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# SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

## IDENTIFYING THE TYPES OF CAUSES USING OBSERVATIONAL DATA

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A PREPRINT

<b>Author</b> Affiliation Address email	<b>Coauthor</b> Affiliation Address email	<b>Coauthor</b> Affiliation Address email	<b>Coauthor</b> Affiliation Address email
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### A Detailed Proofs

More concepts and lemmas are needed before we present the proofs of Lemmas, Theorems and Corollaries from our main text.

Let  $\mathcal{C} = (V, E)$  be an undirected graph with vertex set  $V$  and edge set  $E$ . Given  $S \subseteq V$ , the subgraph  $\mathcal{C}(S)$  of  $\mathcal{C}$  induced by  $S$  is an undirected graph with vertex set  $S$  and edge set  $E(S) = \{(u, v) \in E \mid u, v \in S\}$ . An induced subgraph  $\mathcal{C}(S)$  is called complete if there is an edge between every pair of distinct nodes in  $S$ . A clique is a set of vertices such that the induced subgraph is complete. Moreover, a clique is maximal if it isn't contained in any other cliques.

Let  $\pi = (v_0, v_1, \dots, v_k)$  denote a simple path with length equals to  $k$ . If  $k \geq 2$ , we say three consecutive vertices  $v_i, v_{i+1}$  and  $v_{i+2}$  form a triangle on  $\pi$  if  $v_i$  is adjacent to  $v_{i+2}$ .  $\pi$  is called triangle-free if it doesn't contain any triangle. We agree that any path with length equals to 2 is chordless and triangle-free. Generally, It can be shown that,

**Lemma 2.** *In any chordal graph, a path is chordless if and only if it's triangle-free.*

*Proof.* Let  $\pi = (v_0, v_1, \dots, v_k)$  denote a simple path with length  $k \geq 2$ . If  $\pi$  is chordless, then it's obviously triangle-free. Now suppose  $\pi$  is not chordless, then we can pick up a chord  $v_i - v_j$  such that the subpath  $\pi(v_i, v_j)$  has no chord except for  $v_i - v_j$ . If  $j = i + 2$ , then  $v_i, v_{i+1}$  and  $v_j$  form a triangle. If  $j > i + 2$ , then  $v_i - v_{i+1} - \dots - v_{j-1} - v_j$  with  $v_i - v_j$  form a cycle with length greater than 3. However, since the graph is chordal, we must have a chord  $v_k - v_l$  with  $i \leq k, l \leq j$  and  $l - k < j - i$ , which is contrary to our assumption.  $\square$

Lemma 2 is useful for finding chordless path, since checking whether a path is triangle-free is much easier. Another important result is,

**Lemma 3.** *Let  $\rho$  be a cycle with length greater than 3 in a given chordal graph, and  $X$  be a vertex on  $\rho$ . If the two vertices adjacent to  $X$  on  $\rho$  are not adjacent to each other, then  $\rho$  has a chord of which  $X$  is an endpoint.*

*Proof.* Let  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  be two vertices adjacent to  $X$  in  $\rho$ . Suppose that  $\rho$  doesn't have a chord of which  $X$  is an endpoint. Since  $\rho$  has length greater than 3, it must have a chord. Clearly, any chord of  $\rho$  separates  $\rho$  into two sub-cycles, and by our assumptions, it is easy to check that at least one sub-cycle contains  $X$ ,  $v_1$  and  $v_2$ . If this sub-cycle still has a chord, then we can construct another cycle containing  $X$ ,  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  but has shorter length. Finally, we will have a cycle containing  $X$ ,  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  but has no chord. Since  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  are not adjacent, the length of this cycle should be greater than 3, Which is contradicted to the definition of chordal graph.  $\square$

A chordal graph can be turned into a directed graph by orienting its edges. If the resulting directed graph of an orientation is a DAG without v-structure, then we call this orientation a v-structure-free acyclic orientation. Any v-structure-free acyclic orientation of a connected chordal graph has a unique source, i.e. a vertex which has no parent. Conversely, any vertex in a connected chordal graph can be the unique source in some v-structure-free acyclic orientation. The following lemma is useful.

