

# Spectral Clustering

## Part 3: The Normalized Laplacian

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# More constraint for balance

- Further constraints can be added to the eigenvalue system
  - The next problem, Graph Partitioning, will use this strategy
  - However, the resultant eigenvalue system will no longer be standard

# Graph Partitioning Problem

- Given edge weight matrix  $W = (w_{ij})$  and vertex mass matrix  $M$  with diagonal elements  $(m_i)$ , a **2-partitioning** of an undirected graph  $G = (V, E)$  is a partition of  $V$  into two groups  $S$  and  $\bar{S}$  such that  $\text{cut}(S, \bar{S}) = \sum_{i \in S, j \in \bar{S}} w_{ij}$  is minimized under the constraint that  $\sum_{i \in S} m_i = \sum_{i \in \bar{S}} m_i$ , or  $\mathbf{1}^\top Mx = 0$
- Observe that if  $m_i = 1$  for all  $i$ , then the condition  $\sum_{i \in S} m_i = \sum_{i \in \bar{S}} m_i$  is the same as  $|S| = |\bar{S}|$

# Constrained optimization problem

□ Minimize  $x^\top Lx$  where  $L = D' - W$

subject to  $x^\top M \in \{1, -1\}$  and  $\mathbf{1}^\top Mx = 0$

■  $x_i \in \{1, -1\}$  and  $\mathbf{1}^\top Mx = 0$  together enforce balance in the solution

■ However, problem is NP-hard

□ Recall that even the minimum bisection problem, where all edges and vertices have the same weight, is NP-hard

# Relaxed Rayleigh quotient version

- Minimize  $x^\top Lx$  where  $L = D' - W$   
subject to  $x^\top Mx = \sum_i m_i$  and  $\mathbf{1}^\top Mx = 0$ 
  - $x_i \in \{1, -1\} \Rightarrow x^\top Mx = \sum_i m_i$  but not the other way around
  - **Balance no longer enforced** but that's the least of our worry for now because instead of the standard eigensystem
- Optimization must now be achieved through solving the generalized eigensystem

$$Lx = \lambda Mx$$

# Relaxed Rayleigh quotient version

- Minimize  $x^\top Lx$  where  $L = D' - W$   
subject to  $x^\top Mx = \sum_i m_i$  and  $\mathbf{1}^\top Mx = 0$
- Optimize through  $Lx = \lambda Mx$
- Since  $\mathbf{1}$  fulfills condition for  $L$  and  $M$ ,  $\mu_k = \mathbf{1}$ 
  - However, eigenvectors in the solutions are not orthogonal but rather,  $M$ -orthogonal ( $\mu_i M \mu_j = 0$  for  $i \neq j$ )
    - $\mathbf{1}^\top M \mu_{k-1} = 0$  is fulfilled
- Convert to a standard eigenvalue system  
 $M^{-1/2} L M^{-1/2} x = \lambda x$  to compute

Convert to  $M^{-1/2}LM^{-1/2}x = \lambda x$

□ Minimize  $x^T L x$  where  $L = D' - W$   
subject to  $x^T M x = \sum_i m_i$  and  $\mathbf{1}^T M x = 0$

□ Let  $y = M^{1/2}x$ , that is,  $x = M^{-1/2}y$

$$x^T L x \Rightarrow y^T M^{-1/2} L M^{-1/2} y$$

$$x^T M x = \sum_i m_i \Rightarrow y^T y = \sum_i m_i$$

$$\mathbf{1}^T M x = 0 \Rightarrow \mathbf{1}^T M^{1/2} y = 0$$

Hence equivalently

□ Minimize  $y^T M^{-1/2} L M^{-1/2} y$

subject to  $y^T y = \sum_i m_i$  and  $\mathbf{1}^T M^{1/2} y = 0$

Convert to  $M^{-1/2}LM^{-1/2}x = \lambda x$

□ Minimize  $yM^{-1/2}LM^{-1/2}y$

subject to  $y^T y = 1$  and  $\mathbf{1}^T M^{1/2}y = 0$

□ As  $\mathbf{1}$  is a eigenvector for  $Lx = \lambda Mx$  with eigenvalue 0,  $M^{1/2}\mathbf{1}$  is a eigenvector for this system with eigenvalue 0 (smallest)

