

Graph Theory

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Contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	Definitions	3
1.2	The Degree of a Vertex	4
1.2.1	Some Special Graphs	4
1.3	Paths and Cycles	4
1.4	Connectivity	5
1.5	Trees and Forests	7
2	Matchings and Hamilton Cycles	9
2.1	Matchings in Bipartite Graphs	9
2.2	Hamilton Cycles	11
2.3	Matchings in General Graphs	11
3	The Probabilistic Method	13
4	Graph Colourings	16
4.1	Vertex Colourings	16
4.2	Edge Colourings	18
5	Connectivity	20
5.1	2-Connected Graphs	20
5.2	3-Connected Graphs	20
5.3	Menger's Theorem	21

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Definitions

A **graph** $G = (V, E)$ is a set V of *vertices* and a set E of unordered pairs of distinct vertices, called *edges*. Write vw or $\{v, w\}$ for the edge joining v and w , and say that v and w are **neighbours** or that they are *adjacent*.

In these notes, unless otherwise stated, graphs are:

- **finite**: $|V| \in \mathbb{N}$.
- **labelled**: vertices are distinguishable, usually $V = [n] := \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ for some $n \in \mathbb{N}$.
- **undirected**: edges are *unordered* pairs of vertices.
- **simple**: no loops $\{v, v\}$ or multiple edges (since E is not a multiset).

A graph G with vertex set $\{v_1, \dots, v_n\}$ has **adjacency matrix** $A(G) = (a_{ij})$ where

$$a_{ij} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } v_i v_j \in E, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

$A(G)$ is a **symmetric** $n \times n$ 0-1 matrix with zero diagonal.

The **trivial graph** has at most one vertex. Hence it has no edges.

A **subgraph** of a graph $G = (V, E)$ is a graph $H = (W, F)$ such that $W \subseteq V$ and $F \subseteq E$.

We say that H is an **induced subgraph** if for all $v, w \in W$ if $vw \in E(G)$ then $vw \in E(H)$. Write $H = G[W]$, and say that H is the subgraph of G *induced by* the vertex set W .

The number of **vertices** of G , written $|G| = |V(G)|$, is called the *order* of G . The number of **edges** of G , sometimes written $||G|| = |E(G)|$, is called the *size* of G .

Two graphs $G = (V, E)$ and $H = (W, F)$ are **isomorphic** if there exists a *bijection* $\phi : V \rightarrow W$ such that $\phi(v)\phi(w) \in F$ if and only if $vw \in E$. The map ϕ is called a *graph isomorphism* or *isomorphism*.

1.2 The Degree of a Vertex

If $v \in e$ where v is a vertex and e is an edge, then we say that e is *incident with* v . The **degree** $d_G(v)$ of vertex v in a graph G is the number of *edges* of G which are *incident with* v . A vertex of degree 0 is an *isolated vertex*.

Let $N_G(v)$ be the set of all **neighbours** of v in G , then $d(v) = |N(v)|$.

Lemma 1.2.1 (The Handshaking Lemma). In any graph, $G = (V, E)$,

$$\sum_{v \in V} d(v) = 2|E|.$$

Let $\delta(G) = \min_{v \in V} d(v)$ be the minimum degree in G , and $\Delta(G) = \max_{v \in V} d(v)$ be the maximum degree in G .

1.2.1 Some Special Graphs

A graph is **k -partite** if there exists a partition of its vertex set

$$V = V_1 \cup V_2 \cup \dots \cup V_k$$

into k nonempty disjoint subsets (parts) such that there are no edges between vertices in the same part.

The **complete graph** on r vertices, denoted K_r , has all $\binom{r}{2}$ edges present. The **complete bipartite graph** $K_{r,s}$ has r vertices in one part of the vertex bipartition, s vertices in the other, and all rs present.

A graph is **regular** if every vertex has the same degree. If every vertex of a graph has degree d then we say that the graph is d -regular.

The **complement** of a graph G is the graph $\bar{G} = (V, \bar{E})$ where $vw \in \bar{E}$ if and only if $vw \notin E$. Note that \bar{K}_n is the graph with n vertices and no edges.

If $G = (V, E)$ and $X \subset V$ then $G - X$ denotes the graph obtained from G by deleting all vertices in X and all edges which are incident with vertices in X . If $F \subseteq E$ then $G - F$ denotes the graph $(V, E - F)$ obtained from G by deleting the edges in F .

1.3 Paths and Cycles

A **walk** in the graph G is a sequence of vertices $v_0 v_1 v_2 \dots v_k$ such that $v_i v_{i+1} \in E$ for $i = 0, 1, \dots, k-1$. The **length** of this walk is k . The walk is **closed** if $v_0 = v_k$.

An **Euler tour** is a *closed walk* in a graph which uses every edge precisely once. A graph is Eulerian if it has an Euler tour.

Theorem 1.3.1 (Euler, 1736). A connected graph is Eulerian if and only if every vertex has even degree.

A walk is a **path** if it does not visit any vertex more than once. A path is a sequence of *disinct* vertices, with subsequence vertices joined by an edge. A path $v_0 v_1 \dots v_k$ with k edges is called a k -path and has length k .

If $k \geq 3$ and $P = v_0v_1 \cdots v_{k-1}$ is a path of length $k - 1$ then $C = P + v_0v_{k-1}$ is a **cycle** of length k , also called a k - *cycle*. It is a closed walk which visits no internal vertex more than once.

An edge which joins two vertices of a cycle C , but which is not an edge of C , is called a **chord**. An **induced cycle** is a cycle which has no chords.

Proposition 1.3.2. Every graph G contains a path of length $\delta(G)$ and a cycle of length at least $\delta(G) + 1$, if $\delta(G) \geq 2$.

Proof. Let $P = x_0x_1 \dots x_k$ be the longest path in G . By maximality of P , all neighbours of x_k lie on P . Hence $\delta(G) \leq d(x_k) \leq k = |\{x_0, x_1, \dots, x_{k-1}\}|$, which proves the first statement. Let x_i be the smallest-indexed neighbour of x_k in P . Then $C = x_kx_ix_{i+1} \dots x_{k-1}x_k$ is a cycle of length $\geq \delta(G) + 1$ because C contains $d(x_k) \geq \delta(G)$ neighbours of x_k as well as x_k . \square

The *minimum length* of a cycle in G is the **girth** of G , denoted by $g(G)$.

Given $x, y \in V$, let $d_G(x, y)$ be the length of a shortest path from x to y in G , called the **distance** from x to y in G . Set $d_G(x, y) = \infty$ if no such path exists.

