

15.093 Optimization Methods

Lecture 17: Applications of Nonlinear Optimization

1 Lecture Outline

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- History of Nonlinear Optimization
- Where do NLPs Arise?
- Portfolio Optimization
- Traffic Assignment
- The general problem
- The role of convexity
- Convex optimization
- Examples of convex optimization problems

2 History of Optimization

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Fermat, 1638; Newton, 1670

$$\min f(x) \quad x: \text{ scalar}$$

$$\frac{df(x)}{dx} = 0$$

Euler, 1755

$$\min f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$

$$\nabla f(\mathbf{x}) = 0$$

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Lagrange, 1797

$$\min f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$

$$\text{s.t. } g_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 0 \quad k = 1, \dots, m$$

Euler, Lagrange Problems in infinite dimensions, calculus of variations.

Kuhn and Tucker, 1950s Optimality conditions.

1950s Applications.

1960s Large Scale Optimization.

Karmakar, 1984 Interior point algorithms.

3 Where do NLPs Arise?

3.1 Wide Applicability

- Transportation

Traffic management, Traffic equilibrium . . .

Revenue management and Pricing

- Finance - Portfolio Management

- Equilibrium Problems

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- Engineering

Data Networks and Routing

Pattern Classification

- Manufacturing

Resource Allocation

Production Planning

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4 A Simple Portfolio Selection Problem

4.1 Data

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- x_i : decision variable on amount to invest in stock $i = 1, 2$

- r_i : reward from stock $i = 1, 2$ (random variable)

Data:

- $\mu_i = E(r_i)$: expected reward from stock $i = 1, 2$

- $Var(r_i)$: variance in reward from stock $i = 1, 2$

- $\sigma_{ij} = E[(r_j - \mu_j)(r_i - \mu_i)] = Cov(r_i, r_j)$

- Budget B , target β on expected portfolio reward

5 A Simple Portfolio Selection Problem

5.1 The Problem

Objective: Minimize total portfolio variance so that:

- Expected reward of total portfolio is above target β
- Total amount invested stay within our budget
- No short sales

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$$\min f(x) = x_1^2 Var(r_1) + x_2^2 Var(r_2) + 2x_1x_2\sigma_{12}$$

subject to

$$\sum_i x_i \leq B$$

$$E[\sum_i r_i x_i] = \sum_i \mu_i x_i \geq \beta, \quad (\text{exp reward of portf.})$$

$$x_i \geq 0, \quad i = 1, 2$$

(Linearly constrained NLP)

6 A Real Portfolio Optimization Problem

6.1 Data

- We currently own z_i shares from stock i , $i \in S$
- P_i : current price of stock i
- We consider buying and selling stocks in S , and consider buying new stocks from a set B ($B \cap S = \emptyset$)
- Set of stocks $B \cup S = \{1, \dots, n\}$

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- Data: Forecasted prices next period (say next month) and their correlations:

$$\begin{aligned} E[\hat{P}_i] &= \mu_i \\ Cov(\hat{P}_i, \hat{P}_j) &= E[(\hat{P}_i - \mu_i)(\hat{P}_j - \mu_j)] = \sigma_{ij} \\ \boldsymbol{\mu} &= (\mu_1, \dots, \mu_n)', \quad \boldsymbol{\Sigma} = \sigma_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

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6.2 Issues and Objectives

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- Mutual funds regulations: we cannot sell a stock if we do not own it
- Transaction costs
- Turnover
- Liquidity
- Volatility
- **Objective:** Maximize expected wealth next period minus transaction costs

6.3 Decision variables

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$$x_i = \begin{cases} \# \text{ shares bought or sold} & \text{if } i \in S \\ \# \text{ shares bought} & \text{if } i \in B \end{cases}$$

By convention:

$$\begin{aligned} x_i \geq 0 && \text{buy} \\ x_i < 0 && \text{sell} \end{aligned}$$

