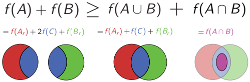
Submodular Functions, Optimization, and Applications to Machine Learning
— Spring Quarter, Lecture 8 —

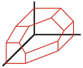
http://www.ee.washington.edu/people/faculty/bilmes/classes/ee596b_spring_2016/

Prof. Jeff Bilmes

University of Washington, Seattle
Department of Electrical Engineering
http://melodi.ee.washington.edu/~bilmes

Apr 25th, 2016





Cumulative Outstanding Reading

- Read chapters 2 and 3 from Fujishige's book.
- Read chapter 1 from Fujishige's book.

Announcements, Assignments, and Reminders

- Homework 3, available at our assignment dropbox (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1039754/assignments), due (electronically) Monday (5/2) at 11:55pm.
- Homework 2, available at our assignment dropbox (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1039754/assignments), due (electronically) Monday (4/18) at 11:55pm.
- Homework 1, available at our assignment dropbox (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1039754/assignments), due (electronically) Friday (4/8) at 11:55pm.
- Weekly Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30-4:30, or by skype or google hangout (set up meeting via our our discussion board (https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1039754/discussion_topics)).

Class Road Map - IT-I

- L1(3/28): Motivation, Applications, & Basic Definitions
- L2(3/30): Machine Learning Apps (diversity, complexity, parameter, learning target, surrogate).
- L3(4/4): Info theory exs, more apps, definitions, graph/combinatorial examples, matrix rank example, visualization
- L4(4/6): Graph and Combinatorial Examples, matrix rank, Venn diagrams, examples of proofs of submodularity, some useful properties
- L5(4/11): Examples & Properties, Other Defs., Independence
- L6(4/13): Independence, Matroids, Matroid Examples, matroid rank is submodular
- L7(4/18): Matroid Rank, More on Partition Matroid, System of Distinct Reps, Transversals, Transversal Matroid,
- L8(4/20): Transversals, Matroid and representation, Dual Matroids, Geometries
- L9(4/25):
- L10(4/27):
- L11(5/2):
- L12(5/4):
- L13(5/9):
- L14(5/11):
- L15(5/16):
- L16(5/18):
- L17(5/23):
- L18(5/25):
- L19(6/1):
- L20(6/6): Final Presentations maximization.

Finals Week: June 6th-10th, 2016.

System of Distinct Representatives

- Let $(V, \mathcal{V})$ be a set system (i.e., $\mathcal{V} = (V_k : i \in I)$ where $V_i \subseteq V$ for all i), and I is an index set. Hence, $|I| = |\mathcal{V}|$.
- A family $(v_i : i \in I)$ with $v_i \in V$ is said to be a system of distinct representatives of $\mathcal{V}$ if $\exists$ a bijection $\pi : I \leftrightarrow I$ such that $v_i \in V_{\pi(i)}$ and $v_i \neq v_j$ for all $i \neq j$.
- In a system of distinct representatives, there is a requirement for the representatives to be distinct. We can re-state (and rename) this as a:

Definition 8.2.2 (transversal)

Given a set system $(V, \mathcal{V})$ and index set I for $\mathcal{V}$ as defined above, a set $T \subseteq V$ is a transversal of $\mathcal{V}$ if there is a bijection $\pi : T \leftrightarrow I$ such that

$$x \in V_{\pi(x)} \text{ for all } x \in T \tag{8.19}$$

- Note that due to $\pi : T \leftrightarrow I$ being a bijection, all of I and T are "covered" (so this makes things distinct automatically).

When do transversals exist?

- As we saw, a transversal might not always exist. How to tell?
- Given a set system $(V, \mathcal{V})$ with $\mathcal{V} = (V_i : i \in I)$, and $V_i \subseteq V$ for all i. Then, for any $J \subseteq I$, let

$$V(J) = \cup_{j \in J} V_j \tag{8.19}$$

so $|V(J)| : 2^I \to \mathbb{Z}_+$ is the set cover func. (we know is submodular).
- We have

Theorem 8.2.2 (Hall's theorem)

Given a set system $(V, \mathcal{V})$, the family of subsets $\mathcal{V} = (V_i : i \in I)$ has a transversal $(v_i : i \in I)$ iff for all $J \subseteq I$

$$|V(J)| \geq |J| \tag{8.20}$$

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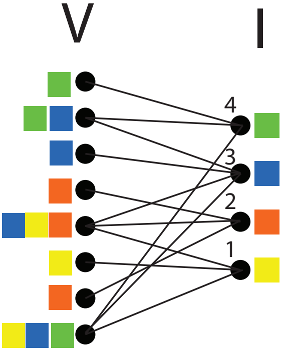
- Hall's theorem $(\forall J \subseteq I, |V(J)| \geq |J|)$ as a bipartite graph.



