Sample problems for Test 2: Solutions

Any problem may be altered or replaced by a different one!

Problem 1 (20 pts.) Let $\mathcal{M}_{2,2}(\mathbb{R})$ denote the vector space of 2×2 matrices with real entries. Consider a linear operator $L : \mathcal{M}_{2,2}(\mathbb{R}) \to \mathcal{M}_{2,2}(\mathbb{R})$ given by

$$L\begin{pmatrix} x & y \\ z & w \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x & y \\ z & w \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Find the matrix of the operator L with respect to the basis

$$E_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad E_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad E_3 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad E_4 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Let M_L denote the desired matrix. By definition, M_L is a 4×4 matrix whose columns are coordinates of the matrices $L(E_1), L(E_2), L(E_3), L(E_4)$ with respect to the basis E_1, E_2, E_3, E_4. We have that

$$L(E_1) = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = 1E_1 + 2E_2 + 0E_3 + 0E_4,$$

$$L(E_2) = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 4 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = 3E_1 + 4E_2 + 0E_3 + 0E_4,$$

$$L(E_3) = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 2 \end{pmatrix} = 0E_1 + 0E_2 + 1E_3 + 2E_4,$$

$$L(E_4) = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 3 & 4 \end{pmatrix} = 0E_1 + 0E_2 + 3E_3 + 4E_4.$$

It follows that

$$M_L = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 3 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 4 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & 4 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Problem 2 (30 pts.) Let V be a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^4$ spanned by the vectors $\mathbf{x}_1 = (1,1,1,1)$ and $\mathbf{x}_2 = (1,0,3,0)$.

(i) Find an orthonormal basis for V.

First we apply the Gram-Schmidt orthogonalization process to vectors $\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2$ and obtain an orthogonal basis $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2$ for the subspace V:

$$\mathbf{v}_1 = \mathbf{x}_1 = (1,1,1,1), \qquad \mathbf{v}_2 = \mathbf{x}_2 - \frac{\mathbf{x}_2 \cdot \mathbf{v}_1}{\mathbf{v}_1 \cdot \mathbf{v}_1}\mathbf{v}_1 = (1,0,3,0) - \frac{4}{4}(1,1,1,1) = (0,-1,2,-1).$$

Then we normalize vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2$ to obtain an orthonormal basis $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2$ for V:

$$\mathbf{w}_1 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_1}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|} = \frac{1}{2}\mathbf{v}_1 = \frac{1}{2}(1,1,1,1), \qquad \mathbf{w}_2 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_2}{\|\mathbf{v}_2\|} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}}\mathbf{v}_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}}(0,-1,2,-1).$$

(ii) Find an orthonormal basis for the orthogonal complement $V^\perp$.

Since the subspace V is spanned by vectors $(1,1,1,1)$ and $(1,0,3,0)$, it is the row space of the matrix

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Then the orthogonal complement $V^\perp$ is the nullspace of A. To find the nullspace, we convert the matrix A to reduced row echelon form:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 3 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -2 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Hence a vector $(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4) \in \mathbb{R}^4$ belongs to $V^\perp$ if and only if

$$\begin{cases} x_1 + 3x_3 = 0 \\ x_2 - 2x_3 + x_4 = 0 \end{cases} \iff \begin{cases} x_1 = -3x_3 \\ x_2 = 2x_3 - x_4 \end{cases}$$

The general solution of the system is $(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4) = (-3t, 2t - s, t, s) = t(-3,2,1,0) + s(0,-1,0,1)$, where $t, s \in \mathbb{R}$. It follows that $V^\perp$ is spanned by vectors $\mathbf{x}_3 = (0,-1,0,1)$ and $\mathbf{x}_4 = (-3,2,1,0)$. It remains to orthogonalize and normalize this basis for $V^\perp$:

$$\mathbf{v}_3 = \mathbf{x}_3 = (0,-1,0,1), \qquad \mathbf{v}_4 = \mathbf{x}_4 - \frac{\mathbf{x}_4 \cdot \mathbf{v}_3}{\mathbf{v}_3 \cdot \mathbf{v}_3}\mathbf{v}_3 = (-3,2,1,0) - \frac{-2}{2}(0,-1,0,1) = (-3,1,1,1),$$

$$\mathbf{w}_3 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_3}{\|\mathbf{v}_3\|} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(0,-1,0,1), \qquad \mathbf{w}_4 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_4}{\|\mathbf{v}_4\|} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{3}}\mathbf{v}_4 = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{3}}(-3,1,1,1).$$

Thus the vectors $\mathbf{w}_3 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(0,-1,0,1)$ and $\mathbf{w}_4 = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{3}}(-3,1,1,1)$ form an orthonormal basis for $V^\perp$.