6.4 Transaction costs

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- Small investors only pay commision cost: a_i \$/share traded
- Transaction cost: $a_i|x_i|$
- Large investors (like portfolio managers of large funds) may affect price: price becomes $P_i + b_i x_i$
- Price impact cost: $(P_i + b_i x_i)x_i - P_i x_i = b_i x_i^2$
- Total cost model:

$$c_i(x_i) = a_i|x_i| + b_i x_i^2$$

6.5 Liquidity

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- Suppose you own 50% of all outstanding stock of a company
- How difficult is to sell it?
- Reasonable to bound the percentage of ownership on a particular stock
- Thus, for **liquidity** reasons $\frac{z_i + x_i}{z_i^{total}} \leq \gamma_i$
- $z_i^{total} = \# \text{ outstanding shares of stock } i$
- γ_i maximum allowable percentage of ownership

6.6 Turnover

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- Because of transaction costs: $|x_i|$ should be small

$$|x_i| \leq \delta_i \Rightarrow -\delta_i \leq x_i \leq \delta_i$$

- Alternatively, we might want to bound turnover:

$$\sum_{i=1}^n P_i |x_i| \leq t$$

6.7 Balanced portfolios

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- Need the value of stocks we buy and sell to balance out:

$$\left| \sum_{i=1}^n P_i x_i \right| \leq L \Rightarrow -L \leq \sum_{i=1}^n P_i x_i \leq L$$

- No short sales:

$$z_i + x_i \geq 0, \quad i \in B \cup S$$

6.8 Expected value and Volatility

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- Expected value of portfolio:

$$E \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \hat{P}_i (z_i + x_i) \right] = \sum_{i=1}^n \mu_i (z_i + x_i)$$

- Variance of the value of the portfolio:

$$Var \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \hat{P}_i (z_i + x_i) \right] = (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x})' \Sigma (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x})$$

6.9 Overall formulation

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$$\begin{aligned} \max & \quad \sum_{i=1}^n \mu_i (z_i + x_i) - \sum_{i=1}^n (a_i |x_i| + b_i x_i^2) \\ \text{s.t.} & \quad (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x})' \Sigma (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x}) \leq \sigma^2 \\ & \quad z_i + x_i \leq \gamma_i z_i^{total} \\ & \quad -\delta_i \leq x_i \leq \delta_i \\ & \quad -L \leq \sum_{i=1}^n P_i x_i \leq L \\ & \quad \sum_{i=1}^n P_i |x_i| \leq t \\ & \quad z_i + x_i \geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

7 The general problem

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$$\begin{aligned} f(\mathbf{x}) &: \Re^n \mapsto \Re \\ g_i(\mathbf{x}) &: \Re^n \mapsto \Re, i = 1, \dots, m \end{aligned}$$

$\begin{aligned} NLP: \quad \min \quad & f(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & g_1(\mathbf{x}) \leq 0 \\ & \vdots \\ & g_m(\mathbf{x}) \leq 0 \end{aligned}$

7.1 Is Portfolio Optimization an NLP?

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$$\begin{aligned} \max \quad & \sum_{i=1}^n \mu_i(z_i + x_i) - \sum_{i=1}^n (a_i|x_i| + b_i x_i^2) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x})' \boldsymbol{\Sigma} (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x}) \leq \sigma^2 \\ & z_i + x_i \leq \gamma_i z_i^{total} \\ & -\delta_i \leq x_i \leq \delta_i \\ & -L \leq \sum_{i=1}^n P_i x_i \leq L \\ & \sum_{i=1}^n P_i |x_i| \leq t \\ & z_i + x_i \geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

8 Geometry Problems

8.1 Fermat-Weber Problem

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Given m points $\mathbf{c}_1, \dots, \mathbf{c}_m \in \Re^n$ (locations of retail outlets) and weights $\mathbf{w}_1, \dots, \mathbf{w}_m \in \Re$. Choose the location of a distribution center.

