PSTAT 5A Practice Worksheet 4

Comprehensive Review: Discrete Random Variables and Distributions

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2025-07-23

Table of contents

# 1. Instructions and Overview

**⏰ Time Allocation:**

* **Quiz Review** : 15 minutes
* **Section A (Warm-up):** 15 minutes
* **Section B (Intermediate):** 20 minutes
* **Optional Question:** Do on your own
* **Total:** 50 minutes

**📝 Important Instructions:**

* Use the formulas provided for guidance
* Round final answers to 4 decimal places unless otherwise specified
* Identify the distribution type before calculating
* Show your work for expected value and variance calculations
* Use calculator as needed for factorials and combinations

**📚 Key Formulas Reference:**

**General Random Variable Properties:**

* **Expected Value:**
* **Variance:**
* **Standard Deviation:**

**Discrete Distributions:**

**Bernoulli Distribution:**

* **PMF:** for
* **Mean:**
* **Variance:**

**Binomial Distribution:**

* **PMF:** for
* **Mean:**
* **Variance:**

**Geometric Distribution:**

* **PMF:** for
* **Mean:**
* **Variance:**

**Poisson Distribution:**

* **PMF:** for
* **Mean:**
* **Variance:**

# 2. Section A: Basic Concepts and Identification

*⏱️ Estimated time: 15 minutes*

**Problem A1: Distribution Identification**

For each scenario below, identify the appropriate discrete distribution and state the parameter(s). **Do not calculate probabilities yet.**

**(a)** A fair coin is flipped until the first head appears. Let X = number of flips needed.

**(b)** A quality control inspector tests 20 randomly selected items from a production line where 5% are defective. Let X = number of defective items found.

**(c)** A website receives visitors at an average rate of 3 per minute. Let X = number of visitors in a 2-minute period.

**(d)** A basketball player shoots one free throw with an 80% success rate. Let X = 1 if successful, 0 if unsuccessful.

**(e)** A student keeps taking a driving test until they pass. The probability of passing on any attempt is 0.7. Let X = number of attempts needed to pass.

**Work Space:**

**Problem A2: Probability Mass Function**

The random variable X has the following probability distribution:

| X | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| P(X=k) | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.4 | a | 0.1 |

**(a)** Find the value of .

**(b)** Calculate .

**(c)** Calculate .

**Work Space:**

# 3. Section B: Expected Value and Variance

*⏱️ Estimated time: 20 minutes*

**Problem B1: Manual Calculations**

Using the probability distribution from Problem A2, calculate:

**(a)** The expected value

**(b)** The variance

**(c)** The standard deviation

|  |
| --- |
| Tip |
| **Calculation Strategy:**  For expected value:  For variance: First find , then use  Show your work step by step! |

**Work Space:**

**Problem B2: Bernoulli and Binomial Applications**

A manufacturing process produces items that are defective with probability 0.15.

**(a)** If you select one item randomly, what is the expected value and variance of X = number of defective items?

**(b)** If you select 25 items randomly, what is the expected number of defective items and the standard deviation?

|  |
| --- |
| Tip |
| Part (a) is a Bernoulli distribution. Part (b) is a Binomial distribution. Use the formulas from the reference box! |

**Work Space:**

# 4. Optional Questions

**Optional Problem : Conceptual Understanding**

**(a)** Explain the key difference between a Binomial distribution and a Geometric distribution in terms of what they count.

**(b)** When would you use a Poisson distribution instead of a Binomial distribution?

**(c)** If , under what conditions would the variance be maximized?

**Work Space:**