

# Graph Neural Network Intro

*“I checked it very thoroughly, said the computer, and that quite definitely is the answer. I think the problem, to be quite honest with you, is that you’ve never actually known what the question is.”*

*- Douglas Adams, The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy (1979)*

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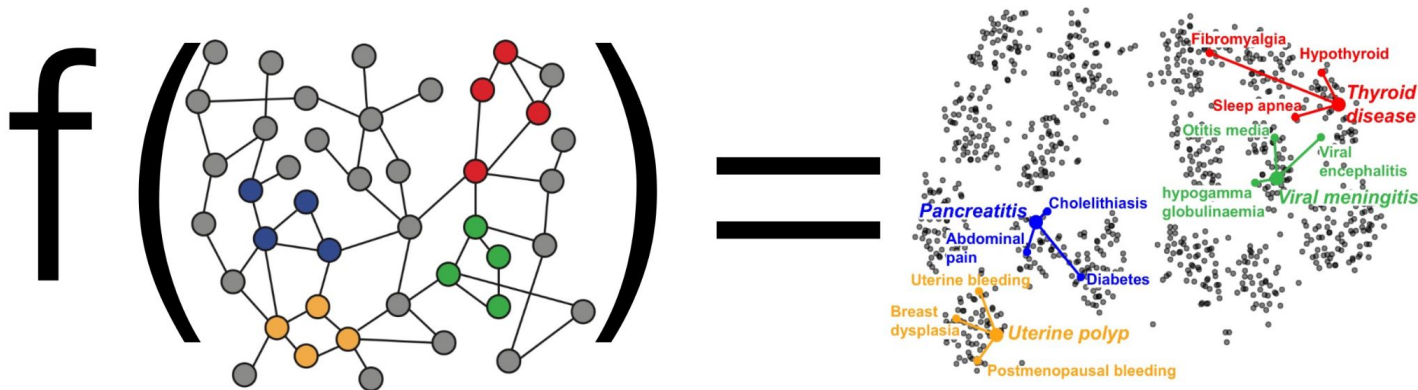
Credits:

[Kipf and Welling, ICLR 2017]

# Review: Node Embeddings

Idea: Map nodes to a *d-dimensional* embeddings such that similar nodes in the graph are embedded close together.

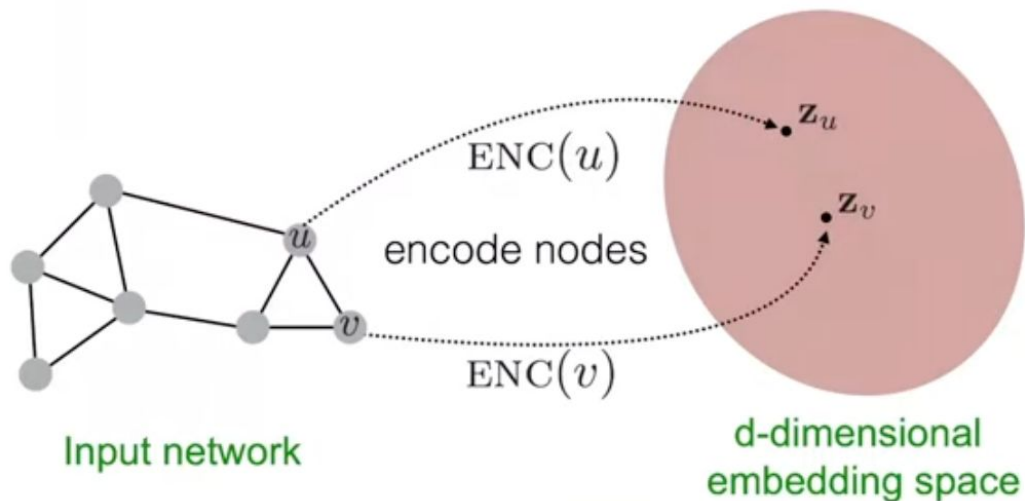
- Need to learn a mapping function  $f$  to perform the embedding.



# Review: Encoder-Decoder Framework

Encoder-Decoder:

- Node Embeddings Goal: ***similarity(u,v)***  $\approx \mathbf{z}_v^T \mathbf{z}_u$

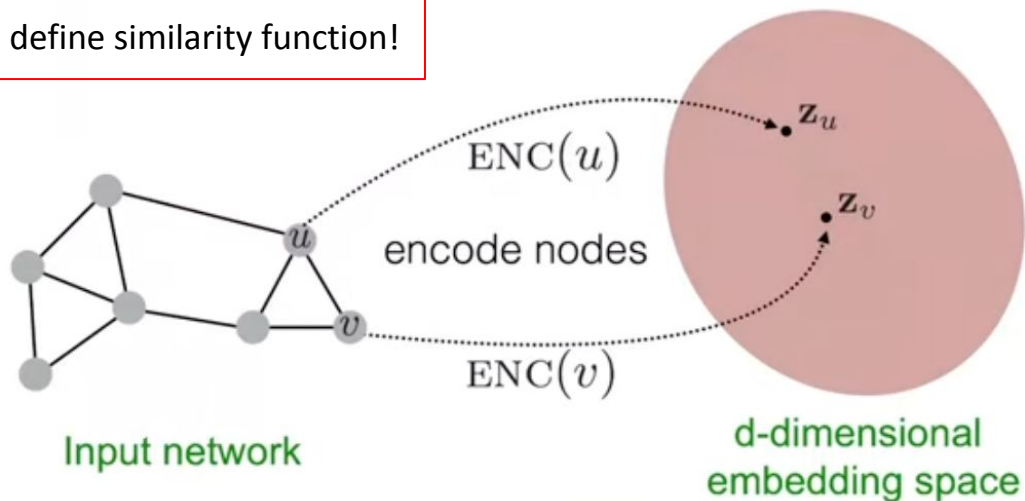


# Encoder-Decoder Framework

Encoder-Decoder:

- Node Embeddings Goal:  $\text{similarity}(u,v) \approx \mathbf{z}_v^T \mathbf{z}_u$

Need to define similarity function!



# Two key components

**Encoder:** Maps each node  $\mathbf{v}$  to a low-dimensional embedding  $\mathbf{z}_v$ .

$$\text{ENC}(v) = \mathbf{z}_v$$

**Similarity function:** Specifies how the relationships in embedding space map to the relationships in the original network.

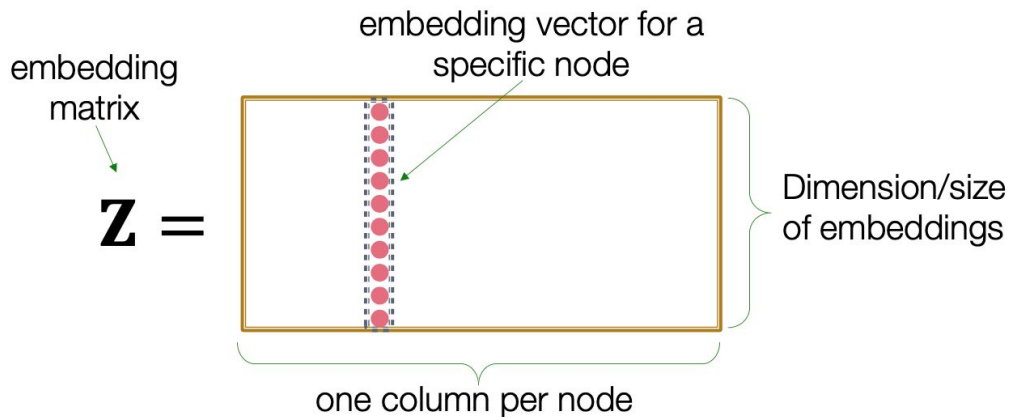
$$\text{similarity}(u, v) \approx \mathbf{z}_v^T \mathbf{z}_u \quad \text{DEC}$$

Similarity between  $u$  and  $v$  in original network

Dot product between node embeddings

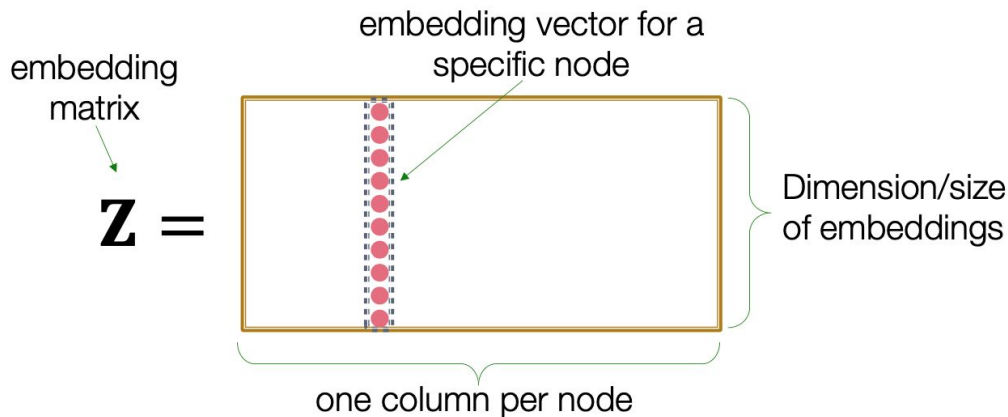
# Shallow Encoding

**Simplest encoding approach:** Encoder is just an embedding-lookup.  
Directly learning the embedding of each node.



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**Simplest encoding approach:** Encoder is just an embedding-lookup.  
Directly learning the embedding of each node.