That is, the point $\mathbf{x} \in \Re^n$ to minimize the sum of the weighted distances from \mathbf{x} to each of the points $\mathbf{c}_1, \dots, \mathbf{c}_m \in \Re^n$ (**minimize total daily distance traveled**).

$$\begin{aligned} \min \quad & \sum_{i=1}^m \mathbf{w}_i \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{c}_i\| \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \mathbf{x} \in \Re^n \end{aligned}$$

or

$$\begin{aligned} \min & \sum_{i=1}^m \mathbf{w}_i \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{c}_i\| \\ \text{s.t.} & \mathbf{x} \geq 0 \\ & A\mathbf{x} \leq b, \text{ feasible sites} \end{aligned}$$

(Linearly constrained NLP)

8.2 The Ball Circumscription Problem

Given m points $\mathbf{c}_1, \dots, \mathbf{c}_m \in \mathbb{R}^n$, locate a distribution center at point $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ to minimize the maximum distance from \mathbf{x} to any of the points $\mathbf{c}_1, \dots, \mathbf{c}_m \in \mathbb{R}^n$.

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$$\begin{aligned} \min & \delta \\ \text{s.t.} & \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{c}_i\| \leq \delta, \quad i = 1, \dots, m \end{aligned}$$

9 Transportation

9.1 Traffic Assignment

- OD w , paths $p \in P_w$, demand d_w , x_p : flow of p
 $c_{ij}(\sum_{p: \text{crossing } (i,j)} x_p)$: travel cost of link (i,j) .
 $c_p(x)$ is the travel cost of path p and

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$$c_p(x) = \sum_{(i,j) \text{ on } p} c_{ij}(x_{ij}), \quad \forall p \in P_w, \quad \forall w \in W.$$

System – optimization principle: Assign flow on each path to satisfy total demand and so that the total network cost is minimized.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Min } C(x) &= \sum_p c_p(x) x_p \\ \text{s.t. } x_p &\geq 0, \quad \sum_{p \in P_w} x_p = d_w, \quad \forall w \end{aligned}$$

9.2 Example

Consider a three path network, $d_w = 10$.

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With travel costs $c_{p_1}(x) = 2x_{p_1} + x_{p_2} + 15$, $c_{p_2}(x) = 3x_{p_2} + x_{p_1} + 11$ $c_{p_3}(x) = x_{p_3} + 48$

$$\begin{aligned} C(x) &= c_{p_1}(x)x_{p_1} + c_{p_2}(x)x_{p_2} + c_{p_3}(x)x_{p_3} = \\ &2x_{p_1}^2 + 3x_{p_2}^2 + x_{p_3}^2 + 2x_{p_1}x_{p_2} + 15x_{p_1} + 11x_{p_2} + 38x_{p_3} \\ &x_{p_1}^* = 6, \quad x_{p_2}^* = 4, \quad x_{p_3}^* = 0 \end{aligned}$$

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- **User – optimization principle**: Each user of the network chooses, among all paths, a path requiring minimum travel cost, i.e., for all $w \in W$ and $p \in P_w$,

$$x_p^* > 0 : \longrightarrow c_p(x^*) \leq c_{p'}(x^*) \quad \forall p' \in P_w, \quad \forall w \in W$$

where $c_p(x)$ is the travel time of path p and

$$c_p(x) = \sum_{(i,j) \text{ on } p} c_{ij}(x_{ij}), \quad \forall p \in P_w, \quad \forall w \in W$$

10 Optimal Routing

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- Given a data net and a set W of OD pairs $w = (i, j)$ each OD pair w has input traffic d_w
- Optimal routing problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Min } C(x) &= \sum_{i,j} C_{i,j} \left(\sum_{p: (i,j) \in p} x_p \right) \\ \text{s.t. } \sum_{p \in P_w} x_p &= d_w, \quad \forall w \in W \\ x_p &\geq 0, \quad \forall p \in P_w, \quad w \in W \end{aligned}$$

