MATH 526 Notes

Jiantong Liu

August 21, 2023

1 Aug 21, 2023

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 $H_*(X) = \bigoplus_{n \geqslant 0} H_n(X)$. 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 $\operatorname{Hom}_{\mathbf{Top}}(\Delta^n, X) \cong \bigoplus_{\sigma:\Delta^n \to X} \mathbb{Z}\sigma$. $\Delta^n \subseteq \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$ is the set of tuples $(t_0, \ldots, t_n)$ such that the coordinates sum to 1. The boundary is $\partial\sigma = \sum_{0 \leqslant i \leqslant n} (-1)^i \sigma|_{[v_0,\ldots,\hat{v}_i,\ldots,v_n]}$.

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 $C_*(X)$.