Need to learn the embedding of each node.

# Shallow Encoders

Limitations of shallow embedding methods?

Bueller? Ferris Bueller?



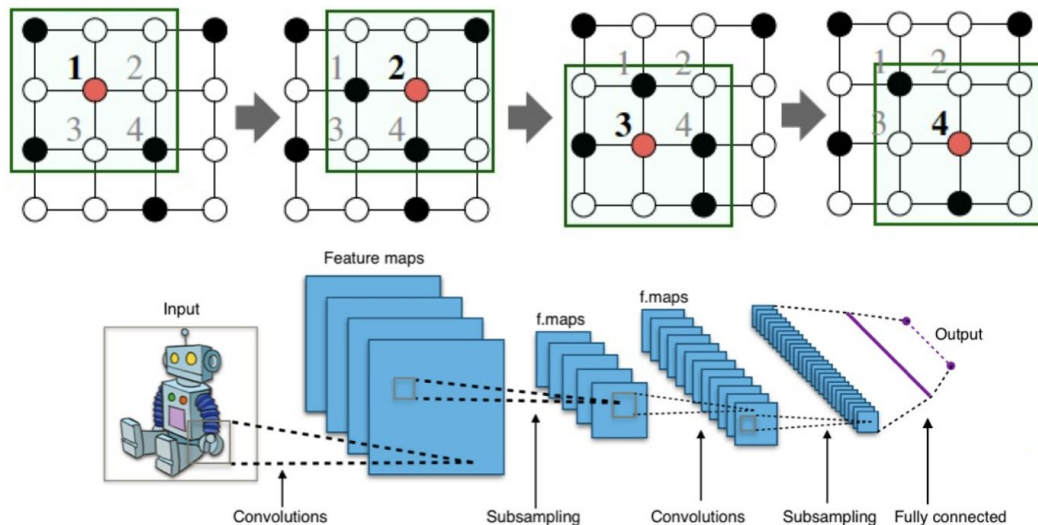
# Shallow Encoders

Limitations of shallow embedding methods:

- $O(|V|)$  parameters are needed:
  - No sharing of parameters between nodes.
  - Every node has its own unique embedding.
- Inherently “transductive”:
  - Cannot generate embeddings for nodes that are not seen during training.
  - Must learn embedding for each node.
  - Want inductive learning.
- Does not incorporate node features:
  - Nodes in many graphs have features that we can and should leverage.

# Idea convolution:

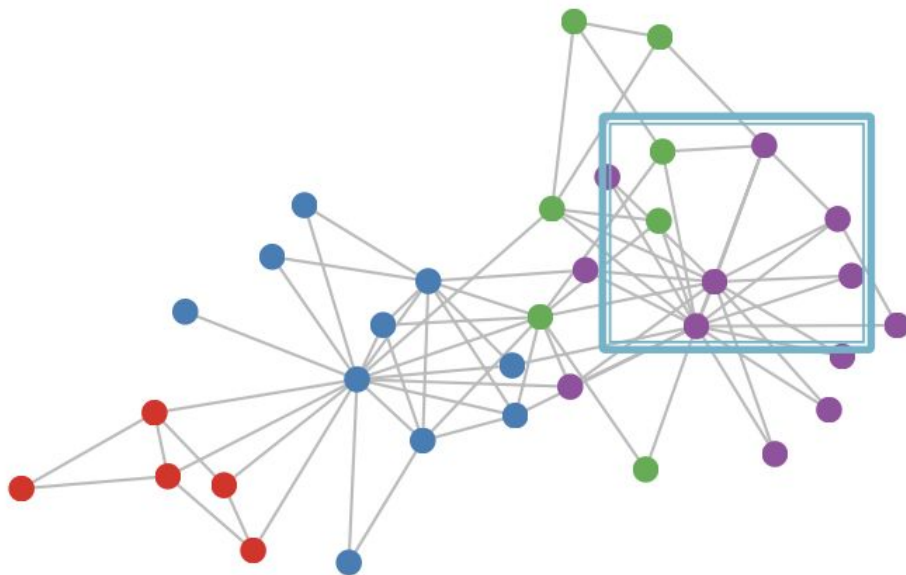
## CNN on an image:



- Goal is to generalize convolutions beyond simple lattices
- Leverage node features/attributes (e.g., text, images)

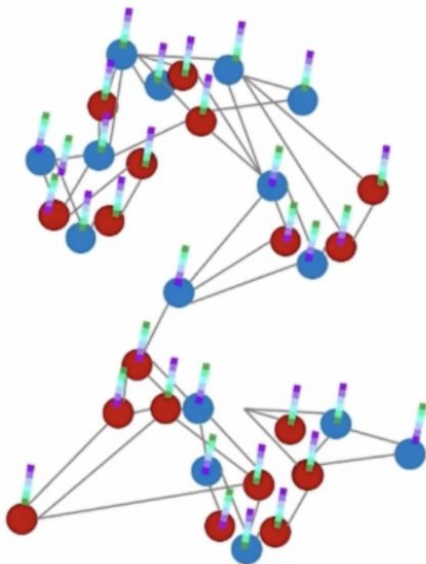
# Real-World Graphs

- There is no fixed notion of locality or sliding window on the graph
- Graph is permutation invariant



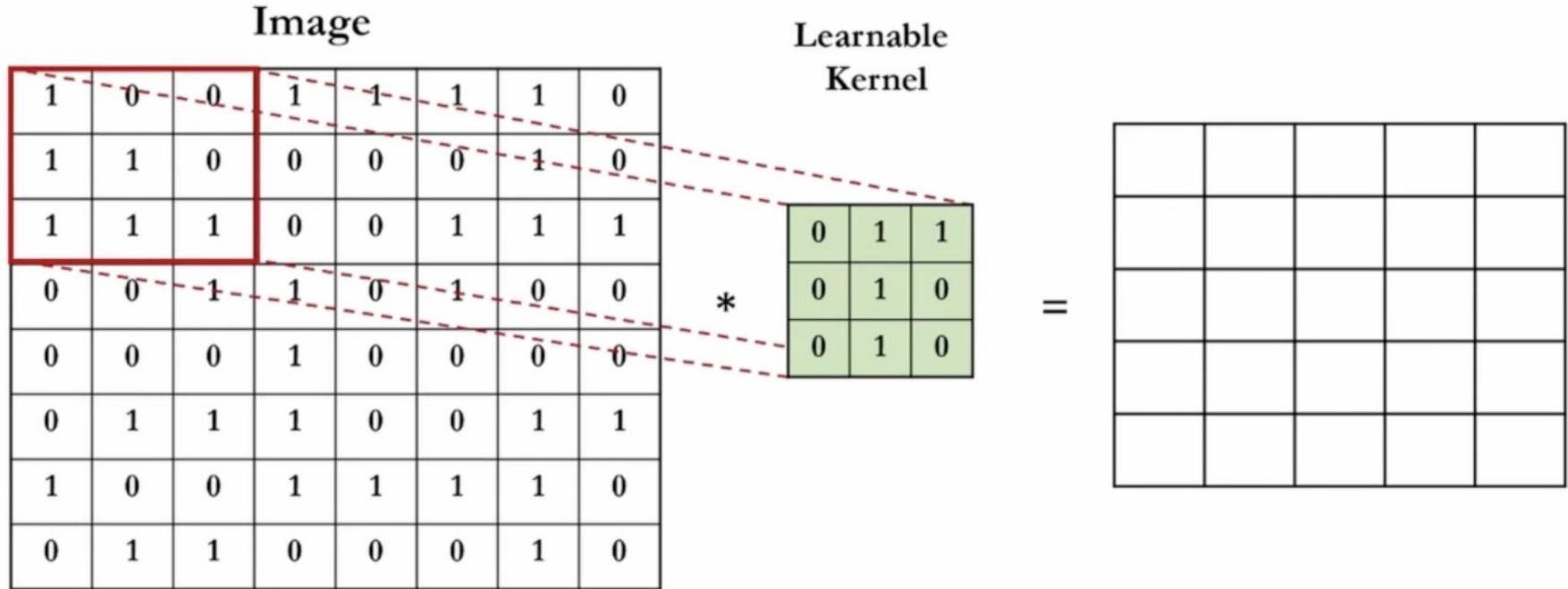
# Generalizing Convolution

How to generalize CNN to GCN?