**Lemma 4.** *Let  $\mathcal{C}$  be a connected chordal graph. For any chordless path  $\pi$  between two distinct vertices  $X$  and  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{C}$ , there is a v-structure-free acyclic orientation of  $\mathcal{C}$  such that  $\pi$  is a completely directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $\pi = (X = X_0, X_1, \dots, X_N = Y)$  be a chordless path from  $X$  to  $Y$ . Consider a v-structure-free acyclic orientation of  $\mathcal{C}$  whose unique source is  $X$ . Since  $X$  is the source, the edge  $X - X_1$  should be oriented as  $X \rightarrow X_1$ . Assume that the subpath  $\pi(X, X_{l-1})$  has been oriented as a completely directed path from  $X$  to  $X_{l-1}$ , then  $X_{l-1} - X_l$  should be oriented as  $X_{l-1} \rightarrow X_l$ . Otherwise,  $X_{l-2} \rightarrow X_{l-1} \leftarrow X_l$  forms a v-structure since by the chordless assumption  $X_{l-2}$  is not adjacent to  $X_l$ . By induction,  $\pi$  is a completely directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$ .  $\square$

Given a CPDAG  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , Andersson *et al.* (1997) proved that  $\mathcal{G}^*$  is a chain graph, which means the undirected subgraph  $\mathcal{G}_u^*$  of  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , i.e. an undirected graph obtained by deleting all the directed edges of  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , is the union of disjoint chordal graphs, and there is no partially directed cycle in the graph. Maathuis *et al.* (2009) pointed out that any v-structure-free acyclic orientation of the edges in  $\mathcal{G}_u^*$  corresponds to a DAG in the equivalence class represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , and such an orientation can be considered separately for each of the disjoint chordal graphs. Moreover, local orientations of some edges are called *valid* if there is a v-structure-free acyclic orientation of  $\mathcal{C}$  such that the the directions of these edges in the v-structure-free acyclic orientation coincide with the local orientations. Maathuis *et al.* (2009) proved that,

**Lemma 5.** *The orientations of the undirected edges adjacent to  $X$  are valid if and only if these new directed edges do not introduce v-structures.*

### A.1 Proof of Theorem 1

With the help of Lemma 4, we can prove Theorem 1.

*Proof.* Suppose there is a partially directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ . Without loss of generality, we can assume it has the following form:  $X = X_0^1 - X_0^2 - \dots - X_0^{k_0} \rightarrow X_1^1 - X_1^2 - \dots - X_1^{k_1} \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow X_n^1 - X_n^2 - \dots - X_n^{k_n} = Y$ . Since  $X_1^1, X_1^2, \dots, X_1^{k_1}$  are in the same chain component,  $X_0^{k_0} \rightarrow X_1^1$  implies  $X_0^{k_0} \rightarrow X_1^{k_1}$ . Similarly, we have  $X_i^{k_i} \rightarrow X_{i+1}^{k_{i+1}}$  for  $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, n-1$ . Hence  $X_0^{k_0} \rightarrow X_1^{k_1} \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow X_n^{k_n} = Y$  is a completely directed path from  $X_0^{k_0}$  to  $Y$ . This means  $X_0^{k_0}$  is an ancestor of  $Y$  in every DAG represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$ . On the other hand, Lemma 4 indicates there is a v-structure-free acyclic orientation of the chain component containing  $X$  such that  $X$  is an ancestor of  $X_0^{k_0}$ . Combining these two observations we can conclude that  $X$  is a potential cause of  $Y$ . Conversely, if  $X$  is a potential cause of  $Y$ , then by the definition of CPDAG and potential cause, we can easily obtain the desired results.  $\square$

### A.2 Proof of Corollary 1

*Proof.* According to the definition of partially directed path, an undirected path is also partially directed, hence if  $X$  and  $Y$  are in the same chain component, they are potential causes of each other. Conversely, if  $X$  and  $Y$  are potential causes of each other, then by Theorem 1, there is a partially directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  as well as a partially directed path from  $Y$  to  $X$ . Clearly, none of these two paths contains a directed edge, otherwise, a partially directed cycle would occur. Therefore,  $X$  and  $Y$  are connected by an undirected path, which means they are in the same chain component.  $\square$

### A.3 Proof of Corollary 2

This corollary is a trivial conclusion hence we omit the proof here.