We say that G is **connected** if $d_G(x, y)$ is finite for all $x, y \in V$.

Let the **diameter** of G be $\text{diam}(G) = \max_{x, y \in V} d_G(x, y)$.

Proposition 1.3.3. Every graph G which contains a cycle satisfies $g(G) \leq 2 \text{diam}(G) + 1$.

Proof. Let C be a shortest cycle in G , so $|C| = g(G)$. For a contradiction, assume $g(G) \geq 2 \text{diam}(G) + 2$.

Choose vertices x, y on C with $d_C(x, y) \geq \text{diam}(G) + 1$. In G the distance $d_G(x, y)$ is strictly smaller, so any shortest path P from x to y in G is not a subgraph of C . But using P together with the shorter arc of C from x to y gives a closed walk of length $< |C|$. This closed walk contains a shorter cycle than C which is a contradiction. \square

1.4 Connectivity

A maximal connected subgraph of G is called a **component** (or **connected component**) of G .

Proposition 1.4.1. The vertices of a connected graph can be labelled v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n such that $G_n = G$ and $G_i = G[v_1, \dots, v_i]$ is connected for all i .

Proof. Choose v_1 arbitrarily. Now suppose that we have labelled v_1, \dots, v_i such that $G_j = G[v_1, \dots, v_j]$ is connected for all $j = 1, \dots, i$.

If $i < n$ then $G_i \neq G$, so there exists some $v_j \in \{v_1, \dots, v_i\}$ with a $w \notin \{v_1, \dots, v_i\}$ in G . (Otherwise $G_i \neq G$ is a component of G , impossible as G is connected.) Let $v_{i+1} = w$, then $G_{i+1} = G[v_1, \dots, v_{i+1}]$ is connected. This completes the proof, by induction. \square

Let $A, B \subseteq V$ be sets of vertices. An (A, B) -**path** in G is a path $P = x_0x_1 \cdots x_k$ such that

$$P \cap A = \{x_0\}, \quad P \cap B = \{x_k\}.$$

Let $A, B \subseteq V$ and let $X \subseteq V \cup E$ be a set of vertices and edges. We say that X **separates** A and B in G if every (A, B) -path in G contains a vertex or edge from X .

Note that we do not assume that A and B are disjoint and if X separates A and B then $A \cap B \subseteq X$.

We say that X **separates** two vertices a, b if $a, b \notin X$ and X separates the sets $\{a\}, \{b\}$.

More generally, we say that X *separates* G , and call X a **separating set** for G , if X separates two vertices of G . That is, X separates G if there exist distinct vertices $a, b \notin X$ such that X separates a and b .

If $X = \{x\}$ is a separating set for G , where $x \in V$, then we say that x is a **cut vertex**.

If $e \in E$ and $G - e$ has more components than G then e is a **bridge**.

The unordered pair (A, B) is a **separation** of G if $A \cup B = V$ and G has no edge between $A - B$ and $B - A$. The second condition says that $A \cap B$ separates A from B in G . If both $A - B$ and $B - A$ are nonempty then the separation is **proper**. The order of the separation is $|A \cap B|$.

Definition. Let $k \in \mathbb{N}$. The graph G is **k -connected** if $|G| > k$ and $G - X$ is connected for all subsets $X \subseteq V$ with $|X| < k$.

The **connectivity** $\kappa(G)$ of G is defined by

$$\kappa(G) = \max\{k : G \text{ is } k\text{-connected}\}.$$

So, $\kappa(G) = 0$ iff G is trivial or G is disconnected. Also, $\kappa(K_n) = n - 1$ for all positive integers n .

Definition. Let $\ell \in \mathbb{N}$ and let G be a graph with $|G| \geq 2$. If $G - F$ is connected for all $F \subseteq E$ with $|F| < \ell$ then G is **ℓ -edge-connected**.

The **edge connectivity** $\lambda(G)$ is defined by

$$\lambda(G) = \max\{\ell : G \text{ is } \ell\text{-edge-connected}\}.$$

Proposition 1.4.2. If $|G| \geq 2$ then $\kappa(G) \leq \lambda(G) \leq \delta(G)$.

Theorem 1.4.3 (Mader, 1973). Let k be a positive integer. Every graph G with average degree at least $4k$ has a $(k + 1)$ -connected subgraph H with

$$\frac{|E(H)|}{|V(H)|} > \frac{|E(G)|}{|V(G)|} - k.$$

Proof. We write $|G|$ instead of $|V(G)|$. Let $\gamma = \frac{|E(G)|}{|G|} \geq 2k$. Consider subgraphs G' of G which satisfy:

$$|G'| \geq 2k \quad \text{and} \quad |E(G')| > \gamma(|G'| - k). \tag{1.1}$$

such graphs G' exists as G satisfies 1.1. (Average degree of G is $\frac{2|E(G)|}{|G|} \geq 4k$, so

$$|G| \geq 4k \text{ and } \gamma(|G| - k) = |E(G)| \frac{(|G| - k)}{|G|} < |E(G)|.$$

Now let H be a subgraph of G of smallest order which satisfies 1.1. We continue the proof by proving three claims.

Claim 1. If G' satisfies 1.1 then $|G'| > 2k$.

Proof. If G' satisfies 1.1 and $|G'| = 2k$ then $|E(G')| > \gamma(|G'| - k) \geq 2k^2 > \binom{|G'|}{2}$, contradiction.

Claim 2. $S(H) > \gamma$.

Proof. For a contradiction, suppose that $S(H) \leq \gamma$. Let G' be obtained from H by deleting a vertex of degree $\leq \gamma$. Then $|G'| < |H|$ and G' satisfies 1.1, which is a contradiction. To see this, check:

$$\begin{aligned} |G'| &= |H| - 1 \geq 2k, \quad \text{by Claim 1, and} \\ |E(G')| &\geq |E(H)| - \gamma > \gamma(|H| - k - 1), \quad \text{as } H \text{ satisfies 1.1} \\ &= \gamma(|G'| - k). \end{aligned}$$

Hence $S(H) > \gamma$. It follows that $|H| \geq \gamma$. Thus,

$$\frac{|E(H)|}{|H|} > \frac{\gamma(|H| - k)}{|H|}. \quad (\text{as } H \text{ satisfies 1.1})$$

Claim 3. H is $(k + 1)$ -connected.

Proof. By Claim 1, $|H| \geq 2k + 1 \geq k + 2$ as $k \geq 1$. So H is large enough. For a contradiction, suppose that H is not $(k + 1)$ -connected. Then H has a proper separation $\{U_1, U_2\}$ of order at most k .

