Homological algebra notes

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Contents

1 Introduction

Homework:

- Must submit more than 50% correct solutions in order to take the final exam (oral).
- Posted on Monday after the lecture
- Submitted on following Monday in lecture
- Discuss following Tuesday, 16:45, room 430

2 Chain complexes

Homological algebra is about chain complexes.

Definition 1 (chain complex)**.** Let R be a ring.[1] A chain complex of R-modules, denoted $(C_\bullet, d)$, consists of the following data:

- For each $n \in \mathbb{Z}$, an R-module C_n, and
- R-linear maps $d_n \colon C_n \longrightarrow C_{n-1}$, called the *differentials*,

such that the differentials satisfy the relation

$$d_{n-1} \circ d_n = 0.$$

Example 2 (Syzygies)**.** Let $R = \mathbb{C}[x_1, \ldots, x_k]$. Following Hilbert, we consider a finitely generated[2] R-module M. The ring R is Noetherian, so by Hilbert's basis theorem, M is Noetherian, hence has finitely many generators $a_1, \ldots, a_k$.

Denote by R^k the free R-module with k generators, and consider

$$\phi \colon R^k \twoheadrightarrow M; \qquad e_i \mapsto a_i.$$

This map is surjective, but it may have a kernel, called the *module of first Syzygies*, denoted $\mathrm{Syz}^1(M)$. This kernel consists of those x such that

$$x = \sum_{i=1}^{k} \lambda_i e_i \overset{\phi}{\mapsto} \sum_{i=1}^{k} \lambda_i a_i = 0.$$

This kernel is again a module, the module of relations.

By Hilbert's basis theorem (since polynomial rings over a field are Noetherian), $\mathrm{Syz}^1(M)$ is again a finitely generated R-module. Hence, pick finite set of generators b_i, $1 \leq i \leq \ell$, and look at

$$R^\ell \twoheadrightarrow \mathrm{Syz}^1(M); \qquad e_i \mapsto b_i.$$

In general, there is non-trivial kernel, denoted $\mathrm{Syz}^2(M)$. This consists of relation between relations.

We can keep going. This gives us a sequence $\mathrm{Syz}^\bullet(M)$ corresponding to relations between relations between…between relations.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
 & & \mathrm{Syz}^2(M) \arrow[dr, hook] & & & & \\
\cdots \arrow[r, dotted, no head] & R^m \arrow[ur, two heads] \arrow[rr, "d"] & & R^l \arrow[rr, "d"] \arrow[dr, two heads] & & R^k \arrow[r] & M \\
\mathrm{Syz}^3 \arrow[ur, hook] & & & & \mathrm{Syz}^1(M) \arrow[ur, hook] & &
\end{tikzcd}$$

[1] Associative, with unit. Not necessarily commutative.

[2] i.e. expressible as an R-linear combination of finitely many generators.

From this we build a chain complex $(C_\bullet, d)$, where C_n corresponds to the nth copy of R^k, known as the *free resolution* of M.

Hilbert's Syzygy theorem tells us that every finitely generated $\mathbb{C}[x_1, \ldots, x_n]$-module admits a free resolution of length at most n.

Example 3 (simplicial complexes)**.** Let $N \geq 0$. A collection $K \subset \mathcal{P}(\{0, \ldots, n\})$ of subsets is called a *simplicial complex* if it is closed under the taking of subsets in the sense that if for all $\sigma \in K$,

$$\tau \subset \sigma \implies \tau \in K.$$

For every $n \geq 0$, we define the *n-simplices* of K to be the set

$$K_n = \{\sigma \in K \mid |\sigma| = n + 1\}.$$

Every $\sigma \in K_n$ can be expressed uniquely as $\sigma = \{x_0, \ldots, x_n\}$, with $x_0 < \cdots < x_n$. Define the *ith face* of σ to be

$$\partial_i \sigma = \{x_0, \ldots, x_{i-1}, x_{i+1}, \ldots, x_n\}.$$

Let R be a ring. Define

$$C_n(K, R) = \bigoplus_{\sigma \in K_n} R_{e_\sigma},$$

where the subscripts are simply labels. Further, define

$$d\colon C_n(K, R) \to C_{n-1}(K, R); \qquad e_\sigma \mapsto \sum_{i=0}^{n} (-1)^i e_{\partial_i \sigma}.$$