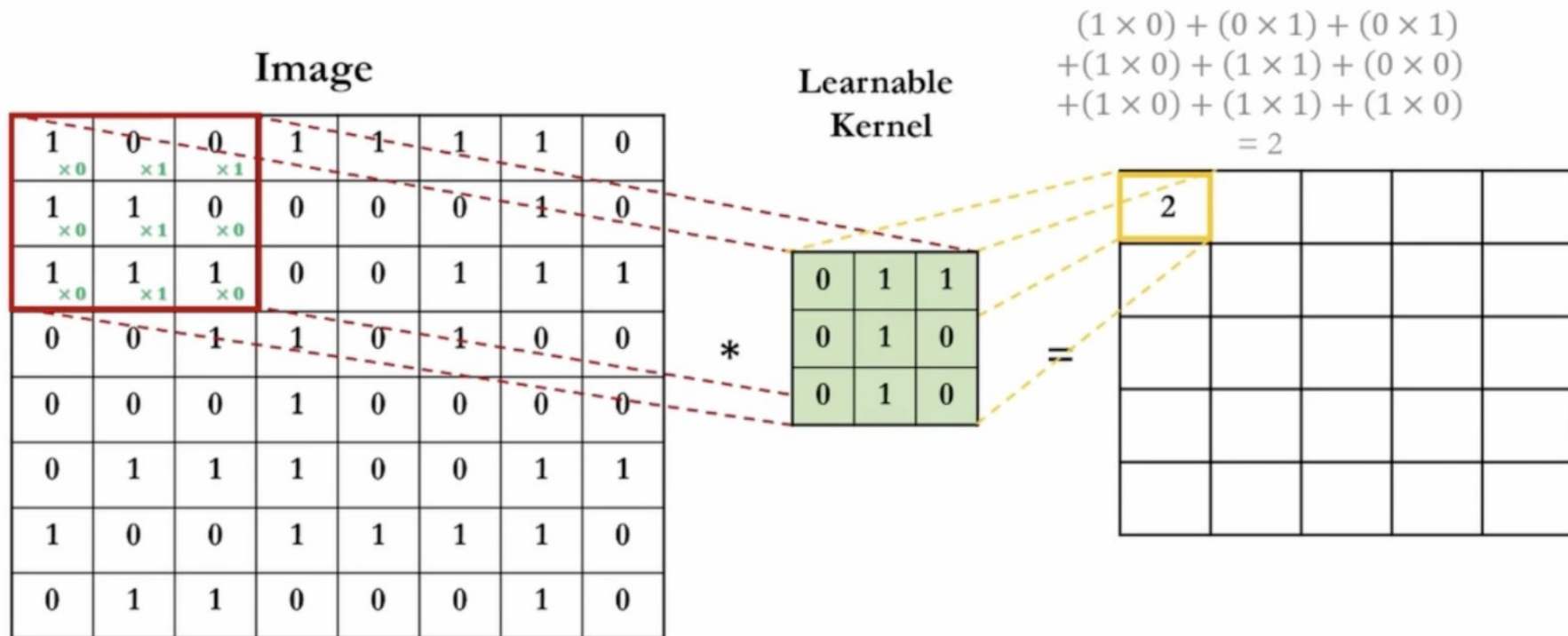


# Review

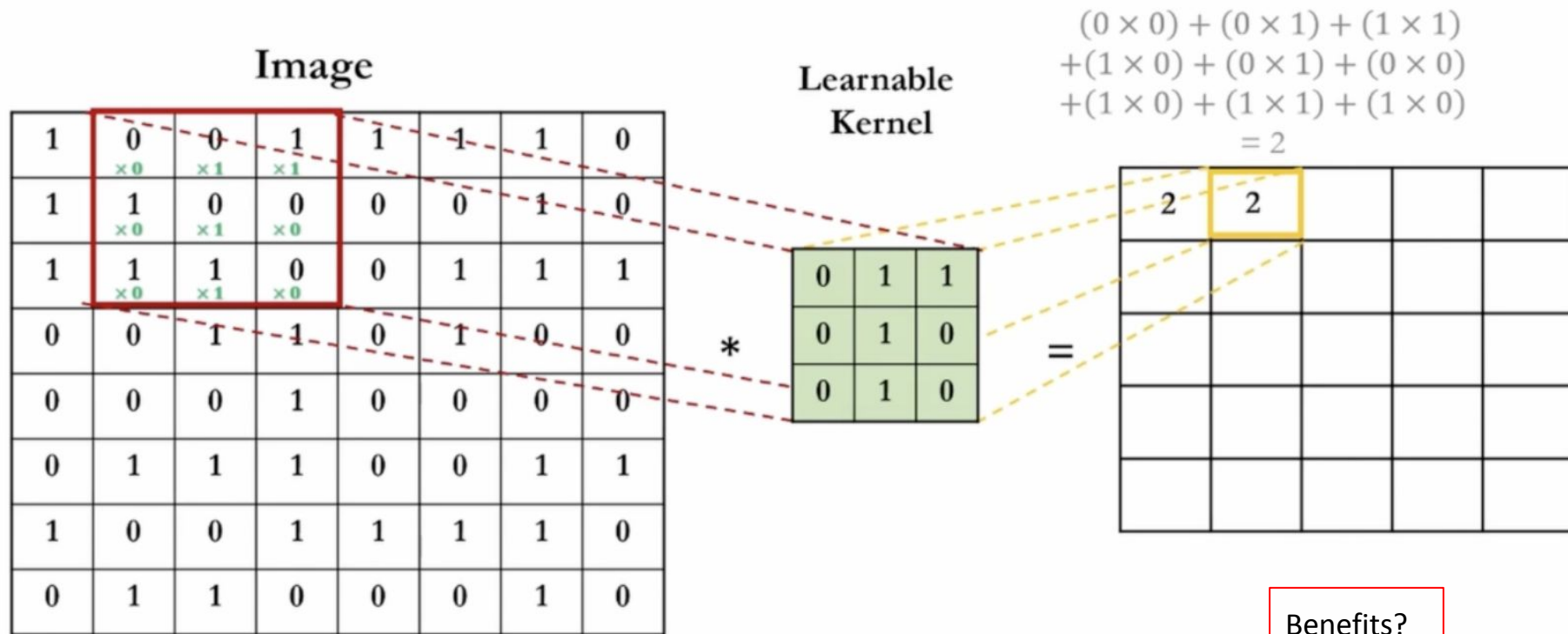
## Convolution in 2D



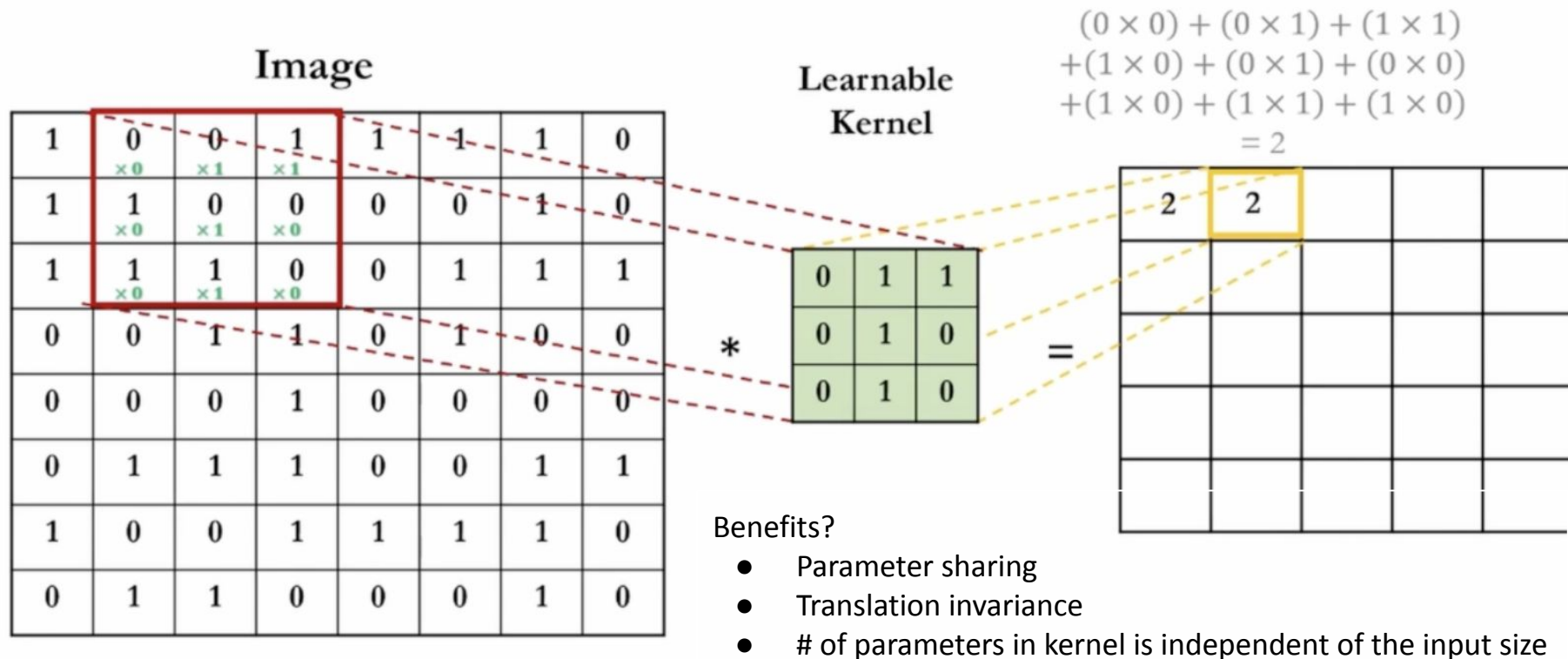
# Convolution in 2D



# Convolution in 2D



# Convolution in 2D





# Deep Learning for Graphs

# Deep Graph Encoders

Deep learning methods based on graph neural networks (GNNs):