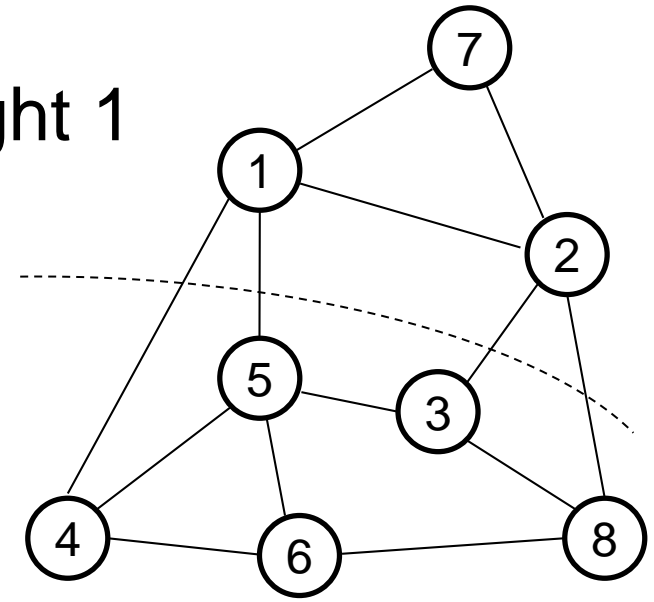
■ Since eigenvectors of this system are orthogonal,  $(M^{1/2}\mathbf{1})\mu_{k-1} = 0$   
 $\Rightarrow \mathbf{1}^T M^{1/2}y = 0$  fulfilled

■ In fact the eigenvalues for this system are the same as those for  $Lx = \lambda Mx$ , even though the eigenvectors are different (related by  $y = M^{1/2}x$ )



# Eigendecomposition

- Edges and vertices have weight 1



$\lambda_1$	$\lambda_2$	$\lambda_3$	$\lambda_4$	$\lambda_5$	$\lambda_6$	$\lambda_7$	$\lambda_8$
5.9390	5.1420	4.6660	4.0	3.0500	1.8100	1.3940	0.0

$\mu_1$	$\mu_2$	$\mu_3$	$\mu_4$	$\mu_5$	$\mu_6$	$\mu_6$	$\mu_6$
0.5677	-0.1583	-0.4862	0.3536	0.2315	-0.2855	0.1766	0.3536
-0.4281	0.6222	-0.2059	0.3536	0.0622	0.2469	0.2690	0.3536
0.3517	0.1203	0.2984	-0.3536	0.5170	0.5007	-0.0694	0.3536
-0.0855	0.0612	0.6267	0.3536	0.1159	-0.4899	-0.3044	0.3536
-0.5514	-0.3549	-0.3566	-0.3536	0.3216	-0.1795	-0.2392	0.3536
0.2351	0.3822	-0.2014	-0.3536	-0.5589	-0.1183	-0.4263	0.3536
-0.0354	-0.1476	0.2596	-0.3536	-0.2798	-0.2029	0.7349	0.3536
-0.0540	-0.5251	0.0654	0.3536	-0.4096	0.5286	-0.1411	0.3536

# Generalized eigenvalue system

- First use of generalized eigenvalue system for spectral clustering in

Donath and Homan, “*Algorithms for partitioning of graphs and computer logic based on eigenvectors of connection matrices*”, 1972, IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin 15(3):938–944

- Note that  $M^{-1/2}LM^{-1/2}$  cannot be related to the incidence matrix as with the earlier graph Laplacian

# Normalized Cut Problem

- Given weight matrix  $W = (w_{ij})$  and weighted degree matrix  $D' = (d_i)$ , the **normalized cut** of an undirected graph  $G = (V, E)$  is a partition of  $V$  into two groups  $S$  and  $\bar{S}$  such that

$$\text{ncut}(S, \bar{S}) = \text{cut}(S, \bar{S}) \left( \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)} + \frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} \right)$$

is minimized, where  $\text{vol}(S) = \sum_{i \in S} d_i$ , that is, sum of all the weights of the edges adjacent to vertices in  $S$ , and  $\text{cut}(S, \bar{S}) = \sum_{i \in S, j \in \bar{S}} w_{ij}$

# Normalized Cut

□ Represent a partition  $S, \bar{S}$  of  $V$  with  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ , where

$$x_i = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)} & \text{if } i \in S \\ -\frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} & \text{if } i \in \bar{S} \end{cases}$$

