
Modern Optimization Theory: Concave Programming

1. Preliminaries

- We will present below the elements of “modern optimization theory” as formulated by Kuhn and Tucker, and a number of authors who have followed their general approach.
- Modern *constrained maximization theory* is concerned with the following problem:

$$\left. \begin{array}{ll} \text{Maximize} & f(x) \\ \text{subject to} & g^j(x) \geq 0, \text{ for } j = 1, 2, \dots, m \\ \text{and} & x \in X \end{array} \right\} \text{(P)}$$

where

- X is a non-empty subset of \mathbb{R}^n , and
- f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) are functions from X to \mathbb{R} .
- **Constraint Set:**

$$C = \{x \in X: g^j(x) \geq 0, \text{ for } j = 1, 2, \dots, m\}.$$

- A point $\hat{x} \in X$ is a point of **constrained global maximum** if \hat{x} solves the problem (P).
- A point $\hat{x} \in X$ is a point of **constrained local maximum** if there exists an open ball around \hat{x} , $B_\epsilon(\hat{x})$, such that $f(\hat{x}) \geq f(x)$ for all $x \in B_\epsilon(\hat{x}) \cap C$.

- A pair $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda}) \in (X \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ is a **saddle point** if

$$\phi(x, \hat{\lambda}) \leq \phi(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda}) \leq \phi(\hat{x}, \lambda) \text{ for all } x \in X \text{ and all } \lambda \in \mathbb{R}_+^m,$$

where

$$\phi(x, \lambda) = f(x) + \lambda g(x) \text{ for all } (x, \lambda) \in (X \times \mathbb{R}_+^m).$$

- $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda})$ is simultaneously a point of maximum and minimum of $\phi(x, \lambda)$: maximum with respect to x , and minimum with respect to λ .
- The *constraint minimization problem* and the corresponding **constrained global minimum** and **constrained local minimum** can be defined analogously.

2. Constrained Global Maxima and Saddle Points

- A major part of modern optimization theory is concerned with establishing (under suitable conditions) an equivalence result between a point of constrained global maximum and saddle point.

– We explore this theory in what follows.

- **Theorem 1:**

If $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda}) \in (X \times \Re_+^m)$ is a saddle point, then

- (i) $\hat{\lambda}g(\hat{x}) = 0$,*
- (ii) $g(\hat{x}) \geq 0$, and*
- (iii) \hat{x} is a point of constrained global maximum.*

– Proof: To be discussed in class.

– Hints:

- For (i) and (ii) use the second inequality in the definition of a saddle point.
- Then use (i), (ii) and the first inequality in the saddle point definition to prove (iii).

- A converse of Theorem 1 can be proved if
 - X is a convex set,
 - f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) are concave functions on X , and
 - a condition on the constraints, generally known as “Slater’s condition” is satisfied.
 - Notice that none of these conditions are needed for the validity of Theorem 1.

- **Slater’s Condition:**

Given the problem (P), we will say that Slater’s condition holds if *there exists $\bar{x} \in X$ such that $g^j(\bar{x}) > 0$, for $j = 1, 2, \dots, m$.*

- **Theorem 2 (Kuhn-Tucker):**

Suppose $\hat{x} \in X$ is a point of constrained global maximum. If X is a convex set, f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) are concave functions on X , and Slater’s condition holds, then there is $\hat{\lambda} \in \Re_+^m$ such that

- (i) $\hat{\lambda} g(\hat{x}) = 0$, and
- (ii) $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda})$ is a saddle point.

- **Examples:** The following examples demonstrate why the assumptions of Theorem 2 are needed for the conclusion to be valid.

#1. Let $X = \mathbb{R}_+$, $f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be given by $f(x) = x$, and $g : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be given by $g(x) = -x^2$.

- What is the point of constrained global maximum (\hat{x}) for the problem (P) for this characterization of X , f and g ?
- Can you find a $\hat{\lambda} \in \mathbb{R}_+$ such that $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda})$ is a saddle point? Explain clearly.
- What goes wrong? Explain clearly.

#2. Let $X = \mathbb{R}_+$, $f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be given by $f(x) = x^2$, and $g : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be given by $g(x) = 1 - x$.

