Duality

How do we get an upper bound to a maximization LP?

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\begin{array}{rrcrl}
\max & 13a & + & 23b & \\
\text{s.t.} & 5a & + & 15b & \le 480 \\
 & 4a & + & 4b & \le 160 \\
 & 35a & + & 20b & \le 1190 \\
 & & & a,b & \ge 0
\end{array}
$$

Note that a lower bound is easy to derive. Every choice of $a, b \ge 0$ gives us a lower bound (e.g. $a = 12, b = 28$ gives us a lower bound of 800).

If you take a conic combination of the rows (multiply the i-th row with $y_i \ge 0$) such that $\sum_i y_i a_{ij} \ge c_j$ then $\sum_i y_i b_i$ will be an upper bound.

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Definition 2

Let $z = \max\{c^T x \mid Ax \le b, x \ge 0\}$ be a linear program P (called the primal linear program).

The linear program D defined by

$$w = \min\{b^T y \mid A^T y \ge c, y \ge 0\}$$

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The dual of the dual problem is the primal problem.

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x is primal feasible iff $x \in \{x \mid Ax \leq b, x \geq 0\}$

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If P is unbounded then D is infeasible.

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