

Chapter 3

Duality

Convex Optimization for Computer Vision
SS 2017

Michael Moeller
Visual Scene Analysis
Department of Computer Science
and Electrical Engineering
University of Siegen

Duality

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Analysis

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Motivation

Convex Conjugation

Fenchel Duality

Duality

Summary: descent methods

For energies of the form

$$u^* \in \arg \min_{u \in \mathbb{R}^n} F(u) + G(u),$$

for proper, closed, convex $F : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, $G : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$, with F additionally being L-smooth, we discussed

Gradient descent: $G \equiv 0$

Gradient projection: $G = \delta_C$

Proximal gradient: G simple (easy to compute prox)

Convergence rates

- Energy convergence in $\mathcal{O}(1/k)$ for "plain" method
- Energy convergence in $\mathcal{O}(1/k^2)$ for Nesterov's method
- Energy and iterate convergence in $\mathcal{O}(c^k)$, $c < 1$, for strongly convex energies.

How powerful is the gradient projection algorithm?

Consider the total variation denoising problem

$$u^* \in \operatorname{argmin}_u \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \|Du\|_{2,1},$$

with the finite difference operator $D : \mathbb{R}^{n \times m \times c} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{nm \times 2c}$.

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Is subgradient descent really the best we can do despite the “nice” strongly convex energy?

Let's try something crazy to try to find a better algorithm:

$$\|g\| = \max_{|q| \leq 1} \langle q, g \rangle$$

Following the crazy idea...

The previous simple observation tells us that

$$\begin{aligned}\|g\|_{2,1} &= \sum_i \|g_i\| = \sum_i \max_{|q_i| \leq 1} \langle q_i, g_i \rangle \\ &= \max_{|q_i| \leq 1} \underbrace{\sum_i \langle q_i, g_i \rangle}_{=: \langle g, q \rangle} \\ &= \max_{\max_i \|q_i\| \leq 1} \langle g, q \rangle = \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \langle g, q \rangle\end{aligned}$$

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We may write

$$\begin{aligned}\min_u \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \|Du\|_1 &= \min_u \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \langle Du, q \rangle \\ &= \min_u \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \langle Du, q \rangle\end{aligned}$$

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Can we switch min and max?

Saddle point problems^a

^aRockafellar, Convex Analysis, Corollary 37.3.2

Let C and D be non-empty closed convex sets in \mathbb{R}^n and \mathbb{R}^m , respectively, and let S be a continuous finite concave-convex function on $C \times D$. If either C or D is bounded, one has

$$\inf_{v \in D} \sup_{q \in C} S(v, q) = \sup_{q \in C} \inf_{v \in D} S(v, q).$$

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We can therefore compute

$$\begin{aligned} \min_u \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \|Du\|_1 &= \min_u \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \langle Du, q \rangle \\ &= \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \min_u \frac{1}{2} \|u - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \langle Du, q \rangle \end{aligned}$$

Now the inner minimization problem obtains its optimum at

$$\begin{aligned}0 &= u - f + \alpha D^* q, \\ \Rightarrow u &= f - \alpha D^* q.\end{aligned}$$

The remaining problem in q becomes

$$\begin{aligned}& \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \frac{1}{2} \|f - \alpha D^* q - f\|_2^2 + \alpha \langle D(f - \alpha D^* q), q \rangle \\&= \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \frac{1}{2} \|\alpha D^* q\|_2^2 + \alpha \langle Df, q \rangle - \|\alpha D^* q\|_2^2 \\&= \max_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} -\frac{1}{2} \|\alpha D^* q\|_2^2 + \alpha \langle Df, q \rangle\end{aligned}$$

Since we prefer minimizations over maximizations, we write

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{q} &= \operatorname{argmax}_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} -\frac{1}{2} \|\alpha D^* q - f\|_2^2 \\ &= \operatorname{argmin}_{\|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1} \frac{1}{2} \left\| D^* q - \frac{f}{\alpha} \right\|_2^2\end{aligned}$$

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This is a problem we know how to solve! An L -smooth function over a simple convex set: Gradient projection

$$q^{k+1} = \pi_C \left(q^k - \tau D \left(D^* q^k - \frac{f}{\alpha} \right) \right),$$

where $C = \{q \in \mathbb{R}^{nm \times 2c} \mid \|q\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1\}$.

A conceptual way to reformulate energy minimization problems?

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Definition: Convex Conjugate

We define the *convex conjugate* of the function $E : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ to be

$$E^*(p) = \sup_{u \in \mathbb{R}^n} (\langle u, p \rangle - E(u)).$$

Convexity of the Convex Conjugate

The convex conjugate E^* of any proper function $E : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ is convex and closed.

Proof: Exercise

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Are there reasonable computation rules for the convex conjugate that simplify our lives in practice?