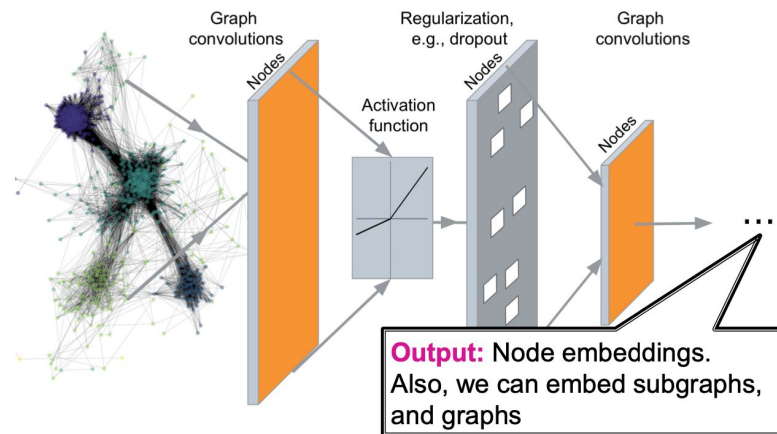
- ***ENC(v)*** - multiple layers of non-linear transformations based on graph structure.
- Deep encoders can be combined with node similarity functions like PageRank, or learn end-to-end.
- Can train for graph prediction tasks.

# Deep Graph Encoders

Goal: Train end-to-end.

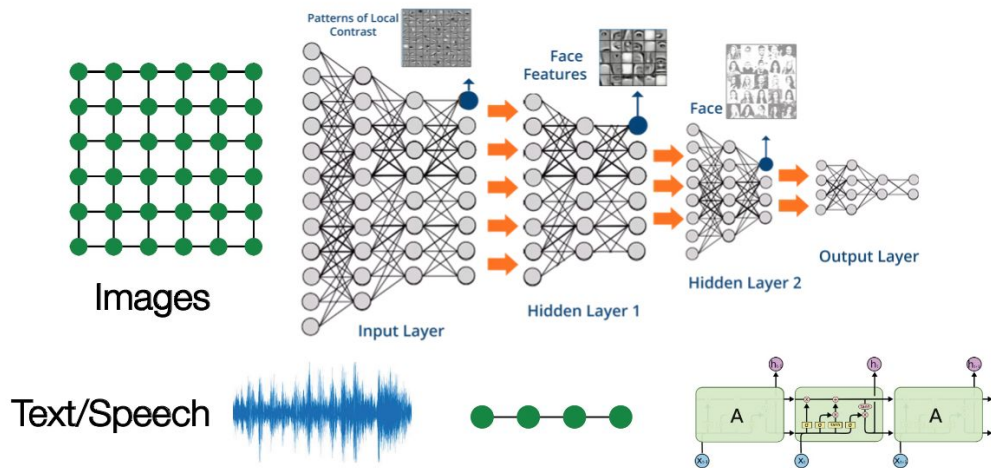
Tasks to solve:

- Node classification - Predict a type of a given node.
- Link prediction - Predict whether two nodes are linked
- Community detection - Identify densely linked clusters of nodes
- Network similarity - How similar are two networks or sub-networks



# Machine Learning

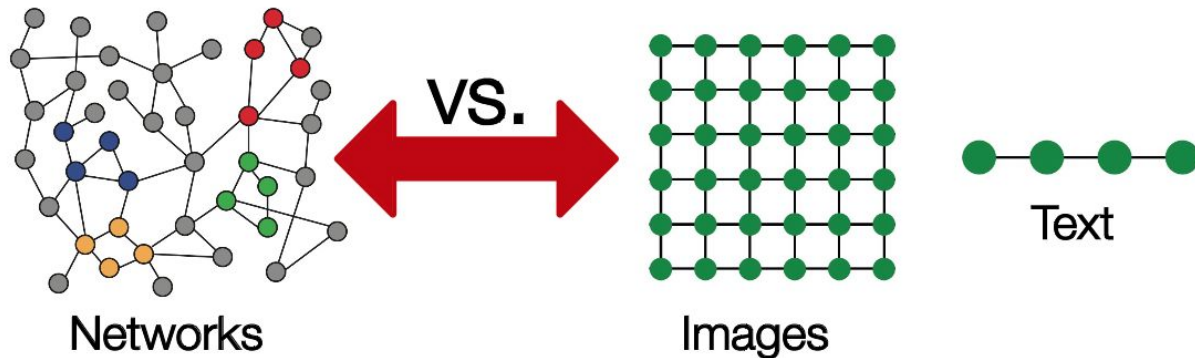
- Modern deep learning methods are designed for simple sequences and grids.
- Assume IID data.
- How to apply to more complex data types like graphs?



# Why is ML on graphs hard?

Networks are far more complex.

- Arbitrary size and complex topological structure - no spatial locality like grids.
- No fixed ordering, no left or right, no direction, no starting reference point.
- Often dynamic and have multimodal features.



# GML Setup

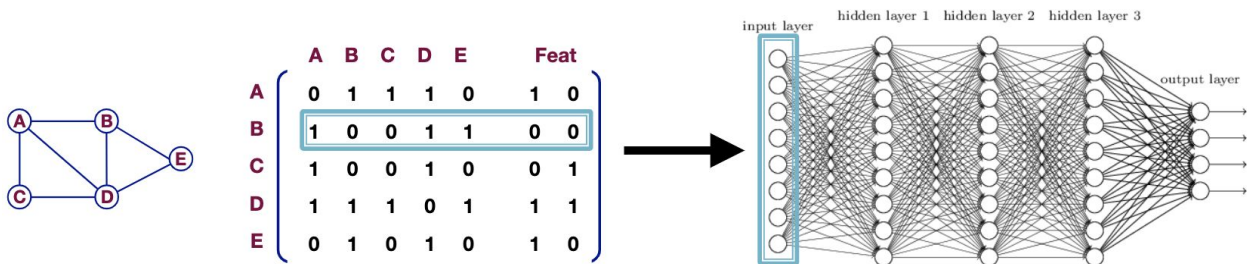
Assume we have a graph  $G$ :

- $V$  is the vertex set
- $A$  is the adjacency matrix (assume binary)
- $X \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times |V|}$  is a matrix of node features
- $v$ : a node in  $V$ ;  $Nv$ : the set of neighbors of  $v$ .
- Node features:
  - Social networks: User profile, User image
  - Biological networks: Gene expression profiles, gene functional information
  - When there is no node feature in the graph dataset:
    - Indicator vectors (one-hot encoding of a node)
    - Vector of constant 1:  $[1, 1, \dots, 1]$

# Naive Approach

Join adjacency matrix and features.

Feed them into a deep neural network:

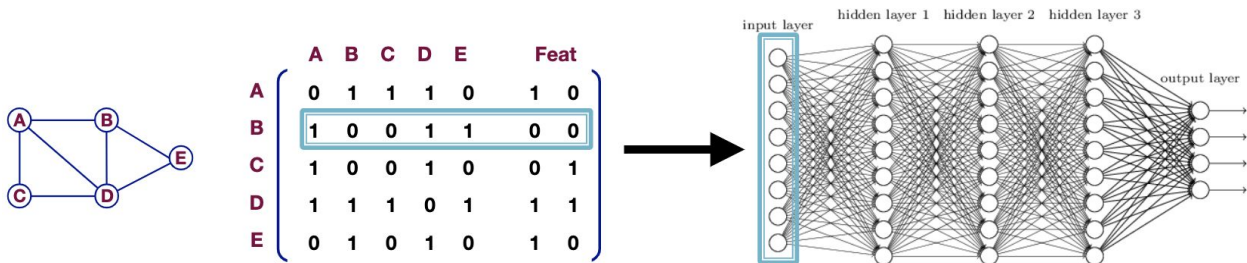


Issues?