- What is the point of constrained global maximum (\hat{x}) for the problem (P) for this characterization of X , f and g ?
- Can you find a $\hat{\lambda} \in \mathbb{R}_+$ such that $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda})$ is a saddle point? Explain clearly.
- Is the Slater's condition satisfied? What goes wrong? Explain clearly.

3. The Kuhn-Tucker Conditions and Saddle Points

• **The Kuhn-Tucker Conditions:**

Let X be an open set in \mathbb{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be continuously differentiable on X . A pair $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda}) \in (X \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ satisfies the Kuhn-Tucker conditions if

$$(i) \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_i}(\hat{x}) + \sum_{j=1}^m \hat{\lambda}_j \frac{\partial g^j}{\partial x_i}(\hat{x}) = 0, \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, n,$$

$$(ii) g(\hat{x}) \geq 0, \text{ and } \hat{\lambda} g(\hat{x}) = 0.$$

– The condition $\hat{\lambda} g(\hat{x}) = 0$ is called the ‘Complementary Slackness’ condition. Note

$$\hat{\lambda} g(\hat{x}) = 0 \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda}_1 g^1(\hat{x}) + \dots + \hat{\lambda}_m g^m(\hat{x}) = 0,$$

$$\Rightarrow \hat{\lambda}_1 g^1(\hat{x}) = 0, \dots, \hat{\lambda}_m g^m(\hat{x}) = 0, \text{ since } \hat{\lambda}_j \geq 0 \text{ as } \hat{\lambda} \in \mathbb{R}_+^m \text{ and } g^j(\hat{x}) \geq 0.$$

- So if $g^j(\hat{x}) > 0$, then $\hat{\lambda}_j = 0$. That is, if a constraint is not binding, then the corresponding multiplier is 0.
- But if $g^j(\hat{x}) = 0$, then $\hat{\lambda}_j$ can be either > 0 or equal to zero.

- A part of modern optimization theory is concerned with establishing the equivalence (under some suitable conditions) between a saddle point and a point where the Kuhn-Tucker conditions are satisfied.

- **Theorem 3:**

Let X be an open set in \mathbb{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be continuously differentiable on X . Suppose a pair $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda}) \in (X \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ satisfies the Kuhn-Tucker conditions. If X is convex and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) are concave on X , then

- (i) $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda})$ is a saddle point, and
- (ii) \hat{x} is a point of constrained global maximum.

– Proof: To be discussed in class.

- **Theorem 4:**

Let X be an open set in \mathbb{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be continuously differentiable on X . Suppose a pair $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda}) \in (X \times \mathbb{R}_+^m)$ is a saddle point. Then $(\hat{x}, \hat{\lambda})$ satisfies the Kuhn-Tucker conditions.

– Proof: To be discussed in class.

4. Sufficient Conditions for Constrained Global Maximum and Minimum

- Now we have all the ingredients to find out the sufficient conditions for a constrained global maximum or minimum involving the Kuhn-Tucker conditions.
- #3. State and prove rigorously a theorem that gives the *sufficient* conditions for a constrained global *maximum* involving the Kuhn-Tucker conditions.
- #4. State and prove rigorously a theorem that gives the *sufficient* conditions for a constrained global *minimum* involving the Kuhn-Tucker conditions.

5. Constrained Local and Global Maxima

- It is clear that if \hat{x} is a point of constrained global maximum, then \hat{x} is also a point of constrained local maximum.
 - The circumstances under which the converse is true are given by the following theorem.

- **Theorem 5:**

Let X be a convex set in \mathbb{R}^n . Let f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be concave functions on X . Suppose \hat{x} is a point of constrained local maximum. Then \hat{x} is also a point of constrained global maximum.

- Proof: To be discussed in class.
- Hints: Establish first that since X is a convex set and g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, m$)'s are concave functions, the constraint set C is a convex set.

6. Necessary Conditions for Constrained Local Maximum and Minimum

- We now establish the useful result (corresponding to the classical Lagrange Theorem) that if $x^* \in X$ is a point of constrained local maximum then, under suitable conditions, there exists $\lambda^* \in \mathfrak{R}_+^k$ such that (x^*, λ^*) satisfies the Kuhn-Tucker conditions.

