

## 12.6: Prediction

Recall the third exam/final exam example. We examined the scatter plot and showed that the correlation coefficient is significant. We found the equation of the best-fit line for the final exam grade as a function of the grade on the third-exam. We can now use the least-squares regression line for prediction.

Suppose you want to estimate, or predict, the mean final exam score of statistics students who received 73 on the third exam. The exam scores ( $x$ -values) range from 65 to 75. Since 73 is between the  $x$ -values 65 and 75, substitute  $x = 73$  into the equation. Then:

$$\hat{y} = -173.51 + 4.83(73) = 179.08$$

We predict that statistics students who earn a grade of 73 on the third exam will earn a grade of 179.08 on the final exam, on average.

### ✓ Example 12.6.1

Recall the third exam/final exam example.

- What would you predict the final exam score to be for a student who scored a 66 on the third exam?
- What would you predict the final exam score to be for a student who scored a 90 on the third exam?

#### Answer

a. 145.27

b. The  $x$  values in the data are between 65 and 75. Ninety is outside of the domain of the observed  $x$  values in the data (independent variable), so you cannot reliably predict the final exam score for this student. (Even though it is possible to enter 90 into the equation for  $x$  and calculate a corresponding  $y$  value, the  $y$  value that you get will not be reliable.)

To understand really how unreliable the prediction can be outside of the observed  $x$ -values observed in the data, make the substitution  $x = 90$  into the equation.

$$\hat{y} = -173.51 + 4.83(90) = 261.19$$

The final-exam score is predicted to be 261.19. The largest the final-exam score can be is 200.

The process of predicting inside of the observed  $x$  values observed in the data is called *interpolation*. The process of predicting outside of the observed  $x$ -values observed in the data is called *extrapolation*.

### ? Exercise 12.6.1

Data are collected on the relationship between the number of hours per week practicing a musical instrument and scores on a math test. The line of best fit is as follows:

$$\hat{y} = 72.5 + 2.8x$$

What would you predict the score on a math test would be for a student who practices a musical instrument for five hours a week?

#### Answer

86.5

## Summary

After determining the presence of a strong correlation coefficient and calculating the line of best fit, you can use the least squares regression line to make predictions about your data.

## References

- Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Data from the National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention.

3. Data from the United States Census Bureau. Available online at [www.census.gov/compendia/stat...atalities.html](http://www.census.gov/compendia/stat...atalities.html)
4. Data from the National Center for Health Statistics.

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