CSE 421
Algorithms

Richard Anderson

Lecture 23

Network Flow

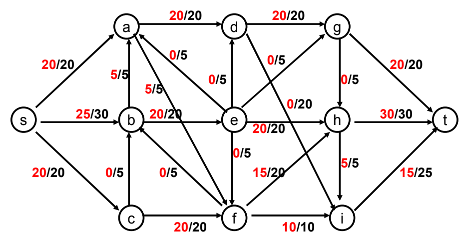
Review

- Network flow definitions
- Flow examples
- Augmenting Paths
- Residual Graph
- Ford Fulkerson Algorithm
- Cuts
- Maxflow-MinCut Theorem

Network Flow Definitions

- Flowgraph: Directed graph with distinguished vertices s (source) and t (sink)
- Capacities on the edges, c(e) >= 0
- Problem, assign flows f(e) to the edges such that:
  - 0 <= f(e) <= c(e)
  - Flow is conserved at vertices other than s and t
    - Flow conservation: flow going into a vertex equals the flow going out
  - The flow leaving the source is a large as possible

Find a maximum flow

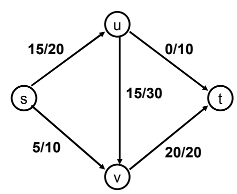


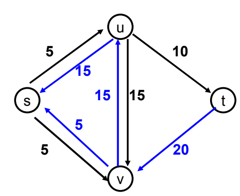
Residual Graph

- Flow graph showing the remaining capacity
- Flow graph G, Residual Graph G_R
  - G: edge e from u to v with capacity c and flow f
  - G_R: edge e' from u to v with capacity c – f
  - G_R: edge e'' from v to u with capacity f

Augmenting Path Lemma

- Let P = $v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_k$ be a path from s to t with minimum capacity b in the residual graph.
- b units of flow can be added along the path P in the flow graph.





Proof

- Add b units of flow along the path P
- What do we need to verify to show we have a valid flow after we do this?
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  –

Ford-Fulkerson Algorithm (1956)

while not done

Construct residual graph G_R

Find an s-t path P in G_R with capacity b > 0

Add b units along in G

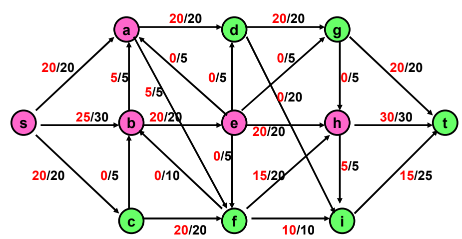
If the sum of the capacities of edges leaving S is at most C, then the algorithm takes at most C iterations

Cuts in a graph

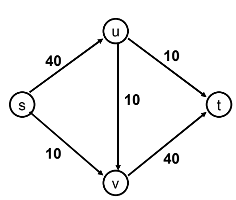
- Cut: Partition of V into disjoint sets S, T with s in S and t in T.
- Cap(S,T): sum of the capacities of edges from S to T
- Flow(S,T): net flow out of S
  – Sum of flows out of S minus sum of flows into S
- Flow(S,T) <= Cap(S,T)

What is Cap(S,T) and Flow(S,T)

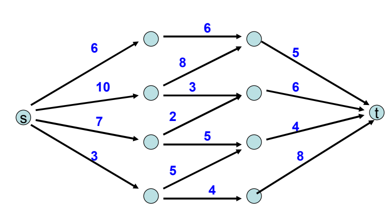
S={s, a, b, e, h}, T = {c, f, i, d, g, t}



Minimum value cut

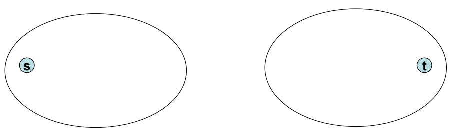


Find a minimum value cut

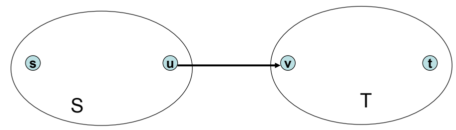


MaxFlow – MinCut Theorem

- There exists a flow which has the same value of the minimum cut
- Proof: Consider a flow where the residual graph has no s-t path with positive capacity
- Let S be the set of vertices in G_R reachable from s with paths of positive capacity



Let S be the set of vertices in G_R reachable from s with paths of positive capacity

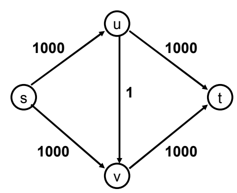


Max Flow - Min Cut Theorem

- Ford-Fulkerson algorithm finds a flow where the residual graph is disconnected, hence FF finds a maximum flow.
- If we want to find a minimum cut, we begin by looking for a maximum flow.

Performance

- The worst case performance of the Ford-Fulkerson algorithm is horrible



Better methods of finding augmenting paths

- Find the maximum capacity augmenting path
  - $O(m^2 \log(C))$ time
- Find the shortest augmenting path
  - $O(m^2 n)$
- Find a blocking flow in the residual graph
  - $O(mn \log n)$