Alternative solution: Suppose that an orthonormal basis $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2$ for the subspace V has been extended to an orthonormal basis $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \mathbf{w}_3, \mathbf{w}_4$ for $\mathbb{R}^4$. Then the vectors $\mathbf{w}_3, \mathbf{w}_4$ form an orthonormal basis for the orthogonal complement $V^\perp$.

We know that vectors $\mathbf{v}_1 = (1,1,1,1)$ and $\mathbf{v}_2 = (0,-1,2,-1)$ form an orthogonal basis for V. This basis can be extended to a basis for $\mathbb{R}^4$ by adding two vectors from the standard basis. For example, we can add vectors $\mathbf{e}_3 = (0,0,1,0)$ and $\mathbf{e}_4 = (0,0,0,1)$. The vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{e}_3, \mathbf{e}_4$ do form a basis for $\mathbb{R}^4$ since the matrix whose rows are these vectors is nonsingular:

$$\begin{vmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & -1 & 2 & -1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{vmatrix} = -1 \neq 0.$$

To orthogonalize the basis $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{e}_3, \mathbf{e}_4$, we apply the Gram-Schmidt process (note that the vectors $\mathbf{v}_1$ and $\mathbf{v}_2$ are already orthogonal):

$$\mathbf{v}_3 = \mathbf{e}_3 - \frac{\mathbf{e}_3 \cdot \mathbf{v}_1}{\mathbf{v}_1 \cdot \mathbf{v}_1}\mathbf{v}_1 - \frac{\mathbf{e}_3 \cdot \mathbf{v}_2}{\mathbf{v}_2 \cdot \mathbf{v}_2}\mathbf{v}_2 = (0,0,1,0) - \frac{1}{4}(1,1,1,1) - \frac{2}{6}(0,-1,2,-1) = \frac{1}{12}(-3,1,1,1),$$

$$\mathbf{v}_4 = \mathbf{e}_4 - \frac{\mathbf{e}_4 \cdot \mathbf{v}_1}{\mathbf{v}_1 \cdot \mathbf{v}_1}\mathbf{v}_1 - \frac{\mathbf{e}_4 \cdot \mathbf{v}_2}{\mathbf{v}_2 \cdot \mathbf{v}_2}\mathbf{v}_2 - \frac{\mathbf{e}_4 \cdot \mathbf{v}_3}{\mathbf{v}_3 \cdot \mathbf{v}_3}\mathbf{v}_3 =$$

$$= (0,0,0,1) - \frac{1}{4}(1,1,1,1) - \frac{-1}{6}(0,-1,2,-1) - \frac{1/12}{1/12} \cdot \frac{1}{12}(-3,1,1,1) = \frac{1}{2}(0,-1,0,1).$$

It remains to normalize vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3, \mathbf{v}_4$:

$$\mathbf{w}_1 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_1}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|} = \frac{1}{2}(1,1,1,1), \qquad \mathbf{w}_2 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_2}{\|\mathbf{v}_2\|} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}}(0,-1,2,-1),$$

$$\mathbf{w}_3 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_3}{\|\mathbf{v}_3\|} = \sqrt{12}\,\mathbf{v}_3 = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{3}}(-3,1,1,1), \qquad \mathbf{w}_4 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_4}{\|\mathbf{v}_4\|} = \sqrt{2}\,\mathbf{v}_4 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(0,-1,0,1).$$

We have obtained an orthonormal basis $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \mathbf{w}_3, \mathbf{w}_4$ for $\mathbb{R}^4$ that extends an orthonormal basis $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2$ for the subspace V. It follows that $\mathbf{w}_3 = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{3}}(-3,1,1,1)$, $\mathbf{w}_4 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(0,-1,0,1)$ is an orthonormal basis for $V^\perp$.

Problem 3 (30 pts.) Let $A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$.

(i) Find all eigenvalues of the matrix A.

The eigenvalues of A are roots of the characteristic equation $\det(A - \lambda I) = 0$. We obtain that

$$\det(A - \lambda I) = \begin{vmatrix} 1-\lambda & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 1-\lambda & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 1-\lambda \end{vmatrix} = (1-\lambda)^3 - 2(1-\lambda) - 2(1-\lambda)$$

$$= (1-\lambda)\big((1-\lambda)^2 - 4\big) = (1-\lambda)\big((1-\lambda) - 2\big)\big((1-\lambda) + 2\big) = -(\lambda - 1)(\lambda + 1)(\lambda - 3).$$

Hence the matrix A has three eigenvalues: -1, 1, and 3.