11 The general problem again

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$$f(\mathbf{x}): \Re^n \mapsto \Re$$

is a continuous (usually differentiable) function of n variables

$$g_i(\mathbf{x}): \Re^n \mapsto \Re, i = 1, \dots, m,$$

$$h_j(\mathbf{x}): \Re^n \mapsto \Re, j = 1, \dots, l$$

$\begin{array}{lll} NLP: & \min & f(\mathbf{x}) \\ & \text{s.t.} & g_1(\mathbf{x}) \leq 0 \\ & & \vdots \\ & & g_m(\mathbf{x}) \leq 0 \\ & & h_1(\mathbf{x}) = 0 \\ & & \vdots \\ & & h_l(\mathbf{x}) = 0 \end{array}$

11.1 Definitions

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- The feasible region of *NLOP* is the set:

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{F} &= \{x | g_1(x) \leq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \leq 0\} \\ &\quad h_1(x) = 0, \dots, h_l(x) = 0\}\end{aligned}$$

11.2 Where do optimal solutions lie?

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Example:

$$\min f(x, y) = (x - a)^2 + (y - b)^2$$

Subject to

$$\begin{aligned}(x - 8)^2 + (y - 9)^2 &\leq 49 \\ 2 \leq x &\leq 13 \\ x + y &\leq 24\end{aligned}$$

Optimal solution(s) **do not necessarily** lie at an extreme point!

Depends on (a, b) .

$(a, b) = (16, 14)$ then solution lies at a corner

$(a, b) = (11, 10)$ then solution lies in interior

$(a, b) = (14, 14)$ then solution lies on the boundary
(not necessarily corner)

11.3 Local vs Global Minima

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- The ball centered at \bar{x} with radius ϵ is the set:

$$B(\bar{x}, \epsilon) := \{x | \|x - \bar{x}\| \leq \epsilon\}$$

- $x \in \mathcal{F}$ is a *local minimum* of *NLOP* if there exists $\epsilon > 0$ such that $f(x) \leq f(y)$ for all $y \in B(x, \epsilon) \cap \mathcal{F}$

- $x \in \mathcal{F}$ is a *global minimum* of *NLOP* if $f(x) \leq f(y)$ for all $y \in \mathcal{F}$

12 Convex Sets

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- A subset $S \subset \Re^n$ is a *convex set* if

$$x, y \in S \Rightarrow \lambda x + (1 - \lambda)y \in S \quad \forall \lambda \in [0, 1]$$

- If S, T are convex sets, then $S \cap T$ is a convex set

- Implication: The intersection of any collection of convex sets is a convex set

13 Convex Functions

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- A function $f(\mathbf{x})$ is a *convex function* if

$$f(\lambda \mathbf{x} + (1 - \lambda) \mathbf{y}) \leq \lambda f(\mathbf{x}) + (1 - \lambda) f(\mathbf{y})$$

$$\forall \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y} \quad \forall \lambda \in [0, 1]$$

- A function $f(\mathbf{x})$ is a *concave function* if

$$f(\lambda \mathbf{x} + (1 - \lambda) \mathbf{y}) \geq \lambda f(\mathbf{x}) + (1 - \lambda) f(\mathbf{y})$$

$$\forall \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y} \quad \forall \lambda \in [0, 1]$$

13.1 Examples in one dimension

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- $f(x) = ax + b$
- $f(x) = x^2 + bx + c$
- $f(x) = |x|$
- $f(x) = -\ln(x)$ for $x > 0$
- $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$ for $x > 0$
- $f(x) = e^x$

13.2 Properties

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- If $f_1(\mathbf{x})$ and $f_2(\mathbf{x})$ are convex functions, and $a, b \geq 0$, then $f(\mathbf{x}) := af_1(\mathbf{x}) + bf_2(\mathbf{x})$ is a convex function
- If $f(\mathbf{x})$ is a convex function and $\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{y} + \mathbf{b}$, then $g(\mathbf{y}) := f(\mathbf{A}\mathbf{y} + \mathbf{b})$ is a convex function