Let $H_i = H[U_i]$ for $i = 1, 2$. Since any vertex $v \in U_1 - U_2$ has $d_H(v) \geq S(H) > \gamma$ (by Claim 2), and all neighbours of v in H belong to H_1 , we have $|H_1| \geq \gamma \geq 2k$. Similarly, $|H_2| \geq 2k$. By minimality of H , neither H_1 nor H_2 satisfies 1.1. Hence $|E(H_i)| \leq \gamma(|H_i| - k)$ for $i = 1, 2$. But then

$$\begin{aligned} |E(H)| &\leq |E(H_1)| + |E(H_2)| \\ &\leq \gamma(|H_1| + |H_2| - 2k) \\ &\leq \gamma(|H| - k), \end{aligned} \quad (\text{by inclusion-exclusion})$$

since $|U_1 \cup U_2| \leq k$. This contradicts 1.1 for H . So H is $(k + 1)$ -connected, completing the proof of Claim 3 and of the theorem. \square

1.5 Trees and Forests

A graph with no cycles is a **forest** (also called an acyclic graph). A connected graph with no cycles is a **tree**.

Theorem 1.5.1. The following are equivalent for a graph T :

- (i) T is a tree;
- (ii) Any two vertices of T are linked by a *unique* path in T ;
- (iii) T is *minimally connected*: that is, T is connected but $T - e$ is disconnected for every $e \in E(T)$;

- (iv) T is *maximally acyclic*: that is, T is acyclic but $T + xy$ has a cycle for any two nonadjacent vertices x, y in T .

Corollary 1.5.2. If G is connected then G has a spanning tree.

Proof. Let G be a connected graph and let H be a minimal connected spanning subgraph of G . (Note H exists as G is a connected spanning subgraph of itself.) By theorem 1.5.1, H is a tree. \square

Corollary 1.5.3. The vertices of a tree can be labelled as v_1, \dots, v_n so that for $i \geq 2$, vertex v_i has a unique neighbour in $\{v_1, \dots, v_{i-1}\}$.

Proof. We use the labelling from Proposition 1.4.1. This labels the vertices of a given tree G as v_1, \dots, v_n such that $G[v_1, \dots, v_n]$ is connected. Let $i \geq 1$ then $G[v_1, \dots, v_i]$ is a tree. Note $G[v_1, \dots, v_{i+1}]$ is connected by Proposition 1.4.1, so v_{i+1} has at least one neighbour in $G[v_1, \dots, v_i]$.

For a contradiction, suppose that v_{i+1} has two neighbours z and w in $G[v_1, \dots, v_i]$. There is a (unique) path P in $G[v_1, \dots, v_i]$ between z and w , and this path does not visit v_{i+1} . Hence $P \cup \{zv_{i+1}, wv_{i+1}\}$ is a cycle in G , contradiction. \square

Corollary 1.5.4. A connected graph with n vertices is a tree if and only if it has $n - 1$ edges.

Proof. Suppose that G is a tree on n vertices. The result is true when $n = 1$. Now suppose the result is true when $n = k$. Let G be a tree on $k + 1$ vertices. Let v be a leaf in G (e.g. take an end vertex of a longest path in G .) Then $G - v$ is a tree on k vertices, so $G - v$ has $k - 1$ edges (inductive hypothesis). Therefore G has k edges as v has degree 1. This concludes the proof, by induction.

Conversely, suppose that G is connected with n vertices and $n - 1$ edges. Then G contains a spanning tree H , by an earlier corollary. Then H has exactly $n - 1$ edges, since it is a tree on n vertices. Hence $H = G$, so G is a tree. \square

Corollary 1.5.5. If T is a tree and G is any graph with $\delta(G) \geq |T| - 1$ then G has a subgraph isomorphic to T .

Chapter 2

Matchings and Hamilton Cycles

Two edges in a graph are called **independent** if they have no vertices in common. A set M of pairwise independent edges in a graph is called a **matching**.

Given $G = (V, E)$ and $U \subseteq V$, say that $M \subseteq E$ is a **matching of U** if M is matching and every vertex in U is incident with an edge of M . We say that the vertices in U are matched by M , and that the vertices not incident with any edge of M are **unmatched**.

A matching M is a **maximal matching** of G if $M \cup \{e\}$ is not a matching for any $e \in E - M$. A **maximum matching** of G is a matching of G such that no set of edges with size greater than $|M|$ is a matching.

A **perfect matching** of G is a matching of G which matches every vertex of G . Note: a perfect matching is a 1-regular spanning subgraph of G also called a **1-factor** of G .

A **k -factor** is a k -regular spanning subgraph. A **2-factor** in a graph is the union of disjoint cycles which covers all the vertices.

2.1 Matchings in Bipartite Graphs

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a bipartite graph with vertex bipartition $V = A \cup B$. Here A, B are nonempty disjoint sets. We use the convention that all vertices called a, a', a'', \dots belong to A and similarly for B .

Let M be matching in G . A path in G which starts at an *unmatched* vertex of A and contains, alternately, edges from $E - M$ and from M , is called an **alternating path** with respect to M .

If an alternating path P ends in an unmatched vertex of B then it is called an **augmenting path**.

Definition 2.1.1. A set $U \subseteq V$ is a **cover** (or **vertex cover**) of G if every edge of G is incident with a vertex in U .

Theorem 2.1.2 (König, 1931). Let G be a bipartite graph. The size of a maximum matching in G is equal to the size of the minimum vertex cover of G .

Proof. Let \hat{U} be a cover in G and let M be a maximum matching. Then $|\hat{U}| \geq |M|$ as we must cover every edge of M . Hence it suffices to construct a cover U of G with $|U| = |M|$.

We build U by choosing one vertex from each edge of M to place into U , as follows:

- If $ab \in M$ and some alternating path in G with respect to M ends in b . Then put b into U otherwise put a into U .

Let $ab \in E$. If $ab \in M$ then $a \in U$ or $b \in U$ by definition of U . Now assume $abb \notin M$. Since M is maximum, there exists $a'b' \in M$ with $a = a'$ or $b = b'$. If a is unmatched in M then $b = b'$ for some $a'b' \in M$. Hence ab is an alternating path ending in $b = b'$, so we chose b' to go into U from the edge $a'b' \in M$. So the edge ab is covered by U in this case.