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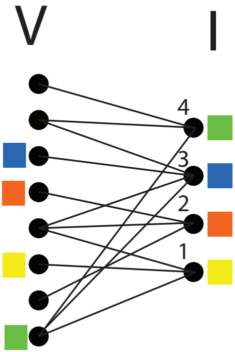

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- Moreover, we have

Theorem 8.2.3 (Rado's theorem (1942))

If $M = (V, r)$ is a matroid on V with rank function r, then the family of subsets $(V_i : i \in I)$ of V has a transversal $(v_i : i \in I)$ that is independent in M iff for all $J \subseteq I$

$$r(V(J)) \geq |J| \tag{8.21}$$

- Note, a transversal T independent in M means that $r(T) = |T|$.

Application's of Hall's theorem

- Consider a set of jobs I and a set of applicants V to the jobs. If an applicant $v \in V$ is qualified for job $i \in I$, we add edge (v, i) to the bipartite graph $G = (V, I, E)$.

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- Note if $|V| = |I|$, then Hall's theorem is the Marriage Theorem (Frobenious 1917), where an edge (v, i) in the graph indicate compatibility between two individuals $v \in V$ and $i \in I$ coming from two separate groups V and I.

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- If $\forall J \subseteq I, |V(J)| \geq |J|$, then all individuals in each group can be matched with a compatible mate.

More general conditions for existence of transversals

Theorem 8.2.2 (Polymatroid transversal theorem)

If $\mathcal{V} = (V_i : i \in I)$ is a finite family of non-empty subsets of V, and $f : 2^V \to \mathbb{Z}_+$ is a non-negative, integral, monotone non-decreasing, and submodular function, then $\mathcal{V}$ has a system of representatives $(v_i : i \in I)$ such that

$$f(\cup_{i \in J}\{v_i\}) \geq |J| \text{ for all } J \subseteq I \tag{8.19}$$

if and only if

$$f(V(J)) \geq |J| \text{ for all } J \subseteq I \tag{8.20}$$

- Given Theorem **??**, we immediately get Theorem 8.2.2 by taking $f(S) = |S|$ for $S \subseteq V$.
- We get Theorem **??** by taking $f(S) = r(S)$ for $S \subseteq V$, the rank function of the matroid.

Transversal Matroid

Transversals, themselves, define a matroid.

Theorem 8.3.1

If $\mathcal{V}$ is a family of finite subsets of a ground set V, then the collection of partial transversals of $\mathcal{V}$ is the set of independent sets of a matroid $M = (V, \mathcal{V})$ on V.

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- This means that the transversals of $\mathcal{V}$ are the bases of matroid M.
- Therefore, all maximal partial transversals of $\mathcal{V}$ have the same cardinality!

Transversals and Bipartite Matchings

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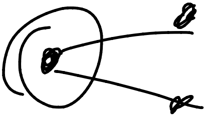
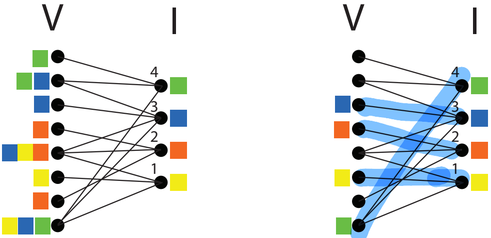
- A matching in this graph is a set of edges no two of which that have a common endpoint.





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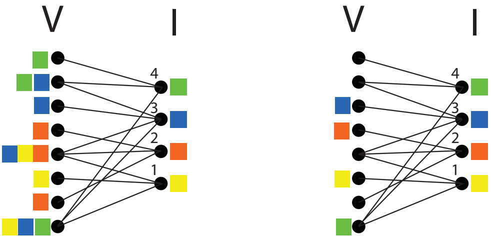

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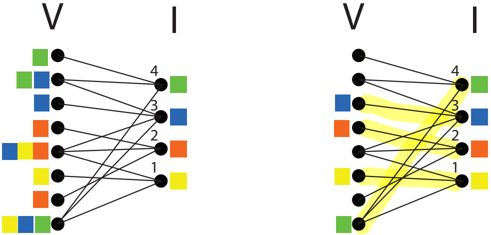
Lemma 8.3.2

A subset $T \subseteq V$ is a partial transversal of $\mathcal{V}$ iff there is a matching in (V, I, E) in which every edge has one endpoint in T (T matched into I).



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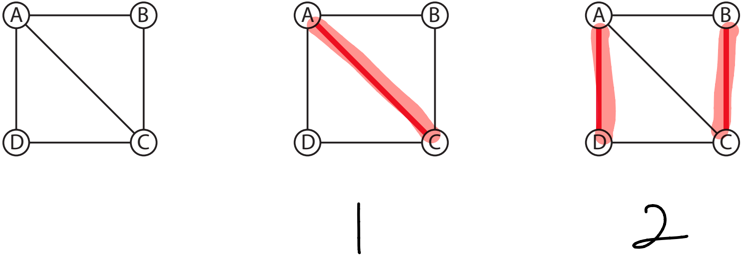

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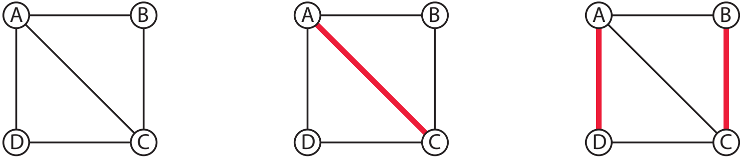
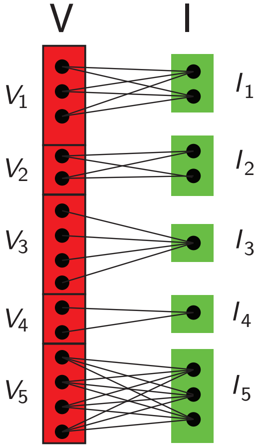


- $\{AC\}$ is a maximum matching, as is $\{AD, BC\}$, but they are not the same size.