13.3 Recognition of a Convex Function

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A function $f(\mathbf{x})$ is *twice differentiable* at $\bar{\mathbf{x}}$ if there exists a vector $\nabla f(\bar{\mathbf{x}})$ (called the *gradient* of $f(\cdot)$) and a symmetric matrix $H(\bar{\mathbf{x}})$ (called the *Hessian* of $f(\cdot)$) for which:

$$f(\mathbf{x}) = f(\bar{\mathbf{x}}) + \nabla f(\bar{\mathbf{x}})'(\mathbf{x} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})$$

$$+ \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{x} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})'H(\bar{\mathbf{x}})(\mathbf{x} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}) + R(\mathbf{x})||\mathbf{x} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}||^2$$

where $R(\mathbf{x}) \rightarrow 0$ as $\mathbf{x} \rightarrow \bar{\mathbf{x}}$ SLIDE 36

The gradient vector is the vector of partial derivatives:

$$\nabla f(\bar{\mathbf{x}}) = \left(\frac{\partial f(\bar{\mathbf{x}})}{\partial x_1}, \dots, \frac{\partial f(\bar{\mathbf{x}})}{\partial x_n} \right)'$$

The Hessian matrix is the matrix of second partial derivatives:

$$H(\bar{\mathbf{x}})_{ij} = \frac{\partial^2 f(\bar{\mathbf{x}})}{\partial x_i \partial x_j}$$

13.4 Examples

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- For LP, $f(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{c}'\mathbf{x}$, $\nabla f(\bar{\mathbf{x}}) = \mathbf{c}$
- For NLP,
 $f(\mathbf{x}) = 8x_1^2 - x_1x_2 + x_2^2 + 8x_1$, at $\bar{\mathbf{x}} = (1, 0)$,
 $f(\bar{\mathbf{x}}) = 16$ and
 $\nabla f(\bar{\mathbf{x}})' = (16\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 + 8, -\bar{x}_1 + 2\bar{x}_2) = (24, -1)$.

$$\mathbf{H}(\bar{\mathbf{x}}) = \begin{bmatrix} 16 & -1 \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{SLIDE 38}$$

Property: $f(\mathbf{x})$ is a convex function if and only if $H(\mathbf{x})$ is positive semi-definite (PSD) for all \mathbf{x}

Recall that \mathbf{A} is PSD if $\mathbf{u}'\mathbf{A}\mathbf{u} \geq 0$, $\forall \mathbf{u}$

Property: If $H(\mathbf{x})$ is PD for all \mathbf{x} , then $f(\mathbf{x})$ is a strictly convex function

13.5 Examples in n Dimensions

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- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{a}'\mathbf{x} + b$
- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{2}\mathbf{x}'\mathbf{M}\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{c}'\mathbf{x}$ where \mathbf{M} is PSD
- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \|\mathbf{x}\|$ for any norm $\|\cdot\|$
- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^m -\ln(b_i - \mathbf{a}'_i \mathbf{x})$ for \mathbf{x} satisfying $\mathbf{A}\mathbf{x} < \mathbf{b}$

14 Convex Optimization

14.1 Convexity and Minima

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$$\begin{array}{ll} \min & f(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{s.t.} & \mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{F} \end{array}$$

Theorem: Suppose that \mathcal{F} is a convex set, $f : \mathcal{F} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is a convex function, and \mathbf{x}^* is a local minimum of P . Then \mathbf{x}^* is a global minimum of f over \mathcal{F} .