- **Theorem 6 (Constrained Local Maximum):**

Let X be an open set in \mathfrak{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, k$) be continuously differentiable on X . Suppose that $x^ \in X$ is a point of constrained local maximum of f subject to k inequality constraints:*

$$g^1(x) \leq b_1, \dots, g^k(x) \leq b_k.$$

Without loss of generality, assume that the first k_0 constraints are binding at x^ and that the last $(k - k_0)$ constraints are not binding. Suppose that the following nondegenerate constraint qualification is satisfied at x^* :*

The rank at x^* of the following Jacobian matrix of the binding constraints is k_0 :

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \end{pmatrix}.$$

Form the Lagrangian

$$L(x, \lambda) \equiv f(x) - \lambda_1 [g^1(x) - b_1] - \dots - \lambda_k [g^k(x) - b_k].$$

Then, there exist multipliers $(\lambda_1^*, \dots, \lambda_k^*)$ such that

- (a) $\frac{\partial L}{\partial x_1}(x^*, \lambda^*) = 0, \dots, \frac{\partial L}{\partial x_n}(x^*, \lambda^*) = 0;$
- (b) $\lambda_1^* [g^1(x^*) - b_1] = 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* [g^k(x^*) - b_k] = 0;$
- (c) $\lambda_1^* \geq 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* \geq 0;$
- (d) $g^1(x^*) \leq b_1, \dots, g^k(x^*) \leq b_k.$

- Proof: To be discussed in class (see Section 19.6, pages 480-482, of the textbook).
- Note that the conditions (a) – (d) are the Kuhn-Tucker conditions.

● **Example:**

Consider the following problem:

$$\left. \begin{array}{ll} \text{Maximize} & x \\ \text{subject to} & (1 - x)^3 \geq y, \\ & x \geq 0, y \geq 0. \end{array} \right\}$$

- Define carefully X , f , and the g^j 's and b_j 's for this problem.
- Draw carefully the constraint set for this problem and find out (x^*, y^*) such that (x^*, y^*) solves this problem.
- Are there λ_j^* 's (the number of λ_j^* 's should be in accordance with the number of g^j 's) such that (x^*, y^*) and the λ_j^* 's satisfy the Kuhn-Tucker conditions? Explain carefully.
- What goes wrong? Explain carefully.

• **Theorem 7 (Mixed Constraints):**

Let X be an open set in \mathbb{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, k$) and h^i ($i = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be continuously differentiable on X . Suppose that $x^ \in X$ is a point of constrained local maximum of f subject to k inequality constraints and m equality constraints:*

$$\begin{aligned} g^1(x) &\leq b_1, \dots, g^k(x) \leq b_k, \\ h^1(x) &= c_1, \dots, h^m(x) = c_m. \end{aligned}$$

Without loss of generality, assume that the first k_0 inequality constraints are binding at x^ and that the last $(k - k_0)$ constraints are not binding. Suppose that the following nondegenerate constraint qualification is satisfied at x^* :*

The rank at x^ of the Jacobian matrix of the equality constraints and the binding inequality constraints*

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \end{pmatrix}$$

is $(k_0 + m)$.

Form the Lagrangian

$$L(x, \lambda, \mu) \equiv f(x) - \lambda_1 [g^1(x) - b_1] - \dots - \lambda_k [g^k(x) - b_k] \\ - \mu_1 [h^1(x) - c_1] - \dots - \mu_m [h^m(x) - c_m].$$

Then, there exist multipliers $(\lambda_1^, \dots, \lambda_k^*, \mu_1^*, \dots, \mu_m^*)$ such that*

- (a) $\frac{\partial L}{\partial x_1}(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) = 0, \dots, \frac{\partial L}{\partial x_n}(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) = 0;$
- (b) $\lambda_1^* [g^1(x^*) - b_1] = 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* [g^k(x^*) - b_k] = 0;$
- (c) $h^1(x^*) = c_1, \dots, h^m(x^*) = c_m;$
- (d) $\lambda_1^* \geq 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* \geq 0;$
- (e) $g^1(x^*) \leq b_1, \dots, g^k(x^*) \leq b_k.$