Hence we assume that $a = a'$ for some $a'b' \in M$. If $a = a' \in U$ then we are done. Otherwise $b' \in U$, so there is an alternating path P ending in b' . Then $P = a_1b_1a_2b_2 \dots b'$, and we have three cases:

- P does not include a or b . Then $Pab = a_1a_2 \dots b'ab$ is an alternating path in G with respect to M . By maximality of M , b is matched or else we have an augmenting path. Hence $b \in U$ as b is the chosen vertex from its matching edge.
- If b is on P before a , or $b \in P$ and $a \notin P$, then $P = a_1b_1a_2 \dots b \dots b'$. Then we let $P' = a_1b_1 \dots b$. This is an alternating path ending in b , so finish proof as case above.
- If a is on P before b , or $a \in P$ and $b \notin P$. Then $P = a_1b_1 \dots a_rb_r \dots b'$ and we take $P' = a_1b_1 \dots ab$. This is an alternating path ending in b , so finish proof as case above.

This proves U is a cover of G and since $|U| = |M|$, this completes the proof. \square

For a subset $S \subseteq A$, let $N(S) = \bigcup_{v \in S} N(v)$ be the set of vertices in B which are neighbours of some vertex in S .

Theorem 2.1.3 (Hall, 1935). Let G be a bipartite graph. Then G contains a matching of A if and only if

$$|N(S)| \geq |S| \quad \text{for all } S \subseteq A. \quad (2.1)$$

Proof. We have that this condition is necessary. Now suppose that (2.1) holds. For a contradiction, suppose that G has no matching of A . Then König's Theorem (Theorem 2.1.2) says that G has a cover U with $|U| < |A|$. Suppose that $U = A' \cup B'$ with $A' \subseteq A$ and $B' \subseteq B$. Then $|A'| + |B'| = |U| < |A|$, so $|B'| < |A| - |A'| = |A - A'|$. Since U is a cover, G has no edges from $A - A'$ to $B - B'$. Hence $N(A - A') \subseteq B'$, and so $|N(A - A')| \leq |B'| < |A - A'|$. This contradicts Hall's condition 2.1 for $S = A - A'$. Hence G contains a matching of A . \square

Corollary 2.1.4. Let G be a bipartite graph and $d \in \mathbb{N}$. If $|N(S)| \geq |S| - d$ for all $S \subseteq A$ then G has a matching of size $|A| - d$.

Proof. Add d new vertices to B and join each of them by an edge to each vertex of A . Then for all $S \subseteq A$, in the new graph G' , $|N_{G'}(S)| \geq |S| - d + d = |S|$. Hall's condition is satisfied in G' . Therefore there is a matching M in G' which matches all of A . At least $|A| - d$ edges in M are edges of G . \square

Corollary 2.1.5. If G is a k -regular bipartite graph then G has a perfect matching.

Proof. Assume $k \geq 1$. Since G is k -regular, $|E(G)| = k|A| = k|B|$, so $|A| = |B|$. Hence it suffices to prove that G contains a matching of A . Every set $S \subseteq A$ is joined to $N(S)$ by a total of $k|S|$ edges. These edges are a subset of the $k|N(S)|$ edges incident with $|N(S)|$. Hence $k|S| \leq k|N(S)|$

and dividing by k shows that Hall's condition holds. Thus, G has a matching of A . \square

Corollary 2.1.6. Every regular graph of positive even degree has a 2-factor.

Proof. Let G be any $2k$ -regular graph, $k \geq 1$. Without loss of generality, suppose that G is connected (or apply this argument to each component). By Theorem 1.3.1, G has an Euler tour $v_0v_1 \dots v_{l-1}v_l$ where $v_l = v_0, e_i = v_iv_{i+1} \in E(G)$ using each edge exactly once.

Replace each vertex $v \in V$ with a pair of vertices v^-, v^+ , and replace every edge $e_i = v_iv_{i+1}$ by the edge $v_i^+v_{i+1}^-$. The resulting graph G' is a k -regular bipartite graph. Hence by Corollary 2.1.5, G' has a perfect matching (1-factor). Collapse every vertex pair (v^-, v^+) back into a single vertex v , for all $v \in V$. The 1-factor of G' becomes a 2-factor of G . \square

2.2 Hamilton Cycles

A **Hamilton cycle** is a connected 2-factor. That is, it is a cycle which includes every vertex.

Say G is **Hamiltonian** if it contains a Hamilton cycle. A Hamiltonian graph G must be connected with minimum degree $\delta(G) \geq 2$.

Theorem 2.2.1 (Dirac, 1952). Every graph with $n \geq 3$ vertices and with minimum degree at least $n/2$ has a Hamilton cycle.

Proof. Let G be a graph with minimum degree $\geq n/2$ and $n \geq 3$ vertices. Then G is connected, as otherwise the degree of any vertex in the smaller component must be $< n/2$. Let $P = x_0 \dots x_k$ be a longest path in G . by maximality, all neighbours of x_0 and x_k lie on P . So at least $n/2$ of the vertices x_0, \dots, x_{k-1} are adjacent to x_k and at least $n/2$ of these same vertices satisfy $x_0x_{i+1} \in E(G)$. By the pigeonhole principle, as $k < n$, there exists $i \in \{0, \dots, k-1\}$ with $x_0x_{i+1}, x_ix_k \in E(G)$. This gives a cycle $x_0x_1 \dots x_ix_k \dots x_{i+1}x_0$. We claim this is a Hamilton cycle. If not then, as G is connected, there is some $u \notin C$ with a neighbour $v \in C$. Then we can start at u , go to v then go around C (in some direction) and stop just before we reach v again (i.e. stop at $x \in N_C(v)$). This gives a path which is longer than P , contradiction. \square

2.3 Matchings in General Graphs

Given a graph G , let C_G be the set of its components and let $q(G)$ denote the number of odd components (connected components having an odd number of vertices).

Theorem 2.3.1 (Tutte, 1947). A graph G has a perfect matching if and only if

$$q(G - S) \leq |S| \quad \text{for all } S \subseteq V(G). \quad (2.2)$$

Proof. We have seen that the condition (2.2) is necessary: if G has a perfect matching then (2.2) holds. Now suppose that G has no perfect matching. We want to find a “bad” set S_0 which fails condition (2.2). If $|G|$ is odd then, $S_0 = \emptyset$ is bad. So assume $|G|$ is even.

Claim 1. If G' is obtained from G by adding edges and $S_0 \subseteq V$ is bad for G' then S_0 is bad for G .

Proof. If S_0 bad for G' then $q(G - S_0) > |S_0|$. But each odd component of $G' - S$ is a disjoint union of components of $G - S$, at least one of which must be odd. So $q(G - S) \geq q(G' - S)$.

Hence by Claim 1, we can assume that G has no perfect matching but adding any edge to G gives a graph G' which has a perfect matching.

Claim 2. S is a bad set for G if and only if all components of $G - S$ are complete and every vertex in S is adjacent to all other vertices in G .

