Introduction to Bioinformatics and Computational Biology

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Course information

This is the course material for STAT115/215 BIO/BST282 at Harvard University.

All the YouTube videos in this course are organized under the 2021 STAT115 playlist.

1.1 Contributors

Xiaole Shirley Liu Harvard University and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Joshua Starmer StatQuest
Martin Hemberg Wellcome Sanger Institute
Ting Wang Washington University
Feng Yue Northwestern University
Gad Getz Harvard University and Broad Institute

Ming Tang Yang Liu Bo Yuan Jack Kang Scarlett Qian Jiazhen Rong Phillip Nicol Maartin De Vries

We thank many colleagues in the community, who helped Dr. Liu in prepare the STAT115/215 BIO/BST282 course over the years. Some of the lecture slides acknowledged their contributions, but these contributors are not individually acknowledged here.

Introduction

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- 2.1.1 Protein structure wave
- 2.1.2 Gene expression wave
- 2.1.3 Genome sequencing wave
- 2.1.4 Big data challenge from sequencing
- 2.2 Should I take this course?
- 2.2.1 Bioinformatics vs computational biology
- 2.2.2 Is this class for me?

2.3 Course information

- 2.3.1 Logistics
- 2.3.2 X Shirley Liu lab introduction
- 2.4 Lab 1
- 2.4.1 Introduction
- 2.4.2 Introduction to R
- 2.4.3 Introduction to Bash
- 2.4.4 Getting started with Cannon

High throughput sequencing

3.1 Three generations of sequencing technologies

First generation sequencing is Sanger sequencing. It is the technology that was used to obtain the first human genome sequence.

Second generation sequencing is also called next generation sequencing (NGS) and is the start of high throughput sequencing. It is what scientists use most often nowadays, and Illumina is the market leader. Most of the rest of this course will cover data analysis using second generation sequencing.

Third generation sequencing is single-molecule sequencing. There are many new technologies still under active development, although none has reached market penetration.

3.2 FASTQ and FASTQC

NGS generates FASTQ files. FASTQC is an computational approach to evaluate the quality of your NGS data.

3.3 Early sequence alignment (1 with 1)

In the early days (1970s), scientists were not worried about having to align too many sequences. They wanted to find the best alignment between two sequences. Many bioinformatics courses start with learning these, although it is not the main focus of our course. We included two videos in case you are interested.

The Needlemen-Wunsch algorithm is the earliest algorithm to find the alignment between two sequences and score their similarity.

When two sequences are long, and only a portion of them can align well with each other, the Smith-Waterman algorithm can find the best local sequence alignment. It is still considered the best alignment approach, although it is slow.

3.4 Sequence search algorithms (1 with many)

With more and more sequences available in the public in the 1980s, scientists were interested in finding whether their newly sequenced string has been sequenced before in the public database. Therefore, the fast search algorithm BLAST was developed, using one sequence as the query to find similar sequences from a database.

3.5 Borrow-Wheeler Aligner (many with many)

With NGS, scientists need much faster search (aka mapping) algorithms in order to align the millions of sequences to the reference genome. The current best algorithm is called Borrow-Wheeler Aligner or BWA.

In order to understand BWA, we first need to introduce Borrows-Wheeler transformation and LF mapping

The basic idea of Borrows-Wheeler alignment

3.6 Alignment output

NGS raw data is in FASTQ. Alignment gives you SAM (alignment) or BAM (binary version of SAM) files which contain the sequence information in FASTQ and the mapping locations. BED file is the simpliest, although there is information loss.

RNA-seq Quantification

- 4.1 Introduction to RNA-seq experiment
- 4.2 RNA quality control and experimental design
- 4.3 Alignment
- 4.4 RNA-seq QC
- 4.5 RNA-seq expression index
- 4.6 RSEM and Salmon
- 4.7 RNA-seq read distribution
- 4.8 Lab 2
- 4.8.1 STAR tutorial
- 4.8.2 RSeQC tutorial
- 4.8.3 RSEM/Salmon Tutorial

Differential expression, FDR, GO, and GSEA

DESeq2 is a popular and accurate computational algorithm to detect differential gene expression from RNA-seq data. It includes many elegant quantitative considerations, such as:

- Normalize the gene read counts by library size and composition
- Model gene read counts with negative binomial distribution
- Use hierarchical modeling to stabilize the gene variance
- Use Benjamini-Hochberg to calculate control for false discovery rate of calling differentially expressed genes
- Filter lowly expressed genes to reduce the number of hypotheses to be tested

- 5.1 DESeq2 library normalization
- 5.2 DESeq2 variance stabilization
- 5.3 Multiple hypotheses testing and False Discovery Rate
- 5.4 DESeq2 gene filtering
- 5.5 Gene Ontology (GO analysis)
- 5.6 Gene Set Enrichent Analysis (GSEA)
- 5.7 DESeq2 tutorial

