16.110x: Flight Vehicle Aerodynamics

MITx Spring 2014 Course Report


Questions should be addressed to irx@mit.edu.

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The MIT Institutional Research group in the Office of the Provost, in conjunction with the MIT Office of Digital Learning, have established reporting mechanisms to inform course staff and the general public about activity within MITx open online courses on edX (sometimes referred to as Massive Open Online Courses - MOOCs). These reports are decidedly data driven, with text limited to a brief introduction, course description, and figure captions. The founding principles of these reports can be found in the inaugural MITx and HarvardX course reports; either the 2012-2013 cross-course synthesis [1] or one of the individual course reports from this same period (e.g., [3]; complete list available here http://odl.mit.edu/mitx-working-papers/). Questions regarding these reports, and the tools used to create them, can be directed to the Institutional Research group at MIT (irx@mit.edu).
Description of 16.110x taken from www.edx.org:

Through inspiring examples and stories, discover the power of data and use analytics to provide an edge to your career and your life.

About this Course

In the last decade, the amount of data available to organizations has reached unprecedented levels. Data is transforming business, social interactions, and the future of our society. In this course, you will learn how to use data and analytics to give an edge to your career and your life. We will examine real world examples of how analytics have been used to significantly improve a business or industry. These examples include Moneyball, eHarmony, the Framingham Heart Study, Twitter, IBM Watson, and Netflix. Through these examples and many more, we will teach you the following analytics methods: linear regression, logistic regression, trees, text analytics, clustering, visualization, and optimization. We will be using the statistical software R to build models and work with data. The contents of this course are essentially the same as those of the corresponding MIT class (The Analytics Edge). It is a challenging class, but it will enable you to apply analytics to real-world applications.

Course staff for 16.110x:
Mark Drela, Alejandra Uranga

Certified versus Non-Certified:

Open online courses lead to tremendous diversity in terms of enrollment and activity. Hence, basic grouping of participants helps distinguish behavior relevant to course teams and analysts. For example, the 2012-2013 course reports from HarvardX and MITx used four categories: registered, viewed, explored, and certified. We acknowledge these categories in Fig. 2.1c, but opt for a pragmatic categorization in the bulk of this report, namely, “Non-Certified” versus “Certified”. Certification provides a behavioral reference to those students likely to interact with a significant amount of content, and its application in this report is not intended to focus discussion around certification rates. As shown in previous course reports, behavior of “Non-Certified” participants varies greatly, and many open questions remain.

Course Metadata and participant Activity Highlights relative to certification:

The following tables provide course metadata and summary stats of participant behavior. The lefthand table represents course information, enrollment, and the number certified. The righthand table provides total (summed) and mean metrics for participant behavior categorized by certification. Many of these metrics depend greatly on time of enrollment, and one should consider them only as highly generalized features of the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Metadata</th>
<th>16.110x</th>
<th>Activity Highlights</th>
<th>Non-Certified</th>
<th>Certified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>MITx</td>
<td>Summed Number of Clicks</td>
<td>3036410</td>
<td>1742932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch Date</td>
<td>2014-03-05</td>
<td>Mean Clicks per User</td>
<td>177.4</td>
<td>17256.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Length</td>
<td>14 Weeks</td>
<td>Summed Total Time</td>
<td>26493.4 hrs</td>
<td>15905.8 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Effort</td>
<td>12 hours/week</td>
<td>Mean Total Time per User</td>
<td>2.4 hrs</td>
<td>157.5 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Enrolled</td>
<td>31633</td>
<td>Summed Number of Forum Events</td>
<td>58943</td>
<td>75915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Certified</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>Mean Forum Events per User</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>751.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis Tools and Data Sources:

The data sources for this report come solely from the weekly exports provided by the edX analytics team. All data is loaded into MongoDB, and some pre and post processing is needed to generate figures in this report. More information regarding the format of raw data can found here: [code.edx.org](http://code.edx.org).
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References


irx@mit.edu
Figure 1.1: **Course structure visualization.** Course structure visualization highlighting the order and density of resources in 16.110x. The y-axis represents the temporal order of resources, with chapters indicated by text. Bars are color coded by course component (see legend), while height and length represent density and weight toward final grade, respectively.

(a) Legend describing color coding of course components in the course axis visualization (left). Within the main course structure visualization, the height of each bar represents density of resources, while length is correlated with weight toward final grade.

(b) Counts of resource categories existing in 16.110x, where each category represents a fundamental element of any edX course. For more information on the kinds of resources and naming conventions, please see the edX documentation (http://docs.edx.org/).
(a) Registration date for all participants; counts per day (silver - left scale) and cumulative enrollment (red - right scale). Dashed lines represent course start and end dates.

(b) Last event (click) for participants with at least one click within the course; counts per day (gray - left scale) and a last-event survival function (red - right scale). Dashed lines represent course start and survival end dates.

(c) Participant classification percentages and counts. The registered, viewed, explored, and certified categories are defined here [1].

Figure 2.1: **Enrollment and Last Event figures.** Enrollment is based on registration dates, while Last Activity is based on the last action of any participant. If a participant only registered, there is no last activity measure, leading to potential discrepancies between cumulative enrollment and the last activity survival function. An additional figure indicates population sizes for categories defined in the original MITx and HarvardX course reports [1].
Figure 3.1: **Demographic variables.** Distributions of demographic variables collected during edX registration for all participants reporting data, comparing non-certified versus certified participants: (top left) geolocation via IP look-up, (top-right) gender, (bottom left) level of education, i.e., highest degree attained, and (bottom right) age. Note: other than geolocation, all demographic variables are collected at registration and are self-reported. Hence, variables such as level of education are potentially out of date depending on when a participant registered, and bias issues dealing with self-reported data may also exist.
(a) Number of events (clicks). For clarity, only binning values > 1.

(b) Number of days active (at least one click in a given day).

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(a) **Resource accesses for all participants** in terms of the course axis visualization (Fig. 1.1). The upper plot is a count of unique users, color coded by the course axis visualization.

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**Figure 5.1:** Unique users accessing content visualized via course structure. Course structure visualization (lower image in Fig. 5.1a and Fig. 5.1b) integrated with the number of unique users accessing an individual resource in the course.

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(b) Time series of forum submissions: posts, comments, and up-votes. Dashed lines represent course launch (left) and end (right) dates.
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