This is a complex because…

Example 4. Let k be a field, and A an associative k-algebra. We define a complex of vector spaces

$$\cdots \xrightarrow{d} A^{\otimes n} \xrightarrow{d} \cdots \xrightarrow{d} A^{\otimes 3} \xrightarrow{d} A \otimes A \xrightarrow{d} A\ ,$$

where d is defined by the formula

$$d(a_0 \otimes \cdots \otimes a_n) = \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} (-1)^i a_0 \otimes \cdots \otimes a_i a_{i+1} \otimes \cdots \otimes a_n + (-1)^n a_n a_0 \otimes \cdots \otimes a_{n-1}.$$

This complex is known as the *cyclic bar complex.*

Definition 5 (cycle, boundary, homology)**.** Let $(C_\bullet, d)$ be a chain complex. We make the following definitions.

- The space $\ker d_m$ is known as the space of n-cycles, and denoted $Z_n(C_\bullet)$.
- The space $\operatorname{im} d_{m+1}$ is known as the space of n-boundaries, and denoted $B_n(C_\bullet)$.
- The space
  $$\frac{Z_n}{B_n} = H_n(C_\bullet)$$
  is known as the nth homology of C.

Definition 6 (exact)**.** We say that a chain complex $(C_\bullet, d)$ is exact at $n \in \mathbb{Z}$ if $H_n(C_\bullet = 0)$.

Definition 7 (exact sequence)**.** We say that a sequence

$$C_k \xrightarrow{d} C_{k-1} \xrightarrow{d} \cdots \xrightarrow{d} C_\ell$$

with $d^2 = 0$ is exact if it is exact at $k-1, k-2, \ldots, \ell+1$.

Definition 8 (short exact sequence)**.** A short exact sequence is an exact sequence of the form

$$0 \longrightarrow A \xrightarrow{f} B \xrightarrow{g} C \longrightarrow 0 \ .$$

Equivalently, such a sequence is exact if

- f is a monomorphism
- g is a epimorphism
- $H_B = 0$.

Example 9.

- The sequence
$$0 \longrightarrow \mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\times 2} \mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\pi} \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \longrightarrow 0$$
is exact.
- The sequence
$$0 \longrightarrow \mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\times 2} \mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\pi} \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \longrightarrow 0$$
is not exact since the map $x \mapsto 2x$ is not injective.
- The sequence
$$\mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\times 2} \mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\pi} \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \longrightarrow 0$$
is exact.

3 Basic algebra

4 Abelian categories

4.1 Basics

In this chapter we provide results without proof.

A category is **Ab**-*enriched* if it is enriched over the symmetric monoidal category $(\mathbf{Ab}, \otimes_Z)$. In an **Ab**-enriched category with finite products, products agree with coproducts, and we call both direct sums. We call an **Ab**-enriched category with finite direct sums an *additive* category, and we call a functor between additive categories such that the maps

$$\mathrm{Hom}(A, B) \to \mathrm{Hom}(F(A), F(B))$$

are homomorphisms of abelian groups. A *pre-abelian* category is an additive category such that every morphism has a kernel and a cokernel, and an *abelian category* is a pre-abelian category such that every monic is the kernel of its cokernel, and every epic is the cokernel of its kernel.

This immediately implies the following results.

- Kernels are monic and cokernels are epic
- Since the equalizer of f and g is the kernel of $f - g$, abelian categories have all finite limits, and dually colimits.