Proof. For proof, call the second half of the claim (*). If S is bad for G but does satisfy (*) then we can add an edge to G to get a graph G' with S still bad for G' . This contradicts our assumption on the maximality of G . Conversely suppose S satisfies (*) but S is not bad. Then we can form a perfect matching since $|G|$ is even. This is a contradiction as G has no perfect matching. Hence S is bad.

Define $S_0 = \{v \in V : d_G(v) = n - 1\}$ to be the set of all vertices v in G which are adjacent to every other vertex $w \neq v$.

Claim 3. S_0 is bad.

Proof. We need to show that S_0 satisfies (*). For a contradiction, suppose that S_0 does not satisfy (*). Then $G - S_0$ has a component K which is not complete. Let $a, a' \in V(K)$ with $aa' \notin E(G)$. Fix a shortest path from a to a' in K which starts $abc \dots a'$. Such a path has length ≥ 2 and $ac \notin E(G)$. Note $b \in K$, so $b \in S_0$, so there is some $d \in V$ with $bd \notin E$. By maximality of G , there is a perfect matching M_1 in $G + ac$ and a perfect matching M_2 in $G + bd$. Take a maximal path P in G , starting at d with an edge from M_1 , and taking alternately edges from M_1 and M_2 . Say $P = d \dots v$.

- If the last edge of P is in M_1 then $v = b$ or we could extend P . Let $C = P + bd$ (cycle in $G + bd$).
- If the last edge of P is in M_2 then $v \in \{a, c\}$ as the M_1 edge incident with v must be ac . Let C be the cycle $d \dots vbd$.

In each case, C is an alternating (even length) cycle in $G + bd$ which contains bd . Form M'_2 from M_2 by replacing $M_2 \cap C$ by $C - M_2$. This gives a perfect matching of G , contradiction. Hence S_0 satisfies (*), so Claim 3 holds and the proof is complete. \square

Corollary 2.3.2 (Petersen, 1891). Every bridge cubic (3-regular) graph has a perfect matching.

Proof. Let G be a bridgeless cubic graph. We prove that G satisfies Tutte's condition. Let $S \subseteq V(G)$ be given and consider an odd component C of $G - S$. The sum of the degrees of vertices in C is $3|C|$, which is an odd number. Every edge with both end vertices in C contributes an even number to this sum. Hence the number of edges from C to S is odd.

As G has no bridge, there must be at least 3 edges from S to C . Therefore the number of edges from S to $G - S$ is at least $3q(G - S)$. But the number of edges from S to $G - S$ is bounded above by the sum of the degrees of vertices in S , which is $3|S|$ as G is cubic. Hence $3q(G - S) \leq \# \text{ edges from } S \text{ to } G - S \leq 3|S|$ and thus $q(G - S) \leq |S|$. Therefore by Tutte's Theorem, G has a perfect matching. \square

Chapter 3

The Probabilistic Method

This chapter assumes knowledge of elementary probability knowledge. Content from first year is sufficient.

Example 3.0.1. Let Ω be the set of all graphs on the vertex set $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$. Then $|\Omega| = 2^{\binom{n}{2}}$. Define $\pi(G) = \frac{1}{2^{\binom{n}{2}}}$ for all $G \in \Omega$. This is the *uniform model of random graphs*.

Lemma 3.0.2. The expected number of edges in a uniformly chosen graph on the vertex set $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ is $\frac{1}{2} \binom{n}{2}$.

Proof. (From Definition) For $0 \leq m \leq \binom{n}{2} = N$, there $\binom{N}{m}$ are exactly of graphs on vertex set $\{1, \dots, n\}$ with m edges. Let X be the number of edges in the random graph. Then

$$\begin{aligned} EX &= \sum_{m=0}^N \Pr(X = m) \cdot m \\ &= \sum_{m=0}^N \frac{\binom{N}{m}}{2^N} \cdot m \\ &= \frac{N}{2^N} \sum_{m=1}^N \frac{(N-1)!}{(m-1)!(N-m)!} \\ &= \frac{N}{2^N} \sum_{j=0}^{N-1} \binom{N-1}{j} \quad (j = m-1) \\ &= \frac{N}{2^N} 2^{N-1} \quad (\text{by the binomial theorem}) \\ &= \frac{N}{2} = \frac{1}{2} \binom{n}{2}. \end{aligned}$$

□

Let $A \subseteq \Omega$ be an event. The indicator variable I_A for $A \subseteq \Omega$ is

$$I_A(z) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } z \in A \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Definition 3.0.3 (Linearity of Expectation). Let X_1, \dots, X_k be random variables on Ω and let $c_1, \dots, c_k \in \mathbb{R}$. Define the random variable $X = c_1X_1 + \dots + c_kX_k$. Then

$$\mathbb{E}[X] = c_1\mathbb{E}[X_1] + c_2\mathbb{E}[X_2] + \dots + c_k\mathbb{E}[X_k].$$

Definition 3.0.4 (Markov's Inequality). Suppose that $X : \Omega \rightarrow [0, \infty)$ is a nonnegative random variable on Ω and let $k > 0$. Then

$$\Pr(X \geq k) \leq \frac{\mathbb{E}[X]}{k}.$$

In particular, if X is a nonnegative integer-valued random variable then

$$\Pr(X \neq 0) \leq \mathbb{E}[X].$$

Let $k \geq 2$ be an integer. Events A_1, \dots, A_k in Ω are **mutually independent** if for all j, ℓ_1, \dots, ℓ_j with $2 \leq j \leq k$ and $1 \leq \ell_1 < \ell_2 < \dots < \ell_j \leq k$,

$$\Pr\left(\bigcap_{i=1}^j A_{\ell_i}\right) = \prod_{i=1}^j \Pr(A_{\ell_i}).$$

Lemma 3.0.5. Let Ω be the set of all subsets of some given set S , where $|S| = n$. Define a random set $X \subseteq S$ by setting $\Pr(x \in X) = \frac{1}{2}$, independently for each $x \in S$. Then $\Pr(X = A) = 2^{-n}$ for all $A \subseteq S$, so this gives the uniform probability space on Ω .

Proof. Fix $A \subseteq \Omega$. Then

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr(X = A) &= \prod_{x \in A} \Pr(\text{heads}) \cdot \prod_{x \notin A} \Pr(\text{tails}) && \text{(using independence)} \\ &= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^{|A|} \cdot \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^{n-|A|} \\ &= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^n = 2^{-n} \end{aligned}$$

as claimed. □

Theorem 3.0.6 (Alon & Spencer, Theorem 2.2.1). Let G be a graph with n vertices and m edges. Then G contains a bipartite subgraph with at least $m/2$ edges.