# Naive Approach

Join adjacency matrix and features.

Feed them into a deep neural network:

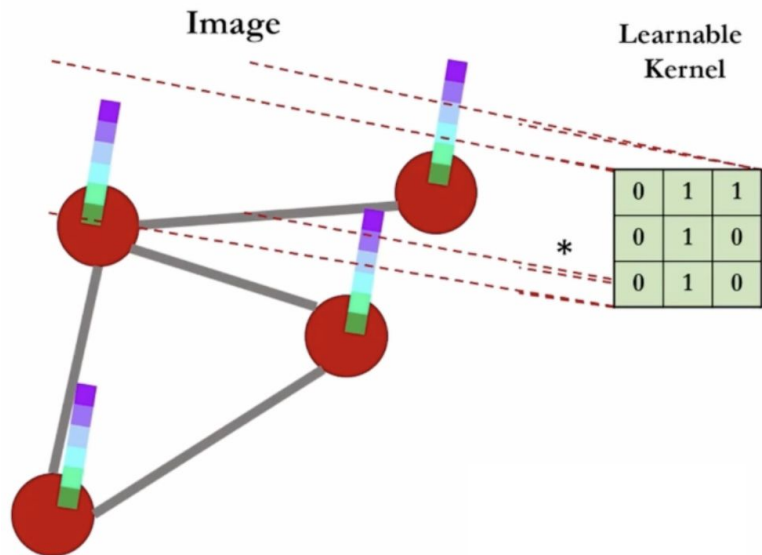


Issues:

- $O(V^2)$  parameters - not scalable!
- Not applicable to graphs of different sizes
- Sensitive to node ordering

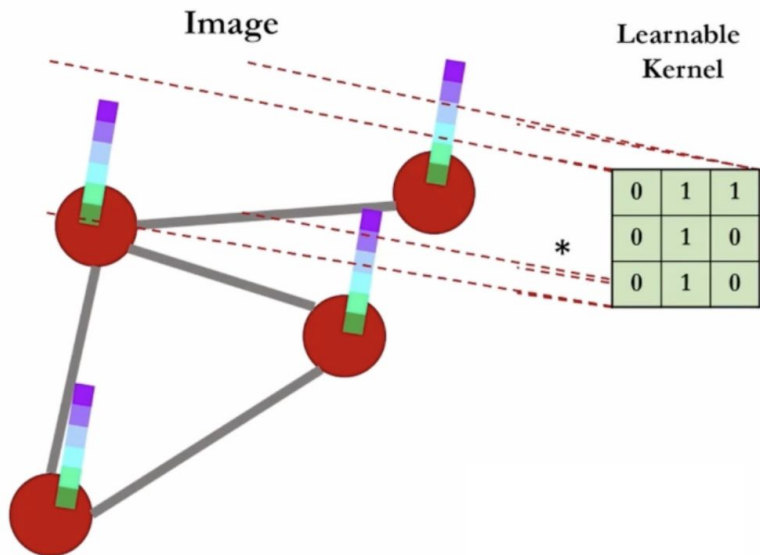


# Challenges in generalizing convolution to graph



Challenges in applying convolution to graph?

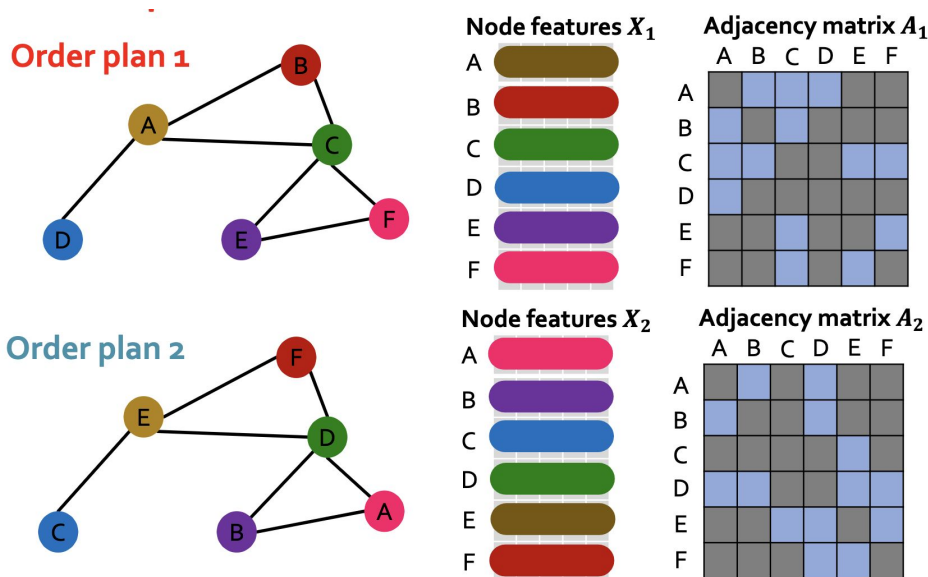
# Challenges in generalizing convolution to graph



- Number of neighbor nodes changes
- Distance between node changes
- Number of attributes can vary (features)
- We may have a heterogeneous graph - different nodes with different meaning and attributes
- Node ordering can change

# Permutation Invariance

- Graph does not have a canonical order of the nodes.



Graph and node representations should be the same for Order plan 1 and 2

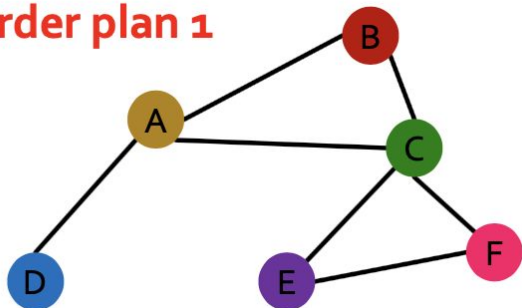
# Permutation Invariance

What does it mean by “graph representation is same for two order plans”?

Learn a function  $f$  that maps a graph  $G = (A, X)$  to a vector  $R^d$  then

$$f(A_1, X_1) = f(A_2, X_2)$$

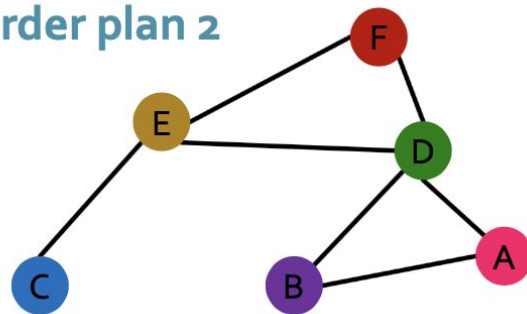
Order plan 1



For two order plans,  
output of  $f$  should be the  
same.

A - adjacency matrix  
X - node similarity matrix

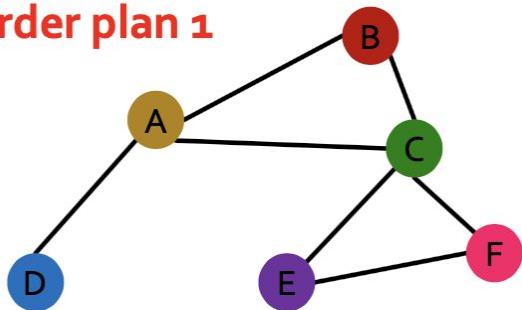
Order plan 2



# Permutation Invariance

- Similarly for node representation: Learn a function  $f$  that maps nodes of  $G$  to a matrix  $R$ .

Order plan 1

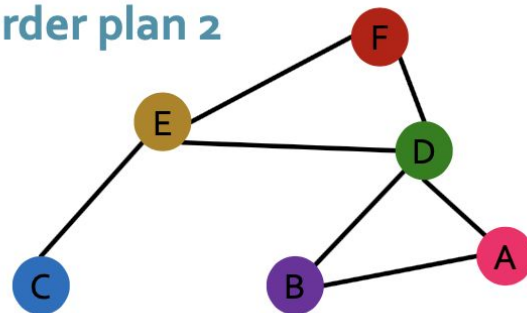


$$f(A_1, X_1) =$$

A	yellow	yellow
B	red	red
C	green	green
D	blue	blue
E	purple	purple
F	red	red

For two order plans,  
output of  $f$  should be the  
same.  
A - adjacency matrix  
X - node similarity matrix

Order plan 2



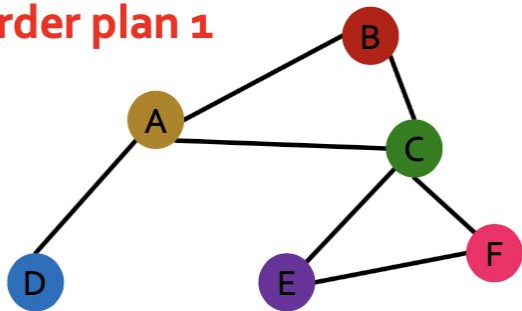
$$f(A_2, X_2) =$$

A	red	red
B	purple	purple
C	blue	blue
D	green	green
E	yellow	yellow
F	red	red

# Permutation (ordering) Invariance

- Similarly for node representation: Learn a function  $f$  that maps nodes of  $G$  to a matrix  $R$ .