- $\mathcal{M}$ is set of matchings in graph $G=(V,E) \Rightarrow (E,\mathcal{M})$ is a set system. I1 holds, I2 (subclusive property) holds, I3 doesn't hold. Q: what is biggest subset $\mathcal{M}' \subseteq \mathcal{M}$ s.t. $(E, \mathcal{M}')$ satisfies I3?

Partition Matroid, rank as matching

- Example where $\ell = 5$, $(k_1, k_2, k_3, k_4, k_5) = (2, 2, 1, 1, 3)$.



- Recall, $\Gamma : 2^V \to \mathbb{R}$ as the neighbor function in a bipartite graph, the neighbors of X is defined as $\Gamma(X) = \{v \in V(G) \setminus X : E(X, \{v\}) \neq \emptyset\}$, and recall that $|\Gamma(X)|$ is submodular.
- Here, for $X \subseteq V$, we have $\Gamma(X) = \{i \in I : (v, i) \in E(G) \text{ and } v \in X\}$.
- For such a constructed bipartite graph, the rank function of a partition matroid is $r(X) = \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} \min(|X \cap V_i|, k_i) =$ the maximum matching involving X.

Morphing Partition Matroid Rank

- Recall the partition matroid rank function. Note, $k_i = |I_i|$ in the bipartite graph representation, and since a matroid, w.l.o.g., $|V_i| \geq k_i$ (also, recall, $V(J) = \cup_{j \in J} V_j$).

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- Start with partition matroid rank function in the subsequent equations.

$$r(A) = \sum_{i \in \{1,\ldots,\ell\}} \min(|A \cap V_i|, k_i) \tag{8.1}$$

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$V(J_i) \subseteq V(I_i)$

$$= \sum_{i \in \{1,\dots,\ell\}} \min_{J_i \subseteq I_i} \left(|V(J_i) \cap A| + |I_i \setminus J_i| \right) \tag{8.5}$$

... Morphing Partition Matroid Rank

- Continuing,

$$r(A) = \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} \min_{J_i \subseteq I_i} \left(|V(J_i) \cap V(I_i) \cap A| - |I_i \cap J_i| + |I_i| \right) \tag{8.6}$$

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- In fact, this bottom (more general) expression is the expression for the rank of a transversal matroid.

Partial Transversals Are Independent Sets in a Matroid

In fact, we have

Theorem 8.3.3

Let $(V, \mathcal{V})$ *where* $\mathcal{V} = (V_1, V_2, \dots, V_\ell)$ *be a subset system. Let* $I = \{1, \dots, \ell\}$*. Let* $\mathcal{I}$ *be the set of partial transversals of* $\mathcal{V}$*. Then* $(V, \mathcal{I})$ *is a matroid.*

Proof.

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Proof.

- We note that $\emptyset \in \mathcal{I}$ since the empty set is a transversal of the empty subfamily of $\mathcal{V}$, thus (I1') holds.

□

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Let $(V, \mathcal{V})$ *where* $\mathcal{V} = (V_1, V_2, \dots, V_\ell)$ *be a subset system. Let* $I = \{1, \dots, \ell\}$. *Let* $\mathcal{I}$ *be the set of partial transversals of* $\mathcal{V}$. *Then* $(V, \mathcal{I})$ *is a matroid.*

Proof.

- We note that $\emptyset \in \mathcal{I}$ since the empty set is a transversal of the empty subfamily of $\mathcal{V}$, thus (I1') holds.
- We already saw that if T is a partial transversal of $\mathcal{V}$, and if $T' \subseteq T$, then T' is also a partial transversal. So (I2') holds.

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Partial Transversals Are Independent Sets in a Matroid

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- Suppose that T_1 and T_2 are partial transversals of $\mathcal{V}$ such that $|T_1| < |T_2|$. Exercise: show that (I3') holds.

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Transversal Matroid Rank

- Transversal matroid has rank

$$r(A) = \min_{J \subseteq I} \left(|V(J) \cap A| - |J| + |I| \right) \tag{8.10}$$

$$= \min_{J \subseteq I} m_J(A)$$

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- Therefore, this function is submodular.
- Note that it is a minimum over a set of modular functions. Is this true in general? Exercise:

- what are most general properties of a set of modular functions?

Matroid loops

- A circuit in a matroids is well defined, a subset $A \subseteq E$ is circuit if it is an inclusionwise minimally dependent set (i.e., if $r(A) < |A|$ and for any $a \in A$, $r(A \setminus \{a\}) = |A| - 1$).