### A.4 Proof of Theorem 2

*Proof.* It is easy to verify that statement (1) is equivalent to statement (3), thus we only prove  $(2) \Leftrightarrow (3)$ . The necessity is obvious, so we only need to prove the sufficiency. There is no loss of generality in assuming the path has the following form:  $X = X_0 \rightarrow X_1^1 - X_1^2 - \dots - X_1^{k_1} \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow X_n^1 - X_n^2 - \dots - X_n^{k_n} = Y$ . Similar to the proof of Theorem 1, we have  $X \rightarrow X_1^{k_1}$  and  $X_i^{k_i} \rightarrow X_{i+1}^{k_{i+1}}$  for  $i = 1, 2, \dots, n-1$ . Hence,  $\rho = (X, X_1^{k_1}, X_2^{k_2}, \dots, X_n^{k_n} = Y)$  is a completely directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , which means  $\rho$  is also a directed path in every DAG represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$ .  $\square$

### A.5 Proof of Theorem 3

The proof of Theorem 3 is quiet complicated. First, we show that if  $X$  is a semi-invariant cause of  $Y$ , then at least two distinct variables in the chain component containing  $X$  are completely invariant cause of  $Y$ .

**Lemma 6.** *Let  $\mathcal{G}^*$  be a CPDAG.  $X$  and  $Y$  are two distinct nodes that belong to different chain components. If  $X$  is the only completely invariant cause of  $Y$  in the chain component to which  $X$  belongs, then this chain component doesn't contain any other invariant cause of  $Y$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $Z$  be a vertex in the chain component containing  $X$ , then every partially directed path between  $Z$  and  $Y$  passes through  $X$ . Since there is a v-structure-free orientation of the chain component whose unique source is  $X$ , there is a DAG in the Markov equivalence class represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$  such that none of the vertex except  $X$  in the chain component is an ancestor of  $Y$ .  $\square$

With the help of Lemma 6, we can prove,

**Lemma 7.** *Let  $X, Z_1, Z_2 \dots Z_n$  be distinct vertices in a given chordal graph  $\mathcal{C}$ . The following statements are equivalent.*

- (1)  $X \in an(\{Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n\})$  for every v-structure-free orientation of  $\mathcal{C}$ ;
- (2) there exists two distinct nodes  $Z_i, Z_j$  such that they are connected by a chordless path through  $X$ ;
- (3) the subgraph over the critical set  $C$  of  $X$  with respect of  $\{Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n\}$  in  $\mathcal{C}$  is neither empty nor complete.

*Proof.* It is obvious that we only need to consider the case where  $X, Z_1, Z_2 \dots Z_n$  are in the same connected component of  $\mathcal{C}$ .

$(2) \Rightarrow (1)$ . If there exists two nodes  $Z_i, Z_j$  such that there is a chordless path  $\pi$  between  $Z_i$  and  $Z_j$  on which  $X$  is a intermediate node, then the two vertices adjacent to  $X$  on the path, say  $V_1$  and  $V_2$ , are not adjacent to each other. Hence, in any v-structure-free acyclic orientation of  $\mathcal{C}$ ,  $V_1 \rightarrow X$  and  $X \leftarrow V_2$  can't exist

simultaneously. Denote  $\pi = (Z_i, \dots, V_1, X, V_2, \dots, Z_j)$ , if  $X \rightarrow V_1$ , then  $X$  is an ancestor of  $Z_i$  since the subpath of a chordless path is still chordless. Similarly, if  $X \rightarrow V_2$ , then  $X$  is an ancestor of  $Z_j$ . Thus,  $X \in an(Z_i, Z_j) \subseteq an(Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n)$ , which completes the proof of (2)  $\Rightarrow$  (1).