• **Theorem 8 (Constrained Local Minimum):**

Let X be an open set in \mathbb{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, k$) and h^i ($i = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be continuously differentiable on X . Suppose that $x^ \in X$ is a point of constrained local minimum of f subject to k inequality constraints and m equality constraints:*

$$\begin{aligned} g^1(x) &\geq b_1, \dots, g^k(x) \geq b_k, \\ h^1(x) &= c_1, \dots, h^m(x) = c_m. \end{aligned}$$

Without loss of generality, assume that the first k_0 inequality constraints are binding at x^ and that the last $(k - k_0)$ constraints are not binding. Suppose that the following nondegenerate constraint qualification is satisfied at x^* :*

The rank at x^ of the Jacobian matrix of the equality constraints and the binding inequality constraints*

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_1}(x^*) & \cdots & \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_n}(x^*) \end{pmatrix}$$

is $(k_0 + m)$.

Form the Lagrangian

$$L(x, \lambda, \mu) \equiv f(x) - \lambda_1 [g^1(x) - b_1] - \dots - \lambda_k [g^k(x) - b_k] \\ - \mu_1 [h^1(x) - c_1] - \dots - \mu_m [h^m(x) - c_m].$$

Then, there exist multipliers $(\lambda_1^, \dots, \lambda_k^*, \mu_1^*, \dots, \mu_m^*)$ such that*

(a) $\frac{\partial L}{\partial x_1}(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) = 0, \dots, \frac{\partial L}{\partial x_n}(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) = 0;$

(b) $\lambda_1^* [g^1(x^*) - b_1] = 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* [g^k(x^*) - b_k] = 0;$

(c) $h^1(x^*) = c_1, \dots, h^m(x^*) = c_m;$

(d) $\lambda_1^* \geq 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* \geq 0;$

(e) $g^1(x^*) \geq b_1, \dots, g^k(x^*) \geq b_k.$

7. Sufficient Conditions for Constrained Local Maximum and Minimum

- We use techniques similar to the necessary conditions.
 - Given a solution (x^*, λ^*, μ^*) of the Kuhn-Tucker conditions (the first-order conditions), divide the inequality constraints into binding constraints and non-binding constraints at x^* .
 - On the one hand, we treat the binding inequality constraints like equality constraints;
 - on the other hand, the multipliers for the non-binding constraints must be zero and these constraints drop out of the Lagrangian.

• **Theorem 9:**

Let X be an open set in \mathbb{R}^n , and f, g^j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, k$) and h^i ($i = 1, 2, \dots, m$) be twice continuously differentiable on X . Consider the problem of maximizing f on the constraint set:

$$C_{g,h} \equiv \left\{ x \in X: \begin{array}{l} g^j(x) \leq b_j, \text{ for } j = 1, 2, \dots, k, \\ h^i(x) = c_i, \text{ for } i = 1, 2, \dots, m. \end{array} \right\}$$

Form the Lagrangian

$$L(x, \lambda, \mu) \equiv f(x) - \lambda_1 [g^1(x) - b_1] - \dots - \lambda_k [g^k(x) - b_k] \\ - \mu_1 [h^1(x) - c_1] - \dots - \mu_m [h^m(x) - c_m].$$

(a) Suppose that there exist multipliers $(\lambda_1^, \dots, \lambda_k^*, \mu_1^*, \dots, \mu_m^*)$ such that*

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial x_1}(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) = 0, \dots, \frac{\partial L}{\partial x_n}(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) = 0;$$

$$\lambda_1^* \geq 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* \geq 0;$$

$$\lambda_1^* [g^1(x^*) - b_1] = 0, \dots, \lambda_k^* [g^k(x^*) - b_k] = 0;$$

$$h^1(x^*) = c_1, \dots, h^m(x^*) = c_m.$$

(b) *Without loss of generality, assume that the first k_0 inequality constraints are binding at x^* and that the last $(k - k_0)$ constraints are not binding. Write (g^1, \dots, g^{k_0}) as g_{k_0} , (h^1, \dots, h^m) as h , the Jacobian derivative of g_{k_0} at x^* as $Dg_{k_0}(x^*)$, and the Jacobian derivative of h at x^* as $Dh(x^*)$.*