Clustering

- 6.1 Heatmap and clustering quality
- 6.2 Hierarchical cluster
- 6.3 K means cluster
- 6.4 Pick K and consensus clustering
- 6.5 Batch effect removal
- 6.6 Lab3
- 6.6.1 PCA tutorial
- 6.6.2 Clustering tutorial
- 6.6.3 Combat tutorial
- 6.6.4 DESeq2 Tutorial
- 6.6.5 DAVID/GSEA Tutorial

Dimension Reduction

RNA-seq samples have tens of thousands of genes, although many genes might not vary much between samples and many others have correlated gene expression. Dimension reduction techniques aim to reduce the dimension of representing each sample with tens of thousands of genes to much fewer demensions, e.g. 2 to 100.

7.1 Principal Component Analysis: idea behind PCA.

PCA / SVD automatically outputs PC1, PC2, PC3, etc, with earlier PCs capturing the highest level of variability in the original data. Each PC is a linear combination of raw gene expression, and is orthogonal to all other PCs.

7.2 Principal Component Analysis: PCA applications.

PCA is a widely used method to project samples with high dimensions (e.g. with gene expression data) onto two dimensions for better visualization. It is an intuitive way to identify sample clusters, and identify batch effect.

7.3 Multidimensional Scaling (MDS)

MDS can use differential ways to calculate pair-wise distance, then use lower dimensions to satisfy the pair-wise distance. PCA is a special case of MDS.

7.4 Linear discriminant Analysis (LDA)

LDA is not only a dimension reduction method, but also a supervised machine learning method.

Classification

8.1 Introduction

Imagine you have RNA-seq of a collection of labeled normal lung and lung cancer tissues. Given a new sample of RNA-seq from the lung with unknown diagnosis, will you be able to predict based on the existing labeled samples and the expression data whether the new sample is normal or tumor? This is a sample classification problem, and it could be solved using **unsupervised** and **supervised** learning approaches.

Unsupervised learning is basically clustering or dimension reduction. You can use hierarchical clustering, MDS, or PCA. After clustering and projection the data to lower dimensions, you examine the labels of the known samples (hopefully they cluster into separate groups by the label). Then you can assign label to the unknown sample based on its distance to the known samples.

Supervised learning considers the labels with known samples and tries to identify features that can separate the samples by the label. Cross validation is conducted to evaluate the performance of different approaches and avoid over fitting.

StatQuest has done an amazing job with machine learning with a full playlist of well organized videos. While the full playlist is worth a full course, for the purpose of the course, we will just highlight a number of widely used approaches. They include logistic regression (this is considered statistical machine learning), K nearest neighbors, random forest, and support vector machine (these are considered computer science machine learning).

- 8.2 Supervised learning
- 8.3 Cross validation
- 8.4 Regression
- 8.5 Regularization
- 8.5.1 Ridge regression
- 8.5.2 LASSO regression
- 8.5.2.1 LASSO tutorial in R
- 8.6 KNN
- 8.7 Decision trees
- 8.8 Random forest
- 8.9 SVM
- 8.10 Lab 4
- 8.10.1 K-Nearest Neighbors tutorial
- 8.10.2 Regression/Ridge/LASSO Tutorial
- 8.10.3 Logistic Regression Tutorial
- 8.10.4 Support Vector Machine Tutorial
- 8.10.5 Random Forest Tutorial

Module I Review

- 9.1 Module I review
- 9.2 Analysis Scenario 1
- 9.3 Analysis Scenario 2

Transcription Factor Motif Finding

- 10.1 Transcription regulation and motif representation
- 10.2 Motif finding using expectation maximization
- 10.3 Motif finding using Gibbs sampler
- 10.4 Gibbs sampler intuition and transcription factor motif databases
- 10.5 Motif finding general practices

Transcription Factor Motif Finding

- 11.1 Transcription regulation
- 11.2 Motif representation
- 11.3 EM
- 11.4 Gibbs sampler
- 11.5 Gibbs intuition
- 11.6 Motif finding in eukaryotes
- 11.7 Known motif database

ChIP-seq, Expression Integration

- 12.1 Motif finding in eukaryotes, and ChIP-seq
- 12.2 MACS and ChIP-seq QC
- 12.3 Identify TF interactions from ChIP-seq motifs
- 12.4 TF target genes and expression integration
- 12.5 Lab 5
- 12.5.1 MACS Tutorial
- 12.5.2 ChIP-seq QC Tutorial
- 12.5.3 TF Motif Finding Tutorial
- 12.5.4 TF Collaborator Tutorial

Epigenetics, DNA Methylation

- 13.1 Intro to DNA Methylation
- 13.2 DNA Methylation Pattern and Function
- 13.3 DNA Methylation in Diseases
- 13.4 Techniques to Measure DNA Methylation

