **Kurtosis:** Fixed value characteristic of Gaussian distributions.

The corresponding cumulative distribution function (CDF) does not have a closed-form expression in elementary functions and is evaluated using special functions.

2. Gaussian Random Variable: Standard Forms

Error Function (erf)

The *error function* is defined as:

$$\text{erf}(x) = \frac{2}{\sqrt{\pi}} \int_0^x e^{-t^2} dt$$

It arises naturally when integrating the Gaussian PDF.

Complementary Error Function (erfc)

The *complementary error function* is defined as:

$$\text{erfc}(x) = 1 - \text{erf}(x) = \frac{2}{\sqrt{\pi}} \int_x^{\infty} e^{-t^2} dt$$

This function is useful for tail probability calculations.

Φ -function (Standard Normal CDF)

The CDF of a standard normal random variable $Z \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 1)$ is:

$$\Phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{-\infty}^x e^{-t^2/2} dt$$

Q-function (Gaussian Tail Function)

The Q-function is defined as:

$$Q(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_x^{\infty} e^{-t^2/2} dt$$

It represents the *right-tail probability* of a standard Gaussian random variable.

Key Identity

$$Q(x) = 1 - \Phi(x)$$

3. Relation Between Φ -function and Q-function

Evaluating the CDF of a Gaussian RV

For a general Gaussian random variable $X \sim \mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma^2)$, the CDF is evaluated by standardization:

$$F_X(x) = \Pr(X \leq x) = \Phi\left(\frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}\right)$$

This step converts X into a standard normal variable.

Evaluating Tail Probabilities

$$\Pr(X > x) = Q\left(\frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}\right)$$

Key Identities

- $Q(x) = 1 - \Phi(x)$
- $F_X(x) = 1 - Q\left(\frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}\right)$

Interpretation:

- $\Phi(x)$: Area under the *left tail* of the Gaussian curve.
- $Q(x)$: Area under the *right tail* of the Gaussian curve.

4. Gaussian Random Variable: Example

Given PDF

A random variable X has PDF:

$$f_X(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{8\pi}} e^{-x^2/8}$$

By comparison with the standard Gaussian form, the parameters μ and σ^2 are identified.

Required Probabilities

1. $\Pr(X < 0)$

Expressed using the Φ -function.

2. $\Pr(X > 4)$

Expressed using the Q -function.

3. $\Pr(|X + 3| < 2)$

Converted into an interval probability and evaluated using CDF differences.

4. $\Pr(|X - 2| > 1)$

Converted into two tail probabilities and expressed using Q -functions.

Hint from lecture:

- Use $Q(x)$ for right-tail probabilities.
 - Use $\Phi(x)$ for left-tail probabilities.
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5. Applications of Gaussian Random Variables

Gaussian models arise naturally in many engineering and computing contexts:

- Thermal noise in electronic circuits.
 - Measurement errors in sensors, where: Measured Value = True Value + Gaussian Noise
 - Packet delay variation (jitter) in communication networks, where delays fluctuate around a mean due to congestion.
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6. Problem Solving: CDF Analysis Exercise

Given CDF

$$F_X(x) = \begin{cases} 0, & x < 0 \\ 4x^2, & 0 < x < 1 \\ 1, & x > 1 \end{cases}$$

Step 1: Find the PDF

The PDF is obtained by differentiating the CDF:

$$f_X(x) = \frac{d}{dx} F_X(x) = 2x, \quad 0 < x < 1$$

Step 2: Mean

$$\mu_X = \int_0^1 x(2x) dx = \frac{2}{3}$$

Step 3: Variance

Computed using:

$$\sigma^2 = \mathbb{E}[X^2] - (\mathbb{E}[X])^2$$

Step 4: Skewness and Kurtosis

Derived from central moments.

Conclusion

- The distribution is **left-skewed**.
 - It is **platykurtic**, meaning it has lighter tails than a Gaussian distribution.
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7. Gaussian Modeling: From Noise to Math

Motivation

Real-world systems are noisy:

- Sensors are affected by thermal noise and interference.
- Repeated measurements form a cloud of uncertainty.

Modeling Approach

Noise is modeled using a Gaussian random variable:

$$X = \sigma Z + \mu, \quad Z \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 1)$$

This transformation maps standard randomness to a physical model.

Key Idea: Probability models the *shape of uncertainty*, not exact values.

8. Density Estimation: Learning from Data

Problem

In practice, the true μ and σ are unknown. Only noisy samples are observed.

Solution

- Use **sample statistics** (mean and variance) to estimate the Gaussian distribution.
- Observed data is represented as a histogram.
- The estimated PDF smooths noise into a predictive model.

Key Concept: We estimate *probability distributions*, not deterministic functions.

9. Applications: Network Systems

Case Study: Packet Delay Modeling

- Scenario: 500 ICMP ping measurements.
- Delay varies due to queuing, congestion, and routing.

Engineering Goals

- Estimate **typical delay** (mean).
- Measure **jitter** (variance).

Discussion Point

High jitter is more damaging to real-time video than a high constant delay because variability disrupts synchronization.

10. Applications in Broader Computing Contexts

Probability in Modern Engineering

- **Image Processing:** Gaussian priors for denoising sensor noise.
- **Cloud Systems:** Tail latency modeling (e.g., 99th percentile delays).
- **IoT & Robotics:** Sensor fusion using probabilistic filters (e.g., Kalman filters).

Final Insight: From hardware sensors to software backends, uncertainty is unavoidable and probability is the key tool to manage it.

I've created a **full exam-oriented lecture scribe** in the canvas that:

- Follows the **exact structure and scope of the lecture slides**
- Uses **only slide content** (no invented definitions, theorems, or examples)
- Adds **step-by-step reasoning** for:
 - Definitions
 - Assumptions
 - Transformations and derivations
 - Use of Φ -function and Q -function
 - Example problem logic
- Is written specifically for **revision and exam preparation**, not as casual notes

You can now:

- Read it straight through like a **textbook chapter**
- Skim formulas and boxed identities before exams
- Revise examples by following the reasoning flow, not just final answers

If you want, next I can:

- Convert this into **condensed exam cheat notes**
- Add **margin-style “exam tips”** (what to remember, what not to forget)
- Do the same scribe for the **next lecture** in the course