Suppose that the Hessian of L with respect to x at (x^, λ^*, μ^*) is negative definite on the linear constraint set*

$$\{v: Dg_{k_0}(x^*) \cdot v = 0 \text{ and } Dh(x^*) \cdot v = 0\},$$

that is,

$$\begin{aligned} v &\neq 0, \quad Dg_{k_0}(x^*) \cdot v = 0 \text{ and } Dh(x^*) \cdot v = 0 \\ &\Rightarrow v^T \cdot H_L(x^*, \lambda^*, \mu^*) \cdot v < 0. \end{aligned}$$

Then x^ is a point of constrained local maximum of f on the constraint set $C_{g,h}$.*

- To check condition (b), form the **bordered Hessian**

$$\overline{H} = \left(\begin{array}{cccccc|ccc} 0 & \dots & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_1} & \dots & \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_n} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & \dots & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_1} & \dots & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_n} \\ 0 & \dots & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_1} & \dots & \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_n} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & \dots & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_1} & \dots & \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_n} \\ \hline \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_1} & \dots & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_1} & \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_1} & \dots & \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_1} & \frac{\partial^2 L}{\partial x_1^2} & \dots & \frac{\partial^2 L}{\partial x_n \partial x_1} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial g^1}{\partial x_n} & \dots & \frac{\partial g^{k_0}}{\partial x_n} & \frac{\partial h^1}{\partial x_n} & \dots & \frac{\partial h^m}{\partial x_n} & \frac{\partial^2 L}{\partial x_1 \partial x_n} & \dots & \frac{\partial^2 L}{\partial x_n^2} \end{array} \right)$$

Check the signs of the last $(n - (k_0 + m))$ leading principal minors of \overline{H} , starting with the determinant of \overline{H} itself.

- If $|\overline{H}|$ has the same sign as $(-1)^n$ and if these last $(n - (k_0 + m))$ leading principal minors alternate in sign, then condition (b) holds.
- We need to make the following changes in the wording of Theorem 9 for an inequality-constrained **minimization** problem:
 - (i) write the inequality constraints as $g^j(x) \geq b_j$ in the presentation of the constraint set $C_{g,h}$,
 - (ii) change “negative definite” and “ < 0 ” in condition (b) to “positive definite” and “ > 0 ”.
 - The bordered Hessian check requires that the last $(n - (k_0 + m))$ leading principal minors of \overline{H} all have the same sign as $(-1)^{k_0+m}$.

• **Example 1:**

Consider the following constrained maximization problem:

$$\left. \begin{array}{ll} \text{Maximize} & \prod_{i=1}^n x_i \\ \text{subject to} & \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \leq n, \\ \text{and} & x_i \geq 0, i = 1, 2, \dots, n. \end{array} \right\} \text{(P)}$$

Find out the solution to (P) by showing your steps clearly.

• **Example 2:**

Consider the following constrained maximization problem:

$$\left. \begin{array}{ll} \text{Maximize} & x^2 + x + 4y^2 \\ \text{subject to} & 2x + 2y \leq 1, \\ \text{and} & x \geq 0, y \geq 0. \end{array} \right\} \text{(Q)}$$

Find out the solution to (Q) by showing your steps clearly.

References

- Must read the following sections from the textbook:
 - Section 18.3, 18.4, 18.5, 18.6 (pages 424 – 447): Inequality Constraints, Mixed Constraints, Constrained Minimization Problems, and Kuhn-Tucker Formulation;
 - Section 19.3 (pages 466 – 469): Second-Order Conditions (Inequality Constraints),
 - Section 19.6 (pages 480 – 482): Proofs of First Order Conditions.
- This material is based on
 1. Mangasarian, O. L., *Non-Linear Programming*, (chapters 5, 7),
 2. Takayama, A., *Mathematical Economics*, (chapter 1),
 3. Nikaido, H., *Convex Structures and Economic Theory*, (chapter 1).