MATH 526 Notes

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August 23, 2023

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Let X be a topological space with basepoint $x_0 \in X$. We already know two invariants,

- the fundamental group $\pi_1(X, x_0)$, and
- the homology groups $H_n(X)$ for $n \geqslant 0$, which are abelian groups.

We will look at two more invariants,

- the cohomology groups $H^n(X)$ for $n \geqslant 0$, and
- the higher homotopy groups $\pi_n(X, x_0)$ for $n \geqslant 0$.

In particular, $\pi_*(X, x_0)$ is a very good invariant in the following sense:

Theorem 1.1 (Whitehead)**.** If $f : (X, x_0) \to (Y, y_0)$ is a map of CW-complexes, then f is a homotopy equivalence if and only if $\pi_*(f) : \pi_*(X, x_0) \to \pi_*(Y, y_0)$ is an isomorphism.

However, π_* is very hard to compute. On the other hand, $H^*(X)$ is relatively easy to compute, but this is not a complete invariant. For instance, $\mathbb{C}P^2$ and $S^2 \vee S^4$ have isomorphic cohomology groups, but they are not equivalent. $H^*(X)$ is closely related to $H_*(X)$, but $H^*(X)$ is a graded ring structure with cup product. It is contravariant in X, where $H_*(X)$ is covariant. The cup product is defined by the composition of induced diagonal map with an external product:

$$H^i(X) \times H^j(X) \xrightarrow{\times} H^{i+j}(X \times X) \xrightarrow{\Delta^*} H^{i+j}(X)$$

Other things we will talk about include:

- Natural transformations $H^i(-) \to H^j(-)$ encoded by Steenrod operations.
- $H^n(-)$ becomes a representable functor, i.e., $H^n(X) = [X, K(\mathbb{Z}, n)]$, where $K(\mathbb{Z}, n)$ is the Eilenberg-Maclane space, and the bracket indicates the homotopy classes of maps.
- Poincaré duality in $H^*(M)$ for compact manifold M, namely the cup product gives

$$H^i(M) \otimes H^{\dim(M)-i}(M) \xrightarrow{\smile} H^{\dim(M)}(M).$$

- Characteristic classes in $H^*(X)$ associated to vector bundles over X.

Recall for a topological space X, we obtain a collection of (singular) homology groups $H_n(X)$, with $H_*(X) = \bigoplus\limits_{n \geqslant 0} H_n(X)$. The functoriality of morphisms says that $X \xrightarrow{f} Y \xrightarrow{g} Z$ induces $f_* g_* = (fg)_* : H_*(X) \xrightarrow{f_*} H_*(Y) \xrightarrow{g_*} H_*(Z)$. So

$$H_*(-) : \textbf{Top} \to \textbf{Ab}$$

is a well-defined functor. This factors into

$$\begin{tikzcd} \mathbf{Top} \arrow[rr, "H_*(-)"] \arrow[dr, "C_*(-)"'] & & \mathbf{Ab} \\ & \mathbf{Ch} \arrow[ur, "H_*(-)"'] & \end{tikzcd}$$

Here $C_*(-)$ is usually the singular chain, given by $\partial : C_n(X) \to C_{n-1}(X)$, where $C_n(X)$ is the free abelian group generated by $\mathrm{Hom}_{\mathbf{Top}}(\Delta^n, X) \cong \bigoplus_{\sigma:\Delta^n \to X} \mathbb{Z}\sigma$. $\Delta^n \subseteq \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$ is the set of tuples $(t_0, \dots, t_n)$ such that the coordinates sum to 1. The boundary is $\partial\sigma = \sum_{0 \leqslant i \leqslant n} (-1)^i \sigma|_{[v_0, \dots, \hat{v}_i, \dots, v_n]}$.

We say $C_*(-)$ is homotopy invariant, i.e., if $f : X \to Y$ is a homotopy equivalence, then the induced map $C_*(X) \to C_*(Y)$ on chain complexes is a chain equivalence.

Remark 1.2. $C_*^{\Delta}(X)$ and $C_*^{\mathrm{CW}}(X)$ are both chain equivalent to $C_*(X)$.