Given a morphism $f\colon A \to B$, the image $\operatorname{im} f = \ker \operatorname{coker} f$ and the coimage is $\operatorname{coker} \ker f$. From this data, we build the following commuting diagram.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
 & \operatorname{im} f \arrow[d, "i"] \arrow[dr, "0"] & \\
A \arrow[r, "f"] & B \arrow[r, "g"] \arrow[d, "p"] & C \\
 & \operatorname{coker} f \arrow[ur] &
\end{tikzcd}$$

This defines a morphism $\phi\colon\ \operatorname{im} f \to \ker g$. We say that the above is *exact* if ϕ is an isomorphism.

Additive functors from additive categories preserve direct sums.

Lemma 10. Let A and B be objects in an additive category $\mathcal{A}$, and let X be an object in $\mathcal{A}$

equipped with morphisms

$$\begin{tikzcd}
A \arrow[dr, "i_A"] & & A \\
& X \arrow[ur, "\pi_A"] \arrow[dr, "\pi_A"] & \\
B \arrow[ur, "i_B"] & & B
\end{tikzcd}$$

such that the following equations hold.

$$\begin{aligned}
i_A \circ \pi_A + i_B \circ \pi_B &= \mathrm{id}_X \\
\pi_A \circ i_B = 0 &= \pi_B \circ i_A \\
\pi_A \circ i_A &= \mathrm{id}_A \\
\pi_B \circ i_B &= \mathrm{id}_B
\end{aligned}$$

Then the πs and is exhibit $X \simeq A \oplus B$.

Corollary 11. Let $F \colon \mathcal{A} \to \mathcal{B}$ be an additive functor between additive categories. Then F preserves direct sums in the sense that there is a natural isomorphism

$$F(a \oplus b) \simeq F(a) \oplus F(b).$$

4.2 Homological algebra in abelian categories

4.2.1 The snake lemma and its compatriots

Lemma 12. Consider the following exact sequence in an abelian category $\mathcal{A}$.

Lemma 13. Let $f \colon B \twoheadrightarrow C$ be an epimorphism, and let $g \colon D \to C$ be any morphism. Then the kernel of f functions as the kernel of the pullback of f along g, in the sense that we have the following commuting diagram in which the right-hand square is a pullback square.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
\ker f' \arrow[r, "i"] \arrow[d, equal] & S \arrow[r, "f'"] \arrow[d, "g'"'] \arrow[dr, phantom, "\ulcorner", very near start] & D \arrow[d, "g"] \\
\ker f \arrow[r, "\iota"'] & B \arrow[r, two heads, "f"'] & C
\end{tikzcd}$$

Proof. Consider the following pullback square, where f is an epimorphism.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
S \arrow[r, "f'"] \arrow[d, "g'"'] \arrow[dr, phantom, "\ulcorner", very near start] & D \arrow[d, "g"] \\
B \arrow[r, two heads, "f"'] & C
\end{tikzcd}$$

Since we are in an abelian category, the pullback f' is also an epimorphism. Denote the kernel of f by K.

The claim is that K also functions as the kernel of f'. Of course, in order for this statement to make sense we need a map $i \colon K \to S$. This is given to us by the universal property of the pullback as follows.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
K \arrow[dr, dashed, "\exists! i"] \arrow[drr, bend left, "0"] \arrow[ddr, bend right, "\iota"'] & & \\
& S \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & D \arrow[d, "g"] \\
& B \arrow[r, two heads, "f"'] & C
\end{tikzcd}$$

Next we need to verify that (K, i) is actually the kernel of f', i.e. satisfies the universal property. To this end, let $v \colon Q \to S$ be a map such that $f' \circ v = 0$. We need to find a unique factorization of v through K.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
& Q \arrow[dl, dashed, "\exists! v'"'] \arrow[d, "v"] \arrow[dr, "0"] & \\
K \arrow[r, "i"] \arrow[dr, "\iota"'] & S \arrow[r, two heads, "f'"'] \arrow[d, "g'"] & D \arrow[d, "g"] \\
& B \arrow[r, "f"'] & C
\end{tikzcd}$$