As in Ratio Cut,  
 $|x_i|$  **changes**  
**according to**  
**the solution**

$$\begin{aligned} 1. \quad x^\top L x &= \sum_{ij} w_{ij} (x_i - x_j)^2 = \left( \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)} + \frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} \right)^2 \sum_{ij} w_{ij} \\ &= \left( \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)} + \frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} \right)^2 \text{cut}(S, \bar{S}) \end{aligned}$$

$$2. \quad x^\top D' x = \sum_i d_i (x_i)^2 = \sum_{i \in S} \frac{d_i}{\text{vol}(S)^2} + \sum_{i \in \bar{S}} \frac{d_i}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})^2} = \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)} + \frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})}$$

$$1 + 2 \Rightarrow \frac{x^\top L x}{x^\top D' x} = \text{cut}(S, \bar{S}) \left( \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)} + \frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} \right) = \text{ncut}(S, \bar{S})$$

# Constrained optimization problem

- Minimize  $x^\top Lx$  where  $L = D' - W$

subject to  $x_i \in \left\{ \frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)}, -\frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} \right\},$

$$x^\top D'x = 1, \text{ and}$$

$$\mathbf{1}^\top D'x = 0$$

- Problem is NP-hard

- Note:

- $\mathbf{1}^\top D'x = \sum_{i \in S} \frac{d_i}{\text{vol}(S)} - \sum_{i \in \bar{S}} \frac{d_i}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})} = 1 - 1 = 0$

- $\frac{1}{\text{vol}(S)}, -\frac{1}{\text{vol}(\bar{S})}$  are not the only possible choices

- See <https://arxiv.org/abs/1311.2492>

# Relaxed Rayleigh quotient version

□ Minimize  $x^\top Lx$

subject to  $x^\top D'x = 1$  and  $\mathbf{1}^\top D'x = 0$

Through the same reasoning as in graph partitioning problem, equivalently solve the generalized eigensystem  $Lx = \lambda D'x$

□ Minimize  $y(D')^{-1/2}L(D')^{-1/2}y$

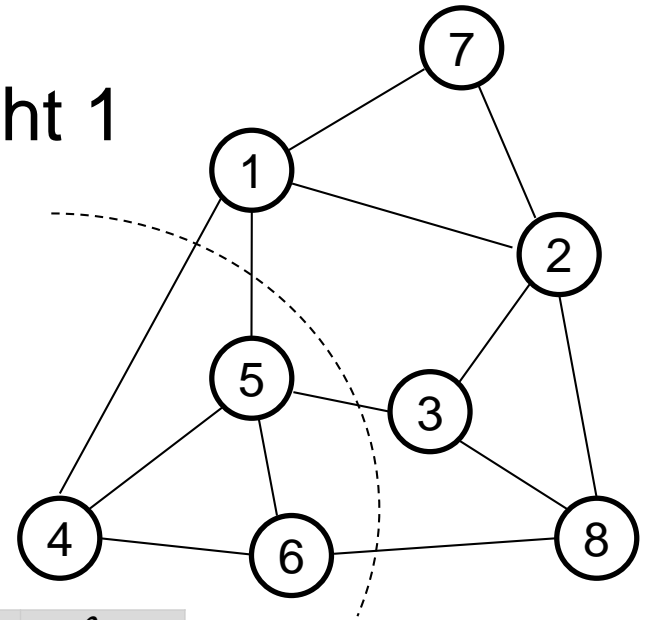
subject to  $y^\top y = 1$  and  $\mathbf{1}^\top (D')^{1/2}y = 0$

where  $y = (D')^{1/2}x$

□  $(D')^{-1/2}L(D')^{-1/2}$  is called the **normalized Laplacian** (due to its relation to  $D^{-1}W \dots$  later)

# Eigendecomposition

- Edges and vertices have weight 1



$\lambda_1$	$\lambda_2$	$\lambda_3$	$\lambda_4$	$\lambda_5$	$\lambda_6$	$\lambda_7$	$\lambda_8$
1.6760	1.5100	1.42700	1.3100	0.9900	0.5880	0.4990	0.0