Proof. Let Ω be the set of all subsets of $V(G)$. Then $|\Omega| = 2^n$. Consider the uniform probability space on Ω . Let $A \subseteq V$ be a randomly chosen element of Ω and define $B = V - A$. Call $xy \in E(G)$ a crossing edge if exactly one of x, y belongs to A . Let X be the number of crossing edges. Finally, for each edge $e \in E(G)$ define the indicator variable

$$X_e = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } e \text{ is a crossing edge,} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Then $X = \sum_{e \in E(G)} X_e$. For any $e = xy \in E(G)$, we have,

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr(x \in A \text{ and } y \notin A) &= \Pr(x \in A) \Pr(y \notin A) && \text{(using independence)} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{4}. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}X_e &= \Pr((x \in A \text{ and } y \notin A) \text{ or } (x \notin A \text{ and } y \in A)) \\ &= \Pr(x \in A \text{ and } y \notin A) + \Pr(x \notin A \text{ and } y \in A) && \text{(events are disjoint)} \\ &= \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{2}. \end{aligned}$$

Hence, by linearity of expectation,

$$\mathbb{E}X = \sum_{e \in E(G)} \mathbb{E}X_e = \frac{m}{2}.$$

Thus there exists a fixed set $A_0 \subseteq V(G)$ which has at least $\frac{m}{2}$ crossing edges. The corresponding bipartition $(A_0, V(G) - A_0)$ defines a bipartite subgraph consisting of the $\geq \frac{m}{2}$ crossing edges. \square

An **independent set** in a graph G is a subset $U \subseteq V$ such that if $v, w \in U$ then $vw \notin E(G)$. Let $\alpha(G)$ be the size of a maximum independent set in G , called the **independence number**.

Theorem 3.0.7. Let G have n vertices and $nd/2$ edges, where $d \geq 1$. Then $\alpha(G) \geq \frac{n}{25T1d}$. Note d , is the average degree of G .

Proof. Define the random subset $S \subseteq V(G)$ by $\Pr(v \in S) = p$, independently for all $v \in V$. Here $p \in [0, 1]$ which we will fix later.

Let $X = |S|$ and let Y be the number of edges of G with both endvertices in S . Then $\mathbb{E}X = pn$. For $e \in E(G)$ let Y_e be the indicator variable for the event $e \subseteq S$. Then for every $e = xy \in E(G)$,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}Y_e &= \Pr(x \in S \text{ and } y \in S) \\ &= \Pr(x \in S) \cdot \Pr(y \in S) && \text{(by independence)} \\ &= p^2. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, by linearity of expectation and the fact that $Y = \sum_{e \in E(G)} Y_e$ we have

$$\mathbb{E}Y = \sum_{e \in E(G)} \mathbb{E}Y_e = \frac{nd}{2}p^2.$$

By linearity of expectation,

$$\mathbb{E}(X - Y) = \mathbb{E}X - \mathbb{E}Y = pn - p^2 \frac{nd}{2}.$$

Want to choose p to maximise this, so $p = \frac{1}{d}$ and $p \in [0, 1]$. Substituting gives $\mathbb{E}(X - Y) = \frac{n}{2d}$. Hence there exists a fixed set $S_0 \subseteq V(G)$ with $|S_0| - (\# \text{ edges in } S_0) \geq \frac{n}{2d}$. Delete one vertex from each edge within S_0 to give a set S^* of at least $\frac{n}{2d}$ vertices which is an independent set. \square

Chapter 4

Graph Colourings

A **vertex colouring** of a graph $G = (V, E)$ is a function $c : V \rightarrow S$ such that $c(u) \neq c(v)$ whenever $uv \in E$. Here S is the set of available colours, usually $S = \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$ for some positive integer k .

A **k -colouring** of G is a colouring $c : V \rightarrow \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$. Often we want the smallest value of k for which a k -colouring of G exists. This smallest value of k is called the **chromatic number** of G , denoted $\chi(G)$.

If $\chi(G) = k$ then G is said to be k -chromatic.

If $\chi(G) \leq k$ then G is said to be k -colourable.

The set of all vertices in G with a given colour under c is called a **colour class**. Each colour class is an independent set. k -colouring is a partition of $V(G)$ into k independent sets.

A **clique** in a graph G is a complete subgraph of G . The order of the largest clique in G is called the **clique number** of G , denoted $\omega(G)$.

Fact: $\chi(G) \geq \omega(G)$ and $\chi(G) \geq n/\alpha(G)$.

An **edge colouring** of G is a map $c : E \rightarrow S$ such that $c(e) \neq c(f)$ whenever e and f share an endvertex. If $S = \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$ then c is a **k -edge-colouring** and G is k -edge-colourable.

Let $\chi'(G)$ be the smallest positive integer k for which G is k -edge-colourable. We call $\chi'(G)$ the **chromatic index** of G .

A **colour class** in an edge colouring is a matching of G . Hence an edge colouring displays $E(G)$ as a union of disjoint matchings.

The **line graph**, denoted $L(G)$, has vertex set $E(G)$ and $e, f \in E(G)$ form an edge of $L(G)$ if and only if e, f share an endvertex in G . Every edge-colouring of G is a vertex colour of $L(G)$ and vice-versa. So $\chi'(G) = \chi(L(G))$.

4.1 Vertex Colourings

Proposition 4.1.1. If graph G has m edges then $\chi(G) \leq \frac{1}{2} + \sqrt{2m + \frac{1}{4}}$.

Proof. Fix a k -colouring of G with $k = \chi(G)$ colours. Then G has at least one edge between any two distinct colour classes, or we could merge them to give a colouring of G with $\leq k - 1$ colours. Hence $m \geq \binom{k}{2} = \frac{1}{2}(k)(k - 1)$ then solve for k to complete the proof. \square

Greedy Algorithm Given a graph G , fix an ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n on the vertices of G and colour them one by one in this order using the first available colour (least positive integer) as you go along. Since v_i has at most $\Delta(G)$ neighbours, this produces a k -colouring of G with $k \leq \Delta(G) + 1 \implies \chi(G) \leq \Delta(G) + 1$.

Fact: $\chi(G) = \Delta(G) + 1$ if G is a complete graph or an odd cycle.

Theorem 4.1.2 (Brooks, 1941). Let G be a connected graph. If G is neither complete nor a n odd cycle then $\chi(G) \leq \Delta(G)$. In fact we will prove the following restatement of Brooks Theorem, due to Zając (2018):

Let $k \geq 3$ be an integer and let G be a graph with $\Delta(G) \leq k$. If G does not contain K_{k+1} as a subgraph then G is k -colourable.