By definition $f' \circ v = 0$. Thus,

$$\begin{aligned} f \circ g' \circ v &= g \circ f' \circ v \\ &= g \circ 0 \\ &= 0, \end{aligned}$$

so $g' \circ v$ factors uniquely through K as $g' \circ v = \iota \circ v'$. It remains only to check that the triangle formed by v' commutes, i.e. $v = v' \circ i$. To see this, consider the following diagram, where the bottom right square is the pullback from before.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
Q \arrow[dr, dashed, "\exists!"] \arrow[drr, bend left, "0"] \arrow[ddr, bend right, "g' \circ v"'] & & \\
& S \arrow[r, "f'"'] \arrow[d, "g'"] & D \arrow[d, "g"] \\
& B \arrow[r, "f"'] & C
\end{tikzcd}$$

By the universal property, there exists a unique map $Q \to S$ making this diagram commute. However, both v and $i \circ v'$ work, so $v = i \circ v'$.

Thus we have shown that, in a precise sense, the kernel of an epimorphism functions as the kernel of its pullback, and we have the following commutative diagram, where the right hand square is a pullback.

$$\begin{tikzcd}
\ker f' \arrow[r, "i"] \arrow[d, equal] & S \arrow[r, "f'"] \arrow[d, "g'"] & D \arrow[d, "g"] \\
\ker f \arrow[r, "\iota"'] & B \arrow[r, two heads, "f"'] & C
\end{tikzcd}$$

$\square$

At least in the case that g is mono, when phrased in terms of elements, this result is more or less obvious; we can imagine the diagram above as follows.

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{elements of pullback}\\ \text{which map to 0}\end{matrix}\right\} \arrow[r, hook] \arrow[d, equal] & \left\{\begin{matrix}\text{elements of } B\\ \text{which map to } C\end{matrix}\right\} \arrow[r, two heads] \arrow[d, hook] & D \arrow[d, hook] \\
\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{elements of } B\\ \text{which map to 0}\end{matrix}\right\} \arrow[r, hook] & B \arrow[r, two heads] & C
\end{tikzcd}
$$

Theorem 14 (snake lemma)**.** Consider the following commutative diagram with exact rows.

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
0 \arrow[r] & A \arrow[r, "m"] \arrow[d, "f"'] & B \arrow[r, "e"] \arrow[d, "g"'] & C \arrow[r] \arrow[d, "h"] & 0 \\
0 \arrow[r] & A' \arrow[r, "m'"] & B' \arrow[r, "e'"] & C' \arrow[r] & 0
\end{tikzcd}
$$

This gives us an exact sequence

$$0 \to \ker f \to \ker g \to \ker h \to \operatorname{coker} f \to \operatorname{coker} g \to \operatorname{coker} h \to 0.$$

Proof. We provide running commentary on the diagram below.

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
0 \arrow[r, dotted] & \ker f \arrow[r, dotted] \arrow[d, hook] & \ker g \arrow[r, dotted] \arrow[d, hook] & \ker h \arrow[d, hook] \arrow[dddll, dashed, bend left] & \\
0 \arrow[r] & A \arrow[r, hook, "m"] \arrow[d, "f"'] & B \arrow[r, two heads, "e"] \arrow[d, "g"'] & C \arrow[r] \arrow[d, "h"'] & 0 \\
0 \arrow[r] & A' \arrow[r, hook, "m'"'] \arrow[d, two heads] & B' \arrow[r, two heads, "e'"'] \arrow[d, two heads] & C' \arrow[r] \arrow[d, two heads] & 0 \\
& \operatorname{coker} f \arrow[r, dotted] & \operatorname{coker} g \arrow[r, dotted] & \operatorname{coker} h \arrow[r, dotted] & 0
\end{tikzcd}
\tag{4.1}
$$

The dotted arrows come immediately from the universal property for kernels and cokernels, as do exactness at $\ker g$ and $\operatorname{coker} g$. The argument for kernels appeared on the previous homework sheet, and the argument for cokernels is dual. I omit them.