$\mu_1$	$\mu_2$	$\mu_3$	$\mu_4$	$\mu_5$	$\mu_6$	$\mu_7$	$\mu_8$
0.3485	0.0034	0.6240	-0.2451	-0.0704	-0.5023	0.1342	0.3922
-0.0304	0.6546	-0.3393	-0.2014	0.0768	0.0885	0.4973	0.3922
0.4129	-0.3896	-0.1906	-0.0484	-0.5545	0.4474	0.1265	0.3397
-0.2148	-0.2574	-0.4363	-0.5537	0.0989	-0.2859	-0.4286	0.3397
-0.4292	0.2801	0.1122	0.4236	-0.5021	-0.0836	-0.3638	0.3922
0.5058	0.1486	-0.0793	0.3598	0.4989	0.1541	-0.4454	0.3397
-0.1662	-0.4557	-0.2360	0.5096	0.2180	-0.3552	0.4457	0.2774
-0.4397	-0.2128	0.4406	-0.1475	0.3513	0.5487	0.0744	0.3397

The limiting distribution of the normalized Laplacian is not  $f(v) = \text{const}$

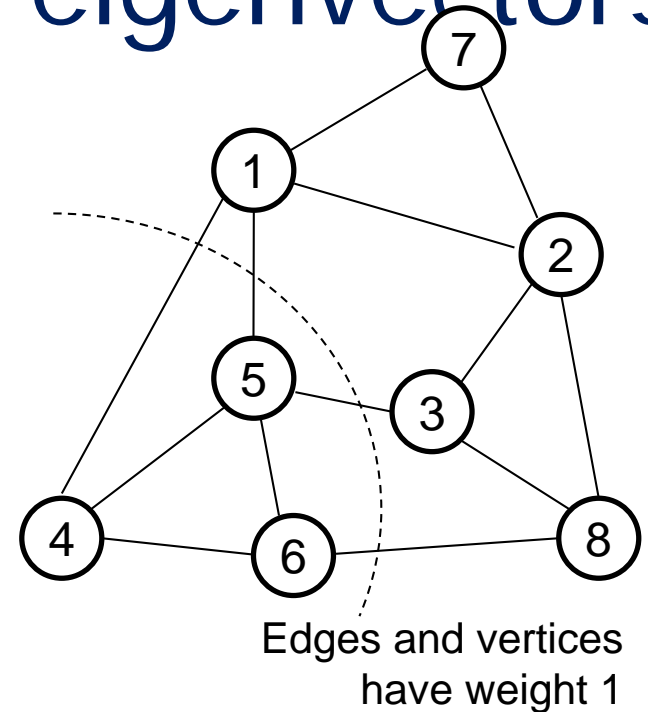
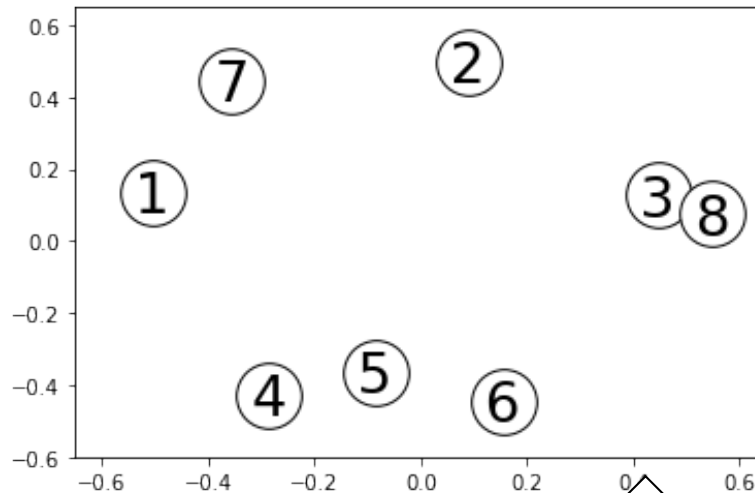
# Shi and Malik (1997, 2000)

- Proposed the NP-hard ncut problem
- Related ncut to generalized eigenvalue system, resulting in the now ubiquitous **normalized Laplacian**
  - However, the first use of the generalized eigenvalue system for spectral clustering was in 1972
- Use Gaussian function  $e^{-d^2/2\sigma^2}$  for weights
  - Previously used for min-cut (Wu and Leahy 1993)
  - Used for RatioCut later (Wang and Siskin 2003)
- Clustering with multiple eigenvectors (Shi and Malik 2000)



