COMPSCI 614: Randomized Algorithms with Applications to Data Science

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University of Massachusetts Amherst. Spring 2024.

Lecture 18

Logistics

- Problem Set 4 is due Monday 4/22 at 11:59pm.
- No quiz this week.

Summary

Last Class:

- Leverage score intuition.
- Connection to spectral graph sparsification
- Connection to effective resistances in electrical networks. Note: I am not going to finish this full derivation – see Lecture 17 slides if you are interested.

Today:

- New unit: Markov Chains.
- Markov chain based algorithms for 2-SAT and 3-SAT.

Markov Chain Definition

- A discrete time stochastic process is a collection of random variables $X_0, X_1, X_2, \ldots,$
- A discrete time stochastic process is a Markov chain if is it memoryless:

$$\begin{aligned}\Pr(X_t = a_t | X_{t-1} = a_{t-1}, \ldots, X_0 = a_0) &= \Pr(X_t = a_t | X_{t-1} = a_{t-1}) \\ &= P_{a_{t-1}, a_t}.\end{aligned}$$

Question: In a Markov chain, is X_t independent of $X_{t-2}, X_{t-3}, \ldots, X_0$?

Transition Matrix

A Markov chain $X_0, X_1, \ldots$ where each X_i can take m possible values, is specified by the transition matrix $P \in [0,1]^{m \times m}$ with

$$P_{j,k} = \Pr(X_{i+1} = k | X_i = j).$$

Let $q_i \in [0,1]^{1 \times m}$ be the distribution of X_i. Then $q_{i+1} = q_i P$.

P

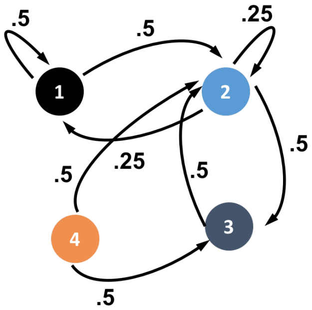
.5	.5	0	0
.25	.25	.5	0
0	1	0	0
0	.5	.5	0

q_0

1	0

Graph View

Often viewed as an underlying state transition graph. Nodes correspond to possible values that each X_i can take.



P

.5	.5	0	0
.25	.25	.5	0
0	1	0	0
0	.5	.5	0

The Markov chain is irreducible if the underlying graph consists of single strongly connected component.

2-SAT

Motivating Example: Find a satisfying assignment for a 2-CNF formula with n variables.

$$(x_1 \vee \bar{x}_2) \wedge (\bar{x}_1 \vee \bar{x}_3) \wedge (x_1 \vee x_2) \wedge (x_4 \vee \bar{x}_3) \wedge (x_4 \vee \bar{x}_1)$$

A simple 'local search' algorithm:

1. Start with an arbitrary assignment.
2. Repeat $2mn^2$ times, terminating if a satisfying assignment is found:
   - Chose an arbitrary unsatisfied clause.
   - Pick one of the variables in the clause uniformly at random, and switch the assignment of the variable.
3. If a valid assignment is not found, return that the formula is unsatisfiable.

Claim: If the formula is satisfiable, the algorithm finds a satisfying assignment with probability $\geq 1 - 2^{-m}$.

Randomized 2-SAT Analysis

Fix a satisfying assignment S. Let $\mathsf{X}_i \leq n$ be the number of variables that are assigned the same values as in S, at step i.

S

1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1

assignment i

1	**0**	0	1	1	**0**	**1**	**1**

- $\mathsf{X}_{i+1} = \mathsf{X}_i \pm 1$ since we flip one variable in an unsatisfied clause.
- $\Pr(\mathsf{X}_{i+1} = \mathsf{X}_i + 1) \geq$
- $\Pr(\mathsf{X}_{i+1} = \mathsf{X}_i - 1) \leq$

$$(x_1 \vee \bar{x}_2) \wedge (\bar{x}_1 \vee \bar{x}_3) \wedge (x_1 \vee x_2) \wedge (x_4 \vee \bar{x}_3) \wedge (x_4 \vee \bar{x}_1)$$

Coupling to a Markov Chain

The number of correctly assigned variables at step i, X_i, obeys

$$\Pr(X_{i+1} = X_i + 1) \geq \frac{1}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad \Pr(X_{i+1} = X_i - 1) \leq \frac{1}{2}.$$

Is $X_0, X_1, X_2, \ldots$ a Markov chain?