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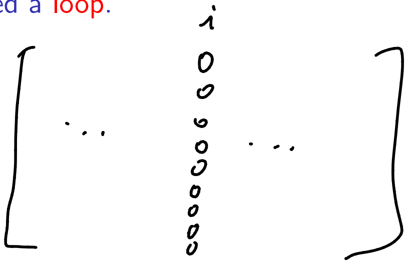
$A = \{i\}$



$r(i) = 0 = |\{i\}| - 1$

$r(\phi) = r(A \setminus \{i\}) = 0 = |A| - 1$

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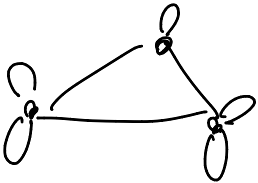
- In a matric (i.e., linear) matroid, the only such loop is the value $\mathbf{0}$, as all non-zero vectors have rank 1. The $\mathbf{0}$ can appear > 1 time with different indices, as can a self loop in a graph appear on different nodes.



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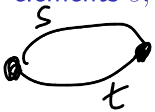
- Note, we also say that two elements s, t are said to be parallel if $\{s, t\}$ is a circuit.



Representable

Definition 8.4.1 (Matroid isomorphism)

Two matroids M_1 and M_2 respectively on ground sets V_1 and V_2 are isomorphic if there is a bijection $\pi : V_1 \to V_2$ which preserves independence (equivalently, rank, circuits, and so on).

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- Let $\mathbb{F}$ be any field (such as $\mathbb{R}$, $\mathbb{Q}$, or some finite field $\mathbb{F}$, such as a Galois field GF(p) where p is prime (such as GF(2)), but not $\mathbb{Z}$. Succinctly: A field is a set with $+$, $*$, closure, associativity, commutativity, and additive and multiplictive identities and inverses.

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Definition 8.4.2 (linear matroids on a field)

Let $\mathbf{X}$ be an $n \times m$ matrix and $E = \{1, \dots, m\}$, where $\mathbf{X}_{ij} \in \mathbb{F}$ for some field, and let $\mathcal{I}$ be the set of subsets of E such that the columns of $\mathbf{X}$ are linearly independent over $\mathbb{F}$.

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- We can more generally define matroids on a field.

Definition 8.4.3 (representable (as a linear matroid))

Any matroid isomorphic to a linear matroid on a field is called representable over $\mathbb{F}$

Representability of Transversal Matroids

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- In particular:

Theorem 8.4.4

Transversal matroids are representable over all finite fields of sufficiently large cardinality, and are representable over any infinite field.

Converse: Representability of Transversal Matroids

The converse is not true, however.

Example 8.4.5

Let $V = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$ be a ground set and let $M = (V, \mathcal{I})$ be a set system where $\mathcal{I}$ is all subsets of V of cardinality ≤ 2 except for the pairs $\{1, 2\}$, $\{3, 4\}$, $\{5, 6\}$.

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- However, this matroid is not isomorphic to any transversal matroid.

Review from Lecture 6

The next frame comes from lecture 6.

Matroids, other definitions using matroid rank $r : 2^V \to \mathbb{Z}_+$

Definition 8.5.3 (closed/flat/subspace)

A subset $A \subseteq E$ is closed (equivalently, a flat or a subspace) of matroid M if for all $x \in E \setminus A$, $r(A \cup \{x\}) = r(A) + 1$.

Definition: A hyperplane is a flat of rank $r(M) - 1$.

Definition 8.5.4 (closure)

Given $A \subseteq E$, the closure (or span) of A, is defined by $\text{span}(A) = \{b \in E : r(A \cup \{b\}) = r(A)\}$.

Therefore, a closed set A has $\text{span}(A) = A$.

Definition 8.5.5 (circuit)

A subset $A \subseteq E$ is circuit or a cycle if it is an inclusionwise-minimal dependent set (i.e., if $r(A) < |A|$ and for any $a \in A$, $r(A \setminus \{a\}) = |A| - 1$).

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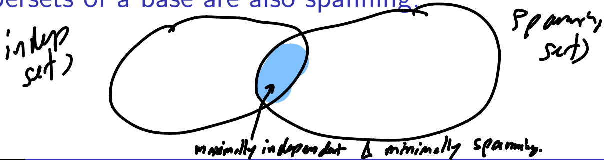
- A base of a matroid is a minimal spanning set (and it is independent) but supersets of a base are also spanning.



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- V is always trivially spanning.
- Consider the terminology: "spanning tree in a graph", comes from spanning in a matroid sense.

Dual of a Matroid

- Given a matroid $M = (V, \mathcal{I})$, a dual matroid $M^* = (V, \mathcal{I}^*)$ can be defined on the same ground set V, but using a very different set of independent sets $\mathcal{I}^*$.