Order plan 1

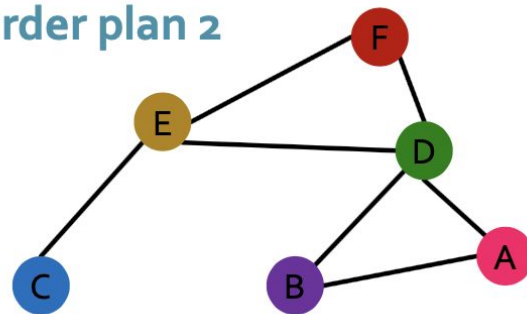


$f(A_1, X_1) =$

A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			

For two order plans, the vector of node at the same position is the same!

Order plan 2



$f(A_2, X_2) =$

A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			

Representation of brown node A, and node E

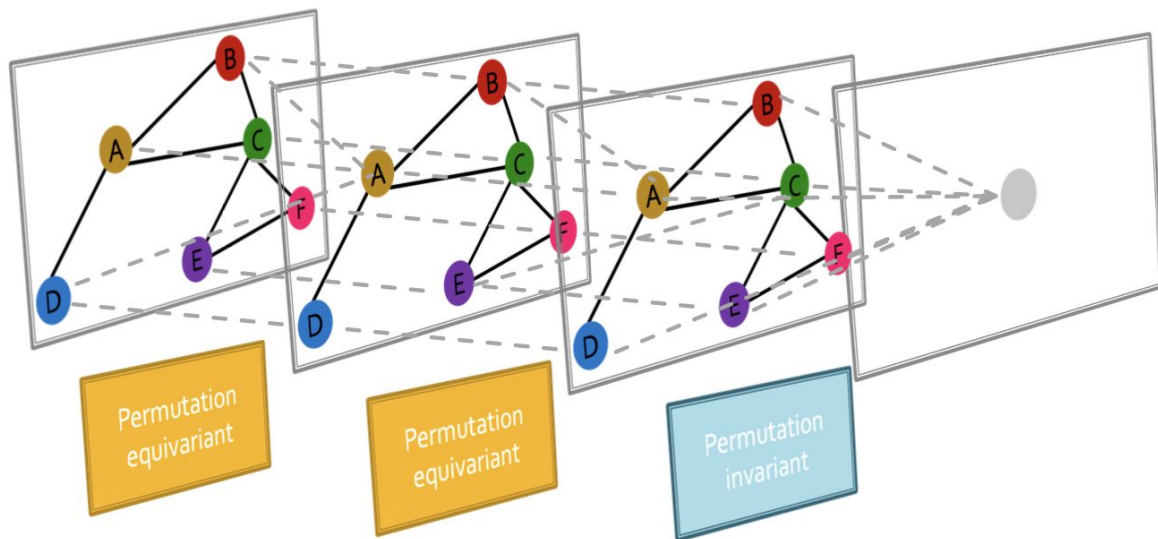
# Permutation Equivariance

For node representation

- Learn a function  $f$  that maps a graph  $G = (A, X)$  to a matrix  $R$ .
  - graph has  $m$  nodes, each row is the embedding of a node.
- Similarly, if this property holds for any pair of order plan  $i$  and  $j$ , we say  $f$  is a **permutation equivariant** function.
- All nodes learn their embeddings from their connections and any function applied to any node will result in the same value independent of noder ordering!

# Graph Neural Network Overview

- Graph neural networks consist of multiple permutation equivariant/invariant functions.

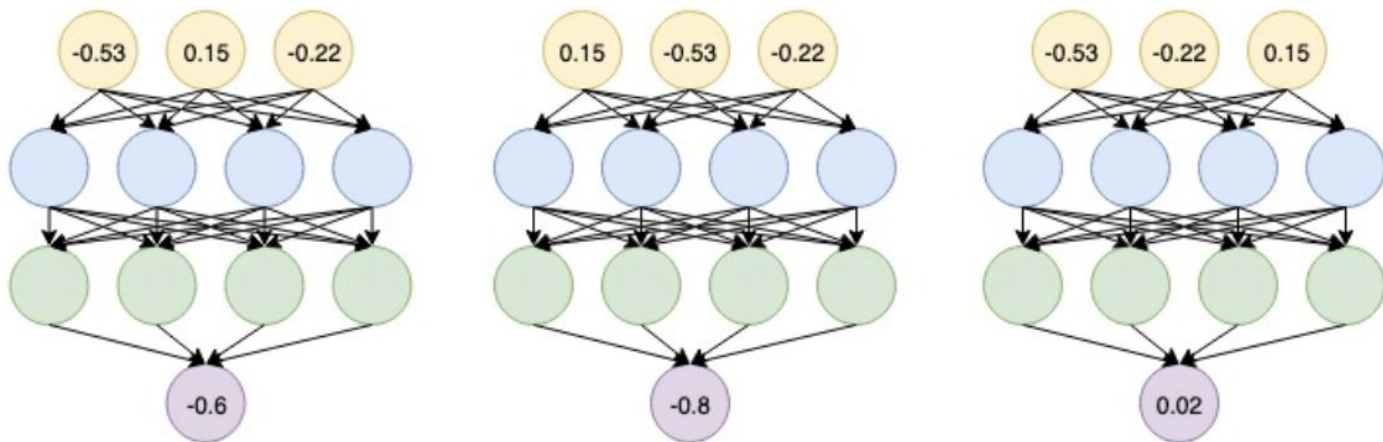




# Graph Neural Network Overview

Are other neural network architectures, e.g., MLPs, permutation invariant / equivariant?

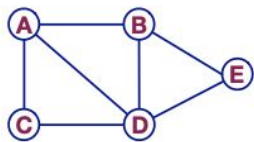
- **Nop!** - switching the order of the input leads to different outputs.



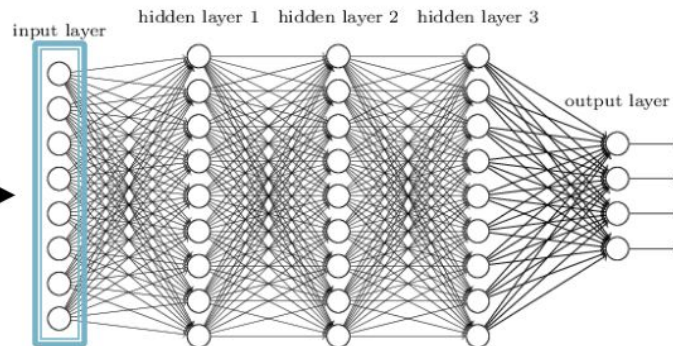
# Graph Neural Network Overview

Are other neural network architectures, e.g., MLPs, permutation invariant / equivariant?

- **Nop!** - switching the order of the input leads to different outputs.



	A	B	C	D	E	Feat	
A	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
B	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
C	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
D	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
E	0	1	0	1	0	1	0

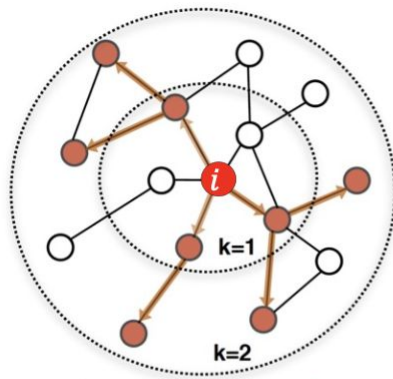


Should we give up?

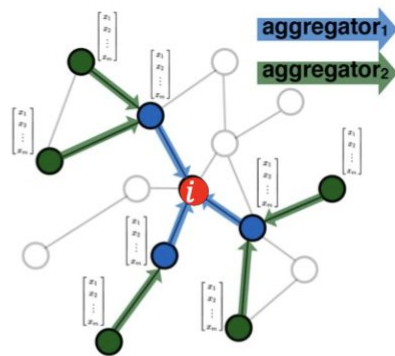
# Graph Convolutional Networks

- Idea: Node's neighborhood defines a computation graph.
- Think message passing!
- Learn how to propagate information across the graph to compute node features.