The only thing left is to define the dashed connecting homomorphism, and to prove exactness at $\ker h$ and $\operatorname{coker} f$.

Extract from the data of Diagram 4.1 the following diagram.

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
& & \ker h \arrow[d, hook] \\
A \arrow[r, hook, "m"] \arrow[d, "f"'] & B \arrow[r, two heads, "e"] \arrow[d, "g"] & C \arrow[d, "h"] \\
A' \arrow[r, hook, "m'"'] \arrow[d, two heads] & B' \arrow[r, two heads, "e'"'] & C' \\
\operatorname{coker} f & &
\end{tikzcd}
$$

Take a pullback and a pushout, and using Lemma 13 (and its dual), we find the following.

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
\ker u \arrow[r, hook, "a"] \arrow[d, equal] & S \arrow[r, two heads, "u"] \arrow[d, "r"] & \ker h \arrow[d, hook] \\
A \arrow[r, hook, "m"] \arrow[d, "f"'] & B \arrow[r, two heads, "e"] \arrow[d, "g"] & C \arrow[d, "h"] \\
A' \arrow[r, hook, "m'"] \arrow[d, two heads] & B' \arrow[r, two heads, "e'"] \arrow[d, "s"] & C' \arrow[d, equal] \\
\operatorname{coker} f \arrow[r, hook, "v"'] & T \arrow[r, two heads, "b"'] & \operatorname{coker} v
\end{tikzcd}
$$

Consider the map

$$\delta_0 = \quad S \xrightarrow{r} B \xrightarrow{g} B' \xrightarrow{s} T \ .$$

By commutativity, $\delta \circ a = 0$, hence we get a map

$$\delta_1\colon \ker h \to T.$$

Composing this with b gives 0, hence we get a map

$$\delta\colon \operatorname{coker} f \to \ker h.$$

□

Theorem 15 (horseshoe lemma)**.**

4.2.2 Projectives

Definition 16 (projective)**.** An object P in an abelian category $\mathcal{A}$ is said to be projective if for every exact sequence $B \to C \to 0$ and every morphism $p\colon P \to C$, there exists a morphism $\tilde{p}\colon P \to B$ such that the folowing diagram commutes.

$$
\begin{tikzcd}
 & P \arrow[dl, "\tilde{p}"'] \arrow[d, "p"] & \\
B \arrow[r] & C \arrow[r] & 0
\end{tikzcd}
$$

Proposition 17. Let R be a ring. A module P is projective if and only if it is a direct summand of a free module, i.e. if there exists an R-module M and a free R-module F such that

$$F \simeq P \oplus M.$$

Proof. First, suppose that P is projective. We can always express P in terms of a set of generators and relations. Denote by F the free R-module over the generators, and consider the following short exact sequence.

$$0 \longrightarrow \ker \pi \hookrightarrow F \xrightarrow{\pi} P \longrightarrow 0$$

An easy consequence of the splitting lemma is that any short exact sequence with a projective in the final spot splits, so

$$F \simeq P \oplus \ker \pi$$

as required.

Conversely, suppose that $P \oplus M \simeq F$, for F free, and P and M arbitrary. Certainly, the following lifting problem has a solution (by lifting generators).

$$\begin{tikzcd} & P \oplus M \arrow[dl, dashed, "\exists(j,k)"'] \arrow[d, "{(f,g)}"] \\ N \arrow[r, two heads] & M \end{tikzcd}$$

In particular, this gives us the following solution to our lifting problem,

$$\begin{tikzcd} & P \arrow[dl, dashed, "\exists j"'] \arrow[d, "f"] \\ N \arrow[r, two heads] & M \end{tikzcd}$$

exhibiting P as projective. □

4.2.3 Exactness in abelian categories

Lemma 18. Let $\mathcal{A}$ be an abelian category, and let

$$A \xrightarrow{f} B \xrightarrow{g} C$$

be objects and morphisms in $\mathcal{A}$. If for all X the abelian groups and homomorphisms

$$\mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(X, A) \xrightarrow{f_*} \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(X, B) \xrightarrow{g_*} \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(X, C)$$

form an exact sequence of abelian groups, then $A \to B \to C$ is exact.

