

Math 530: Graph Theory, Spring 2025:
Homework 1
due 2025-04-11 at 11:59 PM
Please solve 4 of the 6 problems!

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April 4, 2025

1 EXERCISE 1

1.1 PROBLEM

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a simple graph. Set $n = |V|$. Prove that we can find some edges $e_1, e_2, \dots, e_k$ of G and some triangles $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_\ell$ of G such that $k + \ell \leq n^2/4$ and such that each edge $e \in E \setminus \{e_1, e_2, \dots, e_k\}$ is a subset of (at least) one of the triangles $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_\ell$.

1.2 REMARK

In other words, this exercise is claiming that all edges of G can be covered by at most $n^2/4$ edge-or-triangles. Here, an *edge-or-triangle* means either an edge or a triangle of G , and the word “*covers*” means that each edge of G is a subset of the chosen edge-or-triangles.

This is a generalization of Mantel’s theorem (because if G has no triangles, then any edge-or-triangle is an edge).

1.3 HINT

Imitate the proof of Mantel’s theorem given in class.

1.4 SOLUTION

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2 EXERCISE 2

2.1 PROBLEM

Let G be a simple graph with n vertices and k edges, where $n > 0$. Prove that G has at least $\frac{k}{3n}(4k - n^2)$ triangles.

2.2 HINT

First argue that for any edge vw of G , the total number of triangles that contain v and w is at least $\deg v + \deg w - n$. Then, use the inequality $n(a_1^2 + a_2^2 + \cdots + a_n^2) \geq (a_1 + a_2 + \cdots + a_n)^2$, which holds for any n real numbers $a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n$. (This is a particular case of the Cauchy–Schwarz inequality or the Chebyshev inequality or the Jensen inequality – pick your favorite!)

2.3 REMARK

This, too, is a generalization of Mantel's theorem: If $k > n^2/4$, then $\frac{k}{3n}(4k - n^2) > 0$, so the exercise entails that G has at least one triangle.

2.4 SOLUTION

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3 EXERCISE 3

3.1 PROBLEM

Let n be a positive integer. Let S be a simple graph with $2n$ vertices. Prove that S has two distinct vertices that have an even number of common neighbors.

3.2 SOLUTION

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4 EXERCISE 4

4.1 PROBLEM

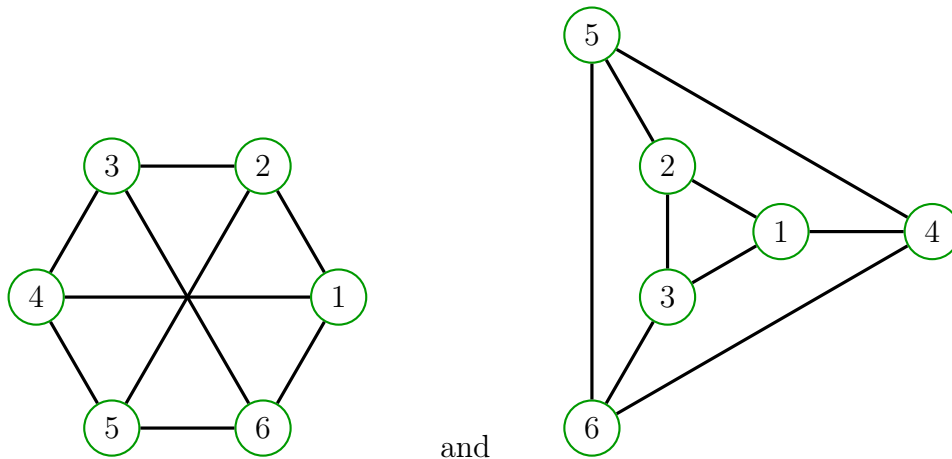
Let $n \geq 2$ be an integer. Let G be a simple graph with n vertices.

- (a) Describe G if the degrees of the vertices of G are $1, 1, \dots, 1, n-1$.
- (b) Let a and b be two positive integers such that $a+b=n$. Describe G if the degrees of the vertices of G are $1, 1, \dots, 1, a, b$.

Here, to “describe” G means to explicitly determine (with proof) a graph that is isomorphic to G .

4.2 REMARK

The situations in this exercise are, in a sense, exceptional. Typically, the degrees of the vertices of a graph do not uniquely determine the graph up to isomorphism. For example, the two graphs



are not isomorphic¹, but have the same degrees (namely, each vertex of either graph has degree 3).

4.3 SOLUTION

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5 EXERCISE 5

5.1 PROBLEM

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a simple graph.

An edge $e = \{u, v\}$ of G will be called *odd* if the number $\deg u + \deg v$ is odd.

Prove that the number of odd edges of G is even.

¹The easiest way to see this is to observe that the second graph has a triangle (i.e., three distinct vertices that are mutually adjacent), while the first graph does not.

5.2 HINT

One solution uses modular arithmetic. Note in particular that $m^2 \equiv m \pmod{2}$ for every integer m . (There is also a solution without all of this.)

5.3 SOLUTION

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6 EXERCISE 6

6.1 PROBLEM

Let G be a simple graph with n vertices. Assume that each vertex of G has at least one neighbor.

A *matching* of G shall mean a set F of edges of G such that no two edges in F have a vertex in common. Let m be the largest size of a matching of G .

An *edge cover* of G shall mean a set F of edges of G such that each vertex of G is contained in at least one edge $e \in F$. Let c be the smallest size of an edge cover of G .

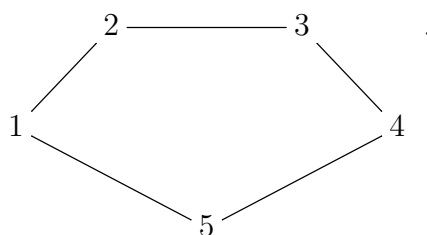
Prove that $c + m = n$.

6.2 HINT

Prove that $c \leq n - m$ and that $m \geq n - c$.

6.3 REMARK

Let G be the graph



Then, $\{12, 34\}$ is a matching of G of largest possible size (why?), whereas $\{12, 34, 25\}$ is an edge cover of G of smallest possible size (why?). So the exercise says that $2 + 3 = 5$ here, which is indeed true.

6.4 SOLUTION

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REFERENCES

- [Grinbe20] Darij Grinberg, *Math 235: Mathematical Problem Solving*, 10 August 2021.
<https://www.cip.ifi.lmu.de/~grinberg/t/20f/mps.pdf>
- [Grinbe22] Darij Grinberg, *Math 530: Graph Theory*, 2022–2025.
<https://www.cip.ifi.lmu.de/~grinberg/t/22s/>