Subject: Re: random numbers with gamma distribution
Posted by davidf on Wed, 04 Nov 1998 08:00:00 GMT

T.Osborn (f055@uea.ac.uk) writes:

> I'm trying to generate a random series that has a gamma distribution, using
> the randomu() function with the gamma keyword. The online help says to set
> gamma to an integer > 0. WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE AN INTEGER? The gamma
> distribution is in fact defined for all gamma > 0, not just integers.
> I want to set gamma=0.5, which currently fails as it converts it to the
> integer 0, which is not > 0, and so it fails.
>
> Is this a bug, and is there any work-around?

Which gamma function are you running? Certainly not IDL's
GAMMA function which works perfectly well with non-integer
values:

    IDL> print, gamma(0.5)
% Compiled module: GAMMA.
      1.77245

Cheers,

David

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Note: A copy of this article was e-mailed to the original poster.