Math 425 Assignment 1

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Lemma A:

Statement: A connected subgraph of n nodes requires at least $n-1$ edges.

Proof: Consider a graph $G=(V,E)$.

Let G_n be the set of all connected subgraphs of G with n nodes. And let G'_n be a subgraph of G_n such that the number of edges in G'_n is minimized. Then let $E'_n = E(G'_n)$ and $V'_n = V(G'_n)$.

First we shall consider the base case of $n=1$ nodes. Here it is trivial to see by definition of a graph that $E'_1 = 0$.

Now assume that $E'_b = \alpha$. Then it must be true that $E'_{b+1} \geq \alpha + 1$ since for any subgraph in G_b, by definition of a graph, requires at least one new edge to connect a new node.

Therefore $E'_n \geq n+1$, hence proving our statement. ■

Lemma B:

Statement: For a spanning tree H, there exists a node v such that $v \in H$ and v has a degree of 1

Proof: Clearly no node can have a degree of 0 or else H would not be connected and therefore not be a tree. So then it is suffice to show that if all nodes in H have a degree greater than 1, then that implies that H has a cycle and therefore is not a tree.

To show this, consider a simple traversal algorithm. In this algorithm one starts at an arbitrary node in H and then traverses an unused edge until it can no longer move because it is stuck at a node with all used edges. If at any point in this algorithm it hits a node already visited then there must be a cycle in the graph since it would imply that there is a path using unique edges from a node back to itself. If this algorithm were run on H it would have to hit a node a second time. This is because for the algorithm to not find a cycle it would have to never hit a node twice and then stop at a final unvisited node because it was stuck. But it can't get stuck at such a node since the degree of all nodes is greater than 1. Therefore there must exist a node in H such that its degree is 1. ■

Lemma C:

Statement: If H is a tree with at least 2 nodes then there exists a node v such that $v \in H$, $H \backslash v$ is a tree and $|E(H)| = |E(H \backslash v)| + 1$

Proof: By Lemma B there must be a node $v \in H$ with a degree of 1. H is a tree and therefore has no cycles so $H \backslash v$ has no cycles either. And since v has a degree of 1, by definition there can be no path in H between any two nodes in $H \backslash v$ that can include the node v. Then since H is connected, by definition $H \backslash v$ is connected. Therefore since $H \backslash v$ is connected and has no cycles it is also a tree. And since v has a degree of 1, then clearly $|E(H)| = |E(H \backslash v)| + 1$. ■

Lemma 2.2

Statement: Let G be a connected graph with n nodes. Then G is a spanning tree if and only if it has exactly $n-1$ nodes.

Proof: First we shall prove that if G is a spanning tree then it has 1 less edges than nodes.

Let S_n be the set of all spanning trees of all subgraphs of G containing n nodes where a spanning tree is possible. Then let $|E_n|$ be the number of edges of used for each subgraph in S_n assuming they are all the same.

Clearly $|E_1| = 0$ by definition of a graph.

Then if $S_n = n - 1$ then $S_{n+1} = n$. This is because Lemma C implies for all $H \in S_{n+1}$ there exists a node $v \in H$ such that $H \backslash v \in S_n$ and as well $|E_{n+1}| = |E_n| + 1$.

Therefore by induction G is a spanning tree of n nodes then it contains $n-1$ edges.

Now we shall show that if G is a connected graph with n nodes and $n-1$ edges then it is a tree.

If G were connected and not a tree then it must have a cycle. If it had a cycle then there must be an edge $e = (u, v)$ such that there is a path without e from u to v and clearly e can be removed from G without breaking the connectivity of G. But this would imply that there is a connected graph with $n - 2$ edges and n nodes with breaks Lemma A. Therefore G cannot have any cycles and must be a tree. $\blacksquare$