Histone Modifications, Chromatin Accessibility

- 14.1 Nucleosome Positioning
- 14.2 Introduction to Histone Modifications
- 14.3 Infer Transcription Factor Binding from Histone Mark Dynamics
- 14.4 Using Histone Marks to Infer Gene Functions
- 14.5 Introduction to DNase-seq and ATAC-seq
- 14.6 Infer TF from Differential Genes Using LISA
- 14.7 Caution on DNase/ATAC-seq footprint analysis
- 14.8 Summary of Epigenetics and Chromatin
- 14.9 Lab 6
- 14.9.1 ChIP-seq Expression Integration
- 14.9.2 Cistrome-GO Tutorial
- 14.9.3 ATAC-seq Analysis and LISA Tutorial

Hidden Markov Model

- 15.1 Markov Chain
- 15.2 Hidden Markov Model
- 15.3 Hidden Markov Model Forward Procedure
- 15.4 Hidden Markov Model Backward Procedure
- 15.5 HMM Forward-Backward Algorithm
- 15.6 Viterbi Algorithm
- 15.7 Baum Welch Algorithm Intuition
- 15.8 HMM Bioinformatics Applications

Long Range Chromatin Interactions

- 16.1 Chromatin interactions
- 16.2 HiC
- 16.3 HiC contact map
- 16.4 HiC normalization
- 16.5 Fractal globule
- 16.6 Loops
- 16.7 Domains
- 16.8 Compartments
- 16.9 Phase separation

Module II Review

- 17.1 Module II Review
- 17.2 Practive Questions

SNP and GWAS

- 18.1 SNP and LD
- 18.2 Family-based vs case-control association studies
- 18.3 GWAS studies and catalog
- 18.4 GTEx and eQTL

GWAS and Epigenomics

- 19.1 Find tissue / cell type
- 19.2 Identify causal SNPs and genes
- 19.3 Predict phenotypes

Single-cell RNA-seq (1)

- 20.1 Intro to scRNA-seq
- 20.2 Smart, Droplet, microwell, SCI-based
- 20.3 QC
- 20.4 Normalization
- 20.5 Imputation
- 20.6 Dimension reduction
- 20.7 Clustering
- 20.8 t-SNE and UMAP

Single-cell RNA-seq (2)

- 21.1 Annotate scRNA-seq clusters
- 21.2 Differential expression
- 21.3 Batch effect removal
- 21.4 Pseudotime
- 21.5 Overload 10X
- 21.6 Other applications (CITE-seq, multi-seq, spatial transcriptomics)

scATAC-seq

- 22.1 Intro to scATAC-seq
- 22.2 Sample and cell QC
- 22.3 Dimension reduction, clustering & visualization
- 22.4 Differential peaks and annotations
- 22.5 Integration with scRNA-seq

Module III Review

23.1 Module III Review

Cancer Genome Sequencing, Mutation analyses

- 24.1 Intro to TCGA
- 24.2 Cancer mutation characterization
- 24.3 Cancer mutation patterns
- 24.4 Tumor purity and clonality
- 24.5 Interpret tumor mutations
- 24.6 Find cancer genes
- 24.7 Summary and future

Cancer Subtyping, Survival Analyses

- 25.1 TCGA expression
- 25.2 Tumor subtypes
- 25.3 Survival analysis
- 25.4 GoF Oncogenes and LoF TS
- 25.5 Chromatin regulator mutations in cancer
- 25.6 DNA methylation and CIMP

Targeted Therapy, Drug Resistance, Compound and Genetic Screens

- 26.1 Hallmarks of cancer
- 26.2 Chemo vs targeted therapy
- 26.3 Drug resistance
- 26.4 Synthetic lethality
- 26.5 Precision medicine
- 26.7 Compound screens
- 26.8 Genetic screens
- 26.9 Tumor heterogeneity

Cancer Immunotherapy (1)

- 27.1 Systemic immunotherapy
- 27.2 Personalized immunotherapy
- 27.3 HLA and neoantigens
- 27.4 Tumor immune deconvolution
- 27.5 T cell signaling (PD1/PDL1, etc)
- 27.6 Other immune-cells (scRNA-seq)

Cancer Immunotherapy (2)

- 28.1 TCR analysis
- 28.2 BCR analysis
- 28.3 Microbiome
- 28.4 Immunotherapy response biomarkers
- 28.5 Targeted therapy as immune-modulators
- 28.6 Epigenetic therapy as immune-modulators

CRISPR Screens

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- 29.2 CRISPRa and CRISPRi
- 29.3 CRISPR design and outcome
- 29.4 CRISPR screens & DepMap
- 29.5 CRISPR screen analysis
- 29.6 CRISPR screens in drug response
- 29.7 CRISPR screens in immunology
- 29.8 Enhancer CRISPR screen
- 29.9 CRISPR screens + scRNA-seq

Module IV Review and Course Review

- 30.1 Module IV Review
- 30.2 Course Review