[Kipf and Welling, ICLR 2017]



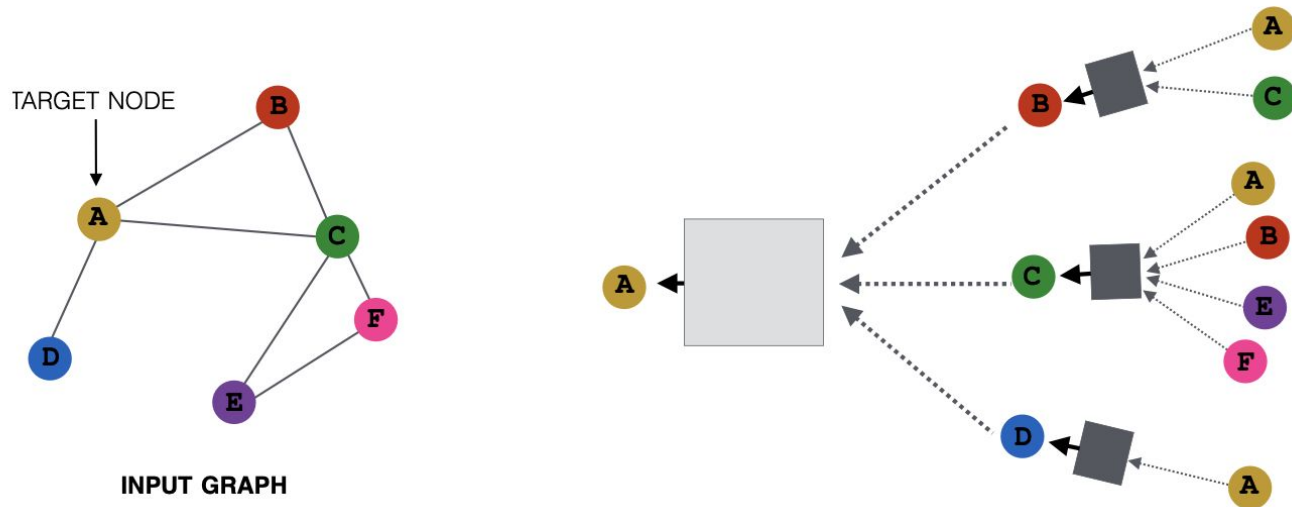
Determine node  
computation graph



Propagate and  
transform information

# Graph Convolutional Networks

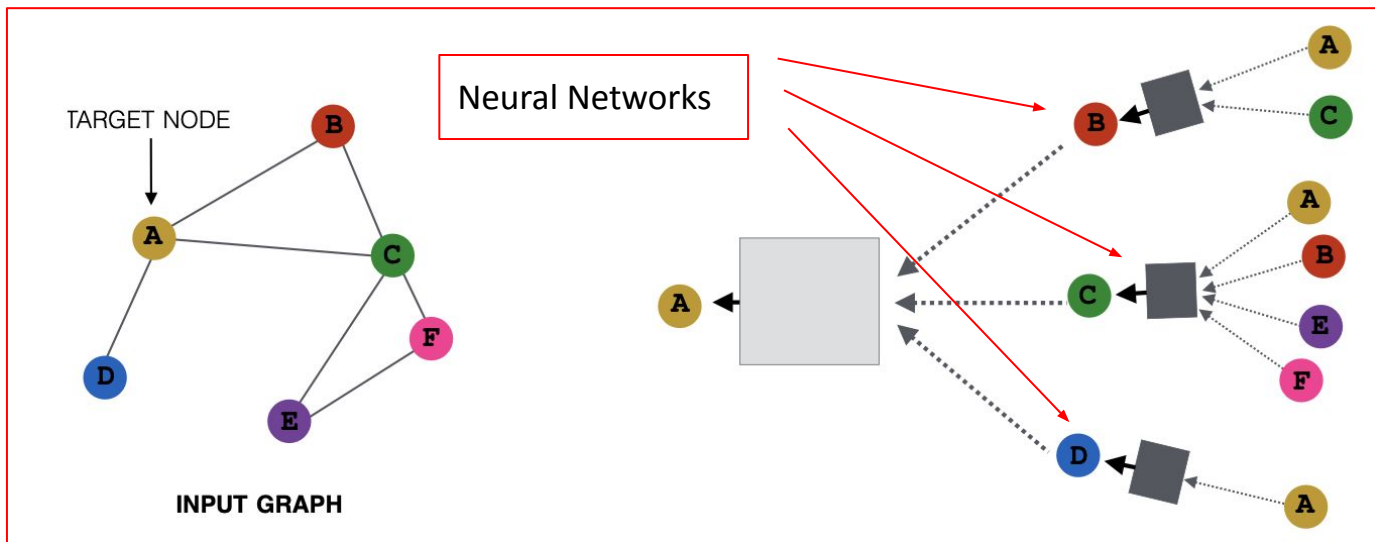
- Key idea: Generate node embeddings based on local network neighborhoods



# Graph Convolutional Networks

Aggregate Neighbors.

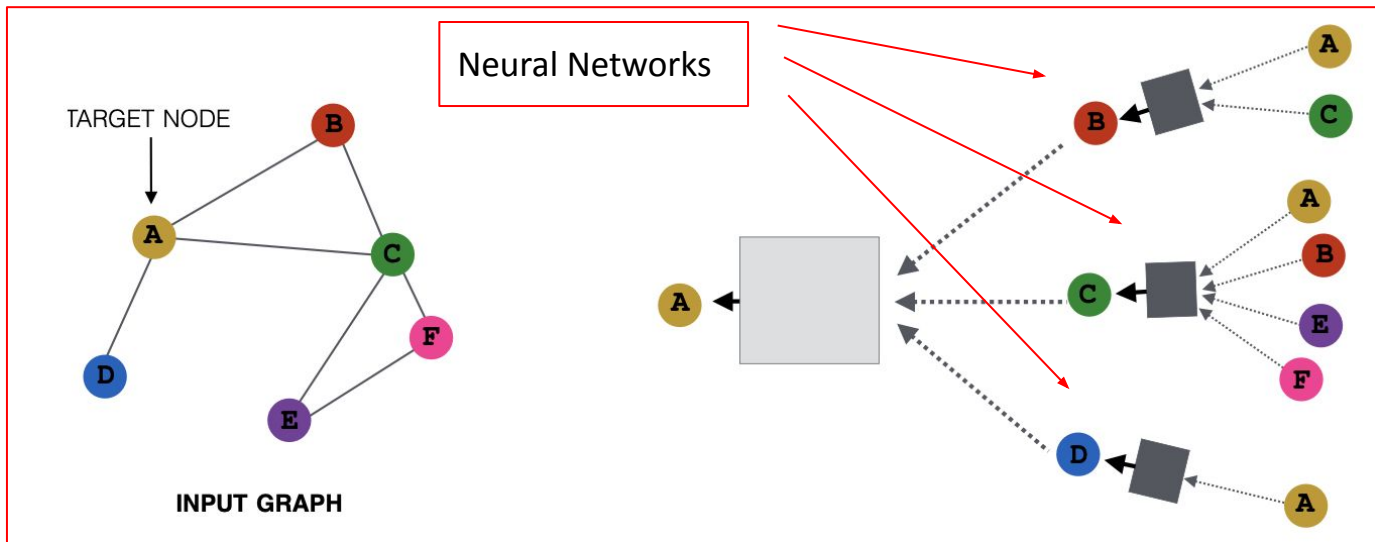
- Idea: Nodes aggregate information from their neighbors using neural networks



# Graph Convolutional Networks

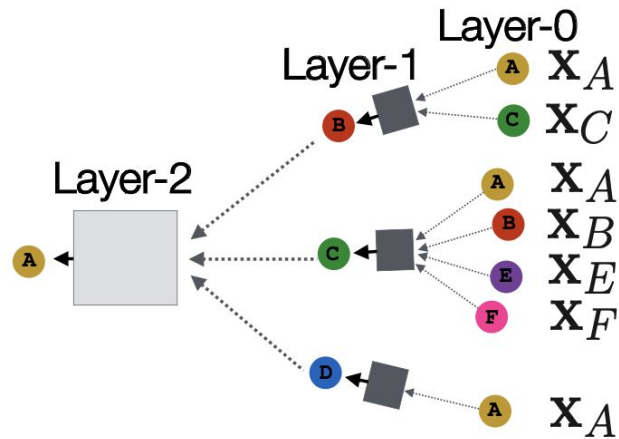
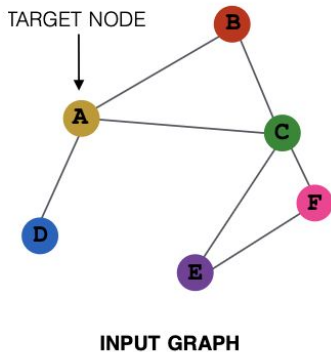
Aggregate Neighbors.

- Idea: Nodes aggregate information from their neighbors using neural networks.
- Every node defines a computation graph.