We call this the “new” version of Brooks Theorem and prove that this implies Brooks Theorem.

Proof. Suppose that G is a graph which satisfies the assumptions of Brooks Theorem. That is, G be a connected graph which is not an odd cycle and which is not complete. Let $\Delta = \Delta(G)$ be the maximum degree of G . We want to show that $\chi(G) \leq \Delta$, as this is the conclusion required for Brooks Theorem.

First suppose that $\Delta \leq 2$. Then G is either a path or an even cycle, as G is connected. Hence G is bipartite and so $\chi(G) \leq 2 = \Delta$, as required.

Now suppose that $\Delta \geq 3$. We wish to apply the new version of Brooks Theorem with $k = \Delta$, so we must check that G does not contain $K_{\Delta+1}$ as a subgraph. For a contradiction, suppose that G does have a subgraph H which is isomorphic to $K_{\Delta+1}$. Then H is Δ -regular, and G has maximum degree Δ , so there is no edge from a vertex of H to a vertex of $G - V(H)$. It follows that H is a component of G . But G is connected, so the only possibility is that $G = H$. But this contradicts our assumption that G is not complete.

Therefore, G satisfies the assumptions of the new version of Brooks Theorem, and by applying this result we find that G is Δ -colourable. From this we conclude that $\chi(G) \leq \Delta$, as required.

In both cases, the conclusion of Brooks Theorem holds, completing the proof. \square

We now prove that this “new” version is true.

Proof. First an observation, let G be a graph with maximum degree $\Delta(G) \leq k$, where $\{1, \dots, k\}$ will be our set of colours. Suppose that G is partially coloured. Let $P = v_1 v_2 \dots v_j$ be a path in G such that all vertices of P are uncoloured. Then we can colour vertices v_1, v_2, \dots, v_{j-1} in this order, since at the moment that we colour v_i ($1 \leq i \leq j - 1$), we know that v_i has an uncoloured neighbour v_{i+1} and hence at most $\Delta - 1$ neighbours. Call this procedure $\text{PATHCOLOUR}(v_1, \dots, v_{j-1}; v_j)$. Note that this procedure colours v_1, \dots, v_{j-1} but it leaves v_j uncoloured. In particular if $j = 1$ then $\text{PATHCOLOUR}(v_1)$ leaves the graph unchanged.

Proof by induction on $n = |G|$, where G is a graph with $\Delta(G) \leq k$ and $k \geq 3$. If $n \leq k$ then we can k -colour G by giving each vertex a distinct colour.

Claim. If G has a vertex of degree $< k$ then G is k -colourable.

Proof. Let v be a vertex of degree $< k$ and let $G' = G - v$. By the inductive hypothesis we can k -colour G' . Fix one such colouring C . Then at most $k - 1$ colours are used by C on neighbours of v , so we have an available colour which we can use to colour v .

Now we assume that G is k -regular. Let v be a vertex of G and consider $G[\{v\} \cup N(v)]$. Since G has no subgraph isomorphic to K_{k+1} , we know that v has two neighbours x, y which are not adjacent. Let $v_1 = x, v_2 = v, v_3 = y$, and extend the path $v_1v_2v_3$ to a maximal length path in G , $P = v_1v_2v_3 \dots v_r$ which starts with $v_1v_2v_3$.

Case 1. Suppose that $r = n$. This means that all vertices of G lie on P (Hamilton Path). Let v_j be any neighbour of v_2 other than v_2 and v_3 . Since G is k -regular and $k \geq 3$ we can choose such a vertex v_j . We now describe how to k -colour G .

- First colour v_1 and v_3 the same colour.
- Next apply $\text{PATHCOLOUR}(v_4, v_5, \dots, v_{j-1}; v_j)$ which colours v_4, \dots, v_{j-1} and leaves v_j uncoloured.
- Next apply $\text{PATHCOLOUR}(v_n, v_{n-1}, \dots, v_j; v_2)$ which will colour all remaining vertices of G except v_2 .
- Finally we have an available colour for v_2 since two of its neighbour (v_1 and v_3) have the same colour. Colour v_2 with an available colour.

Case 2. Now suppose that $r < n$. Recall that all neighbours of v_r lie on P . Let v_j be the neighbour of v_r with the smallest index. Then $C = v_jv_{j+1} \dots v_rv_j$ is a cycle in G . Let $G' = G - V(C)$. We can k -colour G' by induction. If there is no edge between G' and C then we can also k -colour $G[V(C)]$, by induction and we are done. Otherwise ($G[V(C)]$ is not a component of G): let v_ℓ be the vertex on C with largest index which has a neighbour in G' , and let u be a neighbour of v_ℓ in G' . Note, v_ℓ is well defined as v_j has a neighbour in G' if $j \geq 2$. Note $\ell \leq r - 1$ since all neighbours of v_r belong to $V(C)$. Also $v_{\ell+1}$ has no neighbours outside C , by choice of v_ℓ . We now describe how to k -colour vertices of C , giving a k -colouring of G .

- First, colour $v_{\ell+1}$ with the colour assigned to u .
- Next, apply $\text{PATHCOLOUR}(v_{\ell+2}, \dots, v_r, v_j, v_{j+1}, \dots, v_{\ell-1}; v_\ell)$ which colours all remaining vertices of G except v_ℓ .
- Finally, colour v_ℓ with an available colour which exists because v_ℓ has two neighbours with the same colour.

This completes the proof in Case 2, by mathematical induction. □

4.2 Edge Colourings

By considering a vertex of maximum degree, we see that the chromatic index $\chi'(G)$ satisfies $\chi'(G) \geq \Delta(G)$ for all graphs G .

Proposition 4.2.1 (Kőnig, 1916). If G is bipartite then $\chi'(G) = \Delta(G)$.

Proof. We prove this by induction on $m = |E(G)|$. If $m = 0$ then the result is trivially true. So, assume that $m \geq 1$ and that the result holds for all bipartite graphs with at most $m - 1$ edges.

Let $\Delta = \Delta(G)$, choose $xy \in E$ and let $G' = G - xy$. By induction, we can fix a Δ -edge-colouring of G' . We call edges coloured α , “ α -edges”, etc. In G' , vertices x, y both have degree $\Delta - 1$. So there are colours $\alpha, \beta \in \{1, 2, \dots, \Delta\}$ such that x is not incident with an α -edge, and y is not incident with a β -edge.