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- We define the set of sets $\mathcal{I}^*$ for M^* as follows:

$$\mathcal{I}^* = \{A \subseteq V : V \setminus A \text{ is a spanning set of } M\} \tag{8.11}$$

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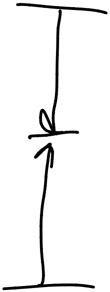

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Theorem 8.5.3 (Dual matroid bases)

Let $M = (V, \mathcal{I})$ be a matroid and $\mathcal{B}(M)$ be the set of bases of M. Then define

$$\mathcal{B}^*(M) = \{V \setminus B : B \in \mathcal{B}(M)\}. \tag{8.14}$$

Then $\mathcal{B}^*(M)$ is the set of basis of M^* (that is, $\mathcal{B}^*(M) = \mathcal{B}(M^*)$.

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4. *X is a circuit in M iff $V \setminus X$ is a cohyperplane in M (hyperplane in M^*).*

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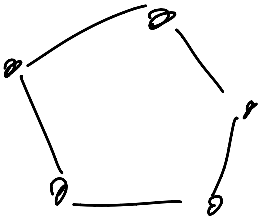

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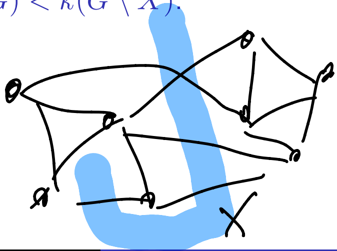
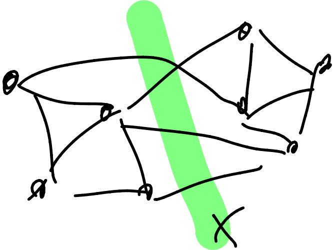
- A cut in a graph G is a set of edges, the removal of which increases the number of connected components. I.e., $X \subseteq E(G)$ is a cut in G if $k(G) < k(G \setminus X)$.





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- Recall, in cycle matroid, a spanning set of G is any set of edges that are incident to all nodes (i.e., any superset of a spanning forest), a minimal spanning set is a spanning tree (or forest), and a circuit has a nice visual interpretation (a cycle in the graph).
- A cut in a graph G is a set of edges, the removal of which increases the number of connected components. I.e., $X \subseteq E(G)$ is a cut in G if $k(G) < k(G \setminus X)$.
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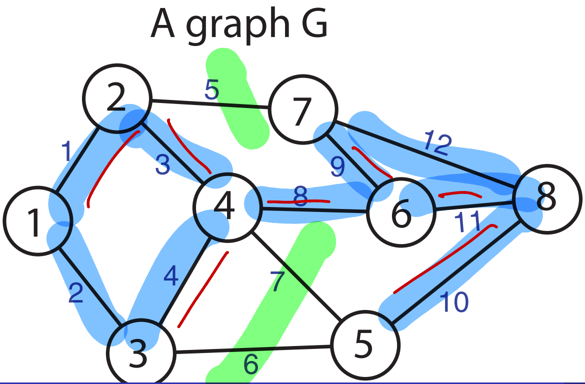

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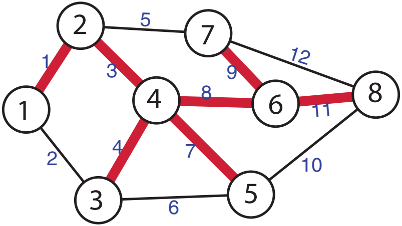
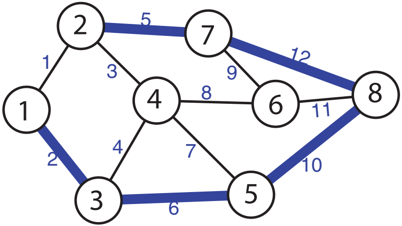
Maximally independent in M* (thus a base, minimally spanning, in M*)





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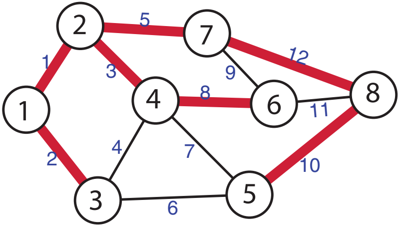

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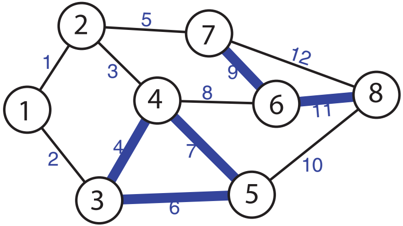

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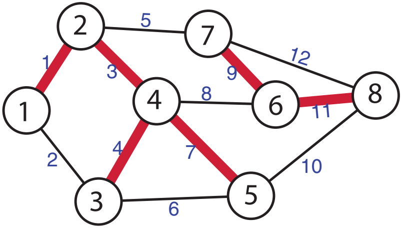
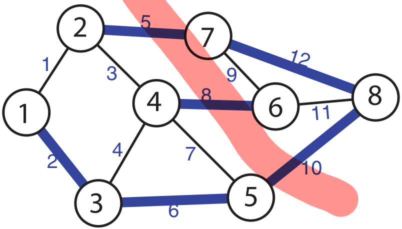
Independent but not spanning in M, and not closed in M.