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Here is a list of properties of $C_*(-) : \mathbf{Top} \to \mathbf{Ch}$:

- Functoriality: given a continuous map $f : X \to Y$, there is an induced map

$$\begin{aligned} f_* : C_*(X) &\to C_*(Y) \\ (\sigma : \Delta^n \to X) &\mapsto (f\sigma : \Delta^n \to Y) \end{aligned}$$

- Homotopy invariance: given $f, g : X \to Y$ such that $f \simeq g$, i.e., there is $H : X \times [0,1] \to Y$ such that $H|_0 = f$ and $H|_1 = g$, then $f_* \simeq g_*$ as a chain homotopy equivalence, i.e., there exists maps $h_n : C_n(X) \to C_{n+1}(Y)$ making a diagram

$$\begin{tikzcd} \cdots \arrow[r] & C_{n+1}(X) \arrow[r] \arrow[d, shift right, "g"'] \arrow[d, shift left, "f"] \arrow[dl, "h"] & C_n(X) \arrow[r] \arrow[d, shift right, "g"'] \arrow[d, shift left, "f"] \arrow[dl, "h"] & C_{n-1}(X) \arrow[r] \arrow[d, shift right, "g"'] \arrow[d, shift left, "f"] \arrow[dl, "h"] & \cdots \\ \cdots \arrow[r] & C_{n+1}(Y) \arrow[r] & C_n(Y) \arrow[r] & C_{n-1}(Y) \arrow[r] & \cdots \end{tikzcd}$$

  such that $f - g = \partial h + h\partial$. Therefore $f_* = g_* : H_*(X) \to H_*(Y)$.

  Remark 2.1. $f : A_* \to B_*$ is a chain equivalence if there exists $g : B_* \to A_*$ and $fg \simeq \mathrm{id}_B$ and $gf \simeq \mathrm{id}_A$, then $f_* : H_*(A_*) \to H_*(B_*)$ is an isomorphism, i.e., f is a quasi-isomorphism.

  Example 2.2. The complexes $A : 0 \to \mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\cdot 2} \mathbb{Z} \to 0$ and $B : 0 \to 0 \to \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \to 0$ gives a quasi-isomorphism $f : A \to B$ in the canonical way, but this is not a chain equivalence, since the backwards map has to be zero.

- Additivity: $C_*(\coprod_\alpha X_\alpha) \cong \bigoplus_\alpha C_*(X_\alpha)$.

- Excision: given a pair (X, A) with $Z \subseteq A$ such that $\bar{Z} \subseteq \mathrm{int}(A)$, then we have $C_*(X \backslash Z, A \backslash Z) \cong C_*(X, A)$.

- Mayer-Vietoris: given $A, B \subseteq X$, with $X = \mathrm{int}(A) \cup \mathrm{int}(B)$, then we have a short exact sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow C_*(A \cap B) \longrightarrow C_*(A) \oplus C_*(B) * C_*(X) \longrightarrow 0$$

The cochain complex is obtained via inverting the indices and maps δ from a chain complex. This induces a cohomology $H^*(C^*) = \ker(\delta)/\operatorname{im}(\delta)$ as the quotient of cocycles over coboundaries. Now $f : A^* \to B^*$ is a quasi-isomorphism if $f^* : H^*(A^*) \to H^*(B^*)$ is an isomorphism. Similarly, one can define the cochain homotopy equivalence.

Example 2.3. If $C_* \in \mathbf{Ch}$, and $k \in \mathbf{Ab}$, then we can form cochain complex $C_k^* := \mathrm{Hom}(C_*, k)$, where $C_k^n = \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathbf{Ab}}(C_n, k) \xrightarrow{\delta} C_k^{n+1}$ by sending $f : C_n \to k$ to $f\partial : C_{n+1} \to C_n \to k$.

- $\mathrm{Hom}(-, k) : \mathbf{Ch} \to \mathbf{coCh}$ is a functor.
- The functor preserves quasi-isomorphisms between chain complexes of free abelian groups.

Definition 2.4. For $k \in \mathbf{Ab}$, the singular cochains with coefficients in k is

$$\begin{tikzcd} C^*(-, k) : \mathbf{Top} \arrow[rr] \arrow[dr, "C_*(-)"'] & & \mathbf{coCh} \\ & \mathbf{Ch} \arrow[ur, "\mathrm{Hom}(-,k)"'] & \end{tikzcd}$$

The cohomology of X with coefficients in k is defined by $H^*(X; k) = H^*(C^*X, k)$. We have the convention $C^*(X) = C^*(X, \mathbb{Z})$.

The corresponding map $\delta : C^n(X; k) \to C^{n+1}(X; k)$ is given by δf that maps $\sigma \in C_{n+1}(X)$ to $(-1)^{n+1} f(\partial\sigma)$. Although the cochains are in general the dual of chains, the cohomology is not going to be the dual of the homology.