

Class 14: Gene Prediction (1)

Held: Tuesday, 13 October 2009

Summary: We consider ways in which we can computationally identify genes (or sequences likely to be genes) in longer DNA sequences.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Reading: Chapter 6.

Notes:

- Don't forget that we have a reading and reflection for Thursday.

Overview:

- What can we do with long sequences?
- Gene finding
- Ways of predicting useful ORFs
- Obstacles to finding genes
- Web exploration

Gene Prediction: Going Beyond DNA Sequences

- We've now figured out how to get long sequences of DNA.
 - See previous classes for details?
- What can we do with those sequences?
 - If we sequence something new, we can *search* those sequences for a similar sequence.
 - We can *compare* related sequences to see how they change (e.g., to build trees)
 - ...
- One clearly useful thing would be to find the genes in the genome
 - But it's a very hard problem

Strategies for Gene Prediction

- Match with existing genes in other organisms
 - Feels like a bit of a chicken-and-the-egg problem
- String matching
 - Computer science is simple; we're good at finding strings (even approximate strings)
 - Biology is messy: We don't know what strings to predict.
- Other characteristics, such as base-pair frequency

Obstacles to Gene Prediction

- Incomplete knowledge: Promotor sequences not universal (and probably not always known)
- Introns and Exons
- ...

Web Exploration

- If there is time, we'll work on the Web exploration from the book.
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