Dependent in M* (contains a cocycle, is a nonminimal cut)



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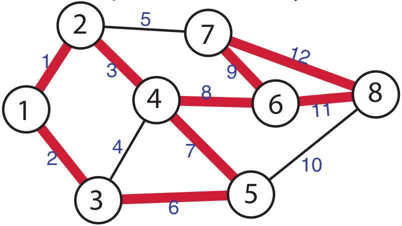
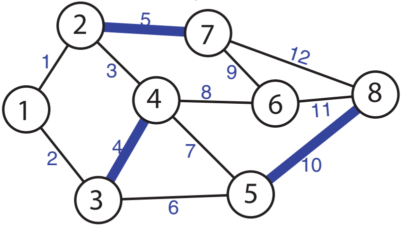
Spanning in M, but not a base, and not independent (has cycles)



Independent in M* (does not contain a cut)



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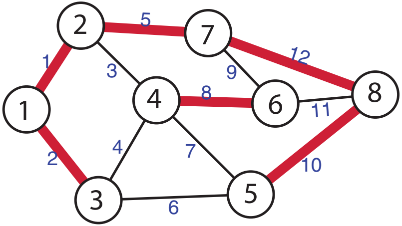

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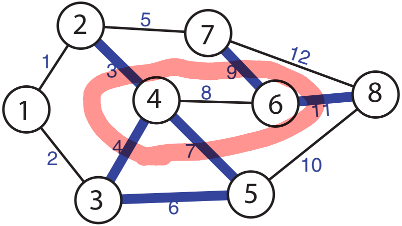

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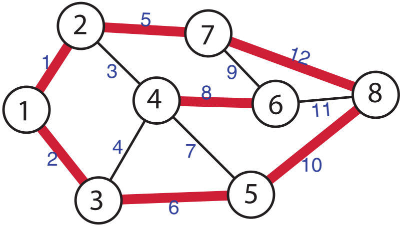
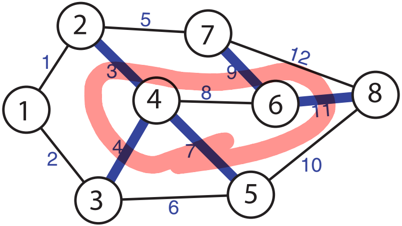
A hyperplane in M, dependent but not spanning in M



A cycle in M* (minimally dependent in M*, a cocycle, or a minimal cut)



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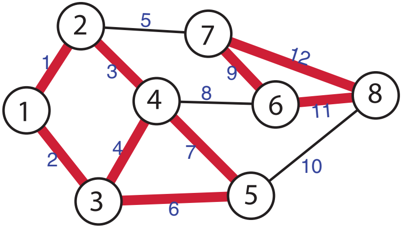

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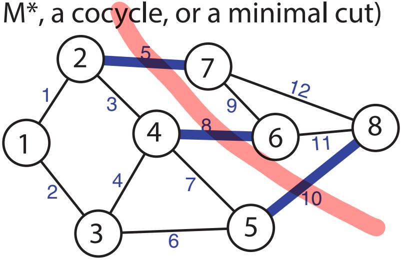

The dual of a matroid is (indeed) a matroid

Theorem 8.5.5

Given matroid $M = (V, \mathcal{I})$, let $M^* = (V, \mathcal{I}^*)$ be as previously defined. Then M^* is a matroid.

Proof.

- Clearly $\emptyset \in \mathcal{I}^*$, so (I1') holds.

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- Clearly $\emptyset \in \mathcal{I}^*$, so (I1') holds.
- Also, if $I \subseteq J \in \mathcal{I}^*$, then clearly also $I \in \mathcal{I}^*$ since if $V \setminus J$ is spanning in M, so must $V \setminus I$. Therefore, (I2') holds.

$V \setminus J \subseteq V \setminus I$

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- Consider $I, J \in \mathcal{I}^*$ with $|I| < |J|$. We need to show that there is some member $v \in J \setminus I$ such that $I + v$ is independent in M^*, which means that $V \setminus (I + v) = (V \setminus I) \setminus v$ is still spanning in M. That is, removing v from $V \setminus I$ doesn't make $(V \setminus I) \setminus v$ not spanning in M.

$$V \setminus I \supseteq V \setminus (I+v)$$

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- Since B and J are disjoint, we have both: 1) $B \setminus I$ and $J \setminus I$ are disjoint; and 2) $B \cap I \subseteq I \setminus J$. Also note, B' and I are disjoint.

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Proof.