(1)  $\Rightarrow$  (3). Clearly,  $C$  is not empty, and by Corollary 2,  $n \geq 2$ . If  $C$  induces a complete subgraph of  $\mathcal{C}$ , then by Lemma 5, there is a v-structure-free acyclic orientation of  $\mathcal{C}$  such that every vertex in  $C$  is a parent of  $X$  while every vertex in  $adj(X) \setminus C$  is a child of  $X$ . We will prove that such an orientation leads to a DAG where  $X \notin an(Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n)$ . In fact, if there is a completely directed path  $\pi = (X = v_0, v_1, v_2, \dots, v_k = Z_i)$  from  $X$  to  $Z_i$ , then  $v_1 \notin C$ , which means  $k \geq 2$  and  $\pi$  is not chordless. Let  $v_p - v_q, q \geq p + 2$  be a chord on  $\pi$ . By acyclicity assumption,  $v_p$  must point at  $v_q$ . Therefore,  $\pi(X, v_p), v_p \rightarrow v_q$  and  $\pi(v_q, Z_i)$  form a completely directed path from  $X$  to  $Z_i$ . If this path is not chordless, we can find another chord and construct a shorter path which is completely directed from  $X$  to  $Z_i$ . Finally, we will have a completely directed chordless path  $\pi'$  from  $X$  to  $Z_i$ . However, the vertex adjacent to  $X$  on  $\pi'$  is in critical set, thus the orientation of  $\pi'$  contradicts the assumption that every vertex in  $C$  is a parent of  $X$ .

(3)  $\Rightarrow$  (2). If  $C$  doesn't induce a complete subgraph of  $\mathcal{C}$ , then  $\exists C_i, C_j \in C$ ,  $C_i$  and  $C_j$  are not adjacent. By the definition of critical set, we have two chordless paths, say  $\pi_i$  and  $\pi_j$ , which are from  $X$  to  $Z_p$  and  $Z_q$  respectively, such that  $C_i$  is adjacent to  $X$  on  $\pi_i$  and  $C_j$  is adjacent to  $X$  on  $\pi_j$ . We claim that  $\pi_i$  and  $\pi_j$  have no common vertex except for  $X$ . If not, let  $A$  be the common vertex such that among all the common vertices,  $A$  is closest to  $X$  on  $\pi_i$ , then the subpath  $\pi_i(X, A)$  has no common vertex with subpath  $\pi_j(X, A)$  other than  $X$  and  $A$ . It is simple to check that  $\pi_i(X, A)$  and  $\pi_j(X, A)$  form a cycle with length greater than 3, and  $C_i, X, C_j$  are three consecutive vertices on this cycle. Since  $C_i$  and  $C_j$  are not adjacent, by Lemma 3, we have a chord connecting  $X$  and some node  $w$  on this cycle. Notice that  $w$  is either a node on  $\pi_i(X, A)$  or a node on  $\pi_j(X, A)$ , thus the chord  $X - w$  is either on  $\pi_i$  or on  $\pi_j$ . This is contradicted to our assumptions. Since  $\pi_i$  and  $\pi_j$  have no common vertex except for  $X$ ,  $Z_p$  and  $Z_q$  are distinct. Therefore,  $\pi_i$  and  $\pi_j$  constitute a path  $\pi$  from  $Z_p$  to  $Z_q$  which passes through  $X$ . As  $\pi_i$  and  $\pi_j$  are chordless, they are triangle-free. It follows from  $C_i$  and  $C_j$  are not adjacent that  $\pi$  is also triangle-free. The desired result comes from Lemma 2.  $\square$

Finally, we can prove our main result.

*Proof of Theorem 3.* (3)  $\Rightarrow$  (2) and (2)  $\Rightarrow$  (1) can be easily derived from Lemma 7, so we omit the proof here. For (1)  $\Rightarrow$  (3), let  $Z$  be the set of all completely invariant causes of  $Y$ . By Corollary 2 and Lemma 6,  $X$  and  $Y$  belong to different chain components and  $Z \neq \emptyset$ . Suppose (3) doesn't hold, then by Lemma 7  $X$  is not an invariant cause of  $Z$ , which means there is a DAG  $\mathcal{G}$  in the markov equivalence class such that  $X \notin an(Z)$ . Since  $X$  is a semi-invariant cause of  $Y$ , it follows that there is a completely directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{G}$ . Let  $\pi$  be such a path, then none of the vertices on  $\pi$  is in  $Z$ . Recall that  $X$  and  $Y$  belong to different chain components, hence by the definition of CPDAG there are two consecutive vertices on  $\pi$  such that the edge between them is directed in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ . Let  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  be such two vertices with  $v_1 \rightarrow v_2$  and  $\pi(X, v_1)$  corresponds to an undirected path in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , then by Theorem 2,  $v_1$  is a completely invariant cause of  $Y$ . However,  $v_1 \notin Z$ , which is contrary to the definition of  $Z$ .  $\square$

