

18.218 PROBLEM SET

Instructions:

- All submissions must be **typed in LaTeX** and submitted as PDF on [Stellar](#) (try [Overleaf](#) if you are looking for an online LaTeX editor without requiring installations). Please name your file `ps#_Lastname_Firstname.pdf` and remember to include your name in each file.
- At the top of each submission, you must **acknowledge all references and people consulted** (other than lectures and the textbook). Failure acknowledge sources will lead to an automatic 10% penalty. Examples include: names of people you discussed homework with, books, and online resources. If you consulted no additional sources, you should write **sources consulted: none**.
- Please turn in the problems marked `ps1` and `ps1★` for problem set 1, etc., by midnight of each due date (see course homepage for due dates). Do not submit the other problems—they are for you to practice. See [course homepage](#) for policies (20% per day late penalty; do not look up solutions; collaboration policy).
- **Bonus problems**, marked by ★, are more challenging. A grade of A- may be attained by only solving the non-starred problems. To attain a grade of A or A+, you should solve a substantial number of starred problems.
- Please **do not exceed one page** for each problem (standard 1-inch margins and 11pt font). If you cannot fit your solution within one page, then think about how to better distill your ideas. If necessary, you may skip details of routine calculations (we don't really want to read them either).
- This file will be updated constantly as the term progresses. Please check back regularly. It will be announced when each problem set is complete.
- You are encouraged to include figures whenever they are helpful. Here are some recommended ways to produce figures in decreasing order of learning curve difficulty:
 - (1) [TikZ](#) or other drawing script
 - (2) [IPE](#) (which supports LaTeX) or other drawing app
 - (3) photo/scan (I recommend the Dropbox app on your phone, which has a nice scanning feature that produces clear monochrome scans)

Problems begin on the next page

1. Verify the following asymptotic calculations used in Ramsey number lower bounds:
 - (a) For each k , the largest n satisfying $\binom{n}{k} 2^{1-\binom{k}{2}} < 1$ has $n = \left(\frac{1}{e\sqrt{2}} + o(1)\right) k 2^{k/2}$.
 - (b) For each k , the maximum value of $n - \binom{n}{k} 2^{1-\binom{k}{2}}$ as n ranges over positive integers is $\left(\frac{1}{e} + o(1)\right) k 2^{k/2}$.
 - (c) For each k , the largest n satisfying $e \left(\binom{k}{2} \binom{n}{k-2} + 1\right) 2^{1-\binom{k}{2}} < 1$ satisfies $n = \left(\frac{\sqrt{2}}{e} + o(1)\right) k 2^{k/2}$.
2. Prove that, if there is a real $p \in [0, 1]$ such that

$$\binom{n}{k} p^{\binom{k}{2}} + \binom{n}{t} (1-p)^{\binom{t}{2}} < 1$$

then the Ramsey number $R(k, t)$ satisfies $R(k, t) > n$. Using this show that

$$R(4, t) \geq c \left(\frac{t}{\log t} \right)^{3/2}$$

for some constant $c > 0$.

3. (Extension of Sperner's theorem) Let \mathcal{F} be a collection of subset of $[n]$ that does not contain $k+1$ elements forming a chain: $A_1 \subsetneq \cdots \subsetneq A_{k+1}$. Prove that \mathcal{F} is no larger than taking the union of the k levels of the boolean lattice closest to the middle layer.

ps1 4. Let A_1, \dots, A_m be r -element sets and B_1, \dots, B_m be s -element sets. Suppose $A_i \cap B_i = \emptyset$ for each i , and for each $i \neq j$, either $A_i \cap B_j \neq \emptyset$ or $A_j \cap B_i \neq \emptyset$. Prove that $m \leq (r+s)^{r+s}/(r^r s^s)$.

ps1 5. Prove that for every positive integer r , there exists an integer K such that the following holds. Let S be a set of rk points evenly spaced on a circle. If we partition $S = S_1 \cup \cdots \cup S_r$ so that $|S_i| = k$ for each i , then, provided $k \geq K$, there exists r congruent triangles where the vertices of the i -th triangle lie in S_i , for each $1 \leq i \leq r$.

ps1 6. Prove that every set of 10 points in the plane can be covered by a union of disjoint unit disks.

ps1★ 7. Prove that $[n]^d$ cannot be partitioned into fewer than 2^d sets each of the form $A_1 \times \cdots \times A_d$ where $A_i \subsetneq [n]$.

8. Let $k \geq 4$ and H a k -uniform hypergraph with at most $4^{k-1}/3^k$ edges. Prove that there is a coloring of the vertices of H by four colors so that in every edge all four colors are represented.

ps1 9. Let G be a graph on $n \geq 10$ vertices. Suppose that adding any new edge to G would create a new clique on 10 vertices. Prove that G has at least $8n - 36$ edges.

(Hint in white:)

10. Prove that there is an absolute constant $c > 0$ so that for every $n \times n$ matrix with distinct real entries, one can permute its rows so that no column in the permuted matrix contains an increasing subsequence of length at least $c\sqrt{n}$. (A subsequence does not need to be selected from consecutive terms. For example, $(1, 2, 3)$ is an increasing subsequence of $(1, 5, 2, 4, 3)$.)
11. Let G be a graph with n vertices and m edges. Prove that K_n can be written as a union of $O(n^2(\log n)/m)$ copies of G (not necessarily edge-disjoint).

ps1 12. Given a set \mathcal{F} of subsets of $[n]$ and $A \subseteq [n]$, write $\mathcal{F}|_A := \{S \cap A : S \in \mathcal{F}\}$ (its *projection* onto A). Prove that for every n and k , there exists a set \mathcal{F} of subsets of $[n]$ with $|\mathcal{F}| = O(k 2^k \log n)$ such that for every k -element subset A of $[n]$, $\mathcal{F}|_A$ contains all 2^k subsets of A .

13. Let A be a subset of the unit sphere in \mathbb{R}^3 (centered at the origin) containing no pair of orthogonal points.

- ps1 (a) Prove that A occupies at most $1/3$ of the sphere in terms of surface area.
- ps1★ (b) Prove an upper bound smaller than $1/3$ (give your best bound).
14. Let $\mathbf{r} = (r_1, \dots, r_k)$ be nonzero integers whose sum is nonzero. Prove that there exists a real $c > 0$ (depending on \mathbf{r} only) such that the following holds: for every finite set A of nonzero reals, there exists a subset $B \subset A$ with $|B| \geq c|A|$ such that there do not exist $b_1, \dots, b_k \in B$ with $r_1 b_1 + \dots + r_k b_k = 0$.
- ps1 15. Prove that every set A of n nonzero integers contains two disjoint subsets B_1 and B_2 , such that both B_1 and B_2 are sum-free, and $|B_1| + |B_2| > 2n/3$. Can you do it if A is a set of nonzero reals?
- ps1★ 16. Prove that every graph with n vertices and $m \geq n^{3/2}$ edges contains two isomorphic subgraphs (not necessarily disjoint) with at least $cm^{2/3}$ edges, where $c > 0$ is a constant.
(Clarification: “subgraph” means a subset of vertices and edges, and does not necessarily have to be induced.)