- Now $J \setminus I \not\subseteq B'$, since otherwise (i.e., assuming $J \setminus I \subseteq B'$):

$$|B| = |B \cap I| + |B \setminus I| \tag{8.15}$$

$$\leq |I \setminus J| + |B \setminus I| \tag{8.16}$$

$$< |J \setminus I| + |B \setminus I| \leq |B'| \tag{8.17}$$

which is a contradiction. *The last inequality on the right follows since $J \setminus I \subseteq B'$ (by assumption) and $B \setminus I \subseteq B'$ implies that $(J \setminus I) \cup (B \setminus I) \subseteq B'$, but since J and B are disjoint, we have that $|J \setminus I| + |B \setminus I| \leq |B'|$.*

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  which is a contradiction.
- Therefore, $J \setminus I \not\subseteq B'$, and there is a $v \in J \setminus I$ s.t. $v \notin B'$.
- So B' is disjoint with $I \cup \{v\}$, means $B' \subseteq V \setminus (I \cup \{v\})$, or $V \setminus (I \cup \{v\})$ is spanning in M, and therefore $I \cup \{v\} \in \mathcal{I}^*$.

□

Matroid Duals and Representability

Theorem 8.5.6

Let M be an $\mathbb{F}$-representable matroid (i.e., one that can be represented by a finite sized matrix over field $\mathbb{F}$). Then M^* is also $\mathbb{F}$-representable.

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Hence, for matroids as general as matric matroids, duality does not extend the space of matroids that can be used.

Theorem 8.5.7

Let M be a graphic matroid (i.e., one that can be represented by a graph $G = (V, E)$). Then M^* is not necessarily also graphic.

Hence, for graphic matroids, duality can increase the space and power of matroids, and since they are based on a graph, they are relatively easy to use: 1) all cuts are dependent sets; 2) minimal cuts are cycles; 3) bases are one edge less than minimal cuts; and 4) independent sets are edges that are not cuts.

Dual Matroid Rank

Theorem 8.5.8

The rank function r_{M^*} of the dual matroid M^* may be specified in terms of the rank r_M in matroid M as follows. For $X \subseteq V$:

$$r_{M^*}(X) = |X| + r_M(V \setminus X) - r_M(V) \tag{8.18}$$

- Note, we again immediately see that this is submodular by the properties of submodular functions we saw in lectures 1 and 2. *I.e., $|X|$ is modular, complement $f(V \setminus X)$ is submodular if f is submodular, $r_M(V)$ is a constant, and summing submodular functions and a constant preserves submodularity.*

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- Non-negativity integral follows since $|X| + r_M(V \setminus X) \geq r_M(X) + r_M(V \setminus X) \geq r_M(V)$. *The right inequality follows since r_M is submodular.*

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- Therefore, r_{M^*} is the rank function of a matroid. That it is the dual matroid rank function is shown in the next proof.

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Proof.

A set X is independent in (V, r_{M^*}) if and only if

$$r_{M^*}(X) = |X| + r_M(V \setminus X) - r_M(V) = |X| \tag{8.19}$$

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But a subset X is independent in M^* only if $V \setminus X$ is spanning in M (by the definition of the dual matroid). □

Matroid restriction/deletion

- Let $M = (V, \mathcal{I})$ be a matroid and let $Y \subseteq V$, then

$$\mathcal{I}_Y = \{Z : Z \subseteq Y, Z \in \mathcal{I}\} \tag{8.21}$$

is such that $M_Y = (Y, \mathcal{I}_Y)$ is a matroid with rank $r(M_Y) = r(Y)$.

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- This is called the restriction of M to Y, and is often written $M|Y$.
- If $Y = V \setminus X$, then we have that $M|Y$ has the form:

$$\mathcal{I}_Y = \{Z : Z \cap X = \emptyset, Z \in \mathcal{I}\} \tag{8.22}$$

is considered a deletion of X from M, and is often written $M \setminus X$.

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$$\mathcal{I}_Y = \{Z : Z \subseteq Y, Z \in \mathcal{I}\} \tag{8.21}$$

  is such that $M_Y = (Y, \mathcal{I}_Y)$ is a matroid with rank $r(M_Y) = r(Y)$.
- This is called the restriction of M to Y, and is often written $M|Y$.
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- Hence, $M|Y = M \setminus (V \setminus Y)$, and $M|(V \setminus X) = M \setminus X$.
- The rank function is of the same form. I.e., $r_Y : 2^Y \to \mathbb{Z}_+$, where $r_Y(Z) = r(Z)$ for $Z \subseteq Y$.

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- In fact, it is the case $M/Z = (M^* \setminus Z)^*$ (Exercise: show why).

Matroid Intersection

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This is an instance of the convolution of two submodular functions, f_1 and f_2 that, evaluated at $Y \subseteq V$, is written as:

$$(f_1 * f_2)(Y) = \min_{X \subseteq Y} \Big(f_1(X) + f_2(Y \setminus X) \Big) \tag{8.25}$$

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- So Hall's theorem can be expressed as convolution. Exercise: define $g(A) = [\Gamma(\cdot) * |\cdot|](A)$, prove that g is submodular.
- Note, in general, convolution of two submodular functions does not preserve submodularity (but in certain special cases it does).