# Clustering w/ multiple eigenvectors

□ With normalized Laplacian

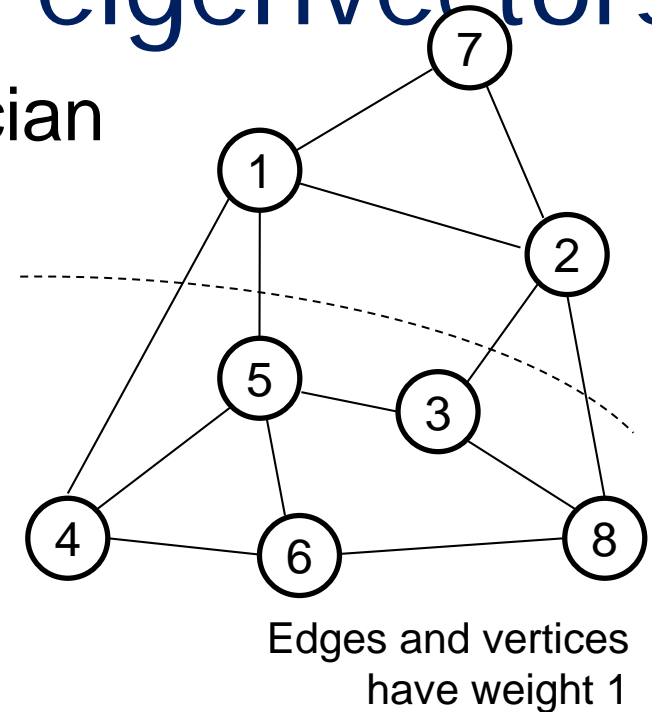
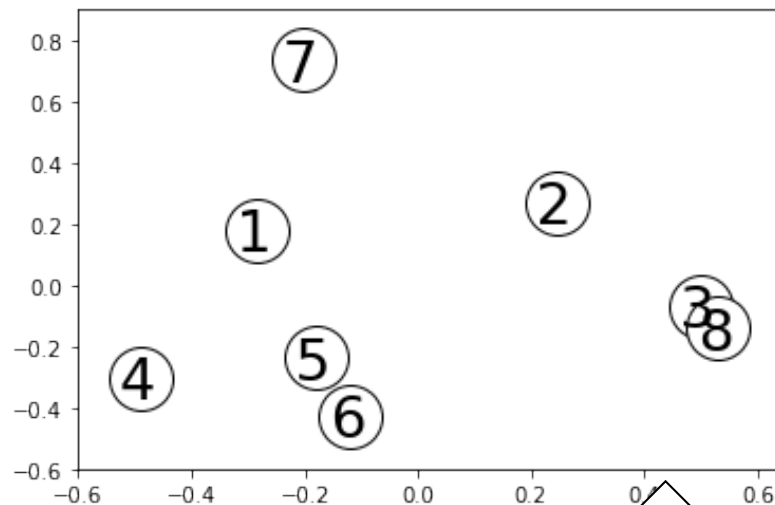


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-0.4397	-0.2128	0.4406	-0.1475	0.3513	0.5487	0.0744	0.3397

Use the values from the top few eigenvectors for clustering (with, for example, *k*-means)

# Clustering w/ multiple eigenvectors

- With graph partitioning Laplacian



$\mu_1$	$\mu_2$	$\mu_3$	$\mu_4$	$\mu_5$	$\mu_6$	$\mu_6$	$\mu_6$
0.5677	-0.1583	-0.4862	0.3536	0.2315	-0.2855	0.1766	0.3536
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The resultant eigenvectors are less suitable for clustering

# Theoretical justification

- How should we view the normalized Laplacian
  - Since normalized Laplacian cannot be related to the incidence matrix, it requires a new characterization
    - ⇒ Random walk characterization (Meilă and Shi 2000)
- Success in the use of multiple eigenvectors makes earlier justification for the use of Fiedler vector weak
  - Furthermore, the argument from minimizing divergence is no longer valid for the normalized Laplacian
    - ⇒ (Weiss 1999), (Meilă and Shi 2000), (Ng, Jordan and Weiss 2001) successively gives justification for the use of the eigenvectors