(ii) For each eigenvalue of A, find an associated eigenvector.

An eigenvector $\mathbf{v} = (x, y, z)$ of A associated with an eigenvalue λ is a nonzero solution of the vector equation $(A - \lambda I)\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0}$. To solve the equation, we apply row reduction to the matrix $A - \lambda I$.

First consider the case $\lambda = -1$. The row reduction yields

$$A + I = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Hence

$$(A + I)\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0} \iff \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \iff \begin{cases} x - z = 0, \\ y + z = 0. \end{cases}$$

The general solution is $x = t$, $y = -t$, $z = t$, where $t \in \mathbb{R}$. In particular, $\mathbf{v}_1 = (1, -1, 1)$ is an eigenvector of A associated with the eigenvalue -1.

Secondly, consider the case $\lambda = 1$. The row reduction yields

$$A - I = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Hence

$$(A - I)\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0} \iff \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \iff \begin{cases} x + z = 0, \\ y = 0. \end{cases}$$

The general solution is $x = -t$, $y = 0$, $z = t$, where $t \in \mathbb{R}$. In particular, $\mathbf{v}_2 = (-1, 0, 1)$ is an eigenvector of A associated with the eigenvalue 1.

Finally, consider the case $\lambda = 3$. The row reduction yields

$$A - 3I = \begin{pmatrix} -2 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & -2 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & -2 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 1 & -2 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & -2 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & -2 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 0 & 2 & -2 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Hence

$$(A - 3I)\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0} \iff \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \iff \begin{cases} x - z = 0, \\ y - z = 0. \end{cases}$$

The general solution is $x = t$, $y = t$, $z = t$, where $t \in \mathbb{R}$. In particular, $\mathbf{v}_3 = (1, 1, 1)$ is an eigenvector of A associated with the eigenvalue 3.

(iii) Is the matrix A diagonalizable? Explain.

The matrix A is diagonalizable, i.e., there exists a basis for $\mathbb{R}^3$ formed by its eigenvectors. Namely, the vectors $\mathbf{v}_1 = (1, -1, 1)$, $\mathbf{v}_2 = (-1, 0, 1)$, and $\mathbf{v}_3 = (1, 1, 1)$ are eigenvectors of the matrix A belonging to distinct eigenvalues. Therefore these vectors are linearly independent. It follows that $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3$ is a basis for $\mathbb{R}^3$.

Alternatively, the existence of a basis for $\mathbb{R}^3$ consisting of eigenvectors of A already follows from the fact that the matrix A has three distinct eigenvalues.

(iv) Find all eigenvalues of the matrix A^2.

Since A has eigenvalues -1, 1, and 3, it is similar to the diagonal matrix

$$B = \begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Namely, $A = UBU^{-1}$, where U is the matrix whose columns are vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3$:

$$U = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Then $A^2 = UBU^{-1}UBU^{-1} = UB^2U^{-1}$, that is, the matrix A^2 is similar to the diagonal matrix

$$B^2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 9 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Similar matrices have the same characteristic polynomial, hence they have the same eigenvalues. Thus the eigenvalues of A^2 are the same as the eigenvalues of B^2: 1 and 9.

Bonus Problem 4 (20 pts.) Find a linear polynomial which is the best least squares fit to the following data:

x	-2	-1	0	1	2
$f(x)$	-3	-2	1	2	5

We are looking for a function $f(x) = c_1 + c_2 x$, where c_1, c_2 are unknown coefficients. The data of the problem give rise to an overdetermined system of linear equations in variables c_1 and c_2:

$$\begin{cases} c_1 - 2c_2 = -3, \\ c_1 - c_2 = -2, \\ c_1 = 1, \\ c_1 + c_2 = 2, \\ c_1 + 2c_2 = 5. \end{cases}$$

This system is inconsistent. We can represent it as a matrix equation $A\mathbf{c} = \mathbf{y}$, where

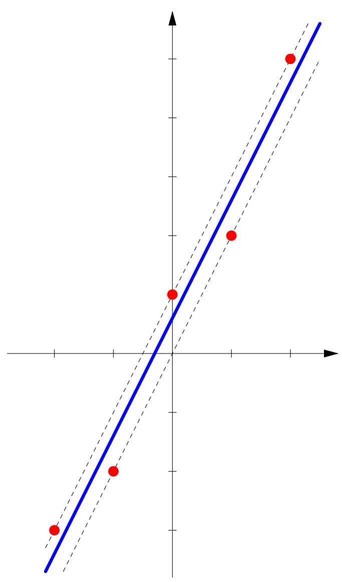
$$A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -2 \\ 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{pmatrix}, \qquad \mathbf{c} = \begin{pmatrix} c_1 \\ c_2 \end{pmatrix}, \qquad \mathbf{y} = \begin{pmatrix} -3 \\ -2 \\ 1 \\ 2 \\ 5 \end{pmatrix}.$$