Matroid Union

Definition 8.6.2

Let $M_1 = (V_1, \mathcal{I}_1)$, $M_2 = (V_2, \mathcal{I}_2)$, …, $M_k = (V_k, \mathcal{I}_k)$ be matroids. We define the union of matroids as $M_1 \vee M_2 \vee \dots \vee M_k = (V_1 \uplus V_2 \uplus \dots \uplus V_k, \mathcal{I}_1 \vee \mathcal{I}_2 \vee \dots \vee \mathcal{I}_k)$, where

$$I_1 \vee \mathcal{I}_2 \vee \dots \vee \mathcal{I}_k = \{I_1 \uplus I_2 \uplus \dots \uplus I_k | I_1 \in \mathcal{I}_1, \dots, I_k \in \mathcal{I}_k\} \quad (8.26)$$

Note $A \uplus B$ designates the disjoint union of A and B.

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Note $A \uplus B$ designates the disjoint union of A and B.

Theorem 8.6.3

Let $M_1 = (V_1, \mathcal{I}_1)$, $M_2 = (V_2, \mathcal{I}_2)$, $\dots$, $M_k = (V_k, \mathcal{I}_k)$ be matroids, with rank functions $r_1, \dots, r_k$. Then the union of these matroids is still a matroid, having rank function

$$r(Y) = \min_{X \subseteq Y} \Big(|Y \setminus X| + r_1(X \cap V_1) + \dots + r_k(X \cap V_k) \Big) \tag{8.27}$$

for any $Y \subseteq V_1 \cup \dots V_k$.

Exercise: Matroid Union, and Matroid duality

Exercise: Describe $M \vee M^*$.

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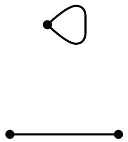
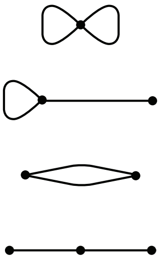
(a) The only matroid with zero elements.



(b) The two one-element matroids.



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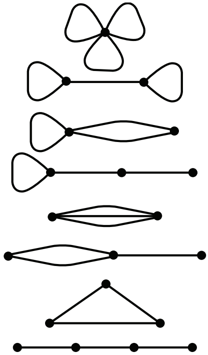

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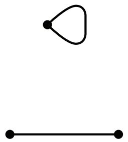

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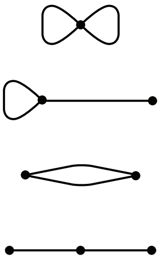

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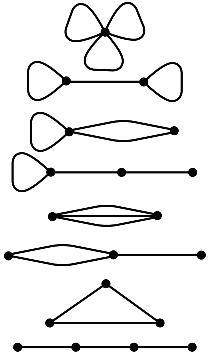

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- This is a nice way to show matroids with low ground set sizes. What about matroids that are low rank but with many elements?

Affine Matroids

- Given an $n \times m$ matrix with entries over some field $\mathbb{F}$, we say that a subset $S \subseteq \{1, \ldots, m\}$ of indices (with corresponding column vectors $\{v_i : i \in S\}$, with $|S| = k$) is affinely dependent if $m \geq 1$ and there exists elements $\{a_1, \ldots, a_k\} \in \mathbb{F}$, not all zero with $\sum_{i=1}^k a_i = 0$, such that $\sum_{i=1}^k a_i v_i = 0$.

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Let ground set $E = \{1, \dots, m\}$ index column vectors of a matrix, and let $\mathcal{I}$ be the set of subsets X of E such that X indices affinely independent vectors. Then $(E, \mathcal{I})$ is a matroid.

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Exercise: prove this.

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- Consider the affine matroid with $n \times m = 2 \times 6$ matrix on the field $\mathbb{F} = \mathbb{R}$, and let the elements be $\{(0,0),(1,0),(2,0),(0,1),(0,2),(1,1)\}$.

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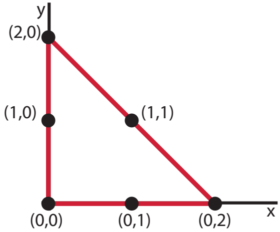

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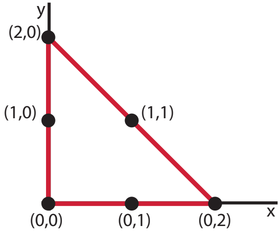

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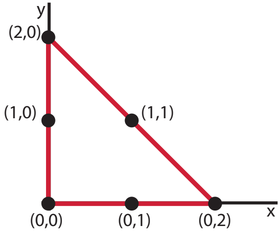

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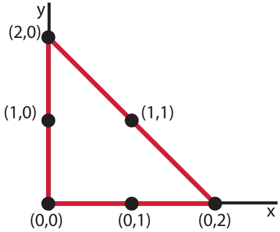

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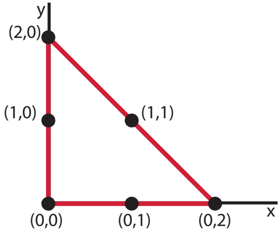

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- Any two points constitute a line, but lines with only two points are not drawn.
- Lines indicate collinear sets with ≥ 3 points, while any two points have rank 2.
- Dependent sets consist of all subsets with ≥ 4 elements (rank 3), or 3 collinear elements (rank 2). Any two points have rank 2.