## A.6 Proof of Theorem 4

*Proof.* First we prove statement (1). Suppose  $X$  is not a potential cause of  $Y$ , that is,  $X$  has no causal effect on  $Y$ , then for every DAG  $\mathcal{G}$  in the Markov equivalence class represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$ ,  $Y$  is a non-descendent of  $X$ . Therefore,  $X \perp\!\!\!\perp Y | pa(X)$  by Markov Property. On the other hand, if  $X$  is a potential cause of  $Y$ , then by definition there is a DAG  $\mathcal{G}$  in the Markov equivalence class represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$  in which  $X$  is an ancestor of  $Y$ . Assume  $\pi$  is the directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{G}$ . Since every vertex on  $\pi$  is a non-collider and none of them is in  $pa(X)$ ,  $X \not\perp\!\!\!\perp Y | pa(X)$ .

Statement (2) is simply a restatement of statement (1), thus we omit the proof.

Next we prove statement (3). If  $X$  is a completely invariant cause of  $Y$ , then clearly  $X \not\perp\!\!\!\perp Y | pa(X)$ . By Theorem 2, let  $\pi$  be the directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , then for any DAG  $\mathcal{G}$  in the Markov equivalence

class represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$ ,  $\pi$  is directed, which means  $\pi$  has no collider. However, none of the vertices on  $\pi$  is a member of  $pa(X)$  or  $sib(X)$ , since otherwise, a directed cycle or a partially directed cycle would occur in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ . Therefore,  $\pi$  is active given  $pa(X) \cup sib(X)$ , which means  $X \not\perp\!\!\!\perp Y | pa(X) \cup sib(X)$ . Conversely, suppose  $X$  is not a completely invariant cause of  $Y$ . Since  $X \not\perp\!\!\!\perp Y | pa(X)$  implies  $X$  is a potential cause of  $Y$ ,  $X$  must be a semi-invariant or non-invariant cause of  $Y$ . In the following, we will prove in both cases  $X \perp\!\!\!\perp Y | pa(X) \cup sib(X)$  holds. By Lemma 5, there is a DAG  $\mathcal{G}$  in the Markov equivalence class represented by  $\mathcal{G}^*$  such that  $ch_{\mathcal{G}}(X) = sib(X) \cup ch(X)$  and  $pa_{\mathcal{G}}(X) = pa(X)$ . Here,  $ch_{\mathcal{G}}(X)$  and  $pa_{\mathcal{G}}(X)$  means the children set and parents set of  $X$  in  $\mathcal{G}$ , respectively. Consider a path  $\pi$  from  $X$  to  $Y$  in  $\mathcal{G}$ . Without loss of generality, we can assume  $\pi = (X, V_1, \dots, V_n, Y)$ . If  $V_1 \in pa_{\mathcal{G}}(X)$ , then  $\pi$  is blocked by  $pa(X) \cup sib(X)$  since  $V_1$  cannot be a collider on  $\pi$ . If  $V_1 \in ch(X)$ , then  $\pi$  is not directed, since otherwise, the corresponding path in  $\mathcal{G}^*$  would be a partially directed path from  $X$  to  $Y$  where the node adjacent to  $X$  is a child of  $X$ . Therefore, there must be a collider on  $\pi$ . Let  $V_i$  is the collider nearest to  $X$ . If  $V_i \in an(pa(X) \cup sib(X))$ , there exists a partially directed cycle in  $\mathcal{G}^*$ , which is impossible. Thus  $V_i \notin an(pa(X) \cup sib(X))$ , and  $\pi$  is blocked by  $pa(X) \cup sib(X)$ . Finally, in the case where  $V_1 \in sib(X)$ , if  $V_1$  is a non-collider,  $\pi$  is clearly blocked by  $pa(X) \cup sib(X)$ . If  $V_1$  is a collider, then  $V_2$  is adjacent to  $X$ , which means  $V_2 \notin ch(X)$ , since otherwise, both  $X \rightarrow V_2 \rightarrow V_1 - X$  and  $X \rightarrow V_2 - V_1 - X$  are partially directed cycles. However,  $V_2$  is a non-collider on  $\pi$  and  $V_2 \notin ch(X)$  implies  $V_2 \in pa(X) \cup sib(X)$ . Hence,  $\pi$  is blocked by  $pa(X) \cup sib(X)$ . This completes the proof of statement (3).