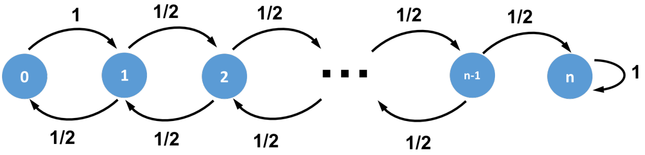
Define a Markov chain $Y_0, Y_1, \ldots$ such that $Y_0 = X_0$ and:

$$\begin{aligned}
\Pr(Y_{i+1} = 1 | Y_i = 0) &= 1 \\
\Pr(Y_{i+1} = j+1 | Y_i = j) &= 1/2 \text{ for } 1 \leq j \leq n-1 \\
\Pr(Y_{i+1} = j-1 | Y_i = j) &= 1/2 \text{ for } 1 \leq j \leq n-1 \\
\Pr(Y_{i+1} = n | Y_i = n) &= 1.
\end{aligned}$$

- Our algorithm terminates as soon as $X_i = n$. We expect to reach this point only more slowly with Y_i. So it suffices to argue that $Y_i = n$ with high probability for large enough i.
- Formally could use a coupling argument (will see later on).

Simple Markov Chain Analysis

Want to bound the expected time required to have $\mathbf{Y}_i = n$.



Let h_j be the expected number of steps to reach n when starting at node j (i.e., the expected termination time when j variables are assigned correctly.)

$$h_n = 0$$

$$h_0 = h_1 + 1$$

$$h_j = \frac{h_{j-1}}{2} + \frac{h_{j+1}}{2} + 1 \text{ for } 1 \leq j \leq n-1$$

Simple Markov Chain Analysis

Claim: $h_j = h_{j+1} + 2j + 1$. Can prove via induction on j.

- $h_0 = h_1 + 1$, satisfying the claim in the base case.

$$h_j = \frac{h_{j-1}}{2} + \frac{h_{j+1}}{2} + 1$$
$$h_j = \frac{h_j}{2} + (j-1) + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{h_{j+1}}{2} + 1$$
$$h_j = \frac{h_j}{2} + \frac{h_{j+1}}{2} + j + \frac{1}{2}.$$

- Rearranging gives: $h_j = h_{j+1} + 2j + 1$.

So in total we have:

$$h_0 = h_1 + 1 = h_2 + 3 + 1 = \ldots = \sum_{j=0}^{n-1}(2j+1) = n^2.$$

Upshot: Consider the Markov chain $Y_0, Y_1, \ldots$, and let i^* be the minimum i such $Y_{i^*} = n$. Then $\mathbb{E}[i^*] \leq n^2$.

- Thus, by Markov's inequality, with probability $\geq 1/2$, our 2-SAT algorithms finds a satisfying assignment within $2n^2$ steps.
- Splitting our $2mn^2$ total steps into m periods of $2n^2$ steps each, we fail to find a satisfying assignment in all m periods with probability at most $1/2^m$.

3-SAT

More Challenging Problem: Find a satisfying assignment for a 3-CNF formula with n variables.

$$(x_1 \vee \bar{x}_2 \vee \bar{x}_3) \wedge (\bar{x}_1 \vee \bar{x}_3 \vee x_4) \wedge (x_1 \vee x_2 \vee \bar{x}_3).$$

- 3-SAT is famously NP-hard. What is the naive deterministic runtime required to solve 3-SAT?
- The current best known runtime is $O(1.307^n)$ [Hansen, Kaplan, Zamir, Zwick, 2019].
- Will see that our simple Markov chain approach gives an $O(1.3334^n)$ time algorithm.
- Note that the exponential time hypothesis conjectures that $O(c^n)$ is needed to solve 3-SAT for some constant $c > 1$. The strong exponential time hypothesis conjectures that for $k \to \infty$, solving k-SAT requires $O(2^n)$ time.

Randomized 3-SAT Algorithm

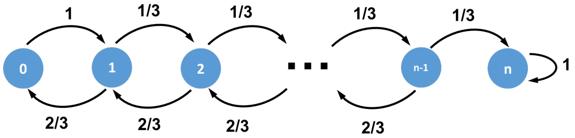
1. Start with an arbitrary assignment.
2. Repeat m times, terminating if a satisfying assignment is found:
   - Chose an arbitrary unsatisfied clause.
   - Pick one of the variables in the clause uniformly at random, and switch the assignment of the variable.
3. If a valid assignment is not found, return that the formula is unsatisfiable.