Convex conjugates rules

- **Scalar multiplication :**

$$E(u) = \alpha \tilde{E}(u) \Rightarrow E^*(p) = \alpha \tilde{E}^*(p/\alpha)$$

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- Careful: Only separable sums work this way!

Sum rule for E_1, E_2 closed, convex, proper:

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- **Translation:**

$$E(u) = \tilde{E}(u - b) \Rightarrow E^*(p) = \tilde{E}^*(p) + \langle p, b \rangle$$

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$$E(u) = \tilde{E}(u - b) \Rightarrow E^*(p) = \tilde{E}^*(p) + \langle p, b \rangle$$

- **Additional affine functions:**

$$E(u) = \tilde{E}(u) + \langle b, u \rangle + a \Rightarrow E^*(p) = \tilde{E}^*(p - b) - a$$

Convex conjugates

Examples:

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Suspicion: $E^{**} = E$?

Fenchel-Young Inequality^a

^aBorwein, Zhu *Techniques of variational analysis*, Proposition 4.4.1

Let E be proper, convex and closed, $u \in \text{dom}(E) \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, and $p \in \mathbb{R}^n$, then

$$E(u) + E^*(p) \geq \langle u, p \rangle.$$

Equality holds if and only if $p \in \partial E(u)$.

Proof: Board.

Theorem: Biconjugate^a

^aRockafellar, Convex Analysis, Theorem 12.2

Let $E : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ be proper, convex and closed, then
 $E^{**} = E$.

Incomplete proof on the board.

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Let $E : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ be proper, convex and closed, then $E^{**} = E$.

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Now we understand what we did for TV minimization: Replace $\|Du\|_{2,1}$ by

$$(\|\cdot\|_{2,1})^{**}(Du) = \sup_p \langle p, Du \rangle - \delta_{\|\cdot\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1}(p).$$

Theorem: Subgradient of convex conjugate^a

^aRockafellar, Convex Analysis, Theorem 23.5

Let E be proper, convex and closed, then the following two conditions are equivalent:

- $p \in \partial E(u)$
- $u \in \partial E^*(p)$

Proof: Board

Theorem: Subgradient of convex conjugate^a

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Proof: Board

Board: A quick way for repeating our TV-reformulation.

Fenchel's Duality Theorem^a

^aC.f. Rockafellar, *Convex Analysis*, Section 31

Let $H : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ and $R : \mathbb{R}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ be proper, closed, convex functions and let there exist a $u \in \text{ri}(\text{dom}(H))$ such that $Ku \in \text{ri}(\text{dom}(R))$. Then

$$\inf_u \quad G(u) + F(Ku) \quad \text{"Primal"}$$

$$= \inf_u \sup_q \quad G(u) + \langle q, Ku \rangle - F^*(q) \quad \text{"Saddle point"}$$

$$= \sup_q \inf_u \quad G(u) + \langle q, Ku \rangle - F^*(q)$$

$$= \sup_q \quad -G^*(-K^*q) - F^*(q) \quad \text{"Dual"}$$

Conclusion

Let the assumptions from Fenchel's Duality Theorem hold. If there exists a pair $(u, q) \in \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^n$ such that one of the following four equivalent conditions are met

- ① $-K^T q \in \partial G(u), \quad q \in \partial F(Ku),$
- ② $-K^T q \in \partial G(u), \quad Ku \in \partial F^*(q),$
- ③ $u \in \partial G^*(-K^T q), \quad q \in \partial F(Ku),$
- ④ $u \in \partial G^*(-K^T q), \quad Ku \in \partial F^*(q),$

Then u solves the primal and q solves the dual optimization problem.

Example application of duality

Assume we want to minimize

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or

$$\hat{p} = \operatorname{argmin}_p \frac{1}{2} \|D^*p - f\|^2 + c\|p\|_1$$

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We can apply the proximal gradient algorithm!

Knowing in advance if the dual problem is more 'friendly':

Conjugation of strongly convex functions

If $E : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$ is proper, closed and m -strongly convex, then E^* is proper, closed, convex and $1/m$ -smooth.

Does this solve all problems?

Consider TV- ℓ^1 denoising, i.e.,

$$\begin{aligned} & \inf_u \|u - f\|_1 + \alpha \|Du\|_{2,1} \\ &= \sup_q \langle \alpha D^* q, f \rangle - \delta_{\|\cdot\|_\infty \leq 1}(-\alpha D^* q) - \delta_{\|\cdot\|_{2,\infty} \leq 1}(q) \end{aligned}$$

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The problem did not become easier! What can we do?

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Next chapter

Work on the saddle-point problem direct! Try to find (u, q) with

$$-K^T q \in \partial G(u), \quad Ku \in \partial F^*(q).$$