Proof. To see this, take $X = A$, giving the following sequence.

$$\mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(A, A) \xrightarrow{f_*} \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(A, B) \xrightarrow{g_*} \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(A, C)$$

Exactness implies that

$$0 = (g_* \circ f_*)(\mathrm{id}) = (g \circ f)(\mathrm{id}) = g \circ f,$$

so $\operatorname{im} f \subset \ker g$. Now take $X = \ker g$.

$$\mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(\ker g, A) \xrightarrow{f_*} \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(\ker g, B) \xrightarrow{g_*} \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathcal{A}}(\ker g, C)$$

The canonical inclusion $\iota\colon \ker g \to B$ is mapped to zero under g_*, hence is mapped to under f_* by some $\alpha\colon \ker g \to A$. That is, we have the following commuting triangle.

$$\begin{tikzcd} & A \arrow[dr, "f"] & \\ \ker g \arrow[ur, "\alpha"] \arrow[rr, hook, "\iota"'] & & B \end{tikzcd}$$

Thus $\operatorname{im} \iota = \ker g \subset \operatorname{im} f$. □

Lemma 19. Let

$$0 \longrightarrow A \xrightarrow{f} B \xrightarrow{g} C \longrightarrow 0$$

be an exact sequence, and let X be any object. Then the sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}(X, A) \xrightarrow{f_*} \mathrm{Hom}(X, B) \xrightarrow{g_*} \mathrm{Hom}(X, C)$$

is an exact sequence of abelian groups.

Proof. To see that f_* is monic, suppose that $f_*\alpha = 0$ for some $\alpha\colon X \to A$. Then $f \circ \alpha = 0$, so $\alpha = 0$ by monomorphicity of f.

To see that $\operatorname{im} f_* \subseteq \ker g_*$, let there be some β such that

$$g_* f_* \beta = \beta \circ g \circ f = \beta \circ 0 = 0.$$

Now let $\gamma\colon X \to B$ such that $g_*\gamma = g \circ \gamma = 0$. Then, because (A, f) functions as a kernel for g, we get a factorization

$$\gamma = f \circ \alpha = f_*\alpha$$

so $\ker g_* \subseteq \operatorname{im} f_*$. □

Definition 20 (exact functor)**.** Let $F\colon \mathcal{A} \to \mathcal{B}$ be an additive functor, and let

$$0 \longrightarrow A \xrightarrow{f} B \xrightarrow{g} C \longrightarrow 0$$

be an exact sequence. We use the following terminology.

- We call F left exact if

  $$0 \longrightarrow F(A) \xrightarrow{f} F(B) \xrightarrow{g} F(C)$$

  is exact
- We call F right exact if

  $$F(A) \xrightarrow{f} F(B) \xrightarrow{g} F(C) \longrightarrow 0$$

  is exact
- We call F exact if it is both left exact and right exact.

Example 21. By Lemma 19, the hom functor $\mathrm{Hom}(A, -)\colon \mathcal{A} \to \mathbf{Ab}$ is left exact. It turns out that $\mathrm{Hom}(-, A)$ is also a left exact functor $\mathcal{A}^{\mathrm{op}} \to \mathbf{Ab}$. It may seem that this should be right exact, but not so! There are two instances of contravariance which cancel each other: the contravariance of the hom functor itself, and the contravariance of…to be continued.

Theorem 22. Let

$$L : \mathcal{A} \longleftrightarrow \mathcal{B} : R$$

be an adjunction of additive functors between abelian categories. Then F