

Some Continuous Probability Distributions

6.1 Continuous Uniform Distribution.

• Uniform Distribution

The density function of the continuous uniform random variable X on the interval $[A, B]$ is

$$f(u; A, B) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{B-A} & A \leq u \leq B \\ 0 & \text{elsewhere} \end{cases}$$

• Theorem 6.1

The mean and variance of the uniform distribution are

$$\mu = \frac{A+B}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad \sigma^2 = \frac{(B-A)^2}{12}$$

6.2 Normal Distribution

• Normal Distribution.

The density of the normal random variable X , with mean μ and variance σ^2 is

$$n(u; \mu, \sigma) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}\sigma} e^{-\frac{1}{2\sigma^2}(u-\mu)^2}, \quad -\infty < u < \infty$$

where $\pi = 3.14159...$ and $e = 2.71828$

Properties of the normal curve:

1. The mode, which is the point on the horizontal axis where the curve is a maximum, occurs at $\mu = M$.
2. The curve is symmetric about a vertical axis through the mean M .
3. The curve has its points of inflection at $\mu = M \pm \sigma$: it is concave downward if $M - \sigma < X < M + \sigma$ and is concave upward otherwise.

Theorem 6.2

The mean and variance of $n(\mu; M, \sigma)$ are M and σ^2 , respectively. Hence, the standard deviation is σ .

6.3 Areas Under the Normal Curve

$Z \rightarrow$ normal random variable.

$$Z = \frac{X - M}{\sigma}$$

whenever X assumes a value μ , the corresponding value of Z is given by $Z = (\mu - M) / \sigma$.

- The distribution of a normal random variable with mean 0 and variance 1 is called standard normal distribution.

• Using the Normal Curve in Reverse

$$Z = \frac{\mu - M}{\sigma} \rightarrow \mu = \sigma Z + M$$

6.5 Normal Approximation to the Binomial Distribution

Theorem 6.3

If X is a binomial random variable with mean $M = np$ and variance $\sigma^2 = npq$, then the limiting form of the distribution of

$$Z = \frac{X - np}{\sqrt{npq}}$$

as $n \rightarrow \infty$, is the standard normal distribution $n(Z; 0, 1)$.

• Normal Approximation to the Binomial Distribution.

Let X be a binomial random variable with parameters n and p . For large n , X has approximately a normal distribution with $M = np$ and $\sigma^2 = npq = np(1-p)$ and

$$\begin{aligned} P(X \leq \mu) &= \sum_{k=0}^{\mu} b(k; n, p) \\ &= P\left(Z \leq \frac{\mu + 0.5 - np}{\sqrt{npq}}\right), \end{aligned}$$

and the approximation will be good if np and $n(1-p)$ are greater than or equal to 5.

6.6 Gamma and Exponential Distributions

• The gamma function is defined by

$$\Gamma(x) = \int_0^{\infty} u^{x-1} e^{-u} du \quad \text{for } x > 0$$

Few simple properties of the gamma function

a) $\Gamma(n) = (n-1)(n-2) \dots (1) \Gamma(1)$, for a positive int. n

b) $\Gamma(n) = (n-1)!$, for a positive integer n

c) $\Gamma(1) = 1$.

d) $\Gamma(1/2) = \sqrt{\pi}$

• Gamma Distribution.

The continuous random variable X has a gamma distribution, with parameters α and β , if its density function is given by

$$f(u; \alpha, \beta) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\beta^\alpha \Gamma(\alpha)} u^{\alpha-1} e^{-u/\beta}, & u > 0 \\ 0, & \text{elsewhere} \end{cases}$$

where $\alpha > 0$ and $\beta > 0$

- The special gamma distribution for which $\alpha = 1$ is called exponential distribution.

• Exponential Distributions.

The continuous random variable X has an exponential distribution, with parameter β , if its density function is given by

$$f(u; \beta) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\beta} e^{-u/\beta}, & u > 0 \\ 0, & \text{elsewhere} \end{cases}$$

where $\beta > 0$.

• Theorem 6.4: The mean and variance of the gamma distribution are $M = \alpha\beta$ and $\sigma^2 = \alpha\beta^2$

• Corollary 6.1: The mean and variance of the exponential distribution are $M = \beta$ and $\sigma^2 = \beta^2$