Again, Statement (4) is simply a restatement of statement (2). We omit the proof here.  $\square$

### A.7 Proof of Lemma 1

Before we prove Lemma 1, we present Algorithm 4, which slightly generalizes Algorithm 1. The main differences between Algorithm 1 and 4 are the elements in  $S$ . In Algorithm 4, We introduce a number to each element in  $S$  and this number is related to the number of loops.

Algorithm 4 is a variant of Breadth-First-Search. It starts from  $X$ , by adding  $\{(X, \emptyset, 0, \emptyset)\}$  to a waiting queue  $S$ . Each quadruple in  $S$  consists of  $T$ ,  $P$ ,  $n$  and  $A$ . The first element,  $T$ , is the vertex we will visit, which stands for an endpoint of a chordless path starting from  $X$  denoted by  $\pi(X, T)$ , the second element  $P$  is the vertex adjacent to  $T$  on  $\pi(X, T)$ , the third element  $n$  is the unique ID of the subpath  $\pi(X, P)$  and the forth element is the vertex adjacent to  $X$  on  $\pi(X, T)$ . During the  $k$ -th loop, we take the first element  $(T, P, n, A)$  out of  $S$  and add  $(T, P, n, k)$  to the front of  $F$ , which stores the found paths. Each quadruple in  $F$  contains 4 elements, namely  $T$ ,  $P$ ,  $n$  and  $k$ . The first three elements have the meanings as they are in  $S$ , while the forth element  $k$  means the current number of loops, which is also the ID of the chordless path  $\pi(X, T)$ . Next, if  $T \in Z$ , we add  $A$  into  $C$  since by definition  $A$  is a member of the critical set. Otherwise, we extend the current path  $\pi(X, T)$  to a longer chordless path by appending a vertex adjacent to  $T$  but not adjacent to  $P$ . More precisely, let  $\alpha$  be a such vertex, the chordless path  $\pi(X, T)$  and the edge  $T - \alpha$  generate a new chordless path  $\pi(X, \alpha)$ . We label  $\pi(X, T)$  by number  $k$  and add  $(\alpha, T, k, A)$  to the end of  $S$ , since  $A$  is still the vertex adjacent to  $X$  on this new path. Of course, such a vertex  $\alpha$  may not exist and if so, no quadruple will be added to  $S$ .

Basically, The output  $F$  is a linearization of a tree. Given the output queue  $F$  of Algorithm 4, each element in  $F$  except for  $(X, \emptyset, 0, 1)$  represents a chordless path that starts with  $X$ . More specifically, let  $(T, P, n, k) \in F$  and  $T \neq X$ ,  $(T, P, n, k)$  represents a chordless path starting with  $X$  and ending with  $T$ . To recover this path, we first add  $T$  into a queue, and find the quadruple after  $(T, P, n, k)$  in  $F$  whose forth element is  $n$ . Clearly, the first element of this quadruple is  $P$ . Again, add  $P$  into the queue. Repeat the above procedures until we reach  $(X, \emptyset, 0, 1)$  and add  $X$  into the queue. Finally, reverse the queue to get a chordless path starting with  $X$  and ending with  $T$ .

*Proof.* We only need to prove the correctness of Algorithm 4. Let  $C_t$  be the true critical set. The construction above shows that each element in  $F$  represents a chordless path starting with  $X$ , which means  $C \subset C_t$ . Therefore, to prove the correctness of Algorithm 4, it suffices to show that for each element  $A$  in  $C_t$ , there

**Algorithm 4** Finding the critical set**Require:** an undirected graph  $\mathcal{G}_u^*$ , a variable  $X$ , and a set  $Z$ ,**Ensure:** the critical set  $C$  of  $X$  with respect to  $Z$  in  $\mathcal{G}_u^*$ , a sequence  $F$  that stores chordless paths.