Randomized 3-SAT Analysis

As in the 2-SAT setting, let X_i be the number of correctly assigned variables at step i. We have:

$$\Pr(X_i = X_{i-1} + 1) \geq$$
$$\Pr(X_i = X_{i-1} - 1) \leq$$

Define the coupled Markov chain $Y_0, Y_1, \ldots$ as before, but with $Y_i = Y_{i-1} + 1$ with probability $1/3$ and $Y_i = Y_{i-1} - 1 = 2/3$.



How many steps do you expect are needed to reach $Y_i = n$?

Randomized 3-SAT Analysis

Letting h_j be the expected number of steps to reach n when starting at node j,

$$h_n = 0$$
$$h_0 = h_1 + 1$$
$$h_j = \frac{2h_{j-1}}{3} + \frac{h_{j+1}}{3} + 1 \text{ for } 1 \leq j \leq n-1$$

- We can prove via induction that $h_j = h_{j+1} + 2^{j+2} - 3$ and in turn, $h_0 = 2^{n+2} - 4 - 3n$.
- Thus, in expectation, our algorithm takes at most $\approx 2^{n+2}$ steps to find a satisfying assignment if there is one.
- Is this an interesting result?

Modified 3-SAT Algorithm

Key Idea: If we pick our initial assignment uniformly at random, we will have $\mathbb{E}[X_0] = n/2$. With very small, but still non-negligible probability, X_0 will be much larger, and our random walk will be more likely to find a satisfying assignment.

Modified Randomized 3-SAT Algorithm:

Repeat m times, terminating if a satisfying assignment is found:

1. Pick a uniform random assignment for the variables.
2. Repeat $3n$ times, terminating if a satisfying assignment is found:
    - Chose an arbitrary unsatisfied clause.
    - Pick one of the variables in the clause uniformly at random, and switch the assignment of the variable.

If a valid assignment is not found, return that the formula is unsatisfiable.

Modified 3-SAT Analysis

Consider a single random assignment with $X_0 = n - j$. I.e., we need to correct j variables to find a satisfying assignment.

Let q_j be a lower bound on the success probability in this case. Since $j \leq n$ and since we run the search process for $3n$ steps,

$$
\begin{aligned}
q_j &= \Pr[X_{3n} = n] \\
&\geq \Pr[X_{3j} = n] \\
&\geq \Pr[\text{take exactly } 2j \text{ steps forward and } j \text{ steps back in } 3j \text{ steps}] \\
&= \binom{3j}{j}\left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^j \cdot \left(\frac{1}{3}\right)^{2j}.
\end{aligned}
$$

Via Stirling's approximation, $\binom{3j}{j} \geq \frac{1}{\sqrt{j}} \cdot \frac{3^{3j-2}}{2^{2j-2}}$, giving:

$$
q_j \geq \frac{2^2}{3^2\sqrt{j}} \cdot \frac{3^{3j}}{2^{2j}} \cdot \frac{2^j}{3^{3j}} \approx \frac{1}{\sqrt{j} \cdot 2^j} \geq \frac{1}{\sqrt{n} \cdot 2^j}.
$$

Modified 3-SAT Analysis

Our overall probability of success in a single trial is then lower bounded by:

$$
\begin{aligned}
q &\geq \sum_{j=0}^{n} \Pr[X_0 = n - j] \cdot q_j \\
&\geq \sum_{j=0}^{n} \binom{n}{j} \cdot \frac{1}{2^n} \cdot \frac{1}{\sqrt{n} \cdot 2^j} \\
&\geq \frac{1}{\sqrt{n} \cdot 2^n} \sum_{j=0}^{n} \binom{n}{j} \cdot \frac{1}{2^j} \\
&= \frac{1}{\sqrt{n} \cdot 2^n} \cdot \left(\frac{3}{2}\right)^n = \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \cdot \left(\frac{3}{4}\right)^n .
\end{aligned}
$$

Thus, if we repeat for $m = O\left(\sqrt{n} \cdot \left(\frac{4}{3}\right)^n\right) = O(1.33334^n)$ trials, with very high probability, we will find a satisfying assignment if there is one.