

- a. According to Piazza post [@1180](#), this means we have to prove  $\forall 0 < \gamma < 2$ , there exists a weighted vertex cover problem whose linear programming solution  $LP < \frac{1}{\gamma} OPT$ , where  $OPT$  is the optimal (minimum) weight.

Let's consider a graph  $G$  with  $n$  vertices. Let there be an edge between every pair of vertices in  $G$ . Let the weight  $w_i = 1$  for each vertex. It's obvious that the optimal weighted vertex cover is  $n - 1$  by choosing any  $n - 1$  vertices (the complement set of vertices of a graph's vertex cover is an independent set, and all possible independent sets of such a graph as we described have cardinality 1 because every pair of vertices is connected by an edge). The optimal linear programming solution  $LP$  has  $x_i = \frac{1}{2}$  for every vertex, and so  $LP = \vec{w} \cdot \vec{x} = \frac{n}{2}$  (it's impossible for  $LP$  to be less than  $\frac{n}{2}$  because then the average  $x_i$  would be less than  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and that cannot satisfy the constraint  $x_u + x_v \geq 1 \forall$  edges  $(u, v)$ ).

If we graph  $f(n) = \frac{\frac{1}{2} \lceil n \rceil}{\lceil n \rceil - 1}$  (we put  $x$  in the ceiling function because number of vertices is always a natural number), we see that  $f(n)$  starts from 1 and asymptotically approaches  $\frac{1}{2}$ . As  $\gamma$  approaches 2,  $LP < \frac{1}{\gamma} OPT$  is satisfied as  $n$  approaches infinity. When  $\gamma \ll 2$ ,  $\frac{1}{\gamma} > \frac{1}{2}$ , so a smaller  $n$  could satisfy  $LP < \frac{1}{\gamma} OPT$ . Choose an  $n$  whose  $f(x)$  is less than  $\frac{1}{\gamma}$ . Thus,  $\forall 0 < \gamma < 2$ , there exists a weighted vertex cover problem whose linear programming solution is less than  $\frac{1}{\gamma} OPT$ .

- b. We formulate this into a linear programming problem.

Objective function to minimize:  $\vec{w} \cdot \vec{x}$

Constraints:  $0 \leq x_i \leq 1 \forall i \in V$

$$\sum_{i \in H} x_i \geq 1 \forall H$$

After we obtain  $\vec{x}$ , round all  $\vec{x}_i \geq \frac{1}{c}$  to 1 and all other  $\vec{x}_j$ 's to 0. If and only if  $\vec{x}_i = 1$  is  $\vec{x}_i \in S$ .

#### Proof of correctness:

- 1) We want to show that this indeed produces a hitting set  $S$

This problem is essentially vertex cover on a hypergraph. An edge in a hypergraph has multiple vertices, and as long as one vertex on an edge is hit, the entire edge is covered. Our constraints ensure that at least one  $x_i \in H$  is greater than or equal to  $\frac{1}{|H|}$ , which in turn is greater than or equal to  $\frac{1}{c}$  because  $|H| \leq c$ , and so that  $x_i$  would be rounded up to 1 to be included in  $S$ .

- 2) We want to show this is a  $c$ -approximation.

$$\sum_{v \in S} w_v \leq c \sum_{v \in S} w_v x_v \leq c \sum_v w_v x_v \leq c OPT$$

The first inequality is because  $x_v \geq \frac{1}{c} \forall v \in S$ . The second inequality is because now it also includes  $v \notin S$ . The third inequality is because  $\vec{w} \cdot \vec{x} \leq OPT$ , because  $\vec{x}$  found by our algorithm can be fractions while the solution  $OPT$  found by integer programming is all integers. QED.