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1: Initialize  $C = \emptyset$ , and waiting queue  $S = \{(X, \emptyset, 0, \emptyset)\}$ , and  $F = \emptyset$ ,
2:  $k=0$ ,
3: while  $S$  is not empty do
4:    $k=k+1$ ,
5:   take the first element  $(T, P, n, A)$  out of  $S$  and add  $(T, P, n, k)$  to the front of  $F$ ,
6:   if  $T \notin Z$  and  $P \neq \emptyset$  then
7:     for  $\alpha \in \text{adj}(T)$  such that  $\alpha \notin \text{adj}(P) \cup \{P\}$  do
8:       if  $P = X$  then
9:         add  $(\alpha, T, k, T)$  to the end of  $S$ ,
10:      else
11:        add  $(\alpha, T, k, A)$  to the end of  $S$ ,
12:      end if
13:    end for
14:   else if  $T \notin Z$  then
15:     for  $\alpha \in \text{adj}(T)$ , do
16:       add  $(\alpha, T, k, \alpha)$  to the end of  $S$ ,
17:     end for
18:   else
19:     add  $A$  into  $C$  if it's not in  $C$ ,
20:   end if
21: end while
22: return  $C, F$ 

```

is a quadruple  $(T, P, n, k)$  in  $F$  such that  $T \in Z$  and  $A$  is the vertex adjacent to  $X$  on the corresponding chordless path.

Let  $A \in C_t$  and  $\pi = (X, A, V_2, \dots, V_m)$  be a chordless path such that  $V_m \in Z$  and no intermediate vertex on the path is in  $Z$ . For convenience, we set  $V_0 = X, V_1 = A, V_{-1} = \emptyset, n_0 = 1, n_{-1} = 0$ . During the first loop,  $(X, \emptyset, 0, 1)$  is added into  $F$  and  $(A, X, 1, A)$  is added into  $S$  since  $A$  is adjacent to  $X$ . Since  $S$  is a queue, there exists  $n_1$  such that  $(A, X, 1, A)$  will be took out from  $S$  during the  $n_1$ -th loop. Clearly, if  $m = 1$ , then  $A \in Z$ , and  $A$  will be added to  $C$  during the  $n_1$ -th loop. Suppose  $m > 1$ , since  $X$  and  $V_2$  are not adjacent, during the  $n_1$ -th loop,  $(A, X, 1, n_1)$  is added to  $F$  and  $(V_2, A, n_1, A)$  is added to  $S$ . Assume that during the  $n_{m-1}$ -th loop,  $(V_{m-1}, V_{m-2}, n_{m-2}, A)$  was took out from  $S$ , and  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, n_{m-1}, A)$  was added to  $S$ , then there exists  $n_m$  such that  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, n_{m-1}, A)$  will be took out from  $S$  during the  $n_m$ -th loop and  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, n_{m-1}, n_m)$  will be added into  $F$ . Since  $V_m \in Z$ ,  $A$  will be added to  $C$ . It can be checked that  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, n_{m-1}, n_m)$  corresponds to the chordless path  $\pi$ , which proves the existence.

Next we will prove that there is only one quadruple in  $F$  corresponding to  $\pi$ . Suppose that  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, s_{m-1}, s_m)$  and  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, t_{m-1}, t_m)$  are two different quadruples in  $F$  which both correspond to  $\pi$ . By above discussion, the construction procedure of the path will visit a sequence of quadruples in  $F$ . Let  $(V_i, V_{i-1}, s_{i-1}, s_i)$  and  $(V_i, V_{i-1}, t_{i-1}, t_i)$   $i = 0, 1, \dots, m$  are two sequences of quadruples which the procedure visited, starting from  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, s_{m-1}, s_m)$  and  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, t_{m-1}, t_m)$ , respectively. Since the forth element of a quadruple is the number of loops when the quadruple enters the queue,  $s_m \neq t_m$ . If  $s_{m-1} = t_{m-1}$ , we have  $(V_{m-1}, V_{m-2}, s_{m-2}, s_{m-1}) = (V_{m-1}, V_{m-2}, t_{m-2}, t_{m-1})$ , which means  $(V_m, V_{m-1}, s_{m-1}, A)$  is added to  $S$  twice during the  $s_{m-1}$ -th loop. This is contrary to Algorithm 4, hence  $s_{m-1} \neq t_{m-1}$ . By induction,  $s_i \neq t_i$  for  $i = 0, 1, \dots, m$ . However,  $s_0 = t_0 = 1$ . This completes the proof of uniqueness.  $\square$

### A.8 Proof of Theorem 5

The proof follows from Theorem 1 to Theorem 4, as well as Lemma 1.

### References

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