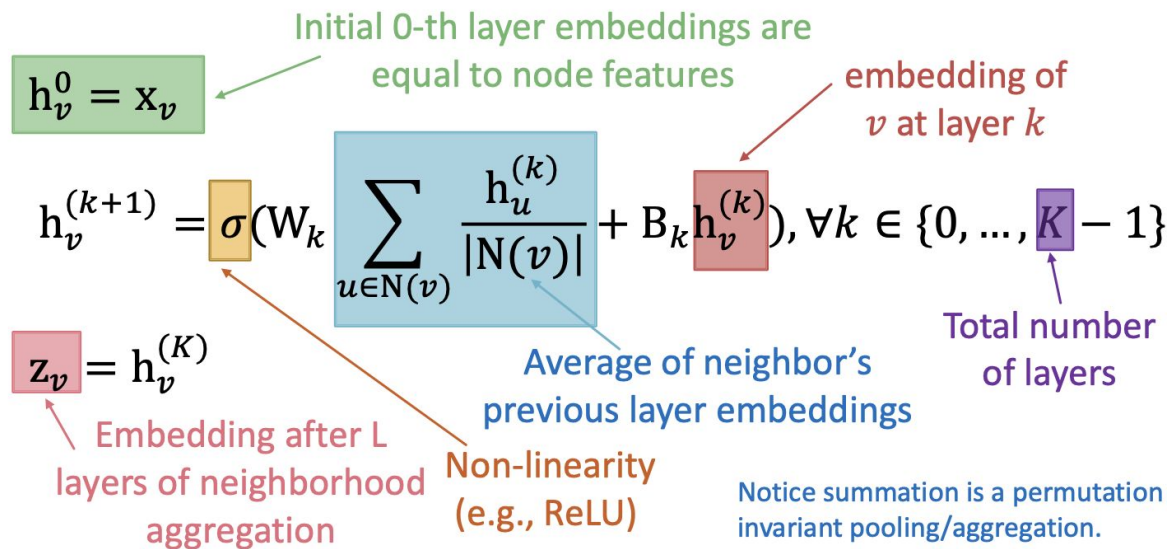
# Deep Model: Many layers

- Model can be of arbitrary depth:
- Nodes have embeddings at each layer
- **Layer-0** embedding of node  $v$  is its input feature,  $x_v$
- **Layer- $k$**  embedding gets information from nodes that are  $k$  hops away.



# Neighborhood Aggregation

- Key distinctions in algorithms are in how different approaches aggregate information across the layers.
- Basic approach: Average messages from neighbors.

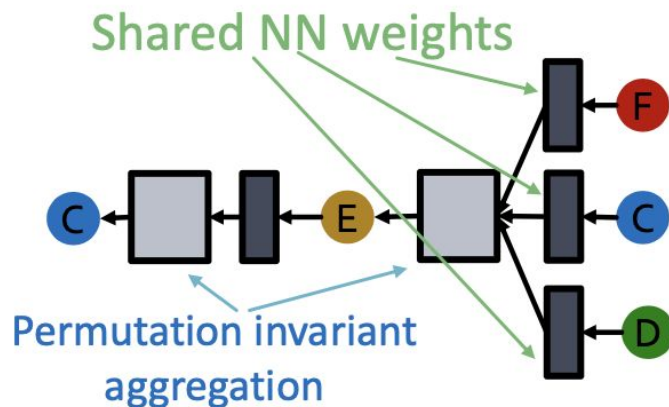




# Equivariant Property

Message passing and neighbor aggregation in graph convolution networks is permutation equivariant.

The target node has the same computation graph for different order plans.



# Training

Feed embedding into any loss function and run SGD to train the weight parameters.

$B_k$  - weight matrix for transforming hidden vector of self

$W_k$  - weight matrix for neighborhood aggregation

Trainable weight matrices  
(i.e., what we learn)

$$h_v^{(0)} = x_v$$
$$h_v^{(k+1)} = \sigma \left( W_k \sum_{u \in N(v)} \frac{h_u^{(k)}}{|N(v)|} + B_k h_v^{(k)} \right), \forall k \in \{0..K-1\}$$

Final node embedding

The diagram illustrates the training process for node embeddings. It shows the initialization  $h_v^{(0)} = x_v$  and the iterative update rule for hidden vectors  $h_v^{(k+1)}$  across layers  $k$  from 0 to  $K-1$ . The update rule involves a neighborhood aggregation term  $W_k \sum_{u \in N(v)} \frac{h_u^{(k)}}{|N(v)|}$  and a self-transformation term  $B_k h_v^{(k)}$ . The final node embedding is  $z_v = h_v^{(K)}$ . Annotations in pink and green highlight the trainable weight matrices  $W_k$  and  $B_k$ , and the final embedding  $z_v$ .

# Training

Supervised - minimize loss.

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{z_u, z_v} \text{CE}(y_{u,v}, \text{DEC}(z_u, z_v))$$

Node similarity can be anything from earlier in the class:

- Random walks (PageRank, DeepWalk, node2vec)
- Matrix factorization
- Node proximity.

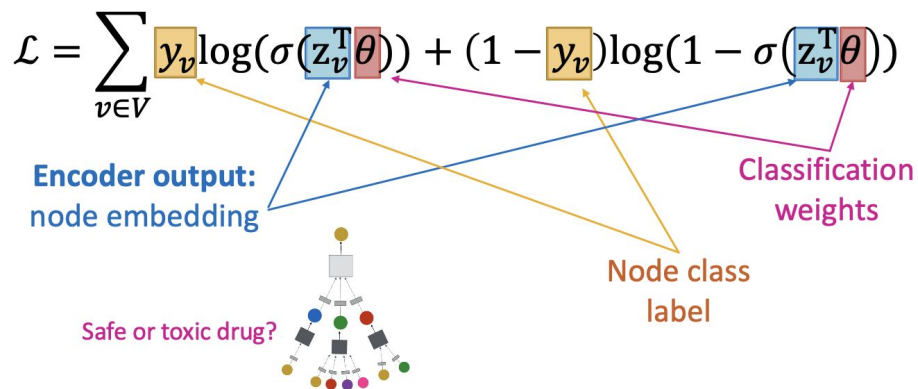
Unsupervised - no node labels, use graph structure (like pagerank)

# Supervised Training

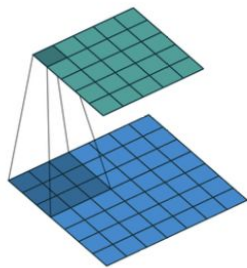
Supervised - minimize loss.

- Directly train the model for a supervised task (e.g., node classification)
- Use cross entropy loss

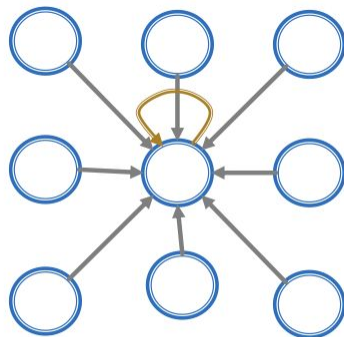
$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{z_u, z_v} \text{CE}(y_{u,v}, \text{DEC}(z_u, z_v))$$



# Generalize CNN as GNN



Image

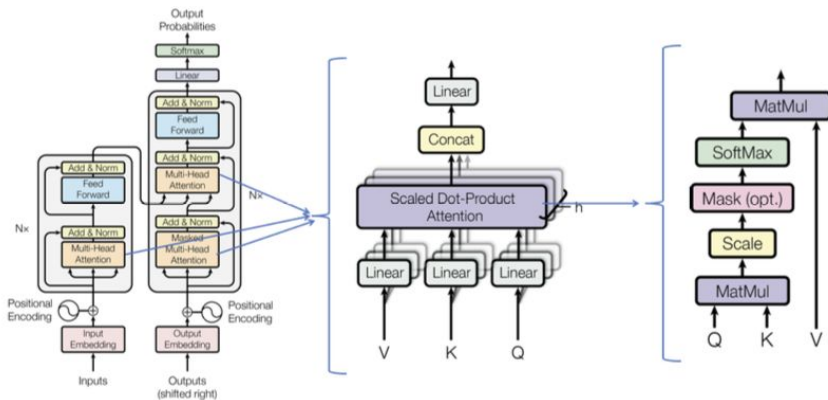


Graph

$$h_v^{(l+1)} = \sigma(\mathbf{W}_l \sum_{u \in N(v)} \frac{h_u^{(l)}}{|N(v)|} + \mathbf{B}_l h_v^{(l)}), \forall l \in \{0, \dots, L-1\}$$

# Generalize Transformer as GNN

- Transformer is one of the most popular architectures that achieves great performance in many sequence modeling tasks.
- Key component: self-attention
  - Input text as graph of connected words: Every token/word attends to all the other tokens/words via matrix calculation.



# Deep Learning on Graphs: Topics

- Basics of neural networks
  - Loss, Optimization, Gradient, SGD, non-linearity, MLP
- Idea for Deep Learning for Graphs
  - Multiple layers of embedding transformation
  - At every layer, use the embedding at previous layer as the input
  - Aggregation of neighbors and self-embeddings
- Graph Convolutional Network
  - Mean aggregation; can be expressed in matrix form
- GNN is a general architecture
  - CNN and Transformer can be viewed as a special GNN