The least squares solution $\mathbf{c}$ of the above system is a solution of the system $A^T A\mathbf{c} = A^T\mathbf{y}$:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ -2 & -1 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -2 \\ 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_1 \\ c_2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ -2 & -1 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} -3 \\ -2 \\ 1 \\ 2 \\ 5 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\iff \begin{pmatrix} 5 & 0 \\ 0 & 10 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_1 \\ c_2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ 20 \end{pmatrix} \iff \begin{cases} c_1 = 3/5 \\ c_2 = 2 \end{cases}$$

Thus the function $f(x) = \frac{3}{5} + 2x$ is the best least squares fit to the above data among linear polynomials.



Bonus Problem 5 (20 pts.) Let $L : V \to W$ be a linear mapping of a finite-dimensional vector space V to a vector space W. Show that

$$\dim \mathrm{Range}(L) + \dim \ker(L) = \dim V.$$

The kernel $\ker(L)$ is a subspace of V. Since the vector space V is finite-dimensional, so is $\ker(L)$. Take a basis $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_k$ for the subspace $\ker(L)$, then extend it to a basis $\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_k, \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_m$ for the entire space V. We are going to prove that vectors $L(\mathbf{u}_1), L(\mathbf{u}_2), \dots, L(\mathbf{u}_m)$ form a basis for the range $L(V)$. Then $\dim \mathrm{Range}(L) = m$, $\dim \ker(L) = k$, and $\dim V = k + m$.

Spanning: Any vector $\mathbf{w} \in \mathrm{Range}(L)$ is represented as $\mathbf{w} = L(\mathbf{v})$, where $\mathbf{v} \in V$. Then

$$\mathbf{v} = \alpha_1\mathbf{v}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{v}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_k\mathbf{v}_k + \beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_m\mathbf{u}_m$$

for some $\alpha_i, \beta_j \in \mathbb{R}$. It follows that

$$\mathbf{w} = L(\mathbf{v}) = \alpha_1 L(\mathbf{v}_1) + \cdots + \alpha_k L(\mathbf{v}_k) + \beta_1 L(\mathbf{u}_1) + \cdots + \beta_m L(\mathbf{u}_m) = \beta_1 L(\mathbf{u}_1) + \cdots + \beta_m L(\mathbf{u}_m)$$

($L(\mathbf{v}_i) = \mathbf{0}$ since $\mathbf{v}_i \in \ker(L)$). Thus $\mathrm{Range}(L)$ is spanned by the vectors $L(\mathbf{u}_1), L(\mathbf{u}_2), \dots, L(\mathbf{u}_m)$.

Linear independence: Suppose that $t_1 L(\mathbf{u}_1) + t_2 L(\mathbf{u}_2) + \cdots + t_m L(\mathbf{u}_m) = \mathbf{0}$ for some $t_i \in \mathbb{R}$. Let $\mathbf{u} = t_1\mathbf{u}_1 + t_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + t_m\mathbf{u}_m$. Since

$$L(\mathbf{u}) = t_1 L(\mathbf{u}_1) + t_2 L(\mathbf{u}_2) + \cdots + t_m L(\mathbf{u}_m) = \mathbf{0},$$

the vector $\mathbf{u}$ belongs to the kernel of L. Therefore $\mathbf{u} = s_1\mathbf{v}_1 + s_2\mathbf{v}_2 + \cdots + s_k\mathbf{v}_k$ for some $s_j \in \mathbb{R}$. It follows that

$$t_1\mathbf{u}_1 + t_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + t_m\mathbf{u}_m - s_1\mathbf{v}_1 - s_2\mathbf{v}_2 - \cdots - s_k\mathbf{v}_k = \mathbf{u} - \mathbf{u} = \mathbf{0}.$$

Linear independence of vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_k, \mathbf{u}_1, \dots, \mathbf{u}_m$ implies that $t_1 = t_2 = \cdots = t_m = 0$ (as well as $s_1 = s_2 = \cdots = s_k = 0$). Thus the vectors $L(\mathbf{u}_1), L(\mathbf{u}_2), \dots, L(\mathbf{u}_m)$ are linearly independent.