# Random walk characterization

- Let  $P = D^{-1}W$  (where  $L = D - W$ )
  - A solution  $x$  for  $Px = \lambda x$  is a solution for the generalized eigensystem  $Lx = \lambda Dx$  (with eigenvalues  $1 - \lambda$ ), and vice versa

Proof.

$$Lx = \lambda Dx \Rightarrow D^{-1}(D - W)x = D^{-1}\lambda Dx$$

$$(I - P)x = \lambda x$$

$$Px = (I - \lambda)x$$

$$Lx = \lambda Dx$$

$$Px = (I - \lambda)x \Rightarrow D^{-1}Wx = (I - \lambda)x$$

$$(I - D^{-1}W)x = \lambda x$$

$$(D - W)x = D\lambda x$$

$$Lx = D\lambda x$$

# Random walk characterization

- Let  $P = D^{-1}W$  (where  $L = D - W$ )
  - A solution  $x$  for  $Px = \lambda x$  is a solution for the generalized eigensystem  $Lx = \lambda Dx$  (with eigenvalues  $1 - \lambda$ ), and vice versa
    - **The normalized Laplacian  $D^{-\frac{1}{2}}LD^{-\frac{1}{2}}$  computes the solutions to  $Px = \lambda x$  for the normalized matrix  $P$**
  - However,  $P$  is not symmetric
    - **Doesn't decompose to orthogonal eigenbasis**
  - On the other hand  $D^{-\frac{1}{2}}LD^{-\frac{1}{2}}$  is symmetric
    - Chosen over  $P$  for spectral clustering

# Random walk characterization

- Each row in  $P$  sums to 1 (normalized)
  - $P$  is a **Markovian transition matrix**

- To start a walk from  $v_1$ , let  $x = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix}$ , then  $P^l x$  is the probability distribution after  $l$  steps from  $v_1$
- $x_i$  for neighboring vertices will become more similar  $\Rightarrow$  gradients decrease
- Parts of the graph will even out more quickly

# Random walk characterization

- Each row in  $P$  sums to 1 (normalized)
  - $P$  is a **Markovian transition matrix**
- A **limiting/stable/stationary state** for a random walk  $P$  is a distribution  $x^*$  where  $Px^* = x^*$ 
  - By definition  $x^*$  is a **eigenvector of  $P$  with  $\lambda = 1$**

Furthermore,  $x^*$  is **everywhere constant** if  $P$  is

- A **transition matrix** for a **regular graph**

By symmetry of the graph, a random walk from any vertex is equally likely to be at any other vertex in the limit

- A **Laplacian  $L = MM^T$**  for **incidence matrix  $M$**

First note that  $x^*$  minimizes  $x^T Lx$ . On the other hand we know that  $x^T Lx = \sum_v f(v)\Delta f(v)$ . Since  $\Delta f(v) = 0$  for the everywhere constant  $x'$ , we have  $x'^T Lx' = 0$ , its minimum. Hence  $x^* = x'$

# Use of eigenvectors

- For convenience use  $L' = D'^{-\frac{1}{2}}(W)D'^{-\frac{1}{2}}$  instead of the normalized Laplacian for analysis

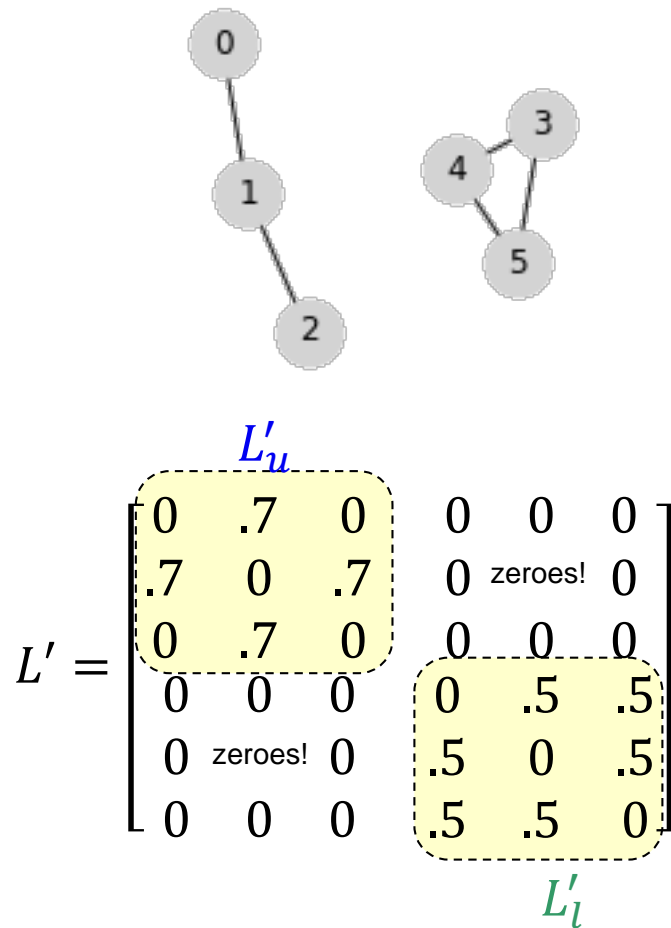
- $L' = I - L$  ( $L$  = normalized Laplacian)