If $\alpha = \beta$ then we can colour the edge xy with colour α to give a Δ -edge-colouring of G , and we are done. Now assume that $\alpha \neq \beta$. Without loss of generality, we can assume that x is incident with a β -edge xu . Extend the β -edge xu to a maximal walk W whose edges are coloured α, β alternately. Since no such walk can contain a vertex colour twice, W is a path.

Claim. W does not contain y .

Proof. For a contradiction, suppose that y lies on W . Then y must be an endvertex of W , and the edge of W incident with y must be an α -edge. Hence W has even length, and so $W + xy$ is an odd cycle in the bipartite graph G . This is a contradiction.

By maximality of W , we can swap the colours α and β on all edges of W . This gives a new Δ -edge-colouring of G' such that β does not appear on any edge incident with x . Since y does not lie on W , there is still no β -edge incident with y . Finally we can colour edge xy with colour β in G , giving a Δ -edge-colouring of G . This completes the proof, by induction. \square

Theorem 4.2.2 (Vizing, 1964). Every graph G satisfies

$$\Delta(G) \leq \chi'(G) \leq \Delta(G) + 1.$$

Chapter 5

Connectivity

5.1 2-Connected Graphs

Let G be a graph. A maximal connected subgraph of G with no cut vertex is called a **block**. Every block of G is either a maximal 2-connected subgraph of G or a bridge or an isolated vertex.

By maximality, different blocks of G overlap in at most one vertex, which must be a **cut vertex** in G . Hence every edge of G lies in a unique block, and G is the union of its blocks.

Let A be the set of cut vertices in G and let \mathcal{B} be the set of blocks in G . Form the bipartite graph on $A \cup \mathcal{B}$ with edge set

$$\{aB : a \in A, B \in \mathcal{B} \text{ and } a \in B\}.$$

Lemma 5.1.1. The block graph of a connected graph is a tree.

Let H be a subgraph of a graph G . An **H -path** is a path in G which intersects H only in its endvertices.

Proposition 5.1.2. A graph is 2-connected if and only if it can be constructed from a cycle by successively adding H -paths to graphs H already constructed.

Proof. Every graph constructed in this way is 2-connected. Conversely, let G be 2-connected. Then $|G| \geq 3$ and G contains a cycle. Hence G has a maximal subgraph H which is constructible using the method described in the proposition stated.

If $H = G$, then we are done. For a contradiction, suppose that $H \neq G$. Since any edge $xy \in E(G) - E(H)$ with $x, y \in H$ is an H -path, by maximality we see that every $xy \in E(G)$ with $x, y \in H$ must belong to $E(H)$. Hence, H is an induced subgraph of G .

By the fact that G is connected, there is an edge vw with $v \in G - H, w \in H$. Since G is 2-connected we know that $G - w$ is connected. Let P be the shortest path from v to H in $G - w$. Then wvP is a H -path in G , and $H \cup wvP$ is a larger constructible subgraph than H , contradicting the maximality of H . \square

5.2 3-Connected Graphs

Let $e = xy \in E(G)$. Define the graph $G/e = (V', E')$ where $V' = (V - \{x, y\}) \cup \{v_e\}$,

$$E' = \{uw \in E(G) : \{u, w\} \cup \{x, y\} = \emptyset\} \cup \{v_e w : xw \in E(G) \text{ or } yw \in E(G)\}.$$

We say that G/e is formed by **contradicting** the edge e in G . This creates a new vertex v_e which replaces the endvertices of e .

Lemma 5.2.1. Let G be a 3-connected graph with $|G| \geq 5$. Then G has an edge e such that G/e is 3-connected.

Proof. For a contradiction, suppose that no such edge exists. For any edge $xy \in E(G)$, the graph G/xy is not 3-connected, but $|G/xy| = |G| - 4 \geq 4$ by assumption that $|G| \geq 5$. Hence G/xy has a separating set S with $|S| \leq 2$. Since G is 3-connected, the contracted vertex v_{xy} must belong to S , and $|S| = 2$, or we would have a separating set in G with ≤ 2 vertices. So there is some $z \in V(G), z \notin \{x, y\}$ such that $S = \{v_{xy}, z\}$. Any two vertices separated in G/xy by S are also separated in G by the set $T = \{x, y, z\}$.

FACT: Since no proper subset of T separates G , by the 3-connectivity of G , every vertex in T has a neighbour in every component C of $G - T$.

Choose the edge xy , vertex z , and component C of $G - \{x, y, z\}$ such that $|C|$ is as small as possible. Let v be a neighbour of z in C , which we know must exist by our **FACT**. By assumption, G/zv is not 3-connected, and $|G/zv| = |G| - 1 \geq 4$. Hence (by our earlier argument) there is a vertex $w \notin \{v, z\}$ such that $\{v, w, z\}$ separates G . Also by our **FACT**, every vertex in $\{v, w, z\}$ has a neighbour in every component of $G - \{v, w, z\}$.

Since x and y are adjacent, $G - \{z, v, w\}$ has a component D such that $D \cap \{x, y\} = \emptyset$. By our **FACT** we know that v has a neighbour in D . Recall that $v \in C$ in $G - \{x, y, z\}$. Since D is connected and $(\{v\} \cup V(D)) \cap \{x, y, z\}$, it follows that $\{v\} \cup V(D) \subseteq V(C)$. Hence D is a proper subgraph of C , as $v \notin V(D)$. Therefore $|D| < |C|$, contradicting the minimality of C .

Hence G/e is 3-connected for some $e \in E(G)$. □

Reversing this, we can construct all 3-connected graphs starting with K_4 and “uncontracting” edges.

Theorem 5.2.2. A graph G is 3-connected if and only if there exists a sequence G_0, G_1, \dots, G_r of graphs such that

- (i) $G_0 = K_4$ and $G_r = G$,
- (ii) G_{i+1} has an edge xy with degrees $d(x), d(y) \geq 3$ such that $G_i = G_{i+1}/xy$, for $i = 0, \dots, r - 1$.

5.3 Menger's Theorem

A set $S \subset V$ separating A from B in G is called an (A, B) -**separator**. This means that every (A, B) -path intersects S , and in particular $A \cap B \subseteq S$.

Let \mathcal{P}, \mathcal{Q} be sets of **disjoint** (A, B) -paths in G . Say that \mathcal{Q} **exceeds** \mathcal{P} if the set of vertices in A which belong to paths in \mathcal{P} is a *proper subset* of the set of vertices in A which belong to paths in \mathcal{Q} and similarly for B .

Theorem 5.3.1. Let $G = (V, E)$ be a graph and $A, B \subseteq V$. Then the minimum number of vertices separating A from B in G equals the maximum number of disjoint (A, B) -paths in G .