14.1.1 Proof

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Assume that \mathbf{x}^* is not the global minimum. Let \mathbf{y} be the global minimum.
From the convexity of $f(\cdot)$,

$$\begin{aligned} f(\mathbf{y}(\lambda)) &= f(\lambda\mathbf{x}^* + (1-\lambda)\mathbf{y}) \leq \lambda f(\mathbf{x}^*) + (1-\lambda)f(\mathbf{y}) \\ &< \lambda f(\mathbf{x}^*) + (1-\lambda)f(\mathbf{x}^*) = f(\mathbf{x}^*) \end{aligned}$$

for all $\lambda \in (0, 1)$.

Therefore, $f(\mathbf{y}(\lambda)) < f(\mathbf{x}^*)$ for all $\lambda \in (0, 1)$, and so \mathbf{x}^* is not a local minimum, resulting in a contradiction

14.2 COP

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$$\begin{aligned} COP : \quad & \min \quad f(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & g_1(\mathbf{x}) \leq 0 \\ & \vdots \\ & g_m(\mathbf{x}) \leq 0 \\ & \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b} \end{aligned}$$

COP is called a *convex optimization problem* if $f(\mathbf{x}), g_1(\mathbf{x}), \dots, g_m(\mathbf{x})$ are convex functions

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Note that this implies that the feasible region \mathcal{F} is a convex set

In *COP* we are minimizing a convex function over a convex set

Implication: If *COP* is a convex optimization problem, then any local minimum will be a global minimum.

15 Examples of COPs

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The Fermat-Weber Problem - COP

$$\begin{aligned} \min \quad & \sum_{i=1}^m \mathbf{w}_i \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{c}_i\| \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \mathbf{x} \in P \end{aligned}$$

The Ball Circumscription Problem - COP

$$\begin{aligned} \min \quad & \delta \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{c}_i\| \leq \delta, \quad i = 1, \dots, m \end{aligned}$$

15.1 Is Portfolio Optimization a COP?

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$$\begin{aligned} \max \quad & \sum_{i=1}^n \mu_i(z_i + x_i) - \sum_{i=1}^n (a_i|x_i| + b_i x_i^2) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x})' \boldsymbol{\Sigma} (\mathbf{z} + \mathbf{x}) \leq \sigma^2 \\ & z_i + x_i \leq \gamma_i z_i^{total} \\ & -\delta_i \leq x_i \leq \delta_i \\ & -L \leq \sum_{i=1}^n P_i x_i \leq L \\ & \sum_{i=1}^n P_i |x_i| \leq t \\ & z_i + x_i \geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

15.2 Quadratically Constrained Problems

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$$\begin{aligned} \min \quad & (\mathbf{A}_0 \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}_0)' (\mathbf{A}_0 \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}_0) - c_0' \mathbf{x} - d_0 \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & (\mathbf{A}_i \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}_i)' (\mathbf{A}_i \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}_i) - c_i' \mathbf{x} - d_i \leq 0 \\ & i = 1, \dots, m \end{aligned}$$

This is a COP

16 Classification of NLPs

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- **Linear:** $f(x) = c^t x$, $g_i(x) = A_i^t x - b_i$, $i = 1, \dots, m$
- **Unconstrained:** $f(x)$, \Re^n
- **Quadratic:** $f(x) = c^t x + x^t Q x$, $g_i(x) = A_i^t x - b_i$
- **Linearly Constrained:** $g_i(x) = A_i^t x - b_i$
- **Quadratically Constrained:** $g_i(x) = (\mathbf{A}_i \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}_i)' (\mathbf{A}_i \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{b}_i) - c_i' \mathbf{x} - d_i \leq 0$,
 $i = 1, \dots, m$
- **Separable:** $f(x) = \sum_j f_j(x_j)$, $g_i(x) = \sum_j g_{ij}(x_j)$

17 Two Main Issues

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- Characterization of minima

Necessary — Sufficient Conditions

Lagrange Multiplier and KKT Theory

- Computation of minima via iterative algorithms

Iterative descent Methods

Interior Point Methods

18 Summary

- Convex optimization is a powerful modeling framework
- Main message: convex optimization can be solved efficiently