Proof. 
$$\begin{aligned} L &= D'^{-1/2}(D' - W)D'^{-1/2} \\ &= D'^{-1/2}(D')D'^{-\frac{1}{2}} - D'^{-\frac{1}{2}}(W)D'^{-\frac{1}{2}} \\ &= I - D'^{-\frac{1}{2}}(W)D'^{-\frac{1}{2}} = I - L' \end{aligned}$$

- Results in the same eigenvectors but eigenvalues become  $1 - \lambda_1, \dots, 1 - \lambda_k$



# Use of eigenvectors



Matrix	Eigenvalues/vectors (decreasing order)	
$L'_u$	$\lambda_1^u = 1$ $\lambda_2^u = 0$ $\lambda_3^u = -1$	$v_1^u = [.5 \quad .7 \quad .5]$ $v_2^u = [.7 \quad 0 \quad -.7]$ $v_3^u = [.5 \quad -.7 \quad .5]$
$L'_l$	$\lambda_1^l = 1$ $\lambda_2^l = -.5$ $\lambda_3^l = -.5$	$v_1^l = [.6 \quad .6 \quad .6]$ $v_2^l = [0 \quad -.7 \quad -.7]$ $v_3^l = [-.8 \quad .4 \quad .4]$
$L'$	$\lambda_1 = 1$ $\lambda_2 = 1$ $\lambda_3 = 0$ $\lambda_4 = -.5$ $\lambda_5 = -.5$ $\lambda_6 = -1$	$v_1 = [0 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad .6 \quad .6 \quad .6]$ $v_2 = [.5 \quad .7 \quad .5 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad 0]$ $v_3 = [.7 \quad 0 \quad -.7 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad 0]$ $v_4 = [0 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad -.7 \quad .7]$ $v_5 = [0 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad -.8 \quad .4 \quad .4]$ $v_6 = [.5 \quad -.7 \quad .5 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad 0]$

- The eigenvalues/vectors of  $L'$  compose of the eigenvalues/vectors of the submatrices  $L'_u$  and  $L'_l$
- The largest eigenvalue of  $L'_u$  and  $L'_l$  are both 1 for the ideal case

# Use of eigenvectors

- The largest eigenvalue of  $L'_u$  and  $L'_l$  is 1 for the ideal (disconnected) case

$$\lambda_1 = \lambda_2 = 1 \Rightarrow |\lambda_1 - \lambda_2| = 0$$

- In non-ideal case,  $\lambda_2 < \lambda_1$
- The larger the eigenvalue (for  $L'$ ), the more cohesive the cluster (this is opposite for  $L$ )
- $|\lambda_k - \lambda_{k+1}|$  is called **eigengap** or **spectral gap**
  - Large  $|\lambda_k - \lambda_{k+1}|$  implies higher cohesion in the clusters given by  $\mu_k$  than those by  $\mu_{k+1}$
  - Evaluate whether to use a eigenvector in clustering by its eigengap from the previous

# Use of eigenvectors

- Historical use based on the Fiedler vector
  - Sign cut or zero threshold cut
  - Median cut (ensures balance)
  - Sweep/criterion cut
    - Sort vertices by Fiedler vector values and cut at the lowest value of some cost function
  - Jump/gap cut
    - Sort vertices by Fiedler vector values and cut at the point of largest gap
- Based on multiple eigenvectors
  - Simultaneous  $k$ -way (Shi and Malik 2000)
  - $k$ -means (